

## Ballyscullion Parish Church Magazine

Winter 2007



**Ballyscullion Parish Church in the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe**

(Parish website is [www.ballyscullion.com](http://www.ballyscullion.com))

At present the parish is under the control of the Rural Dean, The Reverend Canon Raymond Stewart, Rector of the grouping of Tamlaght O’Crilly Upper and Lower Parishes. If necessary Canon Stewart can be contacted by telephone - 02829540296

Rector’s Churchwarden ..... Mr. Jackson Frew

People’s Churchwarden ..... Mr. Wesley Davidson

**Organists**

Mrs. Donna Fullerton and Mr Fred Dunlop

**Church Notices**

**Morning prayer** Sundays at 11.30 a.m.

**Holy Communion** is held the First Sunday in each month at 11.30 a.m.

**Sunday School** at 10.30a.m.



**Parish Records**

**Baptism**

19<sup>th</sup> November, 2006: Charles Patrick Mawhinney, son of Darwin and Lesley Mawhinney



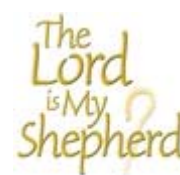
**Marriage**

11<sup>th</sup> November, 2006: Robert Huey and Jane Virgoe at Kildress Parish Church



**Deaths**

The parishioners of Ballyscullion Parish Church express their sincere sympathies to all who have been bereaved since the last issue.



## *For your diary*

### **Bible Study**



The first meeting of the Bible Study group was held in the Rectory on Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> January and was very successful, with 17 parishioners attending. Canon McDonald was very pleased by the interest shown.

- The next meeting will be held in the Parish hall after the Ash Wednesday service at 8.00 pm on 21<sup>st</sup> February.

### **Mothers Union**

The members of the Mothers' Union were invited to Castledawson Women's Fellowship visitors' night on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February. The guest speakers, Archdeacon McLean and Rev. Louise Crawford gave a talk on the subject 'Into Africa' including a slide show of their time in Uganda.

- The members are also invited to Tamlaght O'Crilly Ladies Fellowship visitor's night on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> February when the guest speaker will be Paula Forrest on the subject 'Working with Fashion'.

### **Special Services**

- Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> February at 8.00 pm. Ash Wednesday service in Parish church
- Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March at 8.00 pm in Innishrush Parish Church. A service to mark Women's World Day of Prayer. The guest speaker will be Paddy Wallace from Randalstown, the past All-Ireland President of the Mothers' Union.
- 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2007 in Desertmartin Parish Church at 6.30 pm. A service for the rededication of Select Vestries.
- 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2007 at 6.30 pm in Tobermore Parish Church. The Rural Deanery Youth Service.



### **Meeting**

- Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> February at 8.00 pm in the Rectory. A meeting for women in the parish to discuss arrangements for the formal closure of the Church shop.

### **Prayer Ministry Course**



To be held in The cathedral hall, Raphoe on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>, March and Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 11.00 am – 4.00 pm. The course will be led by Dr. Pat Mollan, Deputy Director of the Church's Ministry of Healing in Ireland. The course registration fee is £15. See Jackson Frew and get an application form to Canon Stewart on/before Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Mothing Sunday:** Sunday, 18th March 2007

**Easter Day:** Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> April

## Amazing Grace - the life of William Wilberforce

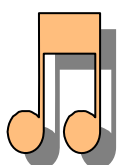
A major new Hollywood film, *Amazing Grace*, is released on March 23 - based on the life of anti-slavery campaigner William Wilberforce.



*Amazing Grace* is the story of Wilberforce's faith in God and passion for justice that drove him to awaken the conscience of a nation and end the dehumanising slave trade in the British Empire. The release coincides with the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade in the UK.

Inspired by the film, *The Amazing Change* is a global campaign to mobilise a new generation of abolitionists committed to freeing children, women and men in slavery today. For more information, visit [www.amazinggracemovie.com](http://www.amazinggracemovie.com) and also [www.theamazingchange.com](http://www.theamazingchange.com)

- \* Churches across the UK will sing the hymn on *Amazing Grace* Sunday, 25th March 2007.
- \* Royal Mail issues First Class William Wilberforce stamp, 22nd March 2007. Royal Mint will issue Bicentenary commemorative coin.
- \* Wilberforce was elected to the House of Commons when only 21 and dedicated his life to the Reformation of Manners in order to build a just and fair society. He advocated prison reform, better hospital care, improving conditions of the poor and others in areas of social reform but his passion was to abolish slavery in all its forms. In 1807 the Commons voted to abolish the slave trade throughout the British Empire, but it took until 1833 for total abolition to be achieved. Three days after this latter event, in July 1833, Wilberforce died.
- \* After 20 years of campaigning, the Commons voted to abolish the slave trade throughout the British Empire in 1807, but it took until 1833 for total abolition to be achieved. Three days after this latter event, in July 1833, Wilberforce died.
- \* The hymn "*Amazing Grace*" from which the movie derives its title, stands as the personal testimony of John Newton, a former slave trader who had a dramatic conversion to Christianity. Wilberforce and Newton met on several occasions and Wilberforce used the words of Newton's hymn to prick the conscience of influential members of the Commons and the Lords to support the Anti-Slavery Bill. John Newton died the same year as the bill passed into law - 1807.



### Gift Aid

*Gift Aid* is one of the simplest and most effective ways of giving to your church. Using *Gift Aid* means that for every £1 you give, the church will receive an extra 28 pence from the Inland Revenue. **If you are a tax payer** and, for example, give £10 pounds through your free will offering it is worth £12.80 to the church. To use *Gift Aid* all you have to do is sign a *Gift Aid* declaration form and the church will do the rest. New declaration forms are available on request.

