



### Sunday Envelope Collection

The amount received for  
**Ferns** for the week was **€411.00**

The amount received for **Ballyduff** for  
month of **December** was **€799.00**

The amount received from **Cloogue** for  
the month of **January** **€400.45**

*Thank you for your generosity*

### *St. Bernadette, Virgin Feast Day: February 18th*

She was a little girl to whom Our Lady appeared eighteen times, presenting to her a stream of healing waters, and commanding her to have a shrine built on the scene of the apparitions. Thus was formed the famous shrine of Our Lady Of Lourdes.

#### *Prayer*

*St. Bernadette, pray for us, that through the  
Immaculate Conception we may be healed of  
all ills, both of body and soul.  
Amen.*

### THE HOOK OF FAITH THIS WEEK

The plight of farming communities and families in Malawi is the focus of this year's Trocaire Lenten campaign. We include resources and prayers for parishes. In a video interview with I-Catholic, the late Taoiseach John Bruton talks about faith and politics. We have a homily for the First Sunday of Lent where Jesus enters the desert to prepare for his ministry. We have a talk by Maria Steen on the forthcoming referendum on women's place in the home and family life. We have video talks by Mgr. James Shea and Fr Mike Schmitz on how to live during Lent and another by Bishop Robert Barron on Lent as a time to discipline desire. Finally, we have an article on Christian unity for the feast of St Peter's chair which falls on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Check out these and other resources available at [www.thehookoffaith.com](http://www.thehookoffaith.com)

### ST. AIDAN'S PARISH INFORMATION

**Very Rev. Paddy Cushen. P.P.** Tel: 053-9366152 / Mobile: 087 2387559.

E-mail: [frpaddycushen@gmail.com](mailto:frpaddycushen@gmail.com) **Eir Code: Y21 N9 W7**

**Assistant: Very Rev. Pat Stafford , 086 234 4674**

**Parish Office:** Tel: 053-9366514. E-mail: [fernsparish@gmail.com](mailto:fernsparish@gmail.com) **Eir Code: Y21 X5 W9**

**Opening Hours:** 9am-1pm & 2pm-4pm Mon-Fri

**Weekend Mass Times:** Vigil Mass, Saturday 6.15pm Sunday 8.30am & 11.00am

Weekday Mass Times: Monday to Saturday day 9.30am.

**Confessions:** Every **Saturday** after **9.30am** Mass & First **Thursday** after **9.30am** Mass and on request.

### ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH, BALLYDUFF

**Weekend Mass Times:** Vigil Mass, Saturday 7.30pm **Eircode: Y21 FD 73**

### ST. BRIDGET'S CHURCH, CLOOGUE

**Weekend Mass Time:** Sunday 9.45am

**Eir Code: Y21 CD 96**

**Reconciliation Services:** Lent and Advent. **Baptism:** By appointment.

**Marriage:** At least three months notice must be given.

**Ferns St. Vincent de Paul:** Tel: 086 7219303

**Safeguarding Officers:** Denis Kinsella 087 2465720, Bernidina Roche 087 4455393

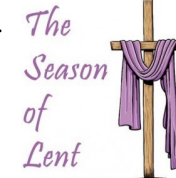
Ballyduff: Alan Byrne 086 8135149. Cloogue: Mary Skelton 087 6984703

**St. Aidan's Church, Ferns**

We have a live Webcam Streaming for all Masses. The camera is focused on the Altar & Sanctuary. You can watch Mass & Services live from St. Aidan's Church by going to YouTube and searching for Ferns Church or on Facebook at Ferns Church Live or on our Parish Website [www.fernsparish.ie](http://www.fernsparish.ie)



