

The Knocklyon News



ST. COLMCILLE'S PARISH NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 1986



THE SHEER MAGIC OF IT ALL

THERE'LL ALWAYS BE CHRISTMAS

An urgent message from Fr. Conroy had dragged me away from a comfortable armchair and a roaring fire. "You must come quickly," he said, "I'm expecting a visit from a wonderful old man and I'd like you to meet him."

It was a bright moonlit night, as I walked up the pedestrian way, with more than a hint of frost in the air. I turned the corner and started to cross the playing-field towards the church when I saw it! A strange object slowly descending from the skies. As it came to rest in the middle of the field I could see lights twinkling. My heart pounded. Was it a space ship? And was I going to be the first person to meet some strange being from another planet? I hurried on . . . and then . . . I heard the voice. "Ho ho ho!" it said, in a warm chuckling tone. "A happy Christmas to you."

There was no mistaking the familiar figure – the long red-hooded robe enclosing an ample rounded body – the friendly benevolent face – the rosy cheeks and the equally rosy nose – the twinkling blue eyes – the white whiskers and the bushy white beard.

"Sorry about the 'ho ho ho' ", he said smiling "I get a bit fed up saying it but people expect it and I don't like to hurt their feelings."

"You came down from the sky" I faltered. "Oh yes," he replied, "I wanted to see Knocklyon – get to know the place a bit. You have quite a lot of chimneys around here. So many houses nowadays don't have any chimneys at all and those new apartment blocks are very difficult. It takes quite a bit of magic to get into them." He took my arm and we set off to the presbytery.

"It was very generous of Fr. Conroy to invite me in", continued Santa. "He seems a nice man – told me to drop in anytime. Mrs. Santa usually gives me a flask, but it will be good to have a cuppa by the fire. I must say," he added, "Irish people are very hospitable. You should see the amount of food they leave for me every Christmas Eve, cake, mince pies, and plum pudding. They even leave bottles of Guinness in case I'm thirsty. I couldn't possibly eat everything and I can't drink when I'm driving."

It was cosy in the priests' house and as we sat there Santa spoke of the many changes he has seen over the years. "You know" he

confessed "I sometimes find it a bit hard to keep up. Everyone is in a hurry these days. I don't particularly like arriving anywhere by helicopter or aeroplane – I much prefer my old sleigh – it's leisurely – and when you travel that way you can see the beauty of God's world and all the people in it. You miss it all when you go too fast. I don't like the media too much either. They use me so much . . . advertising this and that. I always seem to be selling something, especially on the telly and it's not a good image. My message is LOVING and GIVING. You'd never think that when you see all those commercials! The world doesn't understand that, but children do. Children never change. They know that Christmas is a very special occasion – it's the birthday party of Jesus and children love birthdays. To them, birthdays mean happiness with friends and special gifts for the birthday boy or girl. Christmas is the biggest birthday party in the world. It doesn't really matter to them if presents come down chimneys or appear by magic or are given to them by friends. It's the loving and the giving that adds the touch of magic . . . it is the true message – that people who love one another, give each other presents, all in celebration and reminder of that first Christmas long ago. "That's where it all started you know."

It was time for Santa to leave. He climbed onto the sleigh, flicked the reins and, to the tinkling sound of bells, rose slowly into the night. I felt an emptiness and a sadness at his going – the glimpse of fairyland had vanished. Or had it? I thought of the many little children who were, perhaps even at this moment, writing their little letters to Santa . . . and the many little children who would never know him. For a few brief years, for those of us who are lucky, he belongs to each one of us – to the age of innocence, of wonder and dreams. He is the memory of firelight, candlelight and starlight. He is the maker of dreams and as long as there are little children – there'll always be a Santa – there'll always be Christmas.



