



# The Lion



A Monthly News Sheet for St. Mark's Church, Basford

[www.stmarksbasford.co.uk](http://www.stmarksbasford.co.uk)

July 2018

At the end of May I joined a group of pilgrims discovering the Irish roots of St. Chad by spending a week on the Emerald Isle. I thought you might enjoy reading a short summary of what we saw and got up to, so I'm using this month's LION as a vehicle for it.

Having disembarked our ferry in Dublin port we travelled about half an hour south to Bray where our booked accommodation, the Royal Hotel, loomed large on approach to the northern edge of the town. After settling into our rooms we met for dinner followed by a short stroll to the local Roman Catholic church hall which had been made available to us by a most hospitable warden. We enjoyed brief introductions from each other, a short outline of the programme and a theological introduction from Bishop Michael as to how we might get the most from the pilgrimage. The programme comprised 5 main parts which related to different saints and places of interest...

## 1 - St. Brigid and Kildare

Bridgid is one of the three 'patron' saints of Ireland. She built a double monastery for men and women in Kildare around 470AD. Sadly there is no remnant of this or of any later construction; however, the whole of today's Kildare (coming from *Cill Dara* – Church of the Oak) is permeated with all things Brigid. Some scholars credit Brigid with pioneering monastic life in Ireland. Many today draw inspiration from the respect which Brigid had for all creation, her extraordinary compassion for the poor and her peacemaking abilities. We visited St. Brigid's well for a time of prayer and meditation, this off the beaten track place, was a real oasis of peace. A small group of religious sisters now manage a remarkably modern, technological and ecologically sound retreat centre called Solas Bhride. We shared a Eucharist together and enjoyed the sisters' hospitality. This centre has the most luxurious 'hermitages' I've ever seen which are available at EU50.00 per night to those seeking time out.

## 2 - St. Ciarán and Clonmacnoise

St. Kieran (to use the Anglicised version of his name) was born around 512 AD in Connacht, a town located in the northern part of Co. Roscommon. He was the son of a

carpenter and inherited a love of learning from his mother's side of the family, as his maternal grandfather had been a bard, poet, and historian. The young Kieran worked as a cattle herder. Some later believed that his work as a herdsman foreshadowed the care he would offer the many who sought his wisdom. He was educated at the monastery of Clonard, which was led by St. Finnian. Kieran quickly gained the reputation of being the most learned monk at Clonard where he studied alongside his friend and fellow student, Columcille (later to be known as Columba of Iona). Together with eight monastic brothers, he eventually settled at a location in the centre of Ireland, on the east bank of the River Shannon. Here, in the year 544AD, he founded the great monastery of Clonmacnoise. Students by the thousands came to study there, not only from Ireland, but also from England and France. Clonmacnoise became Ireland's centre of study, art, and literature. We were but one group of many visiting on the day scheduled for us yet the site coped with the numbers without feeling crowded. We had arrived, authentically, by boat having left the coach at Athlone.

## 3 - St. Patrick and Downpatrick

On our one and only sortie into Northern Ireland we visited the very impressive St. Patrick Centre in Downpatrick. We experienced a short video presentation (available in German too for our guests) which put St. Patrick into context. Above the centre on the hill stood St. Patrick's Cathedral where we met the vicar for a guided tour. After posing for a group photo outside by a large stone commemorating Patrick's burial place a lengthy walk commenced to an outlying location called Saul. Here we encountered the site where Patrick established his first church. The present building is relatively new but built in a style which reflects the site's importance and original construction.



