

St. Peter and Paul's Church, Ballymacward.

(Listen to Mass at 101.4 fm)

PARISH WEBSITE: ballymacwardgurteenparish.com

To contact Fr. Raymond Sweeney Ph: (Landline) 090 9687614. or (M) 086 3868169

PARISH EMAIL ADDRESS . ballymacwardparish@eircom.net

- Saturday 20th. **Vigil Mass at 7pm. FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT.**
Mary Byrnes, Liscuib (1st. Anniv)
Mary Ryan, Ballinasloe (Nee Kenny, Hampstead) (3rd. Anniv)
Lena Hartnett, Carrahulla (10th. Anniv)
Gerry O'Dowd (Anniv)
John, Winifred, and Sean Nutley, Gurtyryan (Anniv) and the deceased members of the Nutley family.
- Monday 22nd. **Mass at 9am.**
- Tuesday 23rd. **Mass at 9am.**
- Wednesday 24th. **Mass at 9am.** Special Intention.
- Thursday 25th. **Mass at 9am.**
- Friday 26th. **Mass at 9am.**
- Friday 26th. **Mass at 7pm.** Chrissie and John Hogan, Ashfield (Anniv)
Christy Lyons, Castleblakney (Anniv)
- Saturday 27th. **Vigil Mass at 7pm. SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT.**
Paddy Grodan, Liscune (Months Mind)
Gerry and Eileen Murray, Tullamore (Recently deceased)
(Gerry late of Highpark)
Martin Crehan, Mounthazel (6th. Anniv)
Johnny, Theresa and Cian Byrnes, Esker (Anniv) and the deceased members of the Byrnes family.

R.I.P.: Your prayers are requested for Mairead Hogan, Annagh, and also for Mrs. Margaret Farquharson, Canada (Nee Neill, Annagh) Sister of Bridgie Kenny, and Kitty Carr who died in the past week.

NOTE: During Lent there will be morning Mass at 09.00am Mon – Fri in Ballymacward Church, these Masses will be available on both the Parish Radio, and on the Parish Website. Trocaire boxes are available at the church entrances, please take one home. They will be taken up at Easter.

KEEPING CONNECTED:

Why not visit Clonfert Diocese Facebook Page or follow on Clonfert Diocese Twitter.

COLLECTIONS; No count was done in the past week, figures for monies received will be published later in the month.

Fr. Michael Griffin Memorial Church, Gurteen.

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- Sunday 21st. Mass at **11am**. **FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT.**
Mick and Eddie Bodkin, Corskeagh (24th. Anniv)
Willie and Maria Raftery, Killuane (27th. and 33rd. Anniv)
- Friday 26th. Mass at **8pm**. **Thomas (Bob) Griffen (Months Mind)**
- Sunday 28th. Mass at **11am**. **SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT.**
Mass for the people of the Parish.

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PADRAIG PEARSES GAA CLUB. *RESULTS OF THE LOTTO DRAW WHICH TOOK PLACE ON MONDAY 18th. FEBRUARY. WINNING No.'s 2,3,19,30- No Winner. & 4 MATCH 3s. C. HOGAN, F. FLANNERY, M. FLANNERY, & D. McGANN. NEXT WEEK'S DRAW TAKES PLACE ON MONDAY NIGHT 22nd. FEBRUARY FOR A JACKPOT OF €11,200 IN THE CLUBHOUSE.* *Why not play for 2021, all you need do is log on to <https://smartlotto.ie/padraig-pearse-gaa> all details and instructions are there.*

Covid-19 Vaccination Programme

The Irish bishops have encouraged Catholics to support the Covid-19 vaccination programme, “not only for their own good, but for the protection of life and the health of those who are vulnerable and for the common good of humanity.” (Irish Bishops) As vaccination is a medical issue, it is important that people discuss it with their own GP. For further information on the Church’s position with regard to vaccines, see <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2020/12/09/bishops-conference-statement-welcoming-vaccines-for-the-common-good/>

Year of St Joseph 2021

Pope Francis has declared 2021 a special year to meditate on the figure and message of St Joseph, Husband of Mary and Patron of the Universal Church. The Holy Father has done so against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, which, he says, has helped us see more clearly the importance of “ordinary” people who, though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day. In this, they resemble Saint Joseph, “the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence,” who nonetheless played “an incomparable role in the history of salvation.” (*Pope Francis*)

Pope Francis' message for Lent 2021.