*A little boy, playing on the beach with his father, found a dead seagull on the sand. "Daddy, what happened to him?" he asked. His father replied: "He died and went to heaven." The boy thought for a moment and then observed: "He can't have been very good - God's thrown him out again."*



## **Choir Dinner and presentation to Ms Elizabeth Armour on her retirement as organist.**

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2006 was the occasion of the choir dinner at the Sizzlers Restaurant in Magherafelt. A full turn-out of the choir was in evidence as the dinner got under way at 8.00pm. The four course meal was of the highest quality and the chat was every bit as good. It was nice for the choir, its organists Mrs Donna Fullerton, Mr Fred Dunlop and special guest, Ms Elizabeth Armour, to meet in such a relaxed environment to enjoy one another's company and to celebrate the successes of the choir during the year.

The choir dinner is normally the highlight of the year for the members of the choir but on this occasion it was to serve a double purpose. The choir was charged with the responsibility of making, on behalf of Ballyscullion Parish Church, a presentation to Ms Elizabeth Armour on



her retirement as one of the two organists in the church. Mr Jackson Frew made a short speech highlighting the qualities of Elizabeth in her role as organist. He said that Elizabeth, along with Donna, had developed the music within the church very significantly. Her great love for the traditional music of the Church of Ireland was reflected in her training of the choir to sing the chants as they should be sung. Many visiting clergy had passed comment, he said, on how well the choir in the church could sing the chants. The expertise of the choir in this particular

field was largely down to Elizabeth's motivational skills as well as her expertise in training the members of the choir to use their musical talents to the utmost.

Mr Frew paid tribute to her choice of anthems particularly for the Harvest Services drawing attention to how the contributions of the choir had greatly enriched all our special services. Her good humour was something that the choir would remember for a long time and her ability to get the 'best' from all around her was something that all members of the parish recognised and appreciated. Elizabeth had been very faithful to the parish over a period of four years all the more commendable when it is remembered that Elizabeth is a member of the Department of Education's team of Inspectors resulting in time being of paramount importance to her. Yet, she was always available even when it may have been more convenient for her to attend to other more pressing matters relating to her work or the care of her parents who do not always enjoy the best of health. Her dedication to, and love for the church were never in question and the parish admired greatly and appreciated enormously her commitment to her organist duties.

Mr Frew concluded that the parishioners of Ballyscullion Parish Church would miss her greatly but that they would want to wish her every happiness and good health in her life away from the parish. Mrs Sadie McQuillan presented Elizabeth with a Tyrone Crystal Port Decanter from the parish and Mrs Sarah Davison presented her with a bunch of flowers from the members of the choir.

Elizabeth was delighted with her presents from the parish and choir and replied that she had thoroughly enjoyed her time with the parish and that she would treasure her memories of the church.

*J. Frew*

## Nativity Play

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2006 was a special day for our Sunday school. The children decided that they would like to lead the morning service by having a Nativity play to tell us about the true meaning of Christmas. The play entitled 'The real reason for Christmas' was introduced by Ceri Ann Stewart and told us about the precious gift that God gave so lovingly that first Christmas over 2000 years ago.



In the photograph are: Mrs Donna Fullerton (organist) and the Sunday School teachers Miss Laura Davidson, Mrs Helen McQuillan, Mrs Yvonne Davidson.

The cast of the play was: -

- 'Twinkle' the star of Bethlehem - Nicole Dowie
- Angel - Ceri Ann Stewart
- Mary - Kathryn Mawhinney
- Joseph - Callum Donnelly
- Christmas Tree & King - Jayden Stewart
- Present & Shepherd 1 - Courtney Overend
- Plum Pudding & Shepherd 2 - Jonathan Dowie
- Shepherd 3 - James Mawhinney
- Inn Keeper & King - Joshua Overend
- Turkey & King - Sam Dowie
- 
- The readings from Luke 2: verses 4-19 and Matthew 2: verses 1-12 were read by William Dowie and Arran Dowie.

During the play the children sang the carols 'Once in Royal David's City' and 'Away in a Manger'. Ceri Ann Stewart also sang solos entitled 'Twinkle Twinkle' and 'O Holy Night'.

Mark Lennox, who led the service, complimented the children on their excellent performance and gave an interesting address to the children and the large congregation of parents, grandparents and parishioners.



The Sunday School children in the photograph are: Aaron Dowie, William Dowie, Ceri-Ann Stewart, Nicole Dowie, Jayden Stewart, Samuel Dowie, Jonathan Dowie, Callum Donnelly, Courtney Overend, Kathryn Mawhinney, James Mawhinney, Joshua Overend

*Yvonne Davidson*

A Sunday school teacher asked her class: "Do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the Ark?"



"No," replied one lad. "How could he, with just two worms?"

## Girl's Brigade

April 28th 2006 was our 41st Annual Display this year it was a great pleasure to have Mark Lennox as our Chairman and Mrs Anne Arrell as Guest of Honour. Every section carried out their different sketches. Parents girls & friends had a very enjoyable night especially as they finished off with that wee cup of Tea & a Bun.



Altogether we have 33 girls in our Company but unfortunately only 4 are Church of Ireland. Not many but they did us proud to see that each one of them carried off Cups or Trophies. A very special congratulations to Courtney Overend who won the Cup 'Do this Do That' also Courtney received runner up in Under 5's. Ceri-Anne Stewart 2nd in Drill. Leanne Davison 2<sup>nd</sup> in Scripture & Brigader Cup. Judith Overend won the Anne Mulholland Perpetual Cup. Credit to all hope you can Keep up the good work.

June Outing was to Auntie Sandra's Candy Factory Shop in Belfast. All girls had to put on their wee plastic hats to cover their hair before they entered the Factory. Here they were able to watch the sweets mixture being boiled up in large Stew Pans, while the mixture was still warm it was all rolled out on the Bench & put into trays when all was cooled each one was able to sample the different sweets. Then each Leader & Girl was able to make their own Candy Floss. Afterwards everyone went to McDonalds for something more filling. Of course with it being the Ladies day out it wouldn't do if they didn't finish the day by having an hour shopping in the Abbey Centre. This was a very good educational day out even the Bus Driver enjoyed the Factory.

As you are all aware Bellaghy GB published a 40th Anniversary Book which costs £5.00 if anyone would like to purchase any please ask any of our leaders.