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## 4 – Dublin

It's about 20 years since I was last in Dublin; a city far smaller than I remembered it to be. Other than the visit to the Book of Kells exhibition and Choral Evensong in the cathedral, the day was 'free' that we might explore the city at our own speed. Having decided to take the hop-on, hop-off tour bus I soon got orientated with the help of the bus tour map. Evensong was particularly memorable as the choir sung beautifully and the material chosen was super. A walk down toward the Liffey afterwards saw us all entering the oldest pub in Dublin (the Brazen Head) where we had a wholesome meal washed down with the obligatory pint or two of Guinness. Our guest there was the Archbishop of Dublin, The Rt Revd Michael Jackson (no – not the singer!) who talked to us about the implications of Brexit on the island of Ireland – quite an interesting talk too.

## 5 – Monasterboice

Here we encountered many high crosses and an example of a peculiar round tower from the 11<sup>th</sup> Century built as a defence against the Vikings. Inside the ruins stands the impressive Muiredach's High Cross (5.5 metres high), regarded as the finest high cross in the whole of Ireland. It features biblical carvings of both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible and a copy is held in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

This wonderful pilgrimage was arranged largely by The Revd Canon Robert Parsons, a member of our Nordkirche Working Group and leader of the 'Luther' pilgrimage to Germany in 2016. It was so good to see our Lutheran friends again. Now we look toward to our usual Advent gathering, this time to be held in Lichfield. I hope this event will give you a chance to meet them and in some cases, renew acquaintances.

Blessings

*Terry*

### Some Diary Dates for July

3 <sup>rd</sup>	Tuesday	7.30pm	PILGRIM (Pt 4)
4 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	7.00pm	Potteries Theological Society at Keele
7 <sup>th</sup>	Saturday	1.30pm	Garden Party & Queen Crowning
9 <sup>th</sup>	Monday	7.30pm	Men's Fellowship Mass at Porthill
10 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	7.30pm	PILGRIM (Pt 5)
12 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	7.00pm	PCC Meeting
17 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday	7.30pm	PILGRIM (Pt 6)
19 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	7.00pm	Clergy Chapter (BBQ) at Madeley
25 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	1.00pm	Baptism Preparation Evening

### Early August...

1 <sup>st</sup>	Wednesday	7.30pm	Licensing of Revd Sharon Greensmith at Chesterton
8 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	10.00am	DAC visit to our Lady Chapel
16 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday	12.30pm	Wedding

## Men's Mass & Fellowship

The next scheduled mass and fellowship (pint and pub grub) for the men of Newcastle and Stoke North Deaneries will take place (7.30pm) at St. Andrew's – Porthill, on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> July.

## Worship Services during July

1 <sup>st</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> after Trinity	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	'First Sunday' with HC
4 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
8 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup> after Trinity	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Holy Communion
11 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
15 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup> after Trinity	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Family Worship with Baptism
18 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Mary Magdalene	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Holy Communion
25 <sup>th</sup>	James (Apostle)	8.00am	Morning Prayer
		10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)
29 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup> after Trinity	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.30am	Holy Communion

## 2019 Confirmations

If you have not been confirmed and would like to know what is involved, why not have a word with one of the clergy. We hope to run a series of studies for those contemplating Confirmation straight after Christmas.



This year's Queen Crowning and Garden Party will take place on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> July. Patrick will crown Grace at 1.30pm and formally open the Garden Party at about 2.00pm. As ever, lots of help will be needed to make the day a success so please offer what you can. The weekly sheet carries the latest list of requirements.

## Food Bank

Our much-valued support to the local Food Bank continues and thank you for it! The need for basic things such as custard, fruit juice, small bags of sugar and small jars of coffee remain.

## Social Media

For all you technocrats out there... do you follow us on Twitter and Facebook? Both Basford and Wolstanton have accounts and it would be really good to get our number of followers up!

## Young Persons Mission

Our hall is being used for a training event on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> & Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July. Peter Haycock's daughter, Roz, is co-ordinating the event which will see a small number of young folk preparing to engage on special mission projects during the summer. We could do with a couple of bed spaces for one night for the girls attending; please speak to Terry or Patrick if you could offer such. There might also be an opportunity to help in the hall with an evening meals and lunch if you would like to support these young folk.