

# ST. COLMAN'S CHURCH - LARNE ROAD CARRICKFERGUS



## WINTER 2007 NEWSLETTER

Are your preparations for Christmas well underway? I'm going to have an unusual run-up to Christmas this year as I will be travelling to Toronto on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December for my mom's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December. I fly home again on late on the night of Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December arriving early on Friday. I am always late buying presents but I can make the excuse this year that I will shop in Toronto for some unusual items! Not surprisingly perhaps Christmas is even more commercialised in Toronto. Yet there is something special about Christmas time. It's a family time more so than ever for me this year. I find that hearing the Christmas story told in old and new ways in schools and churches reminds me of that Holy Family. We are reminded that there is another more profound and authentic "reason for the season". The joy of Christmas is not about receiving presents but that God blessed the world with his Son and placed him in a family just like any other, just like ours. God holds family life in high regard. May the Christmas season this year be a blessing to you and to those you love.

Mike McCann (Rector)

### DECORATION OF THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS

#### CHRISTMAS SERVICES

##### **Sunday 16 December**

- 9.00 a.m. Holy Communion - traditional language
- 10.15 a.m. All-age Christmas service
- 5.30 p.m. Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at St. John's, Ballycarry



##### **Sunday 23 December**

- 9.00 a.m. Holy Communion - traditional language
- 10.15 a.m. Service of the Word – "Christingle" service

##### **Christmas Eve, Monday 24 December**

- 11.30 p.m. Candlelit Midnight Communion

##### **Christmas Day, Tuesday 25 December**

- 9.00 a.m. Holy Communion - traditional language
- 10.15 a.m. Informal Family Service

(You are encouraged to come casually dressed to this short 30 minute service and children are invited to bring one of their presents with them to show us.)

#### FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

St. John's, Ballycarry, is the church with which St. Colman's is grouped. From time to time we like to do things together. For the last two years we have held our carol service there. It has proved to be such a wonderful setting for this event that we are going to hold our carol service there again this year on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December at 5.30pm. It is a beautiful building which lends itself perfectly to a carol service. Following the service we will enjoy refreshments in the church. St. John's is easy to find, however if you need transport that can be arranged. Please contact Billy Stewart if you require transport.

#### CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

On the Sunday before Christmas this year we are going to have a "Christingle" service.

A "Christingle" is a symbolic object used in advent services in churches of many Christian denominations. It has its origins in the Moravian Church, with the first recorded use, in Germany, in 1747.

This is the story of the first Christingle:

One Christmas time back in 1747 at a town in Germany, Pastor John sat at home in front of his fire. He was thinking how he could explain the love of Jesus, and what Christmas really meant to the children in the church. He decided to prepare a simple symbol to help make the message of Christmas fresh and lively for them. Pastor John gave each child a lighted candle wrapped in a red ribbon, with a prayer that said "Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these dear children's hearts, that theirs like Thine become". This was the first ever Christingle service.

Much later, this simple candle was replaced by a more elaborate Christingle which is rich in symbolism. In the service on the morning of December 23<sup>rd</sup> we will make Christingles and explore the meaning of the symbolism which we hope will help us all, adults and children, to think in a new way about the love of God for us.

Decoration of the church for Christmas will take place from 11.00am on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> December. All gifts of materials for decorating the church and any help with decorating would be much appreciated.

### **CHRISTMAS GIFTS**

At Christmas time we encourage the children to contribute a gift which will be given to a needy child. These will be distributed by the Rev. Don Gamble in his work with ROC in deprived areas in North Belfast and West Belfast. These gifts will be collected at the service on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December. We ask that the gifts are wrapped, a tag is attached on which is written whether they are for a boy or a girl and for what age the gift would be suitable.

### **EDEN OUTREACH**

We continue to develop the outreach from St. Colman's to the village of Eden. A Drop-In continues to operate every Wednesday from 12noon to 4pm in the Orange Hall guided by Victor Latimer and his group of volunteers. Those who call in can enjoy a cup of tea or a bite of lunch, companionable chat, a prayer and some simple entertainment.

The Outreach team are organising a Carol service in Eden Village on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm. Please join us on that evening for some Festive cheer. Refreshments will be served afterwards in the Orange Hall and there will most likely be a special visitor for the children!

Alongside this a new opportunity is available to help the outreach to Eden. See "Christians In Action."

### **COMPASSION**

Compassion is a leading Christian child development ministry seeking to release children from poverty in Jesus' name. It is Christ centred, child focused and church based.