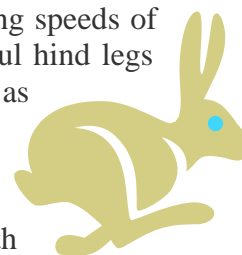
**This year our Display will be Friday 30th March 2007.**

Can I just take this opportunity to thank each Girl's parents & friends who contributed Shoe Boxes to 'Operation Christmas Child' Your box really brought a smile to all these children who suffer from poverty. Many thanks for your time & thoughtfulness.

*Anne Davison*

## Mad as a March Hare?

Mad or not, this is the best time of year to see any sort of hare. But you'll have to be quick: the brown hare is Britain's fastest mammal, reaching staggering speeds of 35 to 45 mph over open ground. With their orange brown fur, powerful hind legs and black tipped ears, hares are magnificent and a pleasure to watch as they run. If you are very fortunate, you may even see two hares 'box' this month, during their breeding season. One will almost certainly get lost. be an unimpressed female, telling an over-amorous male to get lost. Sadly, hares in Britain are in serious decline. In the late 19th century, there were probably more than four million. Today, barely a fifth of this number remains. Their decline is due to modern intensive agriculture methods, however, not aggressive females!



*And now John Junkin takes us on a journey back in time .....*

## The Earl Bishop of Derry - Frederick Augustus Hervey

Frederick Augustus Hervey was born 1st August, 1730 as the third son of an old Suffolk family who were at the time very often occupied at Court. His grandparents took him in hand and virtually reared him until he went to Westminster school at the age of eleven. Six years later he joined Corpus Christi College in Cambridge. In 1748 he entered Lincoln's Inn to study law. Three years later he left Cambridge without having taken his expected degree. The next year 1752 saw his marriage to Elizabeth Davers from a rival neighbouring estate. After two years of marriage he decided to switch from the Law to the Church. He was a clever and cultured individual. By 1763 he had been appointed as chaplain to King George III and immediately spent some time in Italy furthering his children's education. With help from his younger brother George (2nd Earl of Bristol and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland) Frederick became Bishop of Cloyne, Co. Cork in 1767.

Less than one year passed during which he set in train a vast drainage project when he was transferred to the See of Derry, at 38 years of age, with not a little help from the King. He was active and spent a vast fortune on road-building and agricultural advancement. By all accounts he was a hard working bishop. As well as constructing property in Londonderry, he had built the magnificent residences at Downhill in 1775 and at Ballyscullion in 1787.

He became the Fourth Earl of Bristol in 1779 on the successive deaths of his two elder



brothers and amassed considerable property. At the same time he managed to spend much time on the continent collecting works of art for these residences and his family seat at Ickworth in Suffolk. He usually travelled at high speed in his own Great Coach with vast entourages. They regularly took over large hotels in Germany and Italy. Many of these re-named in his honour and to this day still retain their 'Hotels Bristol' titles.

He appears to have had a sudden row with Elizabeth his wife whilst out driving in the Ickworth region in 1782. No further mention of her appears in any of his papers - they seem to have parted completely!

The Ballyscullion house was built in the shape of a crescent and, reputedly, had a window for every day of the year. None of these windows afforded a good view of the ruins of the old church on Church Island so he had a spire added on to the end of the church to give it height. The spire is there to this day, having survived a wing-tip collision from an American plane flying out of Creagh airfield at Toome during World War II. His continental absences meant in fact that he never lived in his new house and when he died in Albano in Italy he bequeathed it to his nephew. However the government's 'Window Tax' made this grand house a total impracticability for him. It was subsequently demolished only a few years after the bishop's death. Some pieces of its ruins remain in the woods at Ballyscullion but the Portico was rescued by the Bishop of Down. It now forms part of the facade of St Georges Church in Belfast's High Street having been taken there first by horse and cart and then transferred to become, reputedly, the first barge cargo brought to Belfast from Lough Neagh by the, then, new Lagan Canal Navigation.

As bishop he is known to have been very much in favour of complete religious equality and opposed the national system of tithes. Consequently he became deeply involved in the Irish Volunteer movement where he was noticeable by his prominence at their convention held in Dublin in 1783. He was of course courting disaster and with the Irish authorities breathing down his neck he caught himself on and in time he steered clear of Irish politics.

In 1798 he was given a jail sentence on the continent by the French and spent eighteen months in jail in Milan where he, at some risk, prised classified military information from his guards and had it sent to England for the use of the British Admiralty.

On July 8 1803 he died in Italy of a severe attack of gout and was later interred in Ickworth church in Suffolk.

The present Earl or Marquess of Bristol resides in Monaco. Another well-known descendant is Lady Isabella Hervey of TV fame.

Details of the Grand Palace at Ballyscullion will appear in the next edition of this Magazine.

*John Junkin*

## **SERMON NOTEBOOK - People Like Us (from the Old Testament!)**

### **Rebekah**

Isaac's wife Rebekah was barren like her mother-in-law Sarah (Genesis 25:21), and also lived with the pain of contradiction. Although God promised her offspring (Genesis 24:60), Rebekah lived with the truth that she couldn't have children. Her example is one that can encourage us when we face contradictions in our own lives.

### **A Family's Blessing**

Abraham sent his servant to find Isaac a wife from among his own family. He found Rebekah (Abraham's niece), who willingly left her home in Paddan-aram to marry Isaac. She went with her family's blessing: 'our sister, may you increase to thousands upon thousands' (60), and a willingness to be identified with God's promise of offspring to Abraham (7).

*What promises do we feel God has given to us?*

### **A Father's Prayer**

The couple find to their surprise that Rebekah is barren (23). Therefore, Isaac prays to the Lord 'on behalf of his wife' (6). He wasn't just praying for his own domestic situation, but also for the fulfilment of God's promises through his family. We can also pray with this double focus, as we 'seek first God's kingdom' for our circumstances (Matt 6:33).

