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## FOREWORD BY FR PADRAIG WALSH P.P.



*Fr Padraig Walsh.*

This year is a special one for our parish. We are celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of the church and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of a separate parish. This is a unique milestone since this is the most recent parish to be formed in the Diocese of Kerry. It is a wonderful celebration for this parish and for all its parishioners.

On October 21<sup>st</sup> 1970, the people of Tralee gathered in the Our Lady and St Brendan's church for its dedication, which was a historic occasion for the people of this town. People of my generation and younger can hardly appreciate the significance of that event in 1970. It was a mammoth project. The planning, design, fund-raising and combined effort was immense. Today, we are proud to reap the rewards of their labours.

On October 19<sup>th</sup> 1985, the people of this parish gathered again to celebrate their identity as a newly formed parish with its first Parish Priest, Fr Pat Horgan. He said on this occasion that his mission was – “to help the new parish create its own identity”. The parish has achieved this and fostered a strong sense of belonging. It has a lovely mix of old established areas and many new communities; families with deep roots in the parish and people who are new to the town. This unique mix has created its own sense of tradition and vibrant spirit.

The construction of the Pastoral Centre in 1990 has greatly enhanced the life of the parish. It is used regularly by organisations and committees, to have meetings, events and other activities.

This publication gives a sense of some of the key events in the life of the parish and our church. It is a record of the story of our parish church but also of the people who have made it their own. It is a place where we celebrate with faith, the joyful occasions of life and where we gather in sadness and grief at the darker times too.

The parish has been blessed with many dedicated and hard working priests, parish sisters and parish staff. The commitment, support and goodwill of parishioners has been a huge asset in building up the sense of parish over the past 25 years.

This year's celebrations have brought back many great memories for older parishioners. I hope younger people cherish this milestone in the life of our parish and nurture the faith for the generations to come. This celebration is an occasion to look back in thanksgiving but also to look ahead with faith. I hope the solid foundations of the past will help us build for the future, with a new generation of parishioners to bear witness to the Gospel.





**Editorial Team.**

*Front row (left to right): Kathleen Browne, Fr Padraig Walsh, Bertie Conway, Maria McSwiney.  
Back row (left to right): Paddy Brosnan, Joe McMahon, Catherine Ryan, Billy Ryle, Michael Quinlan.*





## PLANS FOR A NEW CHURCH

In the late Sixties a decision was taken to build a new church in the town. The area of greatest growth and development at the time not served by an adjacent church was deemed to be Upper Rock Street. Immigration was in decline, industry was expanding and the 1971 census recorded a population growth of approximately 14% over the previous 10 years.

The demand for additional housing led to the development of St Brendan's Park in 1951, St John's Park in 1961, and Connolly Park in 1968, followed by extensive development in Monavalley and Oakpark in the early 1970's. The combination of all these factors prompted Dean Reidy to conclude that the building of another church was essential and inevitable.

In the early Sixties an enthusiastic group held a meeting in the C.Y.M.S. rooms in Denny Street under the direction of Fr Scott. At that meeting, Mr Con Casey was elected as chairman. A secretary and treasurer were also elected and the fundraising began in earnest throughout the Tralee Parish. According to the account of a former Principal of Listellick School, the late Mr Sean Foley, a weekly subscription of one shilling per household was requested. The town was divided into sixteen regions and a superintendent was appointed in charge of a number of collectors in each region. Each week's proceeds were counted by the treasurer and his team in the C.Y.M.S. and deposited in the night safe in the bank.

The estimated cost of the project was £90,000. However the total expenditure reached £114,000, owing to the increased cost of materials. A five year period of collection was envisaged. Later a decision was taken to continue the collection for another year. Although the proceeds did not meet the final cost the collectors were very pleased. Recognition must also be given to the many individual benefactors who donated generously towards the project.



