

Eoghan Rua Goes Strictly

Oh what a night!

What a night of entertainment the recent Eoghan Rua does Strictly event provided for the huge crowd that attended in the Magherabuoy House Hotel. There was a great buzz

in the room from start to finish as the club's dancers performed their routines to an appreciative audience. Such was the superb level of performance from each and every couple, it was clear that the dancers put in endless hours of practice over the previous weeks. Every aspect of the evening's

entertainment was cheered to the rafters by the hugely engaged audience of several hundred. It really was a memorable night for the club, superbly organised by our fund raising sub-committee, brilliantly supported by the local community and all made possible by the wonderful dancers



In the audience: Roslin Larkin, Maura Hickey & Cliodhna Rae



Richard Carey presides over the Judges



Jill Mullan and Vincent Maloney take second place



The lovely Sarah Travers, and Damien McLaughlin are the hosts.

And there's More

The next big event being organised by the club is just around the corner, 'Clash of the Codes - Fight Night'. This is a joint venture with Coleraine Rugby Club, with 'boxers' from both

clubs clashing in a number of bouts. Each club will have male and female 'boxers' going toe to toe in essentially 'fun filled fights'. The event will be held in a huge marquee at the Rugby Club on Saturday 9th April with tickets selling out fast.



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The Magazine of Portstewart Parish, St Mary's Star of the Sea.
Stella Maris
 Issue 48 Easter 2016
 Easter Blessings to all.



Inside this issue

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Happy Easter



Happy Easter!

The parish family has quite a few celebrations going on right now. There is the celebration of that glorious time, Easter. The welcome break from school and work. The joy of knowing that winter is over.

Easter is at the heart of our faith and our celebrations of faith every Sunday. Then there's the celebration of the Jubilee of Mercy, lasting until 20th November (and then we become merciless again!) As well as prayers and reflections on the last Friday of each month in the parish at 2.30pm there are events on an joint-parish basis such as the session in Ballymoney Parish Centre on Thursday 9th June at 7.30pm facilitated by Jim Deeds. Jim hopes, by the end of it, that people will leave with a deeper sense of what mercy is. Saturday 9th July is the centenary of the opening of our church of St Mary's, Star of the Sea. Bishop Noel Treanor will celebrate Mass with us the following Sunday at 3.00pm followed by a reception in the Parish Centre.

There are so many dates associated with the Centenary that we have included a flier in this copy of the Stella Maris.

It is good to have so much to be thankful for and to celebrate!

Father Austin

Lent: Springtime of the Spirit

Each year the trees give us a lesson in renewal.
First the bud, then the blossom, and finally the shoot.
Spring dresses the trees in a new robe,
And makes them young again.
But this is possibly only because in autumn
They let go of their old leaves,
And in between endured a period of nakedness.
Lent is in the springtime of the spirit.
Lord help us not to be afraid to let go of old habits,
And to face our spiritual poverty,
In order that you may renew us, and so at Easter
We will feel young again in our discipleship.

Flor McCarthy

These words form a Post-Communion Reflection read on one of our special Sundays when the children, joined by their parents and siblings, attended Mass in St Mary's Star of the Sea, in preparation for their First Holy Communion day. The reflection says that, 'Spring dresses the trees in a new robe.' And in this way we look forward to seeing all the boys and girls in their lovely outfits appear in our next issue of Stella Maris. But remember, there is one other reflection:

Nobody says, 'So many shopping days to Easter.'
No costly gifts. No monetary loss.
Easter seems too easy.
It is – if you forget the cross.

Again, we thank our contributors. As usual we can be reached Outside the Chapel Gates, or through the parish office, secretary@portstewartparish.co.uk, telephone 70833042. Or, contact me direct, farrenpt@outlook.com, telephone 70832938. Eugene, Adrian, Aaron and I wish everyone all God's blessings.

Patricia Farren

Holy Week in Portstewart

PALM SUNDAY

Blessing of palms in lower Marian Hall followed by procession into church at all Masses.