*What does this say about how we should pray for our families?*



### **A Mother's Concern**

Rebekah should have been overjoyed when she found herself pregnant as a result of Isaac's prayer. However, she was anxious and questioned what was going on (22). God assured her that she bore twins, however this joyful news also brought the warning of trouble between her offspring: 'two nations are in your womb' (23). The ways in which God fulfils his promises in our lives are not always easy!

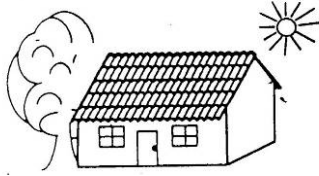
*In ways have we seen God work in ways that we did not expect?*

***God sends contradictions to test our responses. Will we react with trust or bitterness?***

**Book to read? .....God On The Inside - A fresh look at the Holy Spirit.**

**By Nigel Wright , Bible Reading Fellowship, £7.99**

The first Christians knew it was by the Spirit that they first believed and experienced God's love poured into their hearts. Since then, the third person of the Trinity has often been overlooked, even neglected. Yet in the last 30 years there has been an explosion of interest in the Holy Spirit. God on the Inside takes a fresh look at the Spirit in the Old and New Testaments, considering his role in the life of individual believers and the future of the worldwide church.



## THE LOVE, FAITH AND HOPE FOUNDATION

### *Fundacion, Amor Fe y Esperanza*

As we enter another year the Love, Faith and Hope Foundation must once again depend on the generosity of others to keep the boys' home going. Thanks to all you generous people who have contributed, whether by sponsorship, donations or dropping your spare change into the bottle at the back of the church, we have collected £1100 and hope to have more money by the time we send off the cheque later in February. A special thanks to those outside our parish who faithfully donate year after year. Some school teachers in Moneymore even gave up their 'special Santa' Christmas presents and donated the money to our Venezuelan fund. A very thoughtful idea and we are very grateful for it. Debbie Redmon, president of the Foundation, sent the following message before Christmas:

*Dear Friends,*

*This year has been full of blessings. We have 4 new boys: Jorge Luis (14), Yervis (10), Cesar (6) and Robert (4). Having "little ones" brings new challenges which Ruth and Josue are handling well. Ronnie graduated from High School and is looking into study options. The BIG news is that Brulyz graduated on Dec. 1 as TSU (associates degree) in physical therapy. It was a day of celebration and pride. (see photo of Brulyz and Silvio). He continues to study in order to reach his "licenciatura" degree in 1½ years. Miguel works full time at Oxicar, Lennon studies computer science and works part time, and Clint studies engineering at the University of Carabobo.*

*Thank you for all your support through prayers and gifts, may God bless you greatly! Please pray that we will find adequate staff to help Josue and Ruth with the many duties they fulfil.*

*From: Josué y Ruth, Ronnye, Wilmer, Leonardo, Jorge Luis, Yervis, Gregorio, Cesar, Robert, Brulyz, Miguel, Lennon, Clint, and the Board of Directors.*

As Josue and Ruth are getting older they need help with the children, especially now that



there are four new boys. They live their lives for God and these children who need them so much. Please remember this wonderful couple in your prayers and thank God for the work that they do. Last summer, on the anniversary of Vivienne's death, a memorial service was held and the home was renamed the 'Vivienne de Ramirez' Boys Home.

*Photograph of Yervis*



Jorge Luis & Wilmer

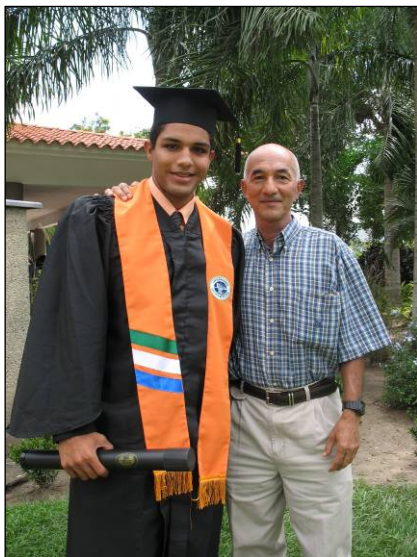


Jose Gregario



Robert & John (Viv's son)

## Brulys's Story



Brulys was one of the first boys to be brought to the home when it opened about 11 years ago.

He was very sad and depressed. His mother left him with the man she had been living with. His real father was unknown. His stepfather was very good to him, as was the stepfather's own mother who was a very old woman. Unfortunately this man who was a security guard was shot and killed while at work. Two months later the old woman died. Brulys then went looking for his mother but she didn't want anything to do with him and left him to fend for himself. He was only eleven.

When he first came to the home he was traumatised – he never smiled and he never cried. He could not read or write. He received counselling and a relationship with his mother was encouraged but to this day she has never wanted anything to do with him.

With the loving care of Ruth and Josue, Brulys blossomed and when we met him in 1999 he was a happy, smiling and gentle teenager. As you can see from Debbie's letter he has used his opportunity in life well and made us all proud to have had a small part in changing the life of a young boy.

Brulys now lives outside the home in an apartment with Miguel, Clint and Lennon and they have part-time jobs to pay their rent.

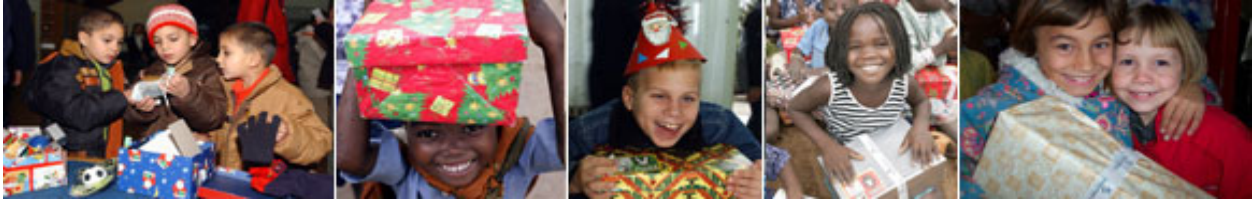
### *Anne Overend*

The judge read the charges, and then asked, "Are you the defendant in this case?"

