

# Lecture on the Parish Priests of bloudalkin

by Con Murphy.

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For the bloudalkin Historical Society.

Under agreement in 1615

Lucan, Acheris, Kilbride, Kilmahuddrick, Esker, Palmerstown, Ballyfermot, bloudalkin & Drinnagh were formed into one Parish known as bloudalkin & Lucan Parish.

A Reference in the Public Records office states quote "According to Parliamentary Paper the Roman Catholic church had in 1731 a chapel in bloudalkin Village.

## II

The Parish Church of the Immaculate Conception, Clondalkin, was opened in 1862, the Presentation Convent having been built on the same site in 1857.

Prior to 1862 the Parish Church was located at "St. Kevin's" where the Monastery Shopping Centre now stands (1991).

Prior to the above location, the Parish Church was situated where St. Killians Park Housing Estate now stands.

In the 1920's when as a boy I used to play in the Chapel Field, folklore told us that there were the remains of a church there and that there was a massacre there in former years. We knew of the few remains above ground but also there were limestone markers which to us boys indicated that there must have been a burial place there. The markers were not tombstones as such as there were no inscriptions or indications that they were tombstones. In 1962 when the County Council were excavating for the housing estate, the foundations of the Church were discovered as can be seen on the

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map. Also found these were human remains some outside the bluish walls where the markers were but also in the church itself. It is therefore feasible that this massacre occurred and that what our ancestors handed down by mouth was true.

I have not been able to locate any written account of this event but the following is recorded

#### 1641 Rebellion

blondallin was held by the insurgents in 1641. In 1642 the village was burned by a troop of horse sent from Dublin most of the Castles and houses were destroyed including Deansrath Castle.

In the Down Survey of 1657 it was stated that only a stump of a Castle was left with a few Thatched Houses and a Round Tower and at Nailstown only the Ruins of a Castle & 3 or 4 cottages remained

It is feasible that at this time the Church at St Killiens Park was destroyed and burial place was hurriedly marked by these limestone markers.

IV

1697 Rev Oliver Doyle who studied in Salamanca was ordained in 1687. He received a Prebendary of Kilmactadway in 1688. He was residing at Esker 1697 and was officiating in blondalkin, Lucan, Esker, Palmerstown, Ballyfermot & Bhopelozod. In 1704 he was living at Esker aged 39 years. He was registered as P.P. of Castleknock & Treasurer of the Dublin Chapter in 1707. He died in 1720

Rev. Richard Fox was described as P.P. of blondalkin in 1729 & in 1704 he was living at Beggars Bush <sup>age 34</sup>. He was ordained in 1694 by Dr. Whelan Bishop of Ossory. He was registered as P.P. of Esker and a Prebendary of Clonmelton in 1710. He was PP from 1720 - 1744. I believe that the reference to Beggars Bush is wrong and that he took over from Rev Oliver Doyle in 1704 and lived a Balgaddy Bush. (near Esker.)

## V

1744 - 1778 Rev. Christopher Coleman was Parish Priest of bloudalkin.

During this time Lucan, Kilbride, Kilmehadrick Esker, Palmerstown, Ballyfermot, Crumlin and bloudalkin formed one Parish known as bloudalkin/Lucan.

FR Coleman died in his 85<sup>th</sup> year and is interred in St John's cemetery bloudalkin.

1778/81 Rev Thomas Maguire was PP of bloudalkin/Crumlin. In 1800 he was transferred to St James Parish on the death of FR Denis Doyle PP. Crumlin was then reunited with Rathfarnham and the Boundries of bloudalkin - Lucan - Palmerstown were set in their position in 1800

From 1781 - 1800 Palmerstown & Lucan became a Parish apart from bloudalkin - Crumlin

## VI

1798 - 1837 Rev John Dunn

From 1798 to 1800 Rev John Dunn was P.P. of Lucan - Palmerstown. When in 1800 the two were united again to Clonsilla he became P.P. of Clonsilla - Lucan - Palmerstown. He was Parish Priest until 1837 when he died aged 76 years in the 50<sup>th</sup> year of his priesthood. For 16 years he was Rector of the Irish College Lisbon. He was buried in the cemetery of the Carmelite Brothers at Monastery Road, Clonsilla.