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COURSES 1987

Evening: Word Processing – 12th January

Typewriting – 15th January

Day: Part-time Typewriting/Audio Typing

14th January

Phone Patricia Byrne at 943514

WORLD SAFARI

Two friends with motorbikes, rucksacks and courage took off from South Australia with a view to going "anywhere the tourists weren't". They started at their home town of Murray Bridge, ran out of money at Alice Springs, but didn't return home until six years later. For Ally Mangels and John Field it was some adventure. Their wanderlust took them 120,000 km through 56 countries, over four continents and four oceans. They lived alternatively like kings and beggars.

Their adventure really started when they saw an advertisement in an old magazine seeking a crew for a Pacific Voyage on the 'Klaraborg' at the grand old age of 120, the oldest sailing vessel still plying the high seas. During the Pacific adventure, the ship happened upon an island, Palmyra, a U.S. Army base, deserted intact after World War II. The group scavenged gear from the island and, a month later, sold it in Hong Kong for \$20,000.

Mangels and Field left the ship in Japan and spent 2 months sleeping out; eventually they wound up in a remote Buddhist monastery where the priests, mistaking them for new devotees to their religion, set them to work. Later, they continued on through Thailand where they were mistaken for drug-smugglers and thrown into prison.

They continued their journey to Africa; the drive through the continent took them a year, including time out to work as insurance salesmen in Johannesburg. They chucked the job when they discovered that commissions would be paid years later!

They had \$400 left at that stage and spent \$200 on "a little Daf" and took off again. The car fell apart regularly and they held it together with wire and glue.

They experienced a war in Mozambique, and they had several near escapes with death, especially when they got lost in the Sahara Desert without water, and John Field came down with hepatitis.

Holland saw the end of the adventure. The pair came home when the makers of the tiny Daf car paid them \$10,000 for the 'souvenir' of their incredible journey. The manufacturers thought it was a good advertisement for their product, and they wanted to display it in their plant's museum.

You would be excused for thinking that the friends had been cured of travel for a lifetime. John was, but Ally is currently refitting a boat for a voyage to the Nile and the Amazon. But that's another story!



Come and follow this **INCREDIBLE JOURNEY** at the **JUNIOR SCHOOL** when the film will be shown by the Parents' Association to raise much needed funds for the schools.

WEDNESDAY 7th JANUARY 1987 - 8.00p.m.

Admission £2.50

CHILDREN'S MATINEE - 3.30 p.m.

Admission £1.00

OUR READERS WRITE . . .



Dear Editor,

Following a recent incident in our church, where a man had been so disturbed during Mass that he had to speak out against these "young men" who had been behaving in a manner more acceptable in three year olds, I was prompted to ask myself why is this a problem in our parish? What example do our young people get?

How many of our older parishioners leave the church early in comparison to those under 18?

How many of our parishioners rush up to the altar at Communion time as if it were a race?

How many parents allow their children to run around the church unrestrained?

How many of our parishioners, though not going to Mass themselves, insist on their teenagers going?

Although I do not condone the behaviour of these "gentlemen", do we not need to find the real root of the problem?

Yours etc. . . .

(name and address with Editor)

. . . WE WELCOME YOUR VIEWS

SANTA AND FRIENDS



Marie, Jean and Brian Moran at the Fair.

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THE MESSAGE OF BETHLEHEM

The sounds of Christmas are everywhere. The crowded streets, the bright lights, the busy shops, the singing of carols fills the air. At home everything is ready, the cakes and puddings are made, the cards are sent and the mince pies are in cold storage. Christmas is a season of joy and happiness but it is also a season of indulgence, commercialisation, and exploitation. There is a lot of money to be made. For many it is a season of memories and loneliness.

What are we celebrating? What are we remembering? The birth of a child. The love of a Father and Mother. The singing of angels. The visit of the Shepherds. No wonder that Christmas is so special for children. The sheer magic of it all. Their little bright eyes gaze in wonder at the fairy lights and Christmas trees adorned with presents. Santa Claus is coming. He has left his home in the north pole and made his way to every department store and street corner. Children have no difficulty in solving the mystery of a thousand Santas because the real one comes to them on Christmas morning.

