



## MAY 2017 NEWSLETTER

### *The Rector Writes*

So it's Garden Fete time, all over again, and we need as much help as we can get to make it a success. If you are free on that day — 10th June— we would be very glad of a hand. Please get in touch with any of the committee members listed elsewhere in this newsletter or speak to any of the churchwardens on a Sunday morning. With this letter are some Raffle Tickets, as usual — please try to sell them to unsuspecting passers by.

The Fete and the Raffle are a big part of our annual fundraising, and thanks to the very hard work of a large number of people, our fundraising over the last few years has actually raised funds! Our church accounts show a modest surplus this year, which has not been the case for long years past. This surplus enables us to undertake some work on the fabric of the building. We've received a grant towards getting [half] the railings, and our gates, removed, fixed and replaced. And hopefully we'll get the other half done another year. A survey conducted in the last year has discovered that the spire isn't actually attached to the tower in any real sense, and that needs fixed before much longer. The wooden surrounds of the clock faces need repair as well, and that's being looked into.

Our Architect is working towards writing a Conservation Plan for the church in the next year, together with an expert committee [and a grant towards paying them]. A Plan like this takes in not just the fabric of the building, but its meaning and history, its use and influence at the level of spirituality and community, and also its importance in tourism, architecture, ... and you get the general idea. It's not just about our worshipping community, its the whole scope of the place and everything to do with it. When we've the plan done, hopefully it will be of use in the forward planning for the upkeep of the building, and a help in sourcing finance towards that so that it's still standing long past our time.

St Nicholas' is going to be 700+ years old in 2020. (The first reference to it dates from 1320, but it was built before that.) This coincides of course with the European City of Culture, and our 2020 committee is busy trying to coordinate events that year, some of our own devising, some to do with the City of Culture, for example, a varied and ambitious programme of external events including the Spiritus project; which at present involves a community opera, Britten's "Noye's Fludde", a series of performances by Resurgam/Elbepolis of Bach music and a festival of traditional sacred European music during the year. We hope to have a special service of re-dedication, a Medieval Galway Weekend and much more!

Our Select Vestry, which is the committee that runs the place, does quite a bit of work under the radar, as well as the other facets of our church's life you will see in the rest of this newsletter. They are a very busy bunch of people and give freely of their time. We should be very grateful to them for all

they do. Stuff gets fixed, like the heating flue, which is a long story in itself, the heating grills in the floor, and we've a new money collection box just inside the door, to hopefully counteract the thieving from the other boxes, and then there's the upkeep of the rectory, and on and on. The vestry oversees and manages the concerts and performances during the year, which make this church so important in the cultural life of the city, are good for our PR, and also bring in a few bob. The vestry also organises the Welcome Desk Team during the Summer, (if you're interested in being involved, please make yourself known!) which also brings in a few more bobs, but more importantly puts a human face on a building still in living, thriving use. The vestry, in the guise of the social committee, runs various events during the year, a children's party, the parish barbeque, outings, walks and so forth. As a community from many different places and backgrounds it's good for us to meet outside worship at a social level.

I haven't mentioned the Sunday Club, caringly organised by Sally and her team every Sunday, who perform a very important function in their teaching and nurturing of our children. Or the Chatty Crafters, who started up this year on Thursday morning in the side chapel, thanks to Mildred. Or the Meditation Group, taken by Dr Paddy Delaney on a Thursday night, (beginners welcome), and the Mothers' Union, who figure elsewhere in this newsletter.

Then there's our parochial school, under Mrs Walsh, with her very capable staff, over in Woodquay, and all the children in it and their families. And also the Brownies and Guides and Scouts who meet in the School, and then there's the Russian and Romanian Orthodox churches who are now such an important part of the wider community connected with St Nicholas', not to mention our ties and services with the Augustinian parish, and the nameless people who come in quietly all week long, and say their prayers, and perhaps light a candle, and spend time in the peace of the place. Then there's tourists and visitors who get the once round from the tour guide and then out again to see something else. This is the constantly widening circle of people our church is in contact with.

Our Schola Cantorum plays a big part in our church life; classes and rehearsals go on all during the week, when you might not be in the church to hear. Their Coffee Concerts on Saturday mornings bring in more than just funds to run the Schola, they bring support and a public profile for our community in the city. The work done by Mark and Dottie and Ronan and all the teachers and helpers is again not immediately visible, but it is appreciable in the music of our parish choir, the choristers and choral scholars, and the wide community it touches.

I don't mention worship as such, because it is the basis upon which and round which everything else happens. Our worship

and faith is the reason for our being here at all, enriched by the music of the Schola, and hopefully by your presence as well. But it's not all that goes on! The fund raising isn't just a way of torturing innocent people, it permits the worship, and all this other activity to happen in the name of Christ, as a witness in the heart of Galway. Thank you for your part in all we do.

