

Parishes of Swords Clonmethan & Kilsallaghan with Donabate and Lusk
Newsletter February 2025



Today the first of February is the feast of Saint Brigid, one of the three national saints of Ireland (the others are Saint Patrick and Saint Columba). While Patrick was originally a foreigner and Columba was from Donegal, Brigid was a local woman, being born up the road from us in Faughart, near Dundalk. She lived a full life, healing, teaching, helping the less fortunate, working miracles with the help of God, and founding monasteries including the most famous at Kildare. She was known for protecting and encouraging poets, scholars, doctors and nurses, farmers, blacksmiths and anyone who works in the creative arts. She passed away over fifteen centuries ago. Her Brigid's Crosses are still crafted out of reeds and kept in the house to bless the home now as they have been for generations. Her feast day of the 1st of February is the official first day of Spring.

Confirmation

If you have a child in 6th Class or above who wishes to be presented to the Archbishop for Confirmation please get in touch as soon as possible.

It is also possible for adults who missed out on Confirmation at the usual age to be Confirmed. Please enquire for details.

The Archbishop of Dublin will administer the Rite of Confirmation in Saint Andrew's Church, Malahide, on Sunday 4th May at 11.30am.

As last year, the Confirmation Service will be a joint service with candidates from Swords Parish.

Candidates should contact Malahide's Parish Administrator, Mary Grimes, on 086 882 2024 before Friday 21st February and ask for their name to be added to the list.

There will be an Information Evening for candidates and parents on Tuesday 25th February in Saint Andrew's Church, Malahide and weekly classes will begin on March 4th in Saint Andrew's Parish Centre.

A Year in Review - Niall Minto looks back at 2024

As 2024 drew to a close, we reflect on a year brimming with community spirit, and celebration. The past year showcased the dedication of parishioners, creativity of events, and enduring strength of faith that unites us.

The year began with the excitement of an Easter Egg Hunt, where the Easter Bunny's antics delighted the children, leaving adults to wish for shorter sermons so they might join the fun next year. Spring brought creativity to the forefront with Hat Day in May, a whimsical celebration where parishioners showcased their imaginative headgear, filling Saint Patrick's church with laughter and camaraderie.

Away from the Sunday services, we were blessed to have the unique service kindly arranged by Mary Jones for the World Day of Prayer in March. The service was composed by the women of Palestine. We continue to remember the people of that region, and all regions afflicted by scourge of war, in our prayers.

The Girls' Brigade and Boys' Brigade continued to hold meetings throughout the year to help kids develop new skills, knowledge, and confidence in a safe and fun environment. Some of the new things the kids had learned were showcased in their end of year Displays, making their parents – and their hardworking leaders – very proud. The confirmation service for the young people of the parishes was held in May. Congratulations to all of those who went through this important coming of age ceremony.

In June, in ChristChurch Cathedral, we celebrated the commissioning of David Snow as a Diocesan Reader and Niall Minto as Parish Reader. The packed coach hired by event-organising mastermind Jean Ellerker brought all the parishioners into Christ Church for this great event.

While the buildings we worship in are not the church, they do help protect us from the glorious Irish summer weather with its traditional copious rain. Conservation work in each of our three historic churches, and on the towers in Swords, continues in the background year-round, the result of huge amounts of project management and other work by Select Vestry members, and speeds ahead in summer's (relatively) better weather. The nave of Saint Columba's church in Swords had just been freshly painted, forming a suitable backdrop when August brought the wedding of Rebecca Wolfe and Bobbie Mahony. Congratulations to them and to all those who took marriage vows this year.

September brought a range of heartwarming events. The Back-to-School Bag Blessing set the tone for the academic year, while the inaugural Pet Service brought a new dimension to our worship, with furry companions adding their unique charm. A church clean-up day followed!

October was marked by a celebration of abundance with the Harvest Services in the churches. In Saint Patrick's, the service, filled with gratitude and reflection, was led by our young parishioners, accentuated by the thoughtful words of one child about using life's blessings to help others.

November brought solemn reflection with the Remembrance services in each church and the landmark annual Clonmethan Remembrance event, honouring the sacrifices of soldiers and rescue workers. We sadly marked the passing of some parishioners and loved ones. Sincere condolences to each and every person who suffered the loss of a loved one.

Sadly, each of our readers and trainee readers lost their mother in a single year – Anne Minto, Mary Snow, and Sylvia Vincent, with the trainee reader losing his father-in-law, John Haynes, too. Despite their grief, the service given by the readers and trainee reader to the parishes did not falter in these very challenging circumstances, a testament to both their faith and their strength of character.

A Year in Review - Niall Minto looks back at 2024 continued

Dark December was lit up by joyous Carol services in each church. Saint David's managed to pack 82 people into this very beautiful but not exactly massive church – a Christmas miracle!

The kids who enjoy the regular Praise 'n' Pizza evening events during the year marked the Christmas season with a special Christingle service in Saint Columba's, while the Sunday Club kids conjured up a magical Nativity Play. Many parishioners showed the spirit of Christmas giving by donating to the gift appeal for the residents of a nursing home in Swords, adding to the cheer of the residents' own ecumenical Christmas service, led by Reverend Yvonne Ginnelly and David Snow.

Throughout the year, unexpected moments of kindness, such as the parishioners' heartfelt gift to our ministry team, underscored the love and support that define this group of parishes. Their appreciation, shared during the Christmas season, added warmth to the conclusion of another busy yet fulfilling year. And the glue that kept us together was Reverend Yvonne who never fails us.

As we move ahead into the new year, may the joy, faith, and togetherness of 2024 continue to inspire us.

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**We send Sincere Condolences to all
who have suffered bereavement and**

To Kelda Barnes, and her mother June,
on the death of Kelda's brother, Trevor.

To Sharon Stavely on the death of her
father-in-law, Richard.

To Andreas Markusson on the death of
his brother, Pol.

To Peter McMurtry on the death of his
brother, Sir David.

To Keith Patterson on the death of his
grandfather, James

May their memory be a blessing. May
they rest in God's peace, and rise in glory.



Some Girls Brigade news from Captain Caron Neale

The Junior Senior girls and leaders of the 45th Co. Girls Brigade went on an outing during the Christmas break to the National Concert Hall to see the musical *Annie*. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all the girls and leaders.

We will be holding a charity Skipathon and Zumbathon in February in aid of the LauraLynn foundation.

We are also working hard now towards our annual display which will be held at a date to be announced in Spring.



Praise 'n Pizza



Parishes of Swords
Donabate and Kilsallaghan

An Evening Family Service

Prayers + Songs + Talk + Activity* + PIZZA!

a.k.a. hymns!

*optional for parents! ☺

Sunday 9th February

Old Borough
School Hall

| 6:00pm

(finished by
7:30pm-ish)

EVERYONE is very welcome!

The Friends of Saint Columba's



A new community group called **The Friends of St Columba's** formed in Swords in August 2024.

The Friends are a group of local volunteers from all walks of life and from many different places, of different faiths and of none.

What they share is the wish to preserve the beautiful, historic nationally important site of Saint Columba's, and to facilitate its development as a community and tourism resource for the future.

Their plans include running guided tours of the site during Heritage Week, carrying out litter picking and clean ups of the churchyard, carrying out historical research, mapping the graves for genealogical study, recording inscriptions for posterity before they erode, conserving the monuments and artwork, replacing fallen trees with new saplings, carrying out environmental assessments, providing stewarding at events, and running concerts, lectures and other community events.

They are working to ensure that St Columba's treasures and resources are preserved and can be enjoyed by the local community and overseas visitors for generations to come.

New members are always welcome. No experience necessary.

To learn more or join them, visit their website at www.thefriendsofstcolumbas.com or send an email to thefriendsofstcolumbas@gmail.com.

Church Services for the month ahead

Sunday 2nd February

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Morning Prayer
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Morning Prayer

Sunday 9th February

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Holy Communion
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Holy Communion
6 p.m.	Swords	Praise 'n' Pizza in the hall

Sunday 16th February

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Morning Prayer
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Morning Prayer

Sunday 23rd February

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Holy Communion
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Holy Communion
1 p.m.	Saint David's Kilsallaghan	Holy Communion

Register of Vestrypersons

Please contact Andrea on reachandrea@gmail.com or 086 086 6698 if you wish to amend an entry.

Ecologically-minded Volunteers Sought

We seek persons who are interested in helping to manage the environment impacts of parish activities. Please contact Andrea on reachandrea@gmail.com or 086 086 6698 for full details.

And finally...