But Christmas is much more than the feast of Christ's birth – it's the feast of the birth of every child of God, in every part of the world. It's the feast of human dignity – that every person born on this earth is loved and cherished by God, and enters the human family where love and care are sought.

Christmas can bring out the best in people – roll away clouds of hatred and bitterness and let the song of the angels be heard. The tree in the sittingroom, the comical mistletoe, the tiny robin, the holly and the ivy are all part of the story that God is close to his people and that we desire relationships of equality and justice and love.

Christmas is also a time of remembering those less well off than ourselves, the poor and forgotten of our community and the world. The Christmas that we invent in the city is not the Christmas of the poor. As we celebrate Christmas, we must never forget the message of Bethlehem.

Why did you come, Lord, the way you did?
 Poor, homeless, God-among-his-people?
 Born, not among the leaders and princes
 whose names are long since forgotten,
 except for Herod who wanted to kill you;
 Born among the outcasts of society,
 within the love of Joseph and Mary.
 Why did you come like this?
 Maybe the silence of your birth
 broken only by the hymn of the angels
 the cry of a child and the noise of an
 animal says it all:
 that God is as simple and as complex as a
 child
 and that he is on the side of the poor.
 Why did you come, Lord, the way you did?

Fr. Chris Conroy.

THEIR FIRST CHRISTMAS FAIR



John & Kenneth Kiernan with their Parents at the Fair

HE'S NOT COMING DOWN MY CHIMNEY



Marie, Raymond & Fiona McEntee, Cremorne.

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THIS CHRISTMAS**

"THE LORD IS BORN FOR US..."

We tend to delve back into memory when talking about Christmas – even if more and more faded as the years roll on, the memory lingers on. At the same time, we might find difficulty recalling how we spent Christmas this time last year. The magic of Christmas is surely bound up with our youth.

So back to misty memory, for some of us at least! Lurking there, among other things, would be images of Christmas stockings – we could not wait to get at them, and their promise of infinite excitement. I suspect we soon exhausted their possibilities, but, not to worry, there would be plenty other Christmas distractions about.

I have definite notions of Christmas "smells"; even in the poorest households, and most of them would be poor at the time, there would be extra goodies. It was the era of the brown free-range turkey. I have notions of Christmas puddings, suspended from ceiling hooks, wrapped in gauze and that sure would be an aroma proper to Christmas. Long-suffering Nuala, who takes good care of us here, assures me that this was the real way to season a pudding. "Rich" fruit cake would be the order of the day. Such a cake with, maybe, a calendar thrown in, was given by some local shops to good customers, with good accounts and good habits of payments, I presume! This was sound solid life, none of your impersonal check-outs with the "regulation" smile. This is by way of comment on sad changes forced by the pace of life, and no reflection on our good Superquinn neighbours and friends!

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Pupils of Ann McGee's School of Irish Dancing who won the TARA BROOCH TROPHY

Odd things stick out in one's memory – if you are old enough, jog your memory and see for yourself. I remember casting envious eyes on a train set, in Gowan's window, in my native town. It is now a select eating place, glorying in the name "The Bistro". To this day, I remember the price, because it was an era when we had to be budget-conscious. The set cost 2/11 (less than 15p). After some negotiation, I obtained the "treasure". No doubt at the time, I thought I would never know a sad moment again. I was to repeat the same mistake, in many parallel instances, for many years to come, before the good Lord hammered into our reluctant skull the old, old truth that life is indeed a series of ups and downs and "we do not have here a lasting city".

The Christmas candle at the window – were there two varieties of colour, red and white? – had its own special dignity and sacredness. And there was my first Christmas Card to a pal in "far off" Athlone, in which I wished him a happy Christmas and solemnly, a prosperous New Year – ye gods!

Simple life, simple joys, simple memories. But then there was nothing extravagant about that first Christmas, except the significance of what happened. And that was, and always will be, extravagant beyond all telling – Emmanuel, God with us and "man shall live for evermore because of Christmas Day".



Pat Fitz.