*Our Lady and St Brendan's Church 1970.*



# ON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH

After extensive enquiries and much deliberation, the field affectionately known as “Joanie’s” field was purchased from the O’Connell family for £4,000. This provided sufficient land on which to build a church, accommodate parking and in later times, facilitate the construction of a Presbytery and Pastoral Centre. To respect history and tradition it was stipulated that the house at the corner of the site on Brewery Road should remain during Joanie’s lifetime. Subsequently the premises were used as kennels! After the death of Kerr Boyle, a renowned greyhound trainer from the top of the Rock, the house was demolished.

Before the field was purchased, it was synonymous with the famed Austin Stack’s Club and for many years was used as a training ground by the men of ‘the black and amber’. Indeed Urban Terrace, adjacent to the church and consisting of only nineteen houses, proudly boasts the acquisition of 21 All-Ireland medals. Names like Landers, Slattery, Doyle and Gorman honed their skills on this hallowed ground and in due course the area was justifiably acknowledged as “the street of champions”. The fame and glory was not the preserve of men only. A mere hundred yards from Urban Terrace, one of the most decorated women in Ladies’ Gaelic Football history, Marina Barry, amassed nine Senior All-Ireland medals during the course of her illustrious career in the Seventies and Eighties.

As people sat on the low wall, on summer evenings watching epic encounters: It is hard to believe that within a few short years, that field had become the centre of prayer and devotion in the area.



*Urban Terrace, Rock Street “The Street of Champions”.*





The opening of the church did not stem the tide of success. In 1973 the Austin Stack's Club reached the Holy Grail by winning the Senior County Football Championship after a famine of 36 years. The Old Testament of the Austin Stack's Football and Hurling Club was finally closed with due respect and reverence. The New Testament had begun. Five more county titles were added and in 1977 the club reached the pinnacle of glory by winning the All-Ireland Senior Club Championship. Some people held that this was no coincidence, but due to the divine intervention of Our Lady and St Brendan!

Since then the Club players have won another 36 All-Ireland Senior Football medals. Household names like Mikey Sheehy (8), Ger Power (8), John O'Keeffe (7), Ger O'Keeffe (4), Kieran Donaghy (3), William Kirby (2), Daniel Bohane (2), Pa Laide (1) and John L. McElligott (1) have proudly carried the mantle of this famed club. To date the club has acquired 88 Senior All-Ireland medals, 23 'All Stars' and 3 'Player of the Year' awards, true testament to the power of prayer and skill; a remarkable record for Church and Club. It was reputed that medals were so plentiful in the Rock that one day a man who entered Mulchinock's shop to purchase a loaf of bread received two All-Ireland medals in his change!!!

It was at Dolly and Joe Mulchinock's shop, long since demolished, that club players and supporters gathered for away games. Today, the teams still congregate in the grounds of Our Lady and St Brendan's Church – the Church at the top of the Rock – the spiritual home of the Austin Stack's Club.



*Mulchinock's Corner – meeting place of Austin Stacks Hurling and Football Club.*



# THE CHURCH DESIGN

Local architect Mr Dan Kennedy designed the Church. The site location at the intersection of Brewery Road and Rock Street prompted the orientation of the building. The building contract was awarded to Fitzgerald Brothers of Tralee. The sod was turned on the site in the late 1960's and the new Church of Our Lady and St Brendan was dedicated by Bishop Casey on October 21<sup>st</sup> 1970.

The design is basically rectangular in shape. The main entrance and the altar are situated at diagonally opposite corners. One of the principal features of the church is that the seats radiate from the altar. Therefore, the sanctuary is close to the congregation in any part of the church. This design also affords an unimpeded view, as there are no supporting pillars. The ceiling is of columbine pine and the roof is prefabricated copper.

**The Altar** – The simple punched granite altar was fittingly designed as a table of sacrifice by Ray Carroll of Dublin and was sculpted by Paddy Rowe.

