



# Abbeyleix & Ballyroan Parish NEWSLETTER



Parish Office 057 87 30844

February 23rd 2020

Seventh Sunday of the Year

Parish Website: [www.abbeyleixparish.ie](http://www.abbeyleixparish.ie)

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Fr Paddy Byrne P.P.

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## Lent ....A time to grow

Lent begins on Wednesday February 26th. Christians around the world mark the beginning of Lent with the celebration of Ash Wednesday. This ancient day and season has a surprising modern appeal. I experience outside of Christmas, more people show up to church on Ash Wednesday than any other day of the year—including Easter. But this mystique isn't reserved for Christians alone. The customs that surround the season have a quality to them that transcend religion. Perhaps most notable is the act of fasting. While Catholics fast on Ash Wednesday and on Fridays during the Lenten season, many people—religious or not—take up this increasingly popular discipline during the year. But Pope Francis has asked us to reconsider the heart of this activity this Lenten season. According to Francis, fasting must never become superficial. He often quotes the early Christian mystic John Chrysostom who said: "No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others. So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually, if you do no good to others, you do nothing great." But this isn't to downplay the role of sacrifice during the Lenten season. Lent is a good time for penance and self-denial. But once again, Francis reminds us that these activities must truly enrich others: "I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt." So, if we're going to fast from anything this Lent, Francis suggests that even more than candy or alcohol, we fast from indifference towards others. In his annual Lenten message, the pope writes, "Indifference to our neighbor and to God also represents a real temptation for us Christians. Each year during Lent we need to hear once more the voice of the prophets who cry out and trouble our conscience." Describing this phenomenon he calls the globalization of indifference, Francis writes that "whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God's voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades." He continues that, "We end up being incapable of feeling compassion at the outcry of the poor, weeping for other people's pain, and feeling a need to help them, as though all this were someone else's responsibility and not our own." But when we fast from this indifference, we can begin to feast on love. In fact, Lent is the perfect time to learn how to love again. Jesus—the great protagonist of this holy season—certainly showed us the way. In him, God descends all the way down to bring everyone up. In his life and his ministry, no one is excluded. "What are you giving up for Lent?" It's a question a lot of people will get these next few days. If you want to change your body, perhaps alcohol and candy is the way to go. But if you want to change your heart, a harder fast is needed. This narrow road is gritty, but it isn't sterile. It will make room in ourselves to experience a love that can make us whole and set us free. Now that's something worth fasting for!!!



### MASS FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

Mass will take place as follows on Ash Wednesday, February 26th in our Parish ;  
Abbeyleix Church of the Most Holy Rosary at 7.30pm  
Ballyroan St. Patricks Church at 10am



**Sacrament of Reconciliation every Saturday 5 - 5.45pm in the Parish Church in Abbeyleix.  
Saturday mornings 10.30am - 12noon in Portlaoise Parish Church.**

**The collection for last weekends Mass 15th & 16th February for Abbeyleix & Ballyroan was €2500.  
Many thanks to all who so generously contributed.**



**Trocaire boxes available as we begin the season of lent,  
it is customary to remember those less fortunate.**

**TROCAIRE**  
Working for a Just World

## Parish Contact

Fr Paddy Byrne P.P.  
The Presbytery,  
Ballinakill Road, Abbeyleix

Tel: 057 8730844

Office Hours

Mondays : 9am-1.45pm

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursdays :9am - 3.30pm

Fridays : 9am - 3pm

Email: [abbeyleixparishchurch@gmail.com](mailto:abbeyleixparishchurch@gmail.com)

If urgently required, contact Fr Paddy  
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Abbeyleix and Ballyroan Parish



Twitter @AbbeyleixP

Fr. Caoimhin O'Neill  
'Emmaus',  
Ballyroan Road, Abbeyleix

Gráinne Fennelly, Parish Secretary  
Parish Office, Knocknamoe House, Ballinakill Road,  
Abbeyleix

## PARISH WEBSITE

**OUR NEW PARISH WEBSITE/WEBCAM  
FOR LIVE STREAMING FROM THE  
CHURCH OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY  
FOR ALL MASSES !**

Website : [abbeyleixparish.ie](http://abbeyleixparish.ie)

WebCam: [abbeyleixparish.ie/webcam/](http://abbeyleixparish.ie/webcam/)

## Abbeyleix Readers Rota

**29th/1st March:** Yvonne Murphy, Fionn Bardon / Michael Martin, Gerry O'Hara

**7th/8th March:** Marie Thompson, Joe Murphy / Liam Holohan, Claire Chambers

## Abbeyleix Eucharistic Ministers

**29th Feb:** John Moran, Noreen Callanan & Laurence Vesey

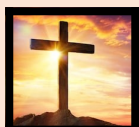
## Ballyroan Readers Rota

**23rd Feb:** Eithne Dunne, Frances Walker & Margaret Meagher

**1st March:** Anna Bland, Yvonne McEvoy & Kieran Savage

## Ballyroan Eucharistic Ministers

**23rd Feb:** Terry Carroll



## Stations of the Cross Ballyroan

Stations of the Cross will take place  
**Friday nights at 7.30pm** in St. Patricks Church for the **season of Lent.**

## ABBEYLEIX PARISH LOTTO

*Please support our Parish Lotto*

**DRAW RESULTS FOR 12th February 2020  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH K&L CO-OP LOTTO**

**08 - 15 - 16 - 18**

**NO €11,000 Jackpot Winner**

**11 MATCH 3 WINNERS WIN €91 each**

## LOCAL WINNERS

Breda Corcoran

Tom Lawlor

**NEXT WEEK'S JACKPOT €11,000**



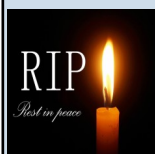
## Public Meeting

There will be a public meeting held in the School Hall **February 25th at 8pm.** This will be hosted by Fr. Paddy and the Board of Management. The meeting is to actively pursue, the best possible way to gain immediate and necessary improvements to the School building. This is all our concern as a community to safeguard the best possible educational environment for our young people in Abbeyleix.



The Months Mind for Ayse Carter will take place in St. Patricks Church Ballyroan at 9.30am on Sunday, March 1st 2020.

**Social Services Meeting for all its drivers, helpers and new volunteers are on Monday 24th February at 8pm.**



**We Pray for the souls of  
Brenda Dunican, Killamuck  
Shane Lalor, Ballyroan, and  
Owen Hiney, Shanahoe**

**May their souls Rest In Peace.**

## First Holy Communion Dates

**First Penance**, for all First Holy Communion candidates will take place on February 26th as follows:

**Abbeyleix : 6.30pm in the Church of the Most Holy Rosary Ballyroan: 7.30pm in St. Patricks Church**

## Confirmation Dates

Our Ceremony of Light will take place in **Abbeyleix on Saturday February 29th and in Ballyroan on Sunday March 1st at 9.30am.**