"No sir, your honour, sir," replied Bob, "I've got a solicitor to do the defendin'. I'm the guy what done it."



## What is Operation Christmas Child (OCC)?



Since 1990, Operation Christmas Child has brought the joy of Christmas to more than 47 million boys and girls. In **2005** OCC) in the UK sent out **over 1.18** Eastern Europe and Africa. This individuals, families, schools, organisations to fill ordinary shoe supplies, sweets, and other gifts for world.



Samaritan's Purse (organiser of **million gifts** to children across annual project enables caring churches, businesses, and other hurting children around the

Operation Christmas Child sends a message of hope to children in desperate situations around the world through gift-filled shoe boxes.

The gifts are given regardless of nationality, political background or religious beliefs to children requiring nothing of them, their families or communities in return. Wherever it is culturally appropriate and in partnership with local partners on the ground, a booklet with Bible stories is made available to children in their own language.

With the help of thousands of volunteers, Samaritan's Purse collects and processes these gift-filled shoe boxes in its warehouses across the UK. Then, working with national churches and charities, Samaritan's Purse delivers the gifts to children in hospitals, orphanages, refugee camps, homeless shelters and impoverished neighbourhoods.



The 1.18million shoes boxes collected in the UK in 2005 were distributed as follows: **Armenia (30,062), Belarus (186,801), Bosnia (76,704), Croatia (10,476), Hungary (8,725), India (87,900), Kosovo (24,911), Kyrgyzstan (60,456), Mozambique (30,024), Romania (267,931), Serbia (193,870), Swaziland (23,820), Ukraine (179,106).**

If 2005 was a huge success then 2006 was even better with 1.24 million shoe boxes collected in total in the UK. For the 2006 appeal, Ballyscullion Parish Church assembled 15 shoe boxes. The parish was indebted to Mrs Anne Davison who acted as link person liaising with the leader of the local Girls Brigade Company who were also involved in the appeal.

The following parishioners kindly donated shoe boxes: William and Sam Dowie, Callum and Conor Donnelly, Leanne Davison, Ceri-Ann Stewart, Mrs Lily Bell, Mrs Winnie Moore, Mrs Annie McQuillan, Mrs Jean Hudson, Mrs Cissy Dawson, Mrs Anne Davison (2), Mrs Elma Overend (2). Two other shoeboxes were donated anonymously.

Boxes from local groups were taken to warehouses. A total of 7474 boxes were sent to the Coleraine warehouse and this combined with a similar total at the Ballymena warehouse gives an indication of the success of the appeal. The boxes have been distributed to Armenia. In 2006 a total of 7 million shoeboxes were collected worldwide in 11 different countries and distributed in more than 90 nations to children who speak more than 70 languages. The USA donated more than 4.2 million shoe boxes and Canada 710,000. In excess of 650,000 were

collected on the Continent (Germany, the Netherlands, Finland, Austria and Switzerland) and another 230,000 came from Australia and New Zealand.

When one looks at the smiling faces of the children in the photographs then one realises just how little it takes to make a child in one of these countries really happy. The story is told that when a child was given a gift-filled box it opened the box, took out a present and passed the box to the next child not realising that the entire contents of the box were for it alone. When the children were asked which presents they preferred they replied that the pens, pencils and jotters were their favourites because they could now do better at school. Young people please take note!

The Samaritan's Purse web address is [www.samaritanspurse.uk.com](http://www.samaritanspurse.uk.com) where further information on Operation Christmas Child can be found.

A big thank you to all who supported the appeal and perhaps even more shoe boxes will be collected next year.

J. Frew

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### **A brain teaser from Sandra**



#### **CAN YOU FIND SIXTEEN BOOKS OF THE BIBLE?**

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu, kept people looking so hard for facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalised, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes there will be some really easy ones to spot, others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete.

*Relax now for there really are sixteen names of books of the Bible in this story.*

*Sandra Overend*

*P.S. if you're stuck ask Sandra!*

### **The Power of Music!!!**

The minister was worrying about how he was going to ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting repairs to the church building. So he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was ill and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play.



"Here's a copy of the service," the minister said impatiently. "But, you'll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances."

Finally the moment came, and the minister announced solemnly: "Brothers and sisters, we are in great difficulty; the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected and we need £10,000 more. Any of you who can pledge £100 or more, please stand up."

At that moment, the substitute organist played 'God Save the Queen'. And that is how the substitute became the regular organist!

*(Donna and Fred..... don't be getting any ideas !)*

## Health and Safety

Ballyscullion Parish now has its own Health and Safety policy statement. The policy statement sets out the Parish's commitment to Health and Safety and the duty of care placed on the (*rector*), church wardens and other members of the select vestry to ensure the safety of anyone who may visit the church, church hall or graveyard for any purpose. This includes paid employees e.g. organists, voluntary workers, regular members of the congregation, visitors and contractors who may be working on the buildings or in the graveyard.



All aspects of Health and Safety are considered including access for the disabled, first aid, church property inspections, personal safety and the preparation of food on church property. Risk assessments are to be periodically carried out to identify hazards and establish appropriate levels of risk. Training will be arranged where necessary and records maintained to ensure the highest standard of Health and Safety that is reasonably possible.

Thanks are due to Robert Huey for his efforts in preparing the policy statement.