**The Tabernacle** – It's door depicts a group of people hungering for the bread of life. The background is the biblical pillar of fire.

**The Crucifix** – The main crucifix, in beaten copper is the work of Benedict Tutty.

**Stations of the Cross** – Crafted in copper and enamel; these stations were executed by Patrick McElroy

**Statue of Our Lady of Peace** – It shows Our Lady with a distinctly Irish face holding in her hands two symbols of peace – a flower and a dove. She is standing on a tree trunk. The work in beaten copper by Imogen Stuart depicts life and growth.



*Statue of Our Lady of Peace in copper.*





*Descending Dove.*



**Stained Glass Windows** – Eleven pairs of narrow elongated single paned windows reaching to the floor provide a profusion of light to the interior. The coloured windows overhead were made and designed by Murphy and Devitt of Dublin. Our Lady and St Brendan are depicted on the windows over the main entrance. Looking clockwise from the altar, a progression of events in the lives of both is symbolised. In a wealth of colour one can see a boat, an anchor, waves, an ascending star, a cross and a descending dove.

## REFURBISHMENT – PHASE 1

In September 1985, Fr Pat Horgan was appointed as the first Parish Priest. A few weeks later the new parish of Our Lady and St Brendan was established. Fr Horgan in recalling his time as Parish Priest stated that his mission was ‘to begin the process of developing a separate sense of identity in the new parish’.

In 1996 he began a programme of major changes to the interior of the building including the following:

**The Reredos** – The painting and the banners on either side and behind the altar, are the work of renowned artist Vicki Crowley. They illustrate the parting of the waters of the Red Sea as narrated in the Book of Exodus.

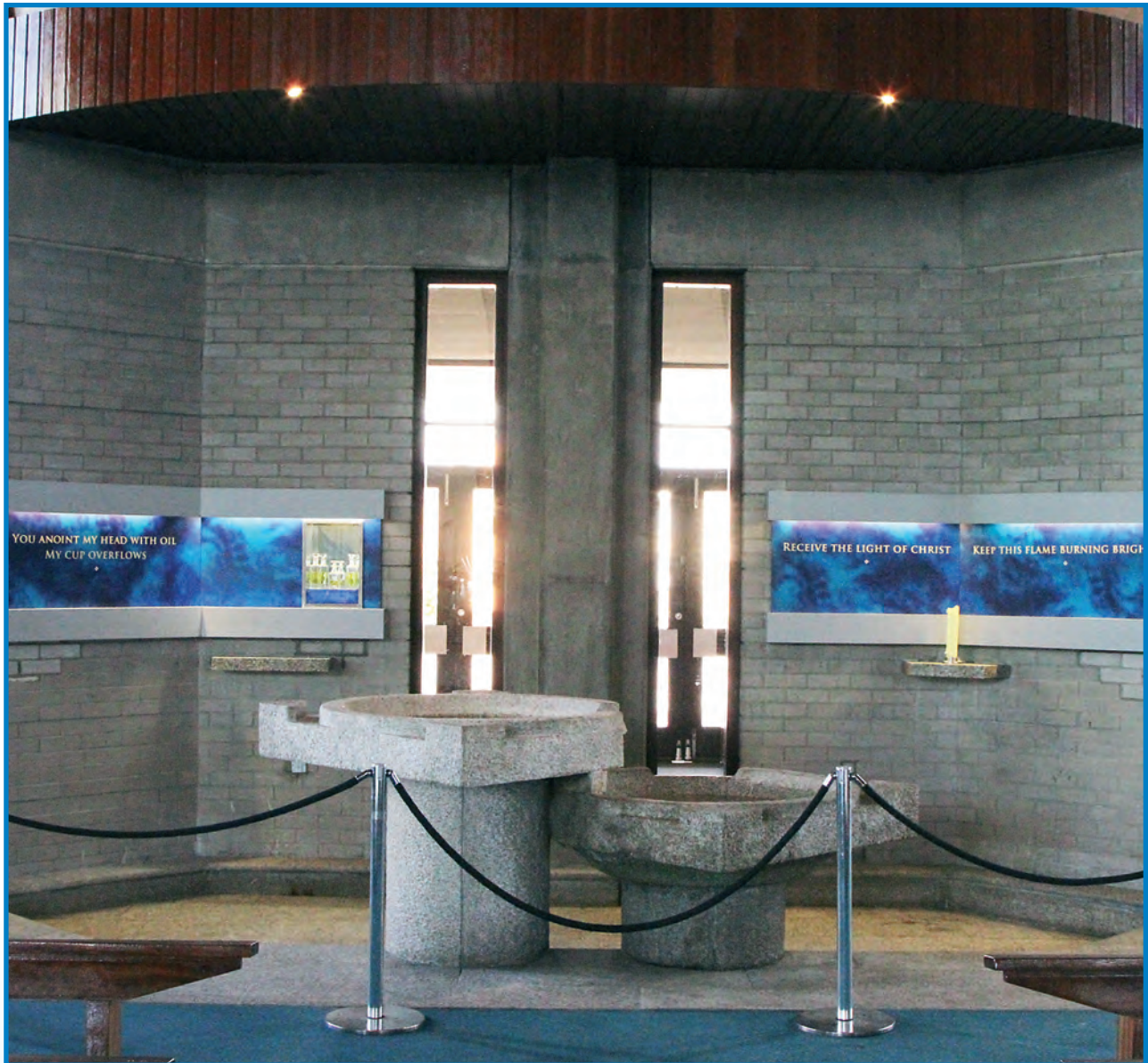
**Blue Carpet** – The carpet in the sanctuary symbolises Our Lady and also the sea, which is associated with St Brendan.