Rev Barnaby Mullen

This Priest is buried in St. John's Cemetery Clonsilla. He died in 1812. at the age of 35 years. The inscription over his grave states that he was P.P. of Clonsilla. The only reference I can find ~~is~~ is that he was administrator of Lucan in 1805. As such he could have been called a P.P.

## VII

During Father Dunn's tenure the sisters of the Carmelite Order opened a Convent at Orchard House (now Area Cronan) in August 29<sup>th</sup> 1824. The two sisters arrived in blondalkin accompanied by the Provincial and Fr Maher O.D.C. Confessor at St Joseph's Monastery blondalkin. A third nun from New Ross joined them but they left in 1827 to found a new convent in Fishhouse since the house in blondalkin proved damp and insanitary.

I believe that the convent was situated in the building behind the present House as it was only built in 1835.

## VIII

1837 to 1855

Rev Matthias Kelly was appointed Parish Priest of bloudalkin (Lucan & Palmerstown) in 1837 having been curate in hiffey street from 1826-1831 and before that he served in Fingal Parish for 6 months. From 1831 to 1837 he was attached to St James Parish.

He was replaced as P.P. of bloudalkin in 1855 by Father Moore and he died in 1856.

1855 - 1893Rev. John Moore.

In 1844 Rev John Moore was appointed Curate of Blondalkin which included Lucan and Palmerstown. He was a native of Carlow.

In 1855 he became Parish Priest replacing Father Kelly.

He was a native of Co Carlow and on his appointment as Parish Priest he bought 20 acres of land for £300 plus a yearly rent of £25 from a Mr. Hegarty. The acreage bought included the site of the present Church & Convent and the site of Colaiste Bride and the situation of "St Cecilia's" the residence of the present P.P. and the adjoining two curates Residences.

The Convent was ~~built~~<sup>opened</sup> in 1857 by the Presentation Sisters from Carlow on the invitation of Fr. Moore.

The Convent was built by a legacy of £2000-00 left, for the purpose of education of children, by Mrs Calbeck who resided at Moyk Park and who is buried a Mount St Josephs Monastery Cemetery together with her daughter. who at a earlier date had a school for blondalkin children a Diamond House blondalkin,

The nuns arrived and took over the Convent Building

on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1857.

The Foundation Stone of the Parish Church was laid & blessed by Archbishop Cullen, later Cardinal, on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1857 and was consecrated by him in August 1862.

It will be noted how far-seeing Fr. Moore was in buying the ~~originally~~ original property for the Parish when we see the subsequent future development of the educational facilities under the stewardship of the Presentation Sisters.

When the Church was opened the Sisters presented the Parish Priest with a priceless cope & vestments which were made by the Sister in the Community. They also presented him with all the sacred vessels and other artifacts they had received for the Convent since the Convent was now attached to the Church by ~~adjoining~~ adjoining the Convent block to the Church Sanctuary and the Sisters were enabled to join in all Church Ceremonies thus eliminating the need for a Chaplain. The sisters also undertook to dress the Altars and look after the vestry and vestments.

Fr. Moore also received many furnishings for

for the Church from parishioners and friends. A Miss Shields who resided at the Convent for some time presented a Mowstrance and ciborium and seating & stained glass windows were presented by parishioners.

On the occasion of ~~His~~ <sup>His</sup> Golden Jubilee in 1890 the Parishioners presented him with a ~~gold~~ Golden chalice and marked the occasion with a new entrance gate and archway suitably inscribed on the New Road entrance to the Church.

He died in 1893, having been ill for a year before, on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

During this time the Presentation Sisters opened a Convent in Lucan in 1867. They also took over the Warrenmount Convent & School from the Carmelite Order in 1892. They also sent Sisters to complement the Communities House in San Francisco.

It should be noted that the Nuns founded an Industrial School for orphan Boys in 1872 and housed them in a wooden Building situated opposite the Old Girls School. In 1874 the School was closed and the Boys transferred to the Christian Brothers Astane School.