Gary

#### **ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS MADE AT THE GENERAL VESTRY MEETING**

Rector's Churchwarden: Denzil Auchmuty

People's Churchwarden: Gráinne Walsh

Rector's Glebewarden: Maria Murphy

People's Glebewarden: Anne Nethaway

#### **Members of the Select Vestry:**

Mary Liddy, Olive Maher, Ray Plummer, Heather Martin, Catherine M. Temple, Rachel Latey, Christine Hunt, Paul Adams, Paddy Delaney, Paul Hardy, Heather Pope (Treasurer), Ann Walton (Secretary).

#### **From the Treasurer**

Sincere thanks to everyone who contributes to the parish with such energy, enthusiasm and generosity. Ours is a very special community and it's always heart-warming to see how much everyone does to keep it going. Last year it took almost €190k to run the parish and maintain the building - with your help, support and a LOT of hard work we managed to bring in €219k. If you're interested in learning more about the breakdown of those figures, a copy of the 2016 financial accounts will be available from the churchwardens on Sundays, or if you prefer, a copy can be emailed to you. As you know, last year we undertook a research report on the Belfry (with some grant assistance from Galway City Council) - this report highlighted areas of vital works which must be addressed - namely, securing the lid on the spire and repair of the clock faces and their timber surrounds. Our plan, as alluded to by the Rector, is to tackle this work in stages and the costs for the first round will be in the region of €40,000. An application had been made under the Structures at Risk fund for assistance with this but unfortunately we were not successful this year—we will have to try again. A second application has been made to the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (Galway City Council) for help with the restoration of the church railings - we've just received news that we've been granted €13,500. We'll be taking this work, one stretch at a time and the costs for the removal, restoration and return of the railings from one gateway to the other (on the south side of the building) plus the gates, is estimated at €27k. Apart from this, we have also applied to the Heritage Council for financial support on the production of a Conservation Management Plan for the building.

Our vigilant Glebewardens ensure the essential maintenance of the Rectory and the property in Knockncarra Park - last year the trees in the Rectory Garden needed some TLC and this year, a much needed job has been done on the drainage system. The heating system in Knockncarra Park was upgraded. As you can see, we have a lot going on and we hope that over the next few years to address some areas of concern, which will in turn enhance our wonderful medieval building as a place of worship and centre for the arts in Galway.

As the parish is a registered charity, any donation of €250 or more in the year, could be worth 30% more to the Parish, so please consider making your giving, more structured, either as a one off donation or via the Standing Order or Envelope Schemes. The value of this to the parish over the last three years was over €18,000. If you are interested in signing up to Standing Order or the Envelope Scheme, please contact me by email, phone or text. Thank You.

*Heather Pope, Treasurer*  
(treasurer@stnicholas.ie/ 086 8336666)

#### **Welcome Desk**

As you will see from the accounts the Welcome Desk contributes significantly to the income of the parish and much thanks is due to all those who help to staff this during the summer.



The desk has just reopened for the summer. If you feel you could give any hours to this no matter how few it would be most appreciated. Training will be given. A normal stint lasts for 2 hours but there can be flexibility. Please contact Mary Liddy (087 6573749 or mary.liddy@nuigalway.ie) or Grainne Walsh (086 0323602 or gw768@aol.com) for more information.

#### **Summer Garden Fete**

The Garden Fete takes place this year on June 10th at 2pm in the Rectory garden. This is a major parish event and is always keenly anticipated by the wider Galway community. Please spread the word and bring your friends! There's face-painting, BBQ, teas and refreshments, ice-creams, crepes, Bouncy Castle, games, various stalls packed with tempting attractions and lots more besides, all set against the backdrop of St Patrick's Brass Band. However, we need lots of helpers both on the day to set up the stalls (and take them down), to help on the stalls themselves and to help on the days before the fete to sell tickets and to load tables and chairs, etc. If you could give of your time, however brief, please contact one of those named below. As always we are also looking for contributions for all the stalls: plants, produce, cakes, books, maps, toys, bric-a-brac, toy teddies, jewellery and other items of value. Please seek them out, asking neighbours and friends if they would like to contribute any unwanted items that are in good condition. Please do not bring any items that are in poor condition; we are often left with disposing of large amounts of useless 'tat' costing the parish financially in the process. Suitable items for sale should be left into the Rectory on the morning of the Fete but if this is not possible contact a member of the committee below. As the Rector has mentioned we are sending everyone on the parish list some raffle tickets that we hope can be sold. The money raised by the Fete is absolutely essential to the parish finances and the income from the sale of raffle tickets makes up a significant figure of the profits on the day. It is not easy for some parishioners to sell tickets, but your best efforts are always appreciated. Stubs and money can be returned to us any Sunday in church or posted to the Rectory, Taylors Hill, Galway. Thank you in advance for doing your best.



**2017 Committee: Caitriona Hastings, Carol Steven, Don Tallon, Matt Wallen, Christine Hunt, Ann McDonagh, Paul Adams, Maria Murphy, Olive Maher, Ann Walton.**

### News from the Schola

St Nicholas' recently fielded four candidates for the prestigious Bronze Award examination of the Royal School of Church Music.



Choristers Emily Rooney, Leasha Garvey and Sorcha Carrick, and Maria Tuohy from the Parish Choir, all passed with flying colours, and with commendations all round. These four have done the church proud, and both examiners and RSCM officials are delighted to find a thriving choral establishment in the west.

Our spring/summer Saturday morning coffee concerts are under way: on 27th May the Choristers will be joined by St Patrick's Intermediate Band, and on 3rd June we welcome the acclaimed Belfast-based choir Cappella Caeciliana. The concerts are at 11am, and an entrance charge of just €10 covers the concert and as much fine coffee and gorgeous baking as you can manage!

The Parish Choir brings its official Trinity Term schedule to a close with Evensong at 5pm on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June, featuring music by Wood, Howells and Ives. The Choristers' final service of the season, with prizegiving, admissions and valedictions, will be on Sunday morning 18<sup>th</sup> June.



The Mothers' Union cake sale in February raised €411.60 for the overseas development fund. The famine lunch was held in April and in all €857.42 was donated to the Bishops' Appeal to fight famine in Sudan.

A Diocesan service was held in Killala on Tuesday 9 May at which the Mothers' Union President Phyllis Grothier planted a tree. Phyllis is currently going around the country planting a tree in each diocese to celebrate 130 years of MU in Ireland.

If you are interested in joining the Mothers' Union or finding out more information please contact the secretary Heather Martin or the chairperson Sally Cunningham.

### Social Committee

The Social Committee organised a Parish Walk in Coole Park in March. The fact that the turlough was higher than anticipated and had flooded over one of the main paths led the group to take off cross country which only added to the adventure! All returned safe and sound having had a very enjoyable cuppa together in Kilcolgan.

The children enjoyed a lively egg hunt in the church on Easter Sunday—indeed an email was received from the US *'we loved the kids' egg hunt after and the very warm welcome from the parishioners. It was quite a special day and a perfect end to our adventure in Ireland.'*

The Teddies Day Out has been postponed due to unforeseen circumstances but it is hoped to reschedule it as soon as possible.

The Parish BBQ was held on Sunday 14 May outside the church after the service and was enjoyed by many. As a result €522

will be donated to the Maji water project. The Diocesan Fun Day will be held on 20 May in Coole Park from 11—3. Details are on the Noticeboard in the church or from the secretary Heather Martin ([heathermartin45@gmail.com](mailto:heathermartin45@gmail.com)).

### Charities

In addition to the charitable donations mentioned above we gave €193.47 was donated to Protestant Aid which aims to give financial assistance to individuals or families at a time of acute need, regardless of religious, ethnic or social background. Holly Armstrong organised the knitting and distribution of chickens again this year. Last year this effort raised over €3,000 for the Galway Hospice. The figure for this year is not available to date.

### News from the School

St. Nicholas' Parochial School is now taking enrolments for all classes. The school has a low pupil teacher ratio, large spacious classrooms and high tech IT facilities. The school aims to create a safe and secure learning environment where children feel valued and happy. Children are offered support and opportunities to develop life skills that will help them to engage with further education and personal development throughout their lives. We encourage them to try as many activities as possible and to make the most of their many talents. There is emphasis on sport, art, music, citizenship and on the environment. We offer a wide range of extra curricular activities including Hockey, Drama, Chinese, French, Zumba, Yoga and Swimming every Wednesday in Leisureland for all classes. Above all, St. Nicholas' Parochial School is a family, and our vibrant school community is welcoming and inclusive.

If you would like to make an appointment to meet with the school principal, Wendy Walsh, please contact us on 091-569233 and visit our website at [www.galwayschool.com](http://www.galwayschool.com)



We have a very busy term ahead with so many exciting activities including the following:

Friday 12th May: Sea Shore Safari to Grattan Beach

Thursday 18th May: Internet Safety Talk to all classes, and a presentation to Parents at 7.00pm (all welcome to attend)

22nd – 26th May: Active Week

Junior School Tour to the Burren Sanctuary

Senior School Tour to Bay Sports, Athlone

26th May: Sports Day, followed by a barbeque and Zumba dancing in the playground

16th June: Hockey Match, Parents V Pupils, in NUIG Sportsground at 5.45pm, followed by a barbeque

Before we finish, we would like to extend to our wonderful 6th class, the very best of good wishes as they leave our school this June and we wish them well as they transfer to their new secondary school, all of which are local secondary schools. We would also like to thank all of the parents in our school, for their continued support, dedication and involvement in the school community. Thank you for all you do.