**The Tabernacle** – The silk background to the tabernacle, which was added at this time, depicts the biblical Pillar of Fire.

**The Baptistry** – Newly constructed at this time, the most important element in the baptistry is the water itself, bubbling up as ‘living water’ and overflowing into a second baptismal font. The water can overflow from this into a large pool.

**The Organ** – The MAKIN MB - 338 organ is a digital computerised instrument and the actual sounds are samples from the great organs of Europe. All the stops are genuine pipe-organ digitally recorded samples. In effect, one is listening to a digital recording of actual organ pipes. The case enclosing the pipes over the Baptistry depicts the Brendan voyage.

**Icon of St Brendan** – The icon depicts the life of the patron saint of our Diocese and secondary patron of the Parish of Our Lady and St Brendan. It is the work of Sr Aloysius McVeigh from Derry. An icon is not merely a holy picture, a work of art, a mere representation or religious decoration. It is primarily an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, a symbol that evokes our imagination and links us to the person and events it portrays. The Icon, which was consecrated by Bishop William Murphy, has become a sacramental, a vessel of grace, a presence and a fruitful source of blessings for all. The icon was donated to our parish by the Sisters of Mercy at Balloonagh Convent, Tralee.



*Baptismal Font.*

## REFURBISHMENT – PHASE 2

In 2008, the exterior of the Church and the grounds were displaying the ravages of wear and tear, and cried out for urgent attention. This work began in September 2009.

**The Roof** – Though remedial works were undertaken many times, it was now clear that a major problem had arisen. The chipboard under the copper had rotted over time and needed replacement. It was necessary to replace the copper as well as the timbers underneath. The new roof has superior timber to withstand moisture as well as insulation and special roofing felt.

**Church Grounds** – Old clay drainage pipes which had collapsed were replaced, new kerbing and paving was laid, the car park was resurfaced and the grounds were newly landscaped.

**Paved Entrance** – This newly paved area approaching the main entrance is adorned by thirteen bronze plaques. Designed by Eithne Ring and Liam Lavery, they depict the voyage of St Brendan.