# Ferns Parish Newsletter



Vol. 18. No. 27

17th & 18th February 2024

First Sunday of Lent



## SEASON OF LENT

On Wednesday last we commenced the season of Lent. The day prior to Lent is called Shrove or Pancake Tuesday. Both titles have their own significance. We call it 'Pancake Tuesday' because in the past the Fast during Lent was very strict and before the season started the people used up the surplus food in the home, which at the best of times was scarce and the variety rather lacking. The normal food in the house was milk, flour, eggs, butter, and salt. They used these which are the ingredients for pancakes so that they would not be tempted to over indulge in food during Lent. It was called 'Shrove Tuesday' because it was the last day before Lent to go to confession to be shriven (absolved) of their sins. In the past this was the great day for going to confession and then the people did penance for their sins for the next forty days. We are given this great Season of Lent to do **Penance** for our sins, to **Pray** and give **Alms**. We have the forty days because Jesus fasted in the desert for forty days and nights to prepare himself for his three years of public ministry, so Jesus was 30 years of age at that time, as he died at the age of 33 years. Please make an effort to follow the example of Jesus by making a few resolutions to Pray, Fast and give Alms.

**Stations of the Cross** will take place in Ferns Church on Monday evenings during Lent at 7.00p.m.

**Mass in Cloogue Church** will take place on **Tuesday** mornings at **9.45a.m.**

**Mass in Ballyduff Church** will take place on **Wednesday** evenings at **7.30p.m.**

Also you could visit the Pastoral Centre where there is daily Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 10.00am to 1.00pm.

**Please take home a Trocaire Box for Lent, your support is vital**

### First Sunday of Lent, 18th February 2024

1. Jesus he is about to start his public ministry. Mark tells us this was preceded by a deep inner struggle when his resolve to take on his God-given mission was tested. Recall important decisions in your own life. Were they accompanied by struggle and doubt? Who were the angels who supported you at that time? Give thanks for them.
2. Such periods of anxiety may seem like wilderness experiences at the time. Later, with hindsight, we may see them as being good for us. Perhaps, like Jesus, you recall a time when the Spirit of God led you into the wilderness to be tested and after the experience you had a clearer sense of your own identity or your purpose in life.
3. *Repent and believe the good news* was the heart of the message of Jesus. It was not a call to penance but to a change of heart, a change of attitude, leading to a change in behaviour. The kingdom of God is a kingdom of right relationships: with God, with one another, with creation, with ourselves. It is a change that leads to a fuller life. When have you found that a change in your attitude towards God, others, yourself, or the world around you, has led you to a more fulfilled or more fruitful life?
4. There is an immediacy about the call of Jesus: *'the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near'*. Recall when you had a realisation that NOW was the moment of opportunity – for a change in your life, for a spiritual renewal, or a time to give a wholehearted yes to life. At this moment to what do you believe you are invited to say 'yes'?

**Mass Time & Intentions  
This Weekend**

**17th & 18th February 2024**

**FERNS CHURCH**

**6.15pm:** Johnny Byrne, St. Aidan's  
Betty Dunbar, Ballylough  
Peadar Leacy, Aldercourt & formerly of  
Boolavogue

**8.30am:**

**11.00am:** Ned Kinsella, Effernogue  
Patrick O'Toole, Ballingale

**BALLYDUFF CHURCH**

**7.30pm:**

**CLOLOGUE CHURCH**

**9.45am:** People of the Parish

**Mass Time & Intentions  
Next Weekend**

**24th & 25th February 2024**

**Ferns Church**

**6.15pm:** Billy Cash, Pairc Mhuire

**8.30am:**

**11.00am:** Bridget Davitt, Craan  
Tommy Davitt, Croy

**BALLYDUFF CHURCH**

**7.30pm:** Tom, Aidan & Pat O'Leary,  
Clonee Lane

**CLOLOGUE CHURCH**

**9.45am:** John Tonks, Milltown

**Ecumenical Service** led by

Bishop Adrian Wilkinson and Bishop Ger  
Nash in St. Mary's Church of Ireland,  
ENNISCORTHY on Sunday  
18th February at 7.00pm.  
All most welcome.

**Confirmation Ceremony of Light**

The ceremony will take place replacing the Penitential Rite at the beginning of Mass at 7.30pm in Ballyduff and 11.00a.m. Mass in Ferns Sat. & Sunday 24/25th Feb.

**24th & 25th February 2024**

**Ministers of the Word**

**6.15pm:** Brendan Kenny

**8.30am:** Maureen Kavanagh

**11.00am:** Joe Sinnott

**Ministers of Holy Communion**

**6.15pm:** Margaret Maguire & Mary Fortune

**8.30am:** A Volunteer

**11.00am:** Ann Swaine & Michael Breen

**NOTICE TO ENVELOPE  
DISTRIBUTORS**

The Ferns Weekly Envelopes for 2024 are now available for distribution, we would be grateful if all distributors would collect them at their convenience.



**BAPTISMS**

We welcome into the faith  
**Ellie Mae Gavin**  
who was baptised recently.

**Synodal Journey**

The continued success of the Synodal journey already begun in our Diocese requires on-going engagement in our parish communities.

As part of this journey seven people will be chosen which will include one Priest and one Religious who will undertake training as facilitators to work with parishes and other groups in the Diocese to continue to develop Synodality in the life and mission of the Church in Ferns. This training will begin in April.

We are also currently preparing two documents one on best practice of synodality in the diocese and the second on How can we imagine the life of the Church in Ireland where people are co-responsible for the Church's mission in different ways. These documents have to be submitted by March 25<sup>th</sup> and they will be sent as part of the Irish National Synodal Team to Rome for the Synod meeting in October next. Our Holy Father Pope Francis continually reminds us that there can be no Synod without prayer. Please continue to pray for our Synodal journey.

**Thought for the Day  
First Sunday of Lent  
18th February 2024**

We need to rethink among other things the question of human power, its meaning and its limits. For our power has increased frenetically in a few decades. We have made impressive and awesome technological advances, and we have not realised that at the same time we have turned into highly dangerous beings, capable of threatening the lives of many beings and our own survival. Today it is worth repeating the ironic comment of Solovyov about an 'age which was so advanced as to be actually the last one.' We need lucidity and honesty in order to recognise in time that our power and the progress we are producing are turning against us.

***Laudate Deum 28, Pope Francis  
(Veritas Publications)***

**FORMS OF FRIDAY PENANCE  
DURING LENT**

The following are suggested as ways of fulfilling Friday penance: Abstaining from meat or some other food; Abstaining from alcoholic drink or smoking; Making a special effort at involvement in family prayer; Making a special effort to participate in Mass on Fridays; Visiting the Blessed Sacrament; Making the Stations of the Cross; Fasting from all food for a longer period than usual and perhaps giving what is saved to the needy; Helping the poor, sick, old or lonely.

***From the statement on Friday Penance  
issued by the Bishops' Conference, 2011***

**LOURDES**

**Ferns Diocesan Pilgrimage 2024**, Led by Bishop Ger Nash

Pilgrimage Director: Fr. Odhrán Furlong, Spiritual Director: Fr. Brian Broaders  
€865 pps 16th—21st May 2024

Only €200 deposit required to book, single room supplement €190.

Further details and booking form please contact Marian Pilgrimages: 01 8788159.

**MARIAN PILGRIMAGES**

**Renew our spirit of love, forgiveness and peace.**

**38-39 Pearse St., Dublin 2—01 8788159, NI (028) 95680005  
WWW.MARIAN.IE.**

**Do You Want To Fast This Lent?  
In the words of Pope Francis**

Fast from hurting words and say kind words.

Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.

Fast from anger and be filled with patience.

Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.

Fast from worries and have trust in God.

Fast from complaints; contemplate simplicity.

Fast from pressures and be prayerful.

Fast from bitterness; fill your hearts with joy.

Fast from selfishness and be compassionate.

Fast from grudges and be reconciled.

Fast from words; be silent and listen.

**Divine Mercy Conference**

RDS Dublin Saturday 24th February

To book a place on the bus,  
please contact 086 2608454.

***Sincere Sympathy***

Is extended to Margaret & Tommy Moynihan on the death of her brother Martin Purcell, Garden City, Gorey who died recently.  
R.I.P.

***May the souls of the faithful  
departed rest in peace. May God and Our  
Lady console the bereaved.***

**Ferns Prayer Group**

Will be meeting in the Pastoral Centre on  
Wednesday 21st February at 7.30pm.  
**All are very welcome**