Enjoy your summer, Mrs. Walsh and Staff

### Meditation

Paddy Delaney has been leading Meditation sessions in the Vestry at 7pm on Thursday evenings. Beginners are always welcome. If you are interested contact Paddy on 087 7821101.

### Chatty Crafters

Our new Chatty Crafters group meet on Thursday mornings (10am—12.30) in the side-chapel. If you knit, crochet, sew, embroider, make cards or do any other sort of craft and would be interested in joining the group do come along.

### The Sunday Club

Sunday Club, for children of primary school age, continues to take place in the Vestry every Sunday during term time, except for Bank Holiday weekends. The activities follow the Sunday readings in a fun and creative way using craft, drama and singing. If you would like to volunteer to help with the Sunday Club please contact Sally Cunningham.

The side chapel, which has the service piped in, is available to parents of younger children who might find the need to let off steam during the service!



The regular Tunes in the Church concerts commence on May 29th Monday to Friday. Concerts start at 8pm and last one and a half hours. For a full programme of each concert visit the website [www.tunesinthechurch.com](http://www.tunesinthechurch.com).

The Ladybirds, Brownies and Guides have all had a busy year which is shortly coming to a close



for the summer holidays although some of the Guides and Brownies will be attending an international camp 'IGGnite' which is being organised at Rockwell College the first week in August.

The Brownies (age 7-10) followed the 'Free Being Me' programme— through fun and interactive activities, they learnt that body confidence and self-esteem come from valuing their bodies, standing up to social pressures, and supporting others to be more body confident.

The Ladybirds (age 5-7) earned the Disability Awareness and Camp Cape badge—the latter involved an edible campfire!.

If you would like more information, would like to volunteer or to add a name to the waiting list for Ladybirds or Brownies contact Catherine (089 4220259) and for Guides Caroline (087 9973828).

### St. Nicholas Beavers, Cubs, Scouts & Ventures

Sad news from the these groups—they will not be re-opening in September. They warned in the previous newsletter that they were struggling to get enough leaders and despite their best attempts they now have to close. We would like to thank all those who through the years have volunteered with these groups—they celebrated 40 years last year.



### Communications



If you are not already receiving Parish information by email and would like to do so please send a request to [info@stnicholas.ie](mailto:info@stnicholas.ie).



We also use Facebook to post about things which have happened and are about to happen so follow us there.

### Calendar of Special Events

(Please see notice board in the church porch for information on the many choirs singing in the church during the summer—many of these concerts are free)

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| May 9     | Re-opening of the Welcome Desk   |
| May 14    | Parish BBQ   |
| May 19-21 | Galway Early Music Events—see programme  |
| May 21    | Confirmation   |
| May 27    | Coffee Concert—Choristers & St. Patrick's Intermediate Band                              |
| May 29    | Tunes in the Church commence   |
| June 3    | Coffee Concert -Belfast-based choir Cappella Caeciliana                                  |
| June 6    | Lunchtime concert with Contempo  |
| June 10   | Garden Fete  |
| June 17   | Evensong sung by the Parish Choir  |
| June 18   | Choristers end of term service—prizegiving, admission of new choristers and valedictions |

### Parish Contact Information

#### Rector

Archdeacon Gary Hastings 091 521914

#### Choir and Organist:

Mark Duley, 0876712301

#### Churchwardens:-

Gráinne Walsh 087 0323602

Denzil Auchmuty 085 1295424

#### Sunday Club

Sally Cunningham, (087 779 1227)

#### Mothers' Union:

Heather Martin (Secretary) 086 8070258

#### Brownies and Guides:

Catherine M. Temple 089 4220259

#### Flower List:

Gráinne Walsh 087 0323602

#### Coffee Rota:

Olive Maher 087 7476506

#### Treasurer:

Heather Pope 086 8336666

#### Secretary:

Ann Walton, 087 2176799

#### Concerts/Church Bookings:

Catherine M. Temple 086 3898777

#### School: 091 569233

Wendy Walsh, Principal,

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

#### Hall Lettings:

Olive Maher 087 7476506

#### Social Committee

Heather Martin 086 8070258

#### Grounds Maintenance

Ray Plummer 087 9428857

#### Parish Website:

[www.stnicholas.ie](http://www.stnicholas.ie) Email: [info@stnicholas.ie](mailto:info@stnicholas.ie)