**Wheelchair Access** – The step at the Main Door was removed and a wheelchair accessible toilet was located beside the family Chapel.





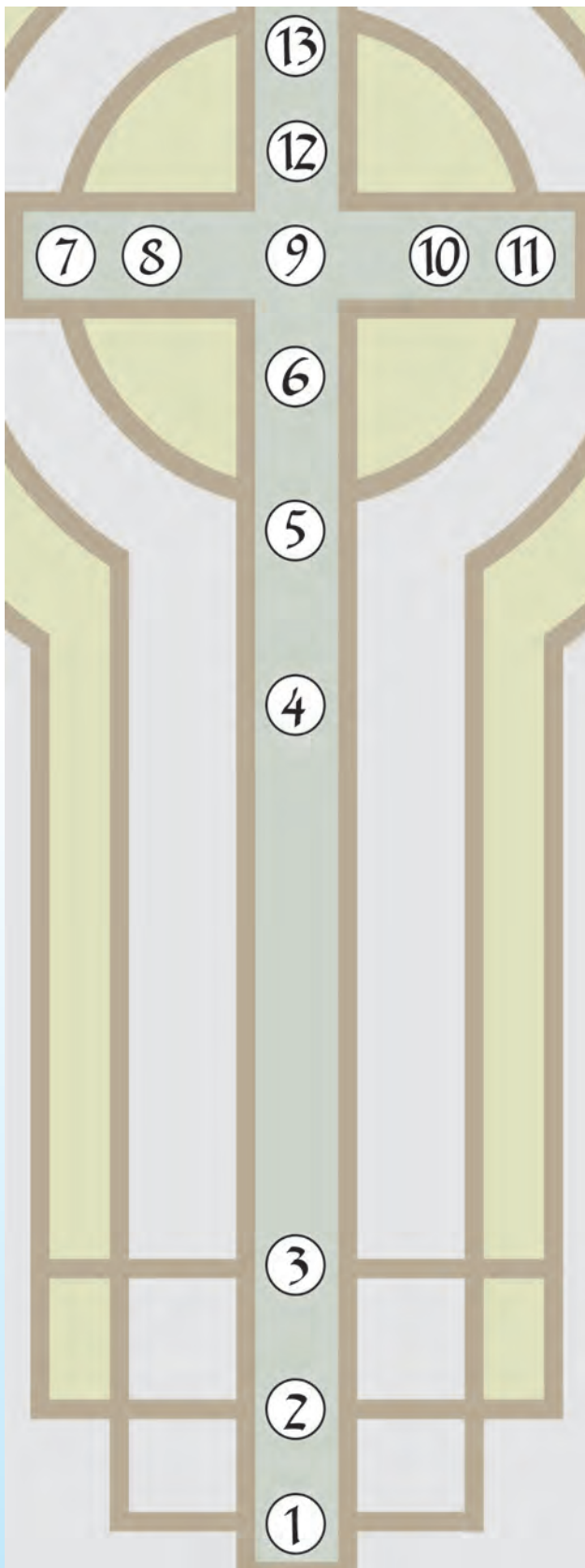
*View of the Sanctuary.*





## THIRTEEN BRONZE PLAQUES INCORPORATED IN THE ENTRANCE PAVING

*The Panels were designed by  
Eithne Ring and Liam Lavery.*

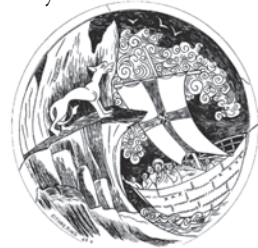


### The voyage of St Brendan

1. St Brendan went to visit St Enda, where he stayed for three days and three nights to get his blessing. He then returned to his native home and began to build a light wooden boat covered with ox hide.



2. Fifteen days into the journey they were blown to a tall rocky island. It was difficult to land there. They were met by a stray dog who led them to a hall where food was set out for them.