CHRISTMAS FAIR – BEST EVER

The Christmas Fair was a wonderful success this year. The overall profit was £7,600, which is a magnificent achievement. There was a lovely atmosphere and spirit throughout the day. We would like to express our deep gratitude to all involved, especially the Fair Committee, stallholders and all who did the door to door collection.

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COFFEE BREAK



A SENSE OF WONDER

We do not really go in much for awe or wonder these days, we are more at home with speculation and analysis. Not that speculating and analysing are not good and necessary but somehow they are not enough, particularly when we are dealing with the deeper realities of life. But even if we do not exactly encourage it, we all do experience a sense of wonder at various times in our lives, perhaps when we see a beautiful scene in the countryside or when we meet or hear of someone who is particularly kind or noble. The capacity to wonder is part of our very nature. It is our response to something that is beautiful, to something that is full of meaning but whose meaning we cannot quite grasp.

When we come to consider the birth of Christ, the mystery of God becoming man, we must begin with a sense of wonder, of awe, allowing ourselves to be grasped by the sheer beauty of it all. We think of how Mary must have held her small child in her arms, holding him close to herself and feeling the warmth of his body. We think of how she must have marvelled at his smallness and his softness and wondered at the God who comes to his people not with a mighty show of strength destroying anyone who offers the slightest resis-

tance, but with the gentleness and vulnerability of a new-born infant. Luke writes that "Mary treasured all these things and reflected on them in her heart". Perhaps she remembered the words of Isaiah the prophet, 'A bruised reed he will not break and a smoldering wick he will not quench until he establishes justice on the earth'.

How different the first Christmas must have been from how we now celebrate Christmas. For Mary and Joseph, in a strange town with nowhere to stay except a stable far away from their family and friends, there were no cakes or puddings or parties. These things and the other things we associate with Christmas are good and important, but they are not the most important things, they are not what Christmas is all about. Christmas can be a lonely time for some people, particularly if they are separated from those they love, but perhaps, in some way, sadness or loneliness can draw us closer to the real mystery of Christmas.

So whoever we are and whatever our situation, Christmas is our Feast. Let us be filled with wonder and deep joy at the beauty and the gentleness and the power of God's love for each one of us and let us share that love with those we meet.



Joe Mothersill

IT'S REALLY A GOOD BARGAIN



Ruth Lumley & Ciara Dunne in the Church Shop

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SANCTA Maria College Gabardine (age 12) Ph: 521392

PRODUCING Newsletters it seems, is only one of the many talents of Beth Cummins (recently retired and much missed member of the Newsletter Production Team). She came up trumps on November 13th – met the deadline, as usual, right on target, and produced a beautiful baby girl!! Many congratulations to Beth and husband Paul.

LISTENERS to R.T.E. Radio 1 Programme, Day by Day, on Thurs. 4th December, will have heard how Lynne Rafferty, (another much-missed ex-member of the Newsletter Production Team) bought truck-loads of books and toys (a slight exaggeration!!) for a mere £10. Any chance of a help'n hand with our budget Lynne?

CONGRATS to Elaine Halpin (Cremorne) a member of the chorus of pupils from St. Pius' School who entertained viewers of the Late Late Toy Show on 5th December, with their beautiful singing.

A BIG "Ta Very Much" from the Newsletter Committee to Peter Hughes, Manager of Superquinn, for making it possible for copies of the Newsletter to be distributed via the Information Desk at Superquinn, during 1986. A very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year to you, Peter, and to the kind staff at Superquinn.

SCHOOL NEWS: We send our best wishes to Mrs. Smullen who had a car accident recently, and we hope to see her back at school shortly.

CONGRATULATIONS to Mr. Eamon Meehan who got married on Saturday 13th December. We hope he is enjoying his honeymoon in the sun.

WELL DONE to Brian Mc Gabhann who won the Leinster Junior Mixed Doubles championships in badminton recently. (We haven't got the partner's name).

TO THE BOYS AND GIRLS of the Senior School who collected the largest amount in the Dublin Area for the Irish Wheelchair Draw.

