

Sunday 21st November 2021

Parish Newsletter

Today Sunday 21st November at 3pm, the Priest's of St Mary's Parish will lead prayers for the dead in Mount St Lawrence Cemetery. All are welcome to attend.

Reflection: We end the Church Year, with all of its worries and anxieties, not in fear but with boundless hope. Christ is Risen and now reigns as the true King. That's how we finish the year.....but next week we begin again the season of Advent, when that King once more becomes a tiny, helpless, homeless child, born in poverty but surrounded by love, and once again begins a journey with each one of us. If we can but open our hearts and truly hear what he says to us, he will lead us through the towns and villages he visited, once more healing and forgiving, feeding the hungry and curing the sick. He will bring us, once again in 2022, through the pain, suffering and terrible injustice of the Cross to Easter Sunday, when once more he will Rise from the dead, taking his place again with God, as Christ the King. Endings and beginnings.....but the same Kingdom and the same Jesus, Risen from the dead, Christ the King. Let's pray that through Advent and into 2022 we may all witness to the joy, peace, gentleness and compassion of the Gospel, so that the prayer of Jesus himself, that "thy Kingdom come", may be realised through our words and actions.



Church Notices

November Holy Souls insert's are available at the back of the Cathedral. These can be filled in with the names of your deceased loved ones, put in the envelope marked Holy Souls and left in the boxes provided. Mass will be offered for all those listed during the month of November.

Church Gift Shop: Open Monday - Saturday from 10.30am to 12.30pm



Mass Times: **Monday - Friday** 10am & 5.45pm, **Saturday** 10am & 6pm (vigil),
Sunday 8am, 10.30am, 12 noon & 7pm.

Confessions: Take place each Saturday after 10am Mass.

Baptisms: Can be booked through the Parish Office 061 414624 or email

admin@stjohnscathedrallimerick.com

Copy of baby's birth certificate required when booking.

Split the Pot: Congratulations to *Lily Sheehan* the winner of last weekend's draw (Sun 14th Nov)
Draw envelopes are available at the back of the church.



We are always grateful for your donations which go towards the upkeep of The Cathedral.
Listed are the various ways to donate:

1. Baskets at exit door.
2. Weekly Envelope collection.
3. Tap to Donate machines at exit door.
4. Online through our website www.stjohnscathedrallimerick.com tap the donate key.



Parish History - St John's Cathedral Limerick Part 17 The Old Order Changeth yielding place to the new

We have seen throughout this fascinating story of the construction of Limerick's newest cathedral that each bishop brought new and different talents to bear. Bishop Ryan's bishopric had the energy and foresight to begin the project and have the cathedral building built. Through his energy and that of his team of priests, administrators and curates the dream became a reality. Bishop Butler put the finishing touches to the building after ascending to See of Limerick and his legacy undoubtedly will be as the bishop who oversaw the construction of the tower with all of the problems associated with that mammoth task. His final act in relation to St Johns before going to his eternal reward was to purchase the bell for the cathedral.

We are told that in late 1883 there was a "Grand Exhibition" in Cork at which John Murphy of the Irish Bell Foundry and Copper Works of Thomas Street in Dublin put on show a "splendid bell" weighing over 1.4 Tonnes with a tone that was described as being "full and harmonious". Bishop Butler immediately purchased the bell for St John's and arranged to have it transported to Limerick by canal barge for installation in the tower in time for Christmas of that year. Once again we can picture the scene as the barge worked its way down the Shannon past Plassey House and the splendour of its estate and along the towpaths on either side of the river that we now use for recreation, all the while with the magnificent horses straining to pull the barge and its cargo safely into the depot at the end of Lelia Street.

On its arrival there it would probably be the biggest piece of cargo seen there for quite a while, though it is hard for us now to realise just how crucial to the infrastructure of the country the canal system was in those days before motorised transport. They were, in effect, the motorways of their day with Guinness' brewery their biggest user.

Once the bell had arrived it was transported a couple of hundred metres from the terminus to the Cathedral where the job of hoisting it into place was overseen once again by Maurice Hennessy. Once this was done the internal floors and spiral staircase in the Tower could be finished out with all building and joinery work probably finished in the early part of 1884. Bishop Butler was laid to rest in the cathedral after his death in 1886.

The twenty-ninth of June 1886 saw the installation of Edward Thomas O'Dwyer as bishop of Limerick. A native of Holycross Co Tipperary his tenure of bishop is certainly remembered for his rebuke of General Maxwell after the execution of the 1916 leaders, which was actually one of his last acts as bishop before his death in 1917, but it was during his oversight of the diocese that the consecration of the cathedral took place.

We are told in John Fleming's book that much restoration work needed to be conducted on the cathedral in advance of the consecration, and judging from the descriptions given of the then over 30 year old building, it was in a poor state. Without access to the journals of JJ Callaghan of Dublin, the architect appointed to oversee the work it is difficult to fully appreciate where the problems emanated from, but it is known that from early on the roof with its tremendous weight of over 100 tons of slate caused structural difficulties for the supporting walls. It was for this reason that the roof was replaced in the 1950's with copper weighing a quarter of the original covering. We are told that the interior presented a "worn-out decaying appearance"

with the original mural and paint decoration all but faded and disappeared. The floors too up that time were simple flagged stone and in wet and damp weather they were greasy and cold. A major refurbishment was undertaken by builders Doolin's of Dublin and Ryan's of Limerick. The floors were replaced with bright tile, the church painted by Limerick firm Hodkinson's, and the sanctuary area was raised three feet with the high altar extended and moved back closer to the back wall. A new bishop's throne and deacons chairs made from Riga Oak were commissioned as well as canons stalls and in a major departure from standard whitewash the sanctuary walls were lined with coloured marble from quarries in Galway, Cork and Garryowen. After refurbishment of the confessionals and seats and repair works to the walls and roof the cathedral was ready for its next big event, the Consecration of the building. George Lee drombanna@gmail.com