3. The next island they came to was called the Island of the Sheep. There were sheep on every side and every one as big as an ox. This island is believed to be one of the Faroe Islands.



4. The monks beached their boat next to an island and lit a fire. As the pot began to boil, the island started to shake. They ran to their boat and watched the "island" swim off. Brendan explained that this island was a whale, the biggest fish in the ocean.



5. After the Island of the Sheep and landing on Jasconius the whale, they arrived at an island with a very narrow stream flowing into the sea. St Brendan ordered his monks to drag the boat, using ropes, upstream. After about a mile they came to its source. Over it there was a tree, covered with so many white birds that you could not see its leaves. A bird flew, from the tree, making a sound like a hand-bell with her wings.





6. One day they saw a huge beast that was about to devour them. St Brendan prayed to the Lord and suddenly a mighty monster attacked the beast and cut him into three pieces. A few days later they came to an island and on it they saw the end portion of the beast that had been slain. St Brendan told his monks to take enough meat from the beast to last three months because by morning all that would be left would be bones.



7. At one point the boat was attacked by a flying gryphon. Just as it was about to strike its talons, a bird appeared and drove off the gryphon. The bird had earlier brought grapes the size of apples for the monks to eat.



8. While on the voyage, they sailed in waters so clear, that they could see the different fish lying at the bottom of the ocean. When Brendan sang, the fish encircled the boat and swam around in a great shoal as far as the monks could see.



9. One day a pillar in the sea appeared to them. It was higher than the sky. A wide meshed net was wrapped around it, so wide, that the boat could pass through its opening. The pillar seemed to be made of crystal. The sea was so clear that they could see the foundation of the pillar and the bottom of the net on the sea-bed. They sailed in the shadow of the pillar, yet could feel the heat of the sun. St Brendan took measurements of each side of the pillar. On the south facing side he found a chalice and paten, and took them as a gift from God.



10. Eight days after the pillar of crystal they came across a very rocky island full of slag. They heard the sound of bellows blowing like thunder. They saw one of the inhabitants who was very shaggy and full of fire and darkness. He started throwing lumps of burning slag at the monks. It did no harm to them but the seas around them seemed to boil like an erupting volcano.



11. Once, they came across a man on a small rock with a cloth suspended between iron fork-shaped supports. The waves and the cloth lashed against him. He told St Brendan that he was Judas and he was on the rock because of God's mercy. Every Sunday, Christmas, Easter and other Holy days he was given respite from the fires of hell on this rock. So, to him, this was not penance but a paradise. When the demons came to take Judas back to hell that evening, St Brendan ordered them to leave him be until morning.



12. Towards the end of their journey they came across a small rocky island made from flint, with only a narrow difficult landing place. Paul the hermit lived on the island for ninety years. For the first thirty years on the island an otter brought him a fish every third day. It also brought him a small bundle of firewood. He lit a fire with the flint and cooked the fish which he ate over the three days. After the thirty years he found two caves and a well, and for sixty years he got his only nourishment from the well.



13. After St Brendan completed his journey to the Promised Land, he returned home to his monastery knowing that his death was fast approaching.





# DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH OF OUR LADY AND ST BRENDAN

WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 1970

The new Church of Our Lady and St Brendan was filled to capacity at 7pm on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> October 1970, for the blessing and dedication by Bishop Eamonn Casey. The Bishop concelebrated the dedication Mass with Tralee born or Tralee based priests Fr Eugene O'Connor P.P., Spa, Fr Daniel McSweeney P.P., Ballylongford, Fr Isidore McArdle O.P., Tralee, Fr Seán McSweeney C.C., Caherciveen, Fr Micheál Galvin C.C., Listowel, Fr Thomas Egan C.C., Killarney, Fr Mattie Murphy C.S.Sp., Fr William Radley C.C., Tralee and Fr Eamon Prendiville, St Brendan's College, Killarney, Fr Patrick McCarthy C.C., Tralee and Fr John O'Keeffe, Bishop's Secretary assisted Bishop Casey. Rev. J L Haworth, Rector, Ballymacelligott, represented the Church of Ireland. Rev. F L McMorran, Oakpark, Tralee, represented the Presbyterian community at the ceremony. The music of the Mass was sung by St John's Choir under Choirmaster, Fr Patrick O'Sullivan C.C., Tralee.