*The document includes various 'annexes' for completion. One of which is called 'Accidents or near misses'.*

*With this in mind I came across the following bricklayer's accident report following an accident on a building site. This is a true story!!*

*Dear Sir, I am writing in response to the additional information you requested in 'section 3' of the accident report form.*

*I put "poor planning" as the cause of my accident. You asked for a fuller explanation and I trust the following details will be sufficient. I am a bricklayer by trade. On the day of the accident, I was working alone on the roof of a new six storey building. (new apartments outside Bellaghy).*

*When I completed my work, I found that I had some bricks left over which, when weighed later were found to be slightly in excess of 500lbs. Rather than carry the bricks down by hand, I decided to lower them down in a barrel by using a pulley, which was attached to the side of the building on the sixth floor. Securing the rope at the ground I went up to the roof, swung the barrel out and loaded the bricks into it. Then I went down and untied the rope, holding it tightly to ensure a slow descent of the bricks. You will note in 'section 11' of the accident report form that I weigh 135lbs. Due to my surprise at being jerked off the ground so suddenly, I lost my presence of mind and forgot to let go of the rope. Needless to say, I proceeded at a rapid rate up the side of the building. In the vicinity of the third floor, I met the barrel, which was now proceeding downward at an equally impressive speed. This explained the fractured skull, minor abrasions and the broken collar bone, as listed in 'section 3' of the accident report form. Slowed only slightly, I continued my rapid ascent, not stopping until the fingers of my right hand were two knuckles deep into the pulley.*

*Fortunately by this time I had regained my presence of mind and was able to hold tightly to the rope, in spite of beginning to experience pain. At approximately the same time, however, the barrel of bricks hit the ground and the bottom fell out of the barrel. Now devoid of the weight of the bricks, that barrel weighed approximately 50lbs. I refer you again to my weight. As you can imagine, I began a rapid descent, down the side of the building. In the vicinity of the third floor, I met the barrel coming up. This accounts for the two fractured ankles, broken tooth and several lacerations of my legs and lower body.*

*Here my luck began to change slightly. The encounter with the barrel seemed to slow me enough to lesson my injuries when I fell into a pile of bricks and fortunately only three vertebrae were cracked. I am sorry to report however as I lay there on the pile of bricks, in pain, unable to move, I again lost my composure and presence of mind and let go of the rope and I lay there watching the empty barrel begin its journey back down unto me.*

*This explains the two broken legs. I hope this answers your query.*

Lets hope we don't have an entry like this in our accident report form.  
By the way, does anyone need a bricklayer?

Wesley Davidson



## The 'Census' Return in Ballyscullion Parish Church

The Diocesan Council of Derry and Raphoe instructed all clergy in the combined diocese to update parish records with regard to numbers of families and parishioners. Canon Raymond Stewart gave notice of this instruction to the Select Vestry of the parish in May/June 2006.

Since the only records available in the parish were somewhat out-of-date, data collection sheets were designed and distributed to parishioners in August to be returned to the church in September. The response from parishioners was excellent with every known household returning their completed data collection sheet either in person or by post. It was very pleasing to note that a small number of additional households were added to the parish further reinforcing the growth of the church over the last 12 to 18 months. The information so returned was inserted into a computerised table and the summary information into a spreadsheet for numerical analysis.



The results from the survey reveal that there are 203 parishioners within the parish and 80 households (as distinct from families). 138 parishioners reside within the parish boundary and 65 parishioners outside the boundary in places such as Castledawson, Glengormley, Maghera, Magherafelt, Moneymore, Portglenone, etc. Approximately 8% of parishioners are aged 11 and under, 19% are 12 to 21 years of age, 48% are over 21 years of age but not yet senior citizens and 25% are senior citizens.

Members of the Select Vestry met to discuss the results of the survey and made a number of observations including the following:-

- members of the parish had a great loyalty to their church demonstrated by the fact that the data collection sheets distributed in August were so promptly returned;
- a considerable number of parishioners still maintained their links with the parish even though they no longer lived within the parish boundary again demonstrating loyalty to, and a great love for, the church;
- even though attendances were good, there was a need to get parishioners on the 'fringe' coming to church more regularly. Visiting by Canon Ian McDonald is crucial;
- ensuring that church services were interesting and utilising the talents of as many parishioners as possible were important aims as this would help to increase attendance;
- pastoral work within the parish needs development and the 'Growing a Healthy Church' initiative to be launched shortly would most likely help in this regard;
- currently contact with some parishioners is only sporadic and the church needs to devise strategies to be more missionary in its approach to fringe parishioners and indeed to others who may have no allegiance to any particular church;
- there was a clear need for a number of small group activities such as the Bible Study Group to exist within the parish to cater for the interests of as many parishioners as possible;
- while the parish was coping very well at the moment there was obviously the need for a new minister to provide the leadership that only a minister can.

In general members of the Select Vestry felt confident about the future but there were challenges ahead, not least in finding the finance necessary to bring all church property up to the standard required. However, they were confident that God would provide what was needed if parishioners continued to serve him as they should.

## Looking back ... The Service of Nine Lessons and Carols held on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006

Following on from an inspiring service in the morning where the children of the Sunday school performed a very successful nativity play, a service of Nine Lessons and Carols was held in the evening. The minister in the evening was Canon Raymond Stewart.

A total of 160 persons were in attendance in the evening to enjoy the readings and the special pieces of music as well as taking part in the singing of well-known Christmas hymns and carols.

Readers were chosen according to a theme of 'The Family'. Readers were selected from newly married couples, young married couples, parents/relatives of babies baptised during 2006 and families who had been bereaved during 2006.

The order of service was as follows:-

**Choir: Introit "Emmanuel: God With Us"**

**Bidding Prayer – Reverend Canon Raymond Stewart**

**Hymn 172 verses 1, 2, 3 & 6: "O Come all ye faithful"**

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Genesis 3 (8 – 15)**

*God announces in the Garden of Eden that the son of a woman shall bruise a serpent's head.*

**Miss Lorna Overend**

**Choir: "Come Sing The Sweet Song Of The Ages"**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Genesis 22 (15-18)**

*"God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed all nations of the earth will be blessed"*

