

Parish of Hannahstown - St Joseph's & St Peter's
West Belfast Pastoral Community
17th March 2019 – Second Sunday of Lent

Saint Patrick

The long years as a lonely shepherd on Irish hills, and later his prayerful reflections on the roles of priest and bishop, seem to have opened Patrick's heart and mind to a sense of God's amazing mercy. Meditating on the passion, death and resurrection of Christ must have helped him appreciate that God was not only for him but with him. Without that life-changing perspective on life, his later actions would not make sense.

Patrick would have seen that Jesus could so easily have escaped into the wilderness behind the garden of Gethsemane and run away from the terrible cruelty that lay ahead for him. He could also have used his Divine power to protect himself from his enemies. Instead, he freely choose to show he would never reject people, even when those same people ignored, insulted, rejected, abandoned or even murdered him. Such giving of himself to, with and for people must have inspired and strengthened Patrick to forgive the treatment the Irish people gave to him in his youth. It would also have inspired Patrick when he had to face misunderstanding, rejection and hardship from the people who were not willing to accept his message.

When we reflect on some of the most difficult situations in our own lives, we often see that God may have been using them to open our hearts to appreciating that when we felt at our lowest, God was, in fact, bearing us up. When those realisations come, we grow to appreciate that the Cross and Resurrection is not just an event that took place two thousand years ago in a distant land, but is an on-going event where the Lord offers His presence to help us turn tragedy into an opportunity for growth. Often, our pains blind us to this amazing offer, but over the years Patrick seems to have grown in understanding and found the inner strength to share his faith with those who opened their hearts to his message. With Patrick we sing the "Faith of our Fathers (and Mothers) living still."

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PRAYER INTENTIONS:

We extend our sympathies to the families of those who died recently and those whose month's mind and anniversary occur at this time.

ANNIVERSARIES: Kevin Murphy, Johnny Logan, Mildred Devine, Denis Finnegan, Paddy Cunningham, Mary Cunningham, Neil McCague, George Gillespie, Marie Prior, James Kerr RIP

23rd/24th March	6.00pm (Vigil)	10.00am	11.30am
	St Joseph's	St Peter's	St Joseph's
EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS	Kevin Kerr Siobhan Ratcliffe	Paul Murray	Rita Goldsmith Marie McCrory
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Marie Gough	Mary Peyton	Rachel Connolly

URGENTLY REQUIRED – A sitter for an elderly lady. One hour per day, lunchtime, Mon-Fri Contact 02890 626492 for details.

DE LA SALLE COLLEGE - As part of the Lasallian community, past pupils/past staff members are welcome to join us to take part in celebrations for the tercentenary year of the death of our Founder St John Baptist de La Salle. This celebration will take place in Knock Shrine, Co Mayo, on Saturday 6th April. If you would be interested, please contact the school on 02890 508800 as transport can be provided.

SLOW DOWN FOR LENT – Clonard 30th March 11am – 3.30pm. Quiet prayer, gently guided reflection, led by Breige O'Hare. Space and time for you and God...to think...to pray...to rest. Booking essential. Ring Clonard: 02890 445950, suggested donation £5. Please bring packed lunch.

GROWING COMMUNITIES – As part of Belfast City Councils Growing Communities Strategy in partnership with Hannahstown Community Centre the next gardening craft workshop will take place in Hannahstown Community Centre on Monday 25th March from 10.30am. This workshop will focus on how to take cuttings of your favourite plants.

COFFEE MORNING – Please come along to our next coffee morning on Wednesday 27th March in Hannahstown Community Centre.

SHALOM RETREAT – Friday 5th – Sunday 7th April in Drumalis Retreat Centre, Larne. Be a part of this exciting weekend where you will rekindle your identity in Christ! Prayer, praise, reconciliation, Mass and encouragement for the journey ahead. A retreat that will shine the light of Christ into your heart and lead you to forgiveness, freedom and healing. Book now £150 pp. includes full board with coffee/tea breaks. Register at www.shalommedia.org/retreat or contact Roshni George tele: 07737430680 or Jacinta tele: 07756225114.

A CHORAL EVENING WITH CAPPELLA CAECILIANA – In aid of St Malachy's Church restoration fund. Saturday 30th March at 7.30pm. In St Malachy's Church, Alfred Street, Belfast. Tickets £12 under 25's free (no ticket required). Musical Director: Donal McCrisken, tickets available from www.caeciliana.org and at Matchetts Music, Belfast.

THE IONA INSTITUTE NI – Welcomes you to their upcoming conference, "The Future of Conscience in an Age of Intolerance" on Saturday 30th March 2019, from 10am – 1.30pm (Registration opens 9.30am). Wellington Park Hotel, Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 6RU. £10 Adults £5 Students (includes tea/coffee/scones). Speakers include Nuala O'Loan (DBE), Dr Helen Watt (Anscombe Bioethics Oxford) Benedict O'Floinn SC, and David Smyth (Evangelical Alliance). To book ring 02892 646861 or email info@ionainstitute.org