In his message for Lent 2021, Pope Francis calls on the faithful to “renew our faith, draw from the living waters of hope, and receive with open hearts the love of God.” The Pope says, “This Lenten journey... is even now luminated by the light of the resurrection, which inspires the thoughts, attitudes and decisions of the followers of Jesus.” He goes on to say that the journey of conversion, through fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, “makes it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope, and effective charity.” “Accepting and living the truth revealed in Christ means, first of all, opening our hearts to God’s word.” Through fasting, “experienced as a form of self-denial,” we are able “to rediscover God’s gift and recognize that, created in His image and likeness, we find our fulfilment in Him.” Fasting, too, by helping us recognize our own poverty, helps us to love both God and neighbour. “Lent is a time for believing,” the Pope says, “for welcoming God into our lives and allowing Him to ‘make His dwelling’ in us.”

“To experience Lent with love,” says Pope Francis, “means caring for those who suffer or feel abandoned because of the Covid-19 pandemic.” He invites us to “speak words of reassurance, and help others to realize that God loves them as sons and daughters.” After reminding us that “every moment of our lives is a time for believing, hoping, and loving,”

Pope Francis concludes by saying: "The call to experience Lent as a journey of conversion, prayer and sharing of our goods, helps us – as communities and as individuals – to revive the faith that comes from the living Christ, the hope inspired by the breath of the Holy Spirit and the love flowing from the merciful heart of the Father."

Important Notice

An Post – Nursing/Care Homes – Freepost - Recognising the increased restrictions in nursing homes across the country and to bring a little joy, An Post will ensure free delivery of all card and letter mail posted to and from residents of Nursing and Care homes in the State until March 31st 2021. By writing FREEPOST where the stamp would normally be affixed, An Post will carry cards, letters large envelopes and packets weighing up to 2KG without a postage stamp. An Post customers can send these items through the Post Office network and post boxes across Ireland.

Fasting, Prayer and Giving to the Poor

Traditionally, fasting, praying and giving to the poor are considered as important tools to help us on our Lenten Pilgrimage of renewal. Fasting is the reduction of one's intake of food or the giving up of something we would normally do. It reminds us that at times we must sacrifice ourselves in order to put God and others first in life. Linked to fasting is the idea of abstinence, which is the abstaining from meat. In Ireland, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are traditionally days of fast and abstinence. Nowadays, some people take on things for Lent. They spend more time in prayer, more time caring for others or giving to the poor. Prayer deepens our relationship with God while giving to the poor reminds us that to love and care for others, especially those most in need, is a central part of being a Christian.

Renewing Our Commitment to Promoting the Dignity of Human Life

Loving Father!

You are the source of all that is:

our beginning and our end.

Pour out your Spirit upon us.

Form in us the mind of Christ.

Give us a greater appreciation for the precious gift of life.

Renew in us a commitment to building a community where every human life is welcomed and valued

from the moment of conception

to the moment of natural death.

Draw near to those who are sick or dying.

Help those who love them and care for them.

Bless us now and at the hour of our death. Amen

Our Lady of Clonfert! Pray for us!

St. Brendan's Education Centre. Abbey St., Loughrea: Infection, Prevention and Control QQI module beginning on 25th February at 9.30 to 12.30. If Level 5 restrictions are still in place this class will be delivered online. Please email freda.murphy@gretb.ie if interested.