## VII

Before continuing I would wish to state that the Residence of the P/Priests Fr Moore and Fr Baxter was the House now occupied by the Massey Funeral Home beside the Black Lion Inn. This pertained until the turn of the century when the site of the Previous Parish Church was cleared and "St. Kevin's" was built, the subsequent Parish Priests up to Mons O'Regan Resided at St. Kevin's.

1893-1930 Rev. James Baxter.

Fr Baxter - a native of Dublin was ordained at [blank] He came as curate to Fr Moore and took over as Parish Priest in 1893. Blundellin/Lucan/Palmroster was under his care. Blundellin itself stretched from Ring Street Inchiore to Baldonnel cross - to 12<sup>th</sup> Lock - to Balgaddy - to Cherry Orchard - to Gallowstown (7<sup>th</sup> Lock).

### XIII

He travelled by Brome - a one horse carriage - In later life he went to the Lucan Spa each Summer to partake of the Spa Baths. As a young boy I had the privilege of seeing his Sunday Masses which he celebrated in his House since he was unable to attend the church due to fracturing his hip.

When Blundalhin <sup>Carnegie</sup> Organ Library was opened he became its first chairman in 1911 and there is a chair in the library denoting that fact.

During his stewardship in Blundalhin he became a canon, and afterwards an Archdeacon and Vicar General of the Diocese. In 1923 to celebrate his Golden Jubilee the ~~Perishians~~ <sup>he was</sup> presented with a golden Chalice. He died in his sleep in 1930.

It should be remembered that in a period of 75 years Blundalhin had but two Parish Priests.

1930 - 1931 Fr Edward Morrissey.

I have just said that blundalkin had two Parish Priests in 75 years. Sadly our next Parish Priest was only with use for only a little over one year. Fr. Morrissey a native of Limerick replace Archdeacon Baxter in 1930 but died suddenly in 1931 and is buried in the Convent cemetery at his own request.

1931 - 1953 Fr Patrick Ryan

Fr Patrick Ryan who had been curate at St Audeons High Street Dublin came as Parish Priest of Blundalkin in 1931.

His first duties was the organising of the Parish for the Eucharistic Congress in 1932.

The 1930's heralded the beginning of a new era in the Parish. The Bluebell Area was ceded to the Inchicore Parish in 1933 a new school was built at Robinhood

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in 1934. This school catered for the children of Bluebell, Canac Park, & Fox a geese from infant age up to 4<sup>th</sup> class when they transferred to blondalkin schools. Later when Bluebell was instituted a Parish the Clondalkin Parish Boundary terminated at Ballymount Road.

During the 40's Fr. Ryan inaugurated a weekly house to house collection in the blondalkin area of the Parish to provide fund for a new church at Palmerstown. This church was opened in the early 1950's and when opened had only a debt of £2000-00. During his time in blondalkin Fr. Ryan became a Canon and later an Archdeacon and Vicar Forane of the Dublin Diocese.

The Parish church was redecorated ~~just~~ during his time & the church organ and the Stations of the Cross were renovated. The church grounds were terraced for the first time.

## XVI

The first Phase of the new Scoil Muire was completed and opened in 1950, the site for this school was bought and was known in the neighbourhood as the "Hatchet Field"

As a matter of interest I wish to record that Archdeacon Ryan gave permission to the writer of this article to found a Troop of the Catholic Boy Scouts in the Parish in 1940

In 1990 we celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> year in scouting and our Scout Hall was built on a piece of the land where the old Church was situated in Watery Lane now St-Killians Park.

In 1946 the Archdeacon welcomed the Little Sisters of the Assumption when they opened their Convent & Centre at the old St. Josephs Monastery. They remained until 1981 when they moved to open a centre a Rowlagh—neilstown area which was developing as a large Housing estate.

Archdeacon Ryan died in 1953 and was interred at Glesnevin Cemetery.

1953 - 1965 Dr. Edward O'Brien

In 1953 after Archbishop Ryan's death the Parish was divided again.

Lucan was made a parish under Fr Edmund Brennan

Ballyfermot became a parish under Fr Troy <sup>which</sup> ~~and~~ included Port of Blundalkin Parish situated around Gallowstown & the 4th Lock area.

Palmerstown was united with Chapelizod.