Monday

Morning Mass at 9.30am

Tuesday

Morning Mass at 9.30am

Wednesday

Morning Mass at 9.30am

THE EASTER TRIDUUM

Holy Thursday

Morning Prayer at 9.30am

Parishioners are invited to the Mass of the Oils at 11am in the Cathedral

Mass of the Lord's Supper 7.30pm

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 10.30pm

Good Friday

Morning Prayer at 9.30am

Liturgy (including Reading of the Passion, Veneration of the Cross and distribution of Holy Communion) at 3.00pm

Stations of the Cross at 7.00pm

Holy Saturday

Morning Prayer at 9.30am

Easter Vigil at 9.00pm

Easter Sunday

Masses at 9.00am and 11.00am

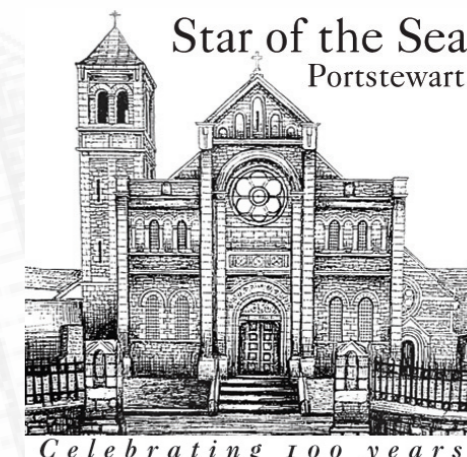
Parish Mission: 21 – 27th May

Celebrating the centenary of the building of St Mary's Star of the Sea should include celebrating our Catholic Christian faith. As we approach the actual centenary on 9th July this year, the parish will have a week of Mission given by the Ember Team of the Vincentian Congregation (the Congregation of the Missions) from 21 to 27th May. The Ember Team is led by a lay director and consists of both priests and lay people, all of whom are trained in the Vincentian tradition. The Parish Mission will be a time for reflection, celebration, renewal, outreach, re-thinking and growth and the Ember Mission Team will be offering liturgies, workshops, educational programmes and information sessions, helping us all to be a stronger community of faith. Please try to make the events of the Parish Mission your priority booking for that week. Take part as much as you can in what is planned. Save the dates.

St Vincent de Paul was born in war-torn

France in 1581. His experience of the spiritual, social and moral conditions of the people around him led him to pioneer works that would improve their quality of life. His congregation, usually known as Vincentians, were actually named by him, The Congregation of the Mission. In 1646 he sent a small group of his Irish associates to Limerick and Cashel. For more than two centuries now, Vincentian mission teams have been giving parish missions in Ireland on an ongoing basis as part of the Catholic community's way of renewing and deepening its faith tradition.

One of the very strong characteristics of our parish is that of priests and lay people working together. The Ember Team reflect this in their membership and their approach to the week of Mission. For all those involved already in various parish activities should look forward to this as a week of refreshment and renewal. For those who have been away from the practice



of their faith, or from any contact with the Catholic community here, apart from reading this parish magazine, this is a time to open your mind and your heart to God's great mercy and love. You will be the better for it. We have God's word for that!

Fr Austin

The Christian Message of Peace

As we celebrate the centenary of our parish church, we do so in a period commemorating many other significant events in the history of our country. When the new Star of the Sea church was opened with great pomp, it was within two weeks of the great WW1 Battle on the Somme commencing. It was also within three months of the rebellion in Dublin, which brought a new dimension to the struggle for Home Rule.

Both events dominated the news throughout the rest of 1916. The battle of the Somme will be forever remembered for the huge scale of casualties which it caused, especially on its opening day when many thousands of men from the Ulster Division were killed or wounded. Between then and November when the battle ended many thousands more would be added to the dreadful list. The arrival of a telegram boy at homes in Ulster was a signal for great mourning at the loss of yet another soldier on a foreign field. Today, many families in Ireland, North or South, have a relative who served in WW1 and so the whole island was touched by its tragedies.

The rebellion in Dublin although on a much lesser scale in terms of casualties, brought considerable destruction to the city and death to over 400, many innocent civilians were caught up in the fighting. But the execution of the rebellions leaders quickly changed the political mood in many parts of the country and paved the way for further violence and to the establishment of the Irish Free State in twenty-six counties five years later.

Both wars have left indelible marks on Ireland. While we can acknowledge the bravery of those who fought and died, these, and indeed all wars, underline the terrible cost of such bloodshed, not least the pain caused to those left behind at the loss of a loved one.

Both events also raise profound questions about the morality of violence. Yet given all the wars before and since we never seem to learn the obvious lesson that there are better ways of resolving conflict. The profound Christian messages of loving our neighbour, of turning the other cheek, and of doing good to those who persecute us, is frequently preached, but too often ignored.

As we commemorate and celebrate our own Star of the Sea centenary perhaps we might especially member those who were suffering on battle fields at home and abroad as our church was being opened and pray fervently that the Christian approach will increasingly be followed when it comes too resolving differences.

Sean Farren



St Colum's pupils thoughts on the Season

A time for sacrifice

Spring has sprung and the freezing winter weather is no more. A time of new beginnings, new life but most of all a time of prayer.

All around flowers are blooming, trees are growing and animals are being born. Leading up to Easter is Lent, a time of prayer and of sacrifice. To me Lent is about patience and making the right choices to avoid temptation. During Lent Jesus went into the desert where he was tempted by the devil, but he stayed loyal to God. We can try to live like Jesus by making a sacrifice like he did. Doing this can help us understand how hard it actually is to make a sacrifice and makes us appreciate Jesus even more.

Jesus wants us to live like him and in order to do that we have to understand what he did for us. We have to try to do things as he did and try to pray as he did. Jesus loved us so much that he died for us so the least we can do is try to be more like him during this time of prayer.

Easter is a time of brightness. Spring time is here, brightness surrounds us; longer days, new growth, new birth, birds returning from migration and animals waking up from hibernation, and it is truly amazing and beautiful. Let us try to keep Jesus as the brightness in our lives this Easter.

Edward Mullholland P7

St Patrick

Long ago a boy was born in Wales and his name was Patrick. He was born in 387. Some years later he was captured by a man called Niall of the nine hostages. He brought Patrick to Ireland and sold him to a farmer. The farmer's name was Patrick had to look after pigs and sheep on a hill called Slemish. Every night Patrick prayed to God. One night Patrick heard a voice, God's voice. God said, 'Go back to Wales. There is a ship waiting for you in the port of Waterford.' When Patrick got to the port, the captain did not let Patrick on to the ship because the wolfhounds on board went mad. Then Patrick said, 'If you let me on to the boat I will calm the wolfhounds. Then the captain said, 'If the wolfhounds do not calm down you will be thrown over board.' The wolfhounds did calm. She ship went to France. Later, Patrick went to Wales. It was night time when he was praying. He heard God's voice again. This time God said. 'Go back to Ireland and tell the pagans about God.' Patrick did as God said and he told them about God using a three leaf shamrock. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Today we remember Patrick on the 17th of March.

Teresa Passmore P.4

Jesus has risen

*Three days after he was crucified
Jesus rose from the dead.
The women were the first to see it.
"He's alive, praise the Lord," they said.
They rushed off to tell the disciples,
To tell them what they had seen,
But they did not believe them.
So John and Peter went to see.
John ran faster than Peter
so he got there first.
When he went into the tomb
He had a great shock.
What the women had said was true.
Jesus was alive from the dead.
They rushed back to tell the others
Singing praises to God in their heads
But poor Mary Magdalene was crying.
She just could not understand.
Then she caught sight of a man.
Maybe he knew what happened.
"Mary, it's me" the man cried.
And that's when Mary realised
Jesus was truly alive.*

Anna Campbell P7



Outside the Chapel Gates

With Eugene Kelly



Catholic Schools Week

Once again the school assembly, as part of Catholic Schools Week, was very well attended. The theme in this Year of Mercy was 'Grandparents are the face of God's mercy to their grandchildren' It was great to see the delight of the children seeing their Grandparent, not to mention the delight of the Grandparents at seeing their grandchildren.



Lorna O'Brien and her granny Olivia

Ireland

Ireland is my country, it's always in my dreams,
Its people and its beauty, it's the land of the greens.

This is the land that reared me, I'll have you all to know.
I love all the seasons, the sun, the rain and the snow.

I have travelled very extensively from the east until the west.
And of all the countries I have seen, by far, Ireland is the best.

I will not overrate it as that would be unfair.
Just check the map of Ireland and find that little bear.

We offer all our visitors a welcome warm and kind
And if you care to visit us, that's exactly what you'll find.

So I'll make my way homeward and have a well earned rest
And don't forget the cliché, Ireland is the best

Bridie Bradley

World book day

There is nothing like a good book, no matter what age you are. How better to get our children interest in expanding their love of reading than getting to know the main characters in the book. On World Book Day the children and staff in St Colum's dressed up as some of those characters in order to stimulate the love of reading. And it was great fun.



The 1950's

One of the strategies used in the delivery of the history curriculum in our schools is to use role play. Recently the P4 class dressed up in period costume of the 1950s to get a better understanding of what it was like to go to school in that era. I'm sure that the experiences of many of their grandparents were called upon to help them be as authentic in their dress as possible.



St Colum's P4 pupils in 1950s dress

The Travelling Service

Another highlight of the New Year was the turnout for the travelling service. Despite cold, wet and windy weather parishioners from the four main churches turned out in their numbers. We all enjoyed a cup of tea afterwards, renewing old friendships and meeting new parishioners.



Jeff & Jean Philip with Vera Graham and Sean Farren who took part in the Travelling Service.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

"Yours must be a work of Love, of kindness, you must give your time, your talents, yourselves. The poor person is a unique person of God's fashioning with an inalienable right to respect. You must not be content with tiding the poor over the poverty crisis: you must study their condition and the injustice which brought about such poverty, with the aim of a long term improvement."

Just as Frederic Ozanam and his friends did when establishing our Society in 1833, Vincentians today still find their inspiration and encouragement to care for others in the love and sacrifice of Christ for mankind.

Portstewart Conference has been in existence for over 100 years and the aims of the conference remain the same. Where there is need, the members of the Conference will seek out those who are in need and those who are disadvantaged and offer them their friendship and support. Through regular person to person contact members seek to establish a sincere and caring relationship based on respect for the individual or family and help them to help themselves. Need is the only criterion used in deciding whether or not Society support should be offered. There are no double standards in our giving. Friendship and support are available to everyone who is in need or who is disadvantaged, regardless of race, colour, creed, class or group in the community to which they belong. Prejudice, whether political, moral or personal has no place in the work of our Society.

Visitation is the cornerstone of our Society. Confidentiality is always respected and maintained. Creating friendship, listening sympathetically and avoiding judgemental and patronising attitudes are key aspects of visitation. Advice is offered only when requested and the temptation to tell people what to do is resisted. The manner of our giving is gentle and ensures that people do not feel unworthy because they need help. The dignity of the individual is paramount. The support offered, practical or material, is never seen as a substitute for

a person's statutory entitlement. It is always supplementary to it. Members strive continually for the rights of those in need and for those who are disadvantaged. The Society, as an organisation, speaks out both publicly and privately on behalf of those in need of social justice.

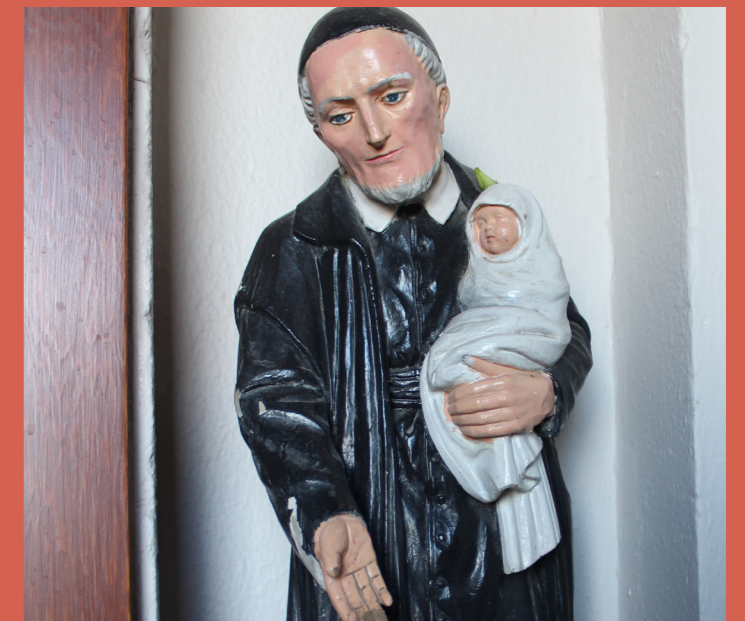
In our community there is no group more aware of social injustice than the young people in our schools. As an organisation which owes its existence to the spirit, courage and enterprise of young people, The Society of St Vincent de Paul continually seeks to renew those fundamental qualities through ongoing recruitment of young people. In response to this very strong and vibrant junior conferences have been established in our local schools.

No work of charity is foreign to our Society hence the wide variety of special works and other support services offered by SVP. These include clothing shops, holiday homes, employment programmes, home management, furniture stores, and after school services. Links have been established to support the work of SVP in third world countries apart from responding to human and environmental crises.

None of the work the Society would be possible were it not for the support and generosity of the people in our Parish community. Since its establishment, just after the turn of the century, the people of Portstewart have seen fit to contribute on a regular basis to the work done in their name. As a Conference we wish to thank you for your continued support.

"Serving our neighbour for the love of God and promoting the dignity of mankind cannot be achieved by second-rate and sub-standard performance. Only the best is good enough and it will not be achieved by good intentions. Every member has an obligation in conscience to take all necessary measures to equip himself or herself for Christian and Vincentian service."

Eugene Kelly



What did you do in the war Daddy?

Elections and commemorations are very much in the news at the moment, prompting some reflections from those who see themselves as at the cutting edge .

The 1916 Rising commemorations bring to mind a question that, in the past, many fathers may have had to answer. And that question is: 'What did you do in the war, Daddy?'

My own father, if the family are to believe him, took on the Black and Tans.

But, if we are to believe my mother's version of events, he and a few neighbours blocked the road by cutting down a tall tree in an attempt to impede the Tans progress. They then lay behind the ditch, smoking cigarettes, waiting for the lorries to arrive. To their dismay nobody showed up.

My father-in-law's outburst over a very vocal Sunday lunch was to inform his adult children that he had seen off three wars in his day, WW1, the War of Independence, and WW2, and therefore knew a thing or two.

'And, what did you do, Dad?' they all chorused. A lad of 15, he stole a telegraph boy's bicycle from outside the GPO, thereby slowing up communications with London. That shut them up, good and proper.

And, of course, we had our own Troubles here in the North. There was an incident when our house was petrol bombed, which made it into the news. The following day the children achieved

celebrity status at St Colum's. A week later when the novelty had worn off, my young son asked: 'Mum, when are we going to be bombed again?' Celebrity had gone to the boy's head.

And then there were the many elections, and some of us got involved in canvassing. It was the 1973 election following one the worst periods in our history, which eventually led to the Sunningdale agreement, that saw me knocking doors for the first time. In a last ditch effort to get the vote out, we drove half way up a mountain side to call on two elderly sisters who were reluctant to exercise the franchise. Black from chimney smoke, they rarely, if ever left the house, although that didn't stop them having some very strong views. They listened to the news on the radio, they told us, and were of the opinion that our men – as compared with the other side – were never interviewed on the wireless. No. They were interrogated.

We left that evening, not with two votes in the bag, but with a miraculous medal to be delivered to the candidate. Good news was to follow. On election morning news came through that Nellie and Bridie had sent to the well for water to wash themselves. A good indicator that they were coming out to vote, and a fair omen for the day that was in.

Then, there was the time our daughter stood for election a Belfast constituency. Her canvas was going fine until, walking

down a garden path she met the opposition candidate walking up to knock the same door, a broad grin on his face when he recognized her from her posters. Being polite, he stretched out his hand to shake hers. She declined the outstretched hand. What she hadn't noticed was his handler sitting on a wall further up observing the scene. Until she heard him call down to his mate: 'Move on Mickie. Save your hond, for knocking doors, big mon.'

On another occasion, we were on a canvas and ventured into uncharted territory. I took one side of the street, my friend took the other. He knocked on the first door, the second and the third, but found nobody home. He knocked on the next. The door seemed to be on the latch. He pushed it in slightly, hoping to announce his presence. Out walked a goat.

Now, when I think of those days, and I think about Nellie and Bridie, and all the other supporters, who, back in 1973 believed their vote could bring peace and partnership. It makes me sad to think of all the lost years and all the lost lives it has taken for that same message to finally sink home.

Patricia Farren



Let the Spirit Move You

A number of children in our parish have always attended schools other than the local Catholic and Integrated primary schools, with the result that, in the past, it was difficult for the parents to arrange for their children to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. For some years now we have been offering to help the parents to prepare these children for the Sacraments. I have found this a very worthwhile ministry and also a rewarding and enjoyable opportunity to work with the children. However, it is quite a commitment for one person to undertake alone. This year Margaret Rooney very kindly volunteered to take the role over, and has done a great job with three Primary 4 children and two Primary 7s. (These are typical numbers for each year.) With her fresh view of the work, she has suggested that it is time to get properly organised, and has even offered to undertake a full review and

prepare a viable plan.

At the moment, we start the P4 group at Hallowe'en and spend the time up to Christmas on prayer, basic elements of our faith and our relationship with those around us and with God, who loves us and wants to be our friend. After Christmas we move on to more detailed teaching about the Eucharist and also prepare the children for First Reconciliation, based on our call to 'live like Jesus'. The P7s start after Christmas and we aim to remind them of the work done earlier and to introduce the idea of them taking over responsibility for their own commitment in Confirmation; we study the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives and discuss the Confirmation ceremony in detail.

We feel that these themes could be split up and taught by several different people, which would mean a much smaller commitment for each person, and also give the children a broader

experience of personal faith and practice. Margaret and I plan to draw up separate schemes of work for each element. Obviously each 'teacher' would be able to rely as much as they wished on the materials provided, but we would hope that each would feel free to make them their own, as the Spirit moves them. We hope that some of you will feel the Spirit moving you to help with this work. If you would like to be kept up to date with our progress, please give me a ring; you won't be committing yourself to anything at this stage! You don't need to be a teacher, although we have nothing against teachers, of course. Passing on the faith is a key responsibility for us all as Catholics and from my own experience, nothing clarifies your faith like talking about it to children. Give it a go!

Sally Andrew

Seeing Things Anew

It is the first Sunday after New Year and I am feeling the effects of a fortnight (ok, it's more like a month) of overeating and under-exercising. So my waistline and I are totally up for swapping the usual 11am Sunday mass for the annual 'Travelling Service'. Eldest son is less enthusiastic, but in the name of tradition he is soon persuaded.

The Travelling Service was dreamt up by 'The Portstewart Friendship Group'. Formed in 2003, they are interdenominational and represent the four churches in the town. They meet to pray and organise events aimed at promoting Christian unity. The annual travelling service is one of their many successes.

It is always held on the first Sunday after New Year and the travelling congregation visit the four churches around the promenade area. It is a short walking distance really (hardly enough to burn off a single Quality Street) and the whole thing is over in under an hour. The service itself, involves the singing of a few carols or hymns and readings from scripture. Refreshments are served in the Town Hall afterwards and although many choose not to stay for this, I feel it is an important and special part of the service. I like to think we are breaking bread together, although it is usually a custard cream.

My family have taken part in the service since it began. We didn't plan to go, in truth we just forgot about the change in mass times (announced in great big bold font across the bulletin). In our ignorance we pitched up for 11am mass only to be told it wasn't on but that if we hung around we could catch the end of the travelling service. So we did, and I have to say, I loved it. I love it more and more each year. I love what it represents, what it tries to do and I have no doubt that The Holy Spirit has a part to play in it all.

The kids seem to enjoy it too, they especially like getting a free pass to nosey around the other churches. Youngest son loves to spot the tiny stuffed choir-mice which decorate Agherton Church of Ireland at Christmastime. His older brother reminds him, as we set out, that he "can't wait to get to the church that has the radiators for your feet". I smile to myself, knowing that he must be referring to the heated pipes than run the length of the kneelers in the Presbyterian church.

First stop is The Methodist church at Heathmount. Everyone squeezes in and a Christmas carol sees us off to a cheery start.



Having a cup of tea in the Town Hall

I suppose it is a little pilgrimage of sorts, and there is a great community feel to it. Strangers chat as our human caravan moves along the street. We make for a peculiar blend of people and must look to onlookers a little bit like a happy carnival minus the sunshine. There are young parents negotiating buggies, women hooking arms and sharing umbrellas, teenagers hunched, hands deep in pockets and looking a little awkward and cold as they talk to each other. There are 'suited and booted' elders, shaking hands and wishing 'Happy New Year' and loads of wee ones too, often trying out their new santa-supplies.

Next stop just across the road is Portstewart Presbyterian church. Volume increasing as we chat politely along the way, our ranks, swelling steadily with tardy latecomers who have slept in. Along the way our kids duck and dive and succeed in escaping me at the earliest opportunity. I have to scan the room upon entering, to make sure that they have arrived, relieved to finally spot them on my radar squashed together in a pew way up at the front.

As I shuffled my way forward I became aware of many eyes following me and of knowing nods in the direction of the boys. I mistook this attention for admiration, and indeed I felt proud of them as I made my way to join them, my pride was quickly turned to anxiety as I began to notice agitation on the face of Eldest son. He was clearly struggling to control his anger at his young siblings. I managed to reach them just as the argument was becoming physical. To my horror I discovered the root of his grievance. The brothers had pulled off, not only their coats, hats and gloves but, much to their big brothers disgust, they had also shed their shoes AND socks.

There they were, delighted and defiantly warming their cold pink toes on the heavy warm pipes!

As soon as I got within poking distance, and their Dad could whisper a few threats concerning the confiscation of Playstation controllers, the matter was resolved. Mortification soon subsided, helped by the forgiving and amused smiles of all those lucky enough to have a ringside seat.

Always the last stop on this tour is our very own St Mary's Star of the Sea. Here it is that I find my pride and dignity repaired.

As we sit in our usual Sunday morning seats I discover that things really are not 'usual' to me. In fact, everything seems different, better. With my new eyes I look about the church; the rose window and the stained glass is breathtakingly beautiful, the white marble of the altar stretches wider than ever, the arched ceiling is surely higher than it was last Sunday and the golden tabernacle must have been polished up especially for today. The Christmas crib takes pride of place and the figure of the child Jesus seems to beckon each visitor through the doors. I sit there, happy, taking in the splendour of it all.

I muse to myself; yes, we really do share so many similarities with our neighbouring churches but there is so much here too which is special and unique to us.

As we sing the final hymn together I feel real joy, and when we spill out onto The Crescent I am filled with hope for 2016. Just then, Youngest son takes my hand and with a big smile announces clearly "The next church is definitely the best one out of them all Mum, because the next church gives out juice and biscuits!

I smile and my mind quickly turns to custard creams.

Christine Donaghy

Christenings at Star of the Sea



Lara Clark (left) and Clara McAnaw (right)



Emily McGowan and James Armstrong – 12/09/15
Frances Nelms (from left: Frances Haughey, Chris Nelms, Mary Nelms, John Haughey, Baby Margaret Frances Nelms, and brother Dylan Nelms) Grandparents Jimmy and Margaret Haughey



Logan Lee Davies – Parents Linda and Lee



Louise McCullagh

The Miracle of Growing Orchids

The "Coleraine Chronicle" described me as an "expert" in growing orchids on the basis of one talk. I'm not. Orchids (only phalaenopsis so far) to grow for me and this is what I do (and don't do!) Once a fortnight allow them to stand in tepid water overnight – then lift them out of the water and allow to drip dry. Do not let them sit for days in water – the roots will rot and the plant will die. They like a bright, warm spot not in direct

sunlight. North facing parochial houses are ideal. When the flowers begin to fade, bin them, and when the last flower has gone from the flowering stem, cut it off either as close to the base as you can, or, if you want another set of flowers, cut down as far as the next node (a visible joint on the stem, sometimes with a bud). Happy orchids have fat, healthy roots coming out from the bottom of the

pot. Rejoice! They are not asking to be re-potted. Relax! Happy orchids have aerial roots. Rejoice and relax! Do not tidy these up by cutting them off. Rainwater is best for watering and you could use some orchid fertiliser (which is very mild) if you wish. How I made all that knowledge last for a whole talk is a minor miracle! Fr Austin

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