TO THE FIFTH CLASSES who sang and danced their way through a lovely nativity scene in the Church on 9th December.

TO THE TEACHERS AND CHILDREN from the Junior School who worked so hard during rehearsals and gave excellent performances at each concert over the four nights 15th to 18th December.

GAVIN COLWELL from Mr. Gearty's class who took part in the recent production of Finian's Rainbow by the E.S.B. Musical and Dramatic Society. Gavin was chosen from a large number of pupils at the Brendan Smith Academy – no mean achievement.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: On Saturday 31st January the Orchard Players are bringing their pantomime 'Red Riding Hood' to the Junior School at 3 p.m. Another fourth class pupil, Lisa Kelly, plays the title role, while her mother Noelene is the Principal Boy. More details later.

1987 KNOCKLYON SWIMMING

Every Monday in Terenure College Swimming Pool at 7.30 p.m. to 8.15 p.m. Next session begins Jan. 5th until April 13th. That's 15 weeks and a Family Ticket costs £21 – or pay nightly – £1 per adult; 80p per teenager and 50p per child. SO JOIN THE SWIM!

There are the usual ones of course, a pint of custard with a glass of brandy in it, or a half-pound of butter creamed with a half-pound of icing sugar with some brandy or whiskey in it, some fresh cream or a lovely new exclusive Knocklyon creation made from eggs, whiskey, sugar and cream – rich, expensive, calorific but beautiful. It can be made in advance if you wish but if a short break after the turkey is in order, the sauce tastes absolutely beautiful when made fresh.

Serves 4 to 6.

4 egg yolks	3 oz. Irish Mist or Irish Whiskey
5 oz. sugar	1 oz. water
squeeze of lemon	2 spoons of whipped cream

Put all the ingredients, except the cream, in a round bottomed pyrex, steel or delph bowl that can take some heat and beat well. Place on top of a pot of simmering water and WHISK vigorously over the heat for about 10 minutes or until thick, rich and creamy. When ready remove from heat, whisk for a few more minutes until slightly cool, fold in whipped cream and serve immediately.

To my faithful and tolerant readers I would like to wish you all a happy and holy Christmas.

Paddy the Chef

112th DUBLIN SCOUT UNIT KNOCKLYON NOVEMBER DRAW WINNERS

£100 Geoghegan, Knocklyon Road
 £ 50 Lenehan, 47, Cremorne
 £ 25 Collins, 28, Delaford Lawn

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

We would like to thank all those who contributed so generously to the Toy Collection on December 7 and our Annual Christmas Collection on December 14. Your contributions are very much appreciated. May we take this opportunity to wish you a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

NEW PARISHIONERS

Gillian Mary Huet,	61, Scholarstown Rd.
Laura Jane Maunsell,	52, Coolamber Pk.
John Bernard Plunkett Reynolds	85, Ashton Ave.
Daniel Kieran Shun,	19, Coolamber Court
Caoimhe Bridge Erna Schroter,	73 Glenvara Pk.

CHRISTMAS DISCO

Enjoy the Christmas atmosphere at the Knocklyon Youth Club Disco on SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20th in the Junior School.

Juniors (10 – 13)	7.30 – 9.15	Adm. 50p
Seniors (14 up)	9.30 – 11.30	Adm. £1.00

All parishioners welcome.

GIFTS WITH CHRISTMAS IN MIND . . .

Then call to our Church Shop and see the wide variety of gifts available. The prices are right and do just look in our display cabinet and see what good value we offer. Good selection of Christmas Cards also in stock. The shop is open after all Masses on Sundays and during the week.

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Items and advertisements for inclusion in the January issue should be handed into the Presbytery by Monday 19th January. The newsletter will be circulated from 29th January. Enquiries re advertising to Pat at 947493 or telephone the Presbytery at 941204. Don't forget our new personal ads section. Our rates are very reasonable. Any news for our Hotlyon? Just drop a note into the Presbytery marked Newsletter Hotlyon.

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