Dr Edward O'Brien came as P.P. to the smaller Parish of Blundalkin. He was a Professor of Canon Law at St Patrick's College Maynooth a position which he held together with Blundalkin Parish.

Dr O'Brien was a native of Fethard Co Tipperary.

During his time the first phase of St Joseph Boys School was built in 1961.

The second phase of Scoil Mhuire was also

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completed and opened in 1959.

The Marist Brothers established their college at Moyle Park in 1957. In 1965 Dr O'Brien became P.P. of Anghrim Street Parish and chaplain to President Connolly De Valera.

He died in \_\_\_\_\_ and was buried in Maynooth College at his request.

### Mons. O'Regan 1965 - 1971

During the 1950's and 1960's blundallin was expanding at a phenomenal rate as regards housing and many new estates were been built.

Mons O'Regan replaced Dr O'Brien as Parish Priest. He had been Chancellor of the Diocese in Archbishop's House and before that he was Head Chaplain in the Army.

A massive building programme was started. The Old P.P.'s Residence at St Kevin's was converted to a youth centre. It was afterwards sold and became the Monastery shopping centre.

Two Houses for the Parish Curates were built in the garden of St. Cecilia's where the curate of the time resided.

~~St. Cecilia's~~ St. Cecilia's itself had been built at the beginning of the 1900's by the parishioners. The Monsignor came to reside at St. Columbas New Road.

In 1968/69 two new schools - Scoil Ide and Scoil Aine were built on the new road with access to the Convent.

The old girls school was converted as a Secondary School for Girls.

The new Bolaisle Bride for girls was built and opened in 1970 & Blessed by Archbishop McQuaid.

This huge development programme had to be financed and in 1965 a Planned Giving Campaign was launched for the Parish.

In 1971 was changed to Rathgar as P.P. and was created Vicar General of the Diocese.

1971-1981 FR Denis Daly.

FR Denis Daly was born on 8th Dec 1903 in Fermoy Co. Cork. He was educated at Fermoy National school and Blackrock College Dublin. He was ordained in Maynooth College on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1930 having studied in Holy Cross College Blouffe and St Patricks College Maynooth.

He served as curate in Anklaw, Belbridge, North William Street and the Pro. Cathedral Dublin. He was appointed P.P. of Finglas West in 1962 and left there in 1971 to be P.P. of Bloualkin. In 1977 Bawnogue was made a Parish and Neilstown was made a Parish in 1979. These Parishes were later divided again. Deaneath from Bawnogue and Balgaddy from Neilstown Pope John Paul II Blessed the foundation stone of Neilstown Church in 1979.

In 1966 a 4 Room extension was added to St Josephs Boys School and in 1979 an extension was added to ~~St~~ Colaiiste Bride.

The Church & school at Bloumussis was

built in 1987 and blessed by Archbishop <sup>Beament</sup> Ryan who was a native of the Parish. Blouburnis is a chapel of ease to bloudallin

Fr Denis Daly retired in 1981 but remained on in the Parish until his death in 1987. He is buried in Gleonevin cemetery.

### Rev Martin Ryan 1981 to the Present.

Fr Martin Ryan is a native of Co. Tipperary and was educated at Rockwell College, Bloulife and Maynooth. He was ordained on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1951.

His first appointment was as chaplain to Presentation College Bray for a period of one year. His chaplaincy to Beament Hospital of one years duration was the first Resident Chaplaincy at that Hospital. He was then transferred to be curate at Kilmacud in Stillorgan Parish where he served for eight years. His next appointment ~~was as~~ was as curate for eleven years to Sandyford Parish. He was Parish Priest of Beament for eight years

before coming to Blandalkin as P.P. in 1981.

Since his appointment to Blandalkin Shusleen Church was built and became a Parish in 1990 and is been served by the Sacred Heart Fathers, Fr. Broddy being the first Parish Priest.

The New St Josephs Boys school was opened in 1984 and due to housing development a Woodford/Yellowmeadows/Knockmitten ~~on~~ a new church was built and opened in August 1989 at Knockmitten.

At this point in time (1991) it would appear that the Parish Development has been completed.

Maybe we should realize what we owe our clergy in their spiritual work for us and what they have done thro the last three centuries for the educational development of our Parish.