

**Sunday 14th November 2021**

**Parish Newsletter**

Today Sunday 14th November at 3pm, the Priest of St Patrick's Parish will lead prayers for the dead in Mount St Lawrence Cemetery. All are welcome to attend.

*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 box's provided. Mass will be offered for all the names deceased during the month of November.*



**Reflection:** We need to realize and acknowledge our own mortality! This is not being maudlin, it is facing reality. While the end of the world may or not take place in our lifetime, our personal end surely will. Pope John XXIII said it so well: "I keep my bags packed." That implies: first, we know we will be going on a trip. Second, we do not know our departure time. The simple and clear spiritual implication is that we need to express our spiritual readiness by living our Catholic-Christian life all the time. Jesus' words are meant to cause us to be watchful in an ongoing way. Our Father loves us with an everlasting love; today's readings invite us to plug our "rechargeable power pack" of spirit into our source, Jesus' transforming love. An image of his transforming love is captured in the life of the caterpillar. The caterpillar inexorably spins its cocoon and later emerges as a butterfly. If we are to become the changed persons that the Lord calls us to become, we must allow ourselves to be transformed. Eucharist is his greatest gift of transportation to him - at least once a week. We need to let his presence transform our presence. That is grace.

### ***Community Notices:***

**Garryowen CDP has vacancies in the following activities: Contact John at 061 310690.**



- Woodwork Mondays 2.30 - 4.30
- IT for Beginners Friday 11.00 - 1.00
- Art for All Levels and Ages Thursdays 3.15 - 5.15



### **Did you work in a Limerick factory in the 1960's, 1970's or 1980's?**

The GAFF want to talk to retired factory workers from Ferenka, Krups, Wang, Danus, Halpin's Tea or any of the many other industries based in #Limerick about your memories of that time.

Working with artist, Helena Enright, #AudioCharged will see young people in the community recording stories from retired factory workers in Limerick. If you have a story to tell about life on the factory floor, please get in touch. **Email:** [midwestcreativecommunities@gmail.com](mailto:midwestcreativecommunities@gmail.com) Or **Call:** 083-0139541



 **diocese of limerick**  
our catholic community

**Lay Pastoral Ministry  
Programme  
Information Evenings**

**Mon 15 Nov Rathkeale House Hotel 7.30 - 9.00pm**  
**Tues 16 Nov Limerick Diocesan Centre 7.30 - 9.00pm**  
**Thurs 18 Nov on Zoom 7.30 - 9.00pm**

**Register at:**  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PastMinInfoEve>

## Church Notices

**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](mailto:admin@stjohnscathedrallimerick.com)  
Copy of baby's birth certificate required when booking.

**Split the Pot:** Congratulations to *Mary Ryan* the winner of last weekend's draw (Sun 7<sup>th</sup> Nov)  
Draw envelopes are available at the back of the church. All proceeds go towards maintenance of the Cathedral. We are very grateful for your support.



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

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### Parish History - St John's Cathedral Limerick Part 16 .....Rebuilding, Tragedy, and Completion

We can only speculate the events that occurred around the collapse of the tower must have been the talk of the city. As with hurricanes and storm events that we experience today, the winds and rain abated quickly and this allowed the clean-up and assessment to happen. It's not recorded anywhere but there must have been a need for a full structural review of the tower in the wake of the damage with a decision being ultimately made that any attempt at repair would be held over until the spring of the following year 1883. What we do know is that a decision was made quite quickly that the cross that had been placed on the tower would not be reused. We can also surmise that a cross of that size and weight must have suffered some damage in a fall from that height. We do know for certain, however, that it was repaired and kept as it now forms the grave marker for the Bethell family plot in Mount Saint Lawrence Cemetery and it commemorates, amongst other family members, James Bethell who was the man who originally crafted the cross in Jones' Lane in Watergate in the shadow of the tower. It is interesting to note when you visit that grave that it has a clear view of the Spire which its impressive marker crowned for a mere 100 hours during those dramatic few days.

Reconstruction began in March of 1883 and in order to build in the "weather window" that summer provided and to avoid a repeat of the freak nature of the previous years' accident, a deadline of the feast of the Assumption, fifteenth August was put on the work.

Once again the scaffolding was erected through the oval windows and the stone procured cut and raised to the top of the tower. From what we can gather quite a few of the workmen that worked at height on this occasion were from the north of England and particularly from an area around Newcastle on Tyne. One of those men was William Stoker who was the superintendent of the work, and who on Saturday night July 14<sup>th</sup> at about 7.20 pm was engaged in taking down the scaffolding with a colleague, Adam Storey. They were working together about a metre apart when while cutting a small batten a piece of the timber got stuck.

William Stoker set about freeing it with another beam of timber when that piece gave way. Adam Storey fell on his chest but managed to recover but to his horror, his colleague fell to the ground. Amazingly the inquest was told by Dr John Holmes of Barrington's Hospital that the unfortunate man was still alive for a short while but had died before getting to the hospital.

William Stoker was 36 years old, five feet eleven inches tall, unmarried and came from Conssett in County Durham. He had been working in Limerick for approximately five months at the time of his death.

While it is believed that this was the only death recorded in the building of the cathedral there is a little confusion as the Cork Examiner recorded that a man named William Travers, a sculptor, was killed while placing a statue of one of the evangelists on a corbel about sixty feet up. What puts this report in doubt is that there is no recorded inquest (which would have been a legal requirement in the circumstances) and the date of his accident and death is given as exactly the same date as the death of Mr. Stoker. He is also mentioned as being English. The balance of probability suggests that this article was a misreporting of the original incident, however as we mentioned in a previous piece the statues of the evangelists though quite clearly designed and included in Maurice Hennessy's plans were never put in place.

Despite this tragedy, work was completed on time and by the fifteenth August, James Bethell's cross was once again the highest point of a magnificent structure which had taken twenty-seven years three months, and fifteen days to complete, and the skyline of our ancient city was changed and enhanced forever. George Lee