Sarah McCann and I were privileged to be able present Compassion's 'A Life in a Day' to the congregation during the service on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October. We told everyone about the children we sponsor, why we took them on and how worthwhile we have found it. We showed a short video that demonstrated the change in the circumstances of a young African woman called Jacqui, who has been sponsored through their programme. Compassion works through local Church projects in 24 of some of the poorest countries of the world ensuring the children enrolled receive healthcare, education, social care, vocational training and spiritual nourishment. Sponsors give £18 a month (60p a day – the price of a can of Coke!) and are encouraged to build up a relationship with their child through prayer and the writing and receiving of letters.

We were delighted that many from the congregation signed up as interested in sponsoring a child. Subsequently 12 children have been sponsored as a result. This is a fantastic response and we would like to thank the Rector for giving us this opportunity and all the people who responded so generously. If you missed this opportunity and would like to know more, please take a leaflet from the back of the Church or contact Sarah or me for more details.

Gina Hibbert

### **"CHRISTIANS IN ACTION"**

Following some of our young people being involved in "Streetreach" at Summer Madness there was desire to begin a social action project locally. So to complement the outreach in the Orange Hall we are embarking on a new venture C.I.A. (Christians In Action). If people think that churches are just a special kind of club for those whose hobby is religion then they won't be able to identify with it. If we come alongside people with practical help then they will begin to ask why we are helping. This is a natural place to talk about our desire that they would know God's love and that we want to show that in a practical way.

Our hope is that we will be able to be of practical help to people in Eden Village. We may tidy gardens, help with some painting or whatever else comes our way. Gary Baxter is leading this work. Experiences on "Streetreach" in Tigers Bay in Belfast and in spending two weeks in Romania last summer have shown Gary how God uses practical service to open people's hearts to talk about what is really going on in their lives. This then gives those gifted in sharing the good news to speak to them about God's love for them. God has given Gary a great passion for this and he has some of the young people on board already but he needs some more adult helpers. The anticipated commitment is 2-3 hours once a month. Speak to Gary in church or he can be contacted on 07707880101.

### **YOUTH GROUP**

The church Youth Fellowship is going very well at the moment. It has strong leadership team headed by Ashleigh Stewart. It meets on Sunday evenings from 7pm to 8.45pm for all those in secondary school and those from 3<sup>rd</sup> form up can stay on until 9.30pm for further discussion time. All young people of the appropriate age are welcome. A weekend away in planned for the end of January. A youth band is being developed which meets on Friday afternoon from 4.45pm to 6pm. Contact Ashleigh for further information about any aspect of the youth fellowship's activities (93362145).

## **BRAZIL CONNECTION**

St. Colman's Church along with Gateway Church in Carrickfergus and Cregagh Community Church in Belfast have developed relationships with churches in Brazil. We have visited them and they have visited us. Brazilian churches have a great number of young people who desire to serve God in the mission field and they have a great heart to plant churches in Europe. For probably two years now a number of leaders from these three churches have been working on developing a "Missions Training School" in Northern Ireland.

From January 2008 we are piloting such a school. 11 young Brazilians will be coming to Northern Ireland to be trained in Missions. They will improve their English through English classes, they will receive teaching on various aspects of Mission work and we will organise opportunities for them to do some practical mission tasks locally.

The students will arrive in Mid January and will be live in local homes until the end of May. In June they will be doing a month long mission placement in Portugal. St. Colman's will be hosting 4 of these young people. We are grateful to those who have agreed to look after them in their homes. These young people will be part of our congregation and so please make them welcome.

If you would like to support this project we need you prayers and there will, of course, be some expenses so if you would like to support it financially then please speak to the rector.

It should be an exciting and stimulating addition to our church life.

## **GENERAL VESTRY**

In accordance with the administrative structures of the Church of Ireland there is an annual Easter meeting, historically in our case 10 days after Easter. Each year this meeting reviews the church's accounts, elects the select vestry and makes appointments to various positions. Also every three years some important additional appointments are made. Those elected to these further positions will hold them for three years. 2008 is such a year.

Therefore in 2008 the parish will have to elect Diocesan Synodsmen and Parochial Nominators. The Diocesan Synodsmen represent the parish at the diocesan annual meeting which takes place each October.

When a rector leaves a parish a successor must be found. In order to do this the bishop calls together a board of nomination which comprises the bishop, 4 clergy from the Diocese, one lay representative of the Diocese and 4 representatives of the parish. The parish representatives are called Parochial Nominators. In our case St. Colman's has three representatives and St. John's one representative. This board will decide on any new rector. So it is a very significant position to hold.

In January each year all those over 18 have the opportunity to register themselves so that they can vote at the annual meeting to decide all the above positions. Once registered this remains in place until a person moves away or otherwise indicates that they wish no longer to be registered. If you haven't registered take the opportunity to do so in January 2008.

