

**Reflection:** There is a wonderful tapestry in the cathedral of Los Angeles, which depicts the apostles and saints of various ages intertwined with images of ordinary people all facing along with the assembled congregation towards the altar. For me, it is a wonderful representation of the communion of saints, that Christian belief that we are united in faith with all those who have preceded us and those who will follow us along the Church's pilgrim way.

The month of November begins with the Feast of all Saints, which invites us to draw inspiration from the lives of those whom the Church has formally canonised because of their witness to the Gospel. We also honour the hidden saints, those individuals in our own lives and families who have lived their Christian faith in heroic but often unrecognised ways. They remind us that all of us are called to be saints: to respond to the Gospel in such a way that it brings joy, meaning and hope to others. Sometimes this will involve the courage to stand alone.

The other night I watched the movie, The Mission. I recognised one of the actors but could not place him. As the credits rolled, I realised it was Dan Berrigan, the priest-poet-pacifist, who acted as spiritual adviser to the crew and cast and ended up with a minor on screen role! With the trees shedding their leaves, November is also the month when we remember the dead: our deceased loved ones, and those who have no one to pray for them. Perhaps it is a good month to remember just one person who has been a huge and positive presence in our life. As we continue to feel gratitude and to be inspired by them, they continue to enlighten the world.

**Fr Richard**

Thank you for your contribution to the parish FAMILY OFFERING collection, amounting to €573.00 last weekend. This is received in weekly envelopes. An average weekly total of €544.00 is also contributed by Standing Orders.

**Mass Intentions for the coming week**

Sat.	30th	6.00pm	John Agnew (A) Rita Lynch (A) and pray for Matt & Lill Halton
Thur.	4th	10.30am	Tom Murphy (A)
Sat.	6th	6.00pm	Conor Cronin (1stA) and his father Kieran Cronin (18 A) Tom & Chris Lean (A) Lena & Edward Hughes (A) Teresa Ryan (A)
Sun.	7th	11.00am	Roscommon Association Annual Mass

**Please Pray for all recently deceased.**

Items for the Parish Link can be e-mailed to [parishlink@gmail.com](mailto:parishlink@gmail.com) or dropped into the Parish Office. A contact name and phone number is required for each item.

Ph: 8308257 or email [ionaroadparish@gmail.com](mailto:ionaroadparish@gmail.com)  
St. Columba's Parish website : [www.ionaroadparish.ie](http://www.ionaroadparish.ie)

**PARISH**



**LINK**

Issue No 28/38

Parish of St. Columba

31st October 2021

*WELCOME BACK TO THE PRINTED  
LINK, TAKE ME HOME WITH YOU,  
KEEP SAFE, KEEP YOUR DISTANCE*



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**Mission Statement: St. Columba's parish is a vibrant and welcoming community of faith, continuing to give practical witness to the Good News of Christ, through worship and reflection, and through Christian service to the community.**

Dear parishioner,

As of 22<sup>nd</sup> October last, we have moved into a new phase of church life following the lifting of restrictions on the number of people attending Mass, or other religious ceremonies.

Let me begin by saying a huge 'Thank You' on behalf of the Parish Pastoral Council, Fr. Paddy and myself, to all who have acted as stewards and liturgical ministers over the past very difficult year and a half. We could not have managed the challenge of ensuring that parishioners and visitors were able to attend Mass safely while conforming with public health guidelines, without the generosity, dedication and continued availability of all those who volunteered to act as stewards, MCs, who cleaned the pews after each service, or in other forms of church ministry. Words are insufficient to express our gratitude to you all.

From this coming weekend we look forward to an increased capacity for Mass attendance. This means that we will no longer need to hand out individual numbers to keep track of the number of people attending, direct people to particular parts of the church to find a seat, or rope off every second pew. Nor will we be handing out envelopes for the collections.

However, in accordance with public health guidelines, parishioners and visitors are encouraged to continue **hand sanitising** on entering **the church**, **maintain social distancing** and to **wear face masks** throughout the Mass (except when receiving Communion).

As we manage this transition, we will continue to welcome parishioners and an MC will introduce the Mass at the weekends, updating everyone with any new developments.

We hope that two 'stewards' will continue to make themselves available for each weekend Mass (*Please let our parish secretary, Sheila, know if you are willing to help with this work*): **to welcome parishioners to distribute the Parish Link** (which returns in a printed version) **to encourage Parishioners** to maintain social distancing by sitting only on the end of each pew where possible (*unless of the same family*), as all pews are now available for use **to assist with the collections during Mass**.

The Collections will revert to collecting cash. Small baskets should be carried by the stewards twice (*First Collection and Second Collection to be taken up separately*.) The collection should start from the rear of the church going to the top and coming back down by the inside (*collection baskets must not be passed from hand to hand by parishioners*). *Once each collection is completed, the small bags should be emptied into the bigger baskets at the front of the church and left inside the altar rails (or brought in to the sacristy).*

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The exchange of the 'sign of peace' continues to be by wave or bow.

We continue to ask parishioners to **exit by the same door you entered** the church, and the requirement to keep the church ventilated during the celebration of Mass remains.

For those parishioners still wary of attending Mass in person, it will continue to be broadcast via webcam. Others may choose to continue to participate in the Mass broadcast by RTE. We appreciate the demand that these new guidelines may make on a relatively small group of people. Indeed we are conscious that we may find that 3-4 volunteers are needed to assist with the collections at Mass. It would ease the burden greatly if regular parishioners on arrival at the church for Mass would offer their service to assist with the collections.

With renewed thanks, and may we continue to keep one another safe as we move forward into a new way of being the Church gathered for Eucharist.

### Fr. Richard and Fr. Paddy

The Irish Bishops Conference has asked parishes to hold a special Church collection on

**Saturday the 6th and Sunday the 7th of November** to

support Trócaire's response to a humanitarian crisis in East Africa. Trócaire teams are on the ground ready to provide more life-saving assistance, but we cannot do so without more funding. Parishes have shown huge compassion to communities supported by Trócaire, not least over the past 18 months.



#### Iona Active Retirement

The AGM will be held on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> November at 11 a.m. Fr. Richard has very kindly given permission for the meeting to be held in the church in the area beside the kitchen.

Annual membership €15 (fifteen euro) is now due and should be given to the Treasurer, Marjorie Chawke.

*Annual Mass for the Bereaved will be held on Wed 17th November at 7.30pm more details to follow*