**Mrs Roberta Anderson**

**Hymn 160: "Hark the Herald"**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Reading: Isaiah 9 (2, 6&7)**

*"The prophet foretells the birth of Christ"*

**Mr Andrew Overend**

**Carol – Mission Praise 597: "Silent Night, Holy Night"**

**4<sup>th</sup> Reading: Isaiah 11 (1–9)**

*"The prophet foretells the Messiah's Kingdom of peace"*

**Mr Darren Frew**

**Solo: "Twinkle, Twinkle; Far Away; O Holy Night"**

**Miss Ceri-Ann Stewart**

**5<sup>th</sup> Reading: St Luke 1 (26–33 & 38)**

*"The Angel Gabriel visits the Blessed Virgin Mary"*

**Mrs Gemma Overend**

**Hymn 174: "O little town of Bethlehem"**

**6<sup>th</sup> Reading: St Luke 2 (1–7)**

*"Saint Luke relates the birth of Jesus"*

**Mr Darwin Mawhinney**

**Carol – Mission Praise 589: "See him lying on a bed of straw"**

**7<sup>th</sup> Reading: St Luke 2 (8-16)**

*"The shepherds go to the manger"*

**Miss Lesley-Ann Overend**

**Children: "Away in a manger"**

**8<sup>th</sup> Reading: St Matthew 2 (1-11)**

*"The Wise Men are led by the Star to Jesus"*

**Mr Stephen Moore**

**Choir: "This child"**

**9<sup>th</sup> Reading: St John 1 (1-14)**

*"Saint John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation: how the word was made flesh and dwelt among us"*

**Reverend Canon Raymond Stewart**

**Hymn 172 verses 1, 2, & 6: O Come all ye faithful"**

**Closing Prayers – Reverend Canon Raymond Stewart**

**Benediction – Reverend Canon Raymond Stewart**



The Nine Lessons and Carols service can be downloaded from the home page of the church's website [www.ballyscullion.com](http://www.ballyscullion.com). At the conclusion of the service all present were invited to the parish hall for mince pies and other light refreshments. The Select Vestry was delighted with the turn-out and would wish to express their sincere thanks to all who helped in any way to make the whole evening the outstanding success that it was.

*J Frew*

## **Are embryos alive? ..... what do you think?**

"An embryo is a life" say one in three Britons. New research into attitudes to fertility treatment shows that one third of people surveyed (34%) consider an embryo to be a life, another one third (32%) disagree, and the remainder neither agree or disagree. When asked what should happen to spare embryos created for IVF treatment, 41% said they should be used for medical research, 35% felt that they should be donated to other people, and 34% felt they should be discarded.



The survey also examined people's attitudes towards fertility treatment for non-traditional families, eg single women or female same-sex couples. Over two thirds, 70%, thought it was acceptable for people to donate sperm or eggs to help infertile couples but only 32% thought it was acceptable to help non-traditional families in this way. The study, which also has many other findings, was commissioned by the Progress Educational Trust and carried out by YouGov. Full details from: [www.yougov.co.uk](http://www.yougov.co.uk)

## **Is it time you remembered 'eureka!'?**

As Lent 2007 gets underway, do you rather suspect that your Christian commitment is not all it could be? If so, you are not alone. As one American church leader sadly puts it: "In America the church is 3,000 miles wide - and one inch deep."

But Jesus is still calling us to be his disciples, NOT his well-wishers - from a safe distance! So how does one start as a disciple, exactly? It can be helpful to remember the story of John and Andrew in the first chapter of St John.

Firstly, John and Andrew were simply getting on with daily life when their teacher, John the Baptist, introduced them to Jesus. They hadn't been out looking for him - but when they met him, they were deeply affected. Andrew excitedly reported: "We have found the Messiah" (John 1:41).

His statement is true, but the more you read of the story, the more you'll realize that it was Jesus who found them. He is after YOU, too! If you encounter God, it is no accident that your paths have crossed.



*A Sunday school teacher was telling her class the story of the Good Samaritan, in which a man was beaten, robbed and left for dead. She described the situation in vivid detail so her students would catch the drama. Then, she asked the class, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside, all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?" A thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence, "I think I'd throw up!"*

## **Looking forward .....**

As you can see from this issue of the magazine we have much to look forward to in the parish. More and more our parishioners want to get involved in the life of the church and to make it part of their lives and those of their families.

If you have any articles, poems, stories which you would be happy to share in the Church magazine then let us know. My email address is [rosieandtigger@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rosieandtigger@yahoo.co.uk). The next issue is due in the spring but first two late articles for the current edition of the magazine.

*Letter to Mr John Junkin from Daniel Norris (USA)*

Sir,

This letter was written to acknowledge my deep appreciation for the referral to Richard Frew you granted me for his genealogical services. My quest for additional Norris family genealogical information had been on hold for nearly ten years, simply because I could not locate a suitable researcher. A few cursory searches by professional researchers provided only a bleak outlook for gaining additional desired information. At times, I believed my quest would end with simply knowing some of my ancestors resided near Swatragh, Maghera Parish.



Then came Richard!

I hesitate to refer to him as a “professional genealogist,” for his level of personalized service far exceeds the “business like” relationship one merely gains through professional genealogical services. Furthermore, his keen knowledge of historical documents, particularly church related records, places him in the professional genealogist ranks. In other words, Richard provided an in depth service with a most personal touch.

Then came Richard’s research!

At last count, I had more than 25 pages of E:mail correspondence pertaining to my family’s history, along with another 25 or more pages of area pictures, census records, baptism documents, Tithing Applotment research and local maps!!! Richard located many sources of Norris information, which enabled me to determine family relationships and land holdings, which helped progress my family tree back an additional generation. Additionally, I sincerely looked forward to Richard’s daily or, at times, hourly E:mail correspondence, which would often stray from genealogical topics!

Then came Richard’s book of verse titled “Our Ballroom of Romance!”

A most interesting array of personal observation that is much like riding a roller-coaster in the dark! For a gullible soul like me, Richard’s literary talents misdirected, confused and, basically, intellectually derailed me on many occasions!!!

Now comes Dan!



I believe it only fitting to “repay” Richard with an unexpected note posted in the Church’s Quarterly Parish Magazine. I did inform Richard I would submit a note of thanks with my forthcoming donation cheque to the church. However, I certainly hope the posting of this letter in the church’s publication catches him off guard and surprises him with a little misdirection!

Now comes the church members!