A very large number of clergy from throughout the Diocese was also present for the official opening. Clergy present included Monsignor Denis Moriarty P.P., Tralee, Monsignor Peter O'Sullivan P.P., Listowel, Fr E Fitzpatrick P.P., Ardfert, Fr A Hawney P.P., Ballylongford, Fr Michael Flaherty, President, St Brendan's College, Killarney, Fr E Stack P.P., Ballydonoghue, Fr James Enright P.P., Ballyheigue, Fr Matthew Keane P.P., Allihies, Fr James Sheehan, Administrator, Killarney, Fr Gerard Dillon P.P., Ballybunion, Fr Peter Scott C.C., Tralee, Fr John Kennelly C.C., Tralee, Fr Tom Hickey C.C., Tralee, Fr Ned Corridan, St Brendan's College, Killarney, Fr Michael Leahy C.C., Killarney, Fr Michael Murphy C.C., Killeentierna, Fr Michael Stack C.C., Millstreet, Fr Michael Maher C.C., Lixnaw, Fr Joe McCluskey C.C., Lixnaw, Fr Denis O'Mahony C.C., Milltown, Fr David McElligott C.C., Castlegregory, Fr John O'Neill S.M.A., Tralee.

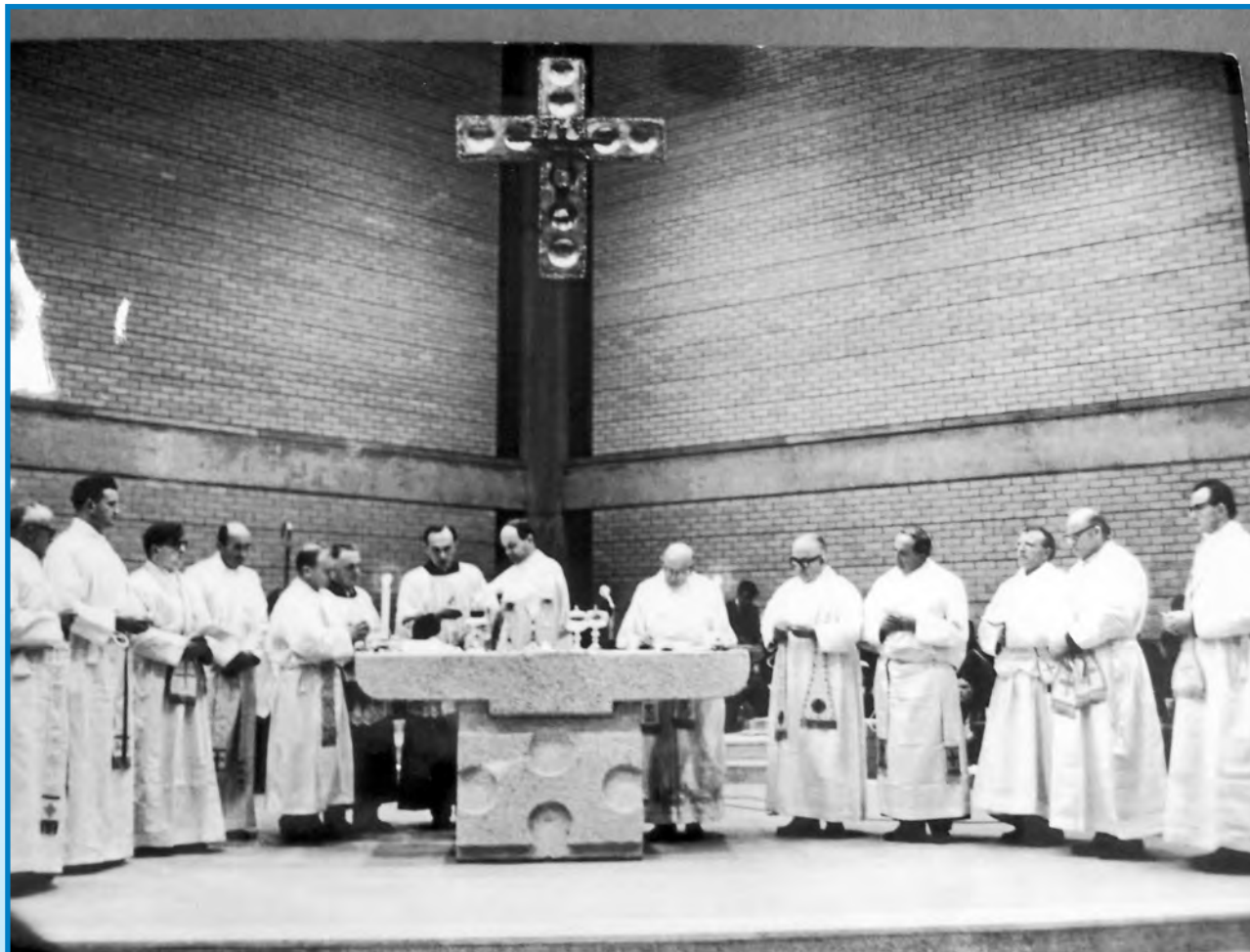
Mr Con Casey, Chairman of St Brendan's Fund-Raising Committee read the first epistle and Mr Michael Scannell MCC, Chairman of Tralee Urban District Council read the second. Fr Eamon Prendiville, St Brendan's College, Killarney preached the homily and Bishop Casey also addressed the congregation. Bishop Casey said it was a very moving occasion for all present to see the new church blessed and dedicated. He expressed his gratitude to all who were responsible for making that day possible. He said the blessing of the church was the completion of a glorious era in the life of the Church in Kerry, blessing the last church initiated by his predecessor, Bishop Denis Moynihan. It was a fitting occasion, he said, to pay tribute to the work of Bishop Moynihan in erecting, throughout the Diocese, churches that were functional and kept the people aware of the Almighty. In blessing the new Church of Our Lady and St Brendan, Bishop Casey said he was reaping the harvest of what another man had sown. He concluded his tribute to Bishop Moynihan by quoting the text, "blessed art thou, because thou hast done thy work well."

