

ST MATTHEW'S PARISH NEWSLETTER

September 2021

MESSAGE FROM REV NIAL STRATFORD

September for so many families and individuals is often the busiest time of the year. The start of the academic year contains so many possible firsts- First day ever at school, first day in a new class, perhaps a change of school. First day in college or university or in an apprenticeship or training course, to name but a few.

Some years ago an initiative was started entitled – ‘Return to Church Sunday’ during September. It was a way of reminding people of a number of matters. First and foremost- God doesn't go away on holiday- he is always here. That the ‘Church’ did not close down for a long vacation during the summer. It too has remained open and yes - You were missed.

When we think about it, we all like to be missed! It is reassuring, it makes us feel valued, it makes us feel that we are making a worthwhile contribution.

It is with joy and thankfulness that we acknowledge and remember, the achievements and contributions to our society made by our ‘young people’. The scope and scale of such endeavours is breath taking- the ability to assimilate and progress, to invent and develop, to explore and boldly proclaim- to ‘Infinity and Beyond’!

Education is a wonderful gift. Something which, here in Ireland, we take very much for granted. Yet we ought not and must not forget that many many children do not have that wonderful opportunity. There are over 70 million children throughout the world who do not have access to education. That is more than the entire population of France.

There are over 750 million adults throughout the world who are illiterate. That is more than twice the population of the United States of America.

Many children – particularly in developing countries – either do not have access to education or have to leave school, because their families or guardians cannot afford to pay for them or even because they have to work to pay for food and medical care. This is not some ‘remote’ or ‘distant’ issue. We are all part of this problem. Our demand for cheap food and cheap clothing results in ‘child labour’ still occurring. Our desire to have more of everything – creates a demand- often where children are exploited.

We are indeed part of the problem. The challenge therefore is – *Can we be part of the solution?* Part of the solution to create a more equitable society? Education is certainly at least part of the answer. It is the answer – to those in deprived areas of our own country and our own city. Access to education is the answer to the people of the nations of the world who have less than nothing, especially to those who suffer ‘gender’ inequality.

As we enter the ‘Harvest’ Season. Let us reflect on being - on becoming part of the solution to increase the availability of education for all.

“I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.” Edward Everett Hale

Best wishes

Niall

Rev Niall Stratford



ST MATTHEWS SCHOOL FARM DAY

Back in June 2021, just before the National School summer term ended, a farm day was hosted in the Church car park.

Many farm animals visited the Church and they included goats, pigs, hens, and a donkey were all welcomed by the pupils of St Matthews.



Zac Bell taking a lamb for a walk!

THE PARISH CLOCK

The Parish Clock is now working again and with so many people asking about the chimes. We are working to get them restored with the help of new digital technology.



NEWS & EVENTS

19th September - Baptism of Bethany Éabha Ryan Williams

19th September - Rev John & Pat Marchant are visiting St Matthews

ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH ENVELOPE SCHEME



If you would like to donate through the Church Envelope Scheme, you can put an Envelope on the Collection plate at Sunday Service. As a registered Charity St Matthews can depending on amounts donated reclaim Income Tax on Parishioner donations.

For more details please contact the Parish office on 087 254 0378, or ask one of the Church Wardens.

PARISH CONTACTS

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Pastoral Care

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Parish Administration

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Nicky Bell Tel: 087 688 7049

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Hon Treasurer

Jonathan Bell Tel: 087 254 0378

Church Wardens

Miriam Hollowed (Rector's), Geraldine Wallace (People's),

Virginia Stewart (People's)

Glebe Wardens

Robbie Hamilton (Rector's)

Select Vestry

Lindy Farmer, Jonathan Bell, Gordon Kelley, Miriam Hollowed, Gladys Raethorne, Robbie Hamilton, Claire Wheeler, Steve Griffiths, Virginia Stewart, Karen Woods, John Wallace, Geraldine Wallace

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