## **PARISH REGISTERS**

### Funerals

21 September 2007	Margaret Gillespie
4 October 2007	Lawson Rush
5 October 2007	Jack Graham

## **FURTHER DIARY DATES**

Sunday	2 December	7.00pm	Contemporary service
Sunday	13 January	7.00pm	Contemporary service

## **NORMAL PATTERN OF SERVICES**

<b>Every Wednesday</b>	10.30am	Holy Communion (BCP form 1 - traditional language)
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### **Sunday mornings**

Every Sunday	9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP form 1 - traditional language)
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1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month	10.15am	Holy Communion (BCP form 2 – modern language)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month	10.15am	Morning Prayer
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month	10.15am	All-age service
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month	10.15am	Service of the word
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month	10.15am	Morning Prayer

### **Sunday evenings (September to June)**

One Sunday a month	7.00pm	Contemporary Service
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## CONTACT DETAILS

Rector	Mike McCann	93362387
Curate-Assistant	Billy Stewart	93362145
Rector's Churchwarden	Brian Shields	93365393
People's Churchwarden	Isabell Stewart	93362145
Honorary Parish Secretary	Angela Cole	28277551
Honorary Parish Treasurer	Alan Hibbert	93329160
FWO (envelopes)	Fred Cole	93364209
Gift-Aid secretary	Chris Sturgess	93362741
Pastoral visitors' co-ordinator	Alison Inch	93366789

## FROM THE TREASURER

Below you will find a chart showing the amount of money included in each of this year's freewill offering envelopes, up to 18 November 2007. I would ask you to check that the amount attributed to your envelope matches the amount you have given.

This figure will also help you to plan your freewill offering for the remaining weeks of this year. While the government's stated rate of inflation is running at 2-3%, I am sure you will realise that many of the costs we incur in our daily lives have increased at a greater rate than this. This is true for the costs of running the church also.

At the moment, the increase in our freewill offering, compared with last year, does not meet the increase in our costs. I would therefore ask you to consider if you would be willing to increase your level of giving to God's work in St Colman's, and maybe make suitable adjustments before the end of the year.

Alan Hibbert

<b>Env No</b>	<b>Total to 18/11/07</b>	<b>Env No</b>	<b>Total to 18/11/07</b>	<b>Env No</b>	<b>Total to 18/11/07</b>	<b>Env No</b>	<b>Total to 18/11/07</b>	<b>Env No</b>	<b>Total to 18/11/07</b>
1	15	41	255	81	90	121	400	161	1380
2	10	42	133	82	225	122	255.50	162	120
3	225	43	80	83	72.50	123	Nil	163	685
4	240	44	75	84	107	124	100	164	225
5	440	45	86	85	100.50	125	120	165	Nil
6	57	46	150	86	Nil	126	245	166	230
7	90	47	144	87	15	127	67	167	20
8	50	48	61	88	10	128	215	168	240
9	90	49	80	89	Nil	129	Nil	169	60
10	180	50	59	90	31	130	Nil	170	180
11	240	51	151	91	94	131	Nil	171	120
12	Nil	52	146.10	92	37.50	132	Nil	172	Nil
13	88	53	32.25	93	90	133	Nil	173	225
14	150	54	465	94	90	134	Nil	174	280
15	204	55	Nil	95	335	135	370	175	470
16	118.30	56	283	96	Nil	136	109	176	Nil
17	235	57	180	97	230	137	Nil	177	100
18	506	58	550	98	320	138	250	178	Nil
19	Nil	59	15	99	470	139	Nil	179	248
20	400	60	Nil	100	163	140	460	180	113
21	460	61	146.85	101	55	141	Nil	181	210
22	43	62	Nil	102	Nil	142	235	182	140
23	125	63	75	103	86	143	Nil	183	70
24	200	64	Nil	104	111.50	144	116	184	61.10
25	40	65	35	105	58	145	230	185	Nil
26	39	66	160	106	306	146	50	186	100
27	158	67	88	107	89	147	325	187	Nil
28	98	68	150	108	100	148	63	188	10
29	245	69	85	109	113	149	30	189	Nil
30	195	70	234	110	405.29	150	54	190	75
31	205	71	852	111	138	151	290	191	Nil
32	5	72	Nil	112	110	152	Nil	192	354
33	5	73	405	113	80	153	120	193	Nil
34	73	74	Nil	114	41.50	154	Nil	194	94
35	58	75	Nil	115	100	155	Nil	195	191
36	260	76	Nil	116	141	156	90	196	207
37	66	77	43	117	235	157	400	197	Nil
38	42	78	85.50	118	135	158	190	198	200
39	114	79	Nil	119	185	159	65	199	500
40	40	80	253	120	100	160	20	200	Nil