Please be sure to give Richard a “big pat on the back” from a sincerely appreciative descendent from your part of the world. Be sure to embarrass him with praise, well just a little, for he has provided me with invaluable genealogical information, became an interesting person to know and can truly be regarded as a fine representative of the Derry County persons I wish to visit someday.

Best regards,

Daniel Norris, U.S.A.

*Speech by Ms Joyce Kerr at her mother's funeral service*

### **A TRIBUTE TO MY MOTHER.**

Eileen Olive June Kerr. 26 February 1929 – 4 February 2007.

Last night I sat down and tried to gather my thoughts about what a daughter can say about the person who is/was my mother. My mother, June was unique - there was no one else like her – clichéd though it sounds.

I'm very happy that my mother and father fell in love whilst she was singing in Clontarf Parish church choir, Dublin, where my father happened to be the organist!! It certainly seemed that at this point they had something in common – their love for music. They were very young then - only in their twenties and life must have been very exciting and very sweet!

This love for music extended itself into my mother teaching music and singing to the boys in St. Columba's College, Dublin. Alongside all this, my parents got married in 1951 in Clontarf Parish Church and I made my appearance nine years later, in the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, where my father was Chaplin.

My parents made my childhood very happy and I remember when I was about seven that my mother loved sometimes to take me into a Grafton Street restaurant and treat me to a big pink meringue filled with fresh cream. This I remember vividly. I also remember that I, as a growing child - and you all know how quickly children grow - had to be bought a winter coat every year in order to keep me warm. This annual event happened in Arnotts but I think that I got rather bored with this occurrence and so I would decide to break free, find a suitable rail of long clothing, where I would proceed to lie under this rail until my aunt Edna, my grandmother and my mother would find me. I must say that I found this amusing – however 'unsure about their patience!!

But enough about my childhood.

People over the past few days have been continually pouring into our house – showing nothing other than love and support. People from all over the country – David from Cork, people from Port Saloon and Leatbeg where my mother so much enjoyed and loved her time when my father was Rector in the Parish of Clondevaddock, Co. Donegal for eleven years. People are here from Sligo and my only relations on my mother's side, Dorothy and George Berry from Monaghan. On my father's side we of course have the Grey family - Wally, Harry, Catherine, Arthur and Karen from Belfast. Of course there have been people from the Coleraine, Dungiven, Bovevagh and Bellaghy areas. Forgive me if I leave any areas unmentioned - it is not my intention to do so but so many people have crossed over the threshold of the house.

This influx has been solid, and the ironic and sad thing is that my mother has not been physically here in order to experience it because she would have loved it! June loved people. Full stop. It is so obvious that her gregarious nature has affected everybody who knew her. I got a call yesterday, from Georgina, who used to work in Orlee kitchens Ballymoney, and she said to me that whenever she saw my mother's face, she herself felt better - and that she felt GRACE coming from my mother's face. Pure grace. My friend Dawn said that my mother was a beautiful woman. Yes, she was. Not only beautiful physically and very pretty - but also beautiful inside. She was gentle, kind, considerate and very generous. Her nature was to give and she loved and concerned herself often with those less fortunate than most of us. She was deeply committed to the NSPCC and was at one time Vice President of the County branch. She would go to various lengths to try to raise money for the charity and one of her favourites was to enlist committee members and everybody to pick daffodils in the Vice Chancellor's residence in Knockarna. You see, there were hundreds of daffodils growing there and with the permission of the university this turned out to be a real money spinner – bunches of daffodils being sold outside the then Crazy Prices, now Tesco's. One of her inspirations.

Dorothy Duffin was recalling last night how her young girls, Lisa and Alison, would love it when my mother would help them with their piano practice and lessons. The girls loved it when my mother would sometimes go over and bath them and wash their hair. Simple things but nice memories. Also

my mother would take our then dog, Bugsey, over to play with the girls and they would dress him up and push him around the garden in the doll's pram.

May Clarke, from Sligo also told me last night, how my mother arrived down in Sligo, only four days after Trudy was born and presented her with a white christening robe. My mother loved to go to her house in Sligo and would often take off on the spur of the moment, arrive down, turn on the heat and then go and rap on May's window, usually latish in the evening. This knock on the window was always recognized and much welcomed especially by the then child, Trudy - because it meant that she could stay up late and they would discuss all the things that they were going to do during her stay there.



Caravan summer holiday days in Sligo also meant an open door and after being out in the boat fishing, my mother loved to be surrounded by the caravan 'gang', feasting on our catch of mackerel!! Peter Henry, also from Sligo told me yesterday that my mother would arrive to their tent in the morning with tea and toast and marmalade. This is when he and his buddies were pretending to be grown up and capable of staying in a tent by themselves (they were only about 14)!!!

Our more recent Northern Irish friends e.g. Brenda and Frank have spent many weekends with us in Coleraine because the door was always open and there was always hospitality.

So you see, she was a people's person and these are only a few of the memories.

Our other lovely memories are of the wonderful holidays which we as a family spent in Canada and America where we used to go touring for three weeks at a time. Great stuff - the big outdoors - and she and my father also very much enjoyed swimming in the warm waters of the Great Barrier Reef, Australia.

She was also an animal person and very much adored all our animals. Recent years normally found her in the evenings sitting in her chair with Lynx our cat, or Kidder our recent addition, on her knee. She was compassionate, very, very compassionate – a quality which is sadly in such short supply in today's world.

My father has talked of how, when he now reaches out his hand to touch her in bed, that she isn't there. This is now the vacant place – so unexpected. There's a void. But, if we can remember her sweet and endearing qualities (and perhaps try to emulate some of them) we know that her presence will still be with us.

She has now gone, physically left this world - but - because of her deep faith in Jesus Christ, I know that she is in the heavenly paradise with HIM. I also believe that she is with the members of her family, our animals, Kruger, and that there is now no more pain, fear or any disease – there is only exquisite glory.

We should all take comfort and rejoice in this.

We say farewell to you my darling mother, and wife of my dear father Arthur, see you later and thank you for being you. When I look at the stars at night, bright in the sky, I shall see you – shining.

Joyce Kerr