Bishop Casey paid tribute to the late Dean Reidy and to the late Dean Lane for the great work they had done for the Church and the Parish. He said that Monsignor Moriarty was now reaping the fruits of their work. The Bishop complimented all of those who had worked so hard over the previous five years to provide the beautiful new church. He thanked the Fund-Raising Committee, which he said, was mainly responsible along with Fr Scott for this wonderful day. Bishop Casey



thanked the collectors who slogged away week after week and the people who contributed, large or small. He said that many contributors fell by the wayside and some people made no contribution but whether they contributed or not he wished the blessing of God on one and all. "There were people who would ask if a church like this was necessary at all. They saw articles written in the press and heard people expressing themselves about the need or otherwise of churches today", said Bishop Casey. People who spoke in that manner did not begin to understand what a church was about. A church was a powerhouse suggested the Bishop. It was a house from which, and through which, Jesus Christ spread his spirit. It was not a sterile place, but a place in which Jesus Christ, the Son of God really dwells. It was a place in which He renews His sacrifice, a place in which He continues to dwell so that through the Blessed Eucharist they might imbibe His Spirit. It was meant to be a living house within which they would get strength, charity and grace. In conclusion, Bishop Casey said he was very grateful to all who had contributed to the fund-raising and he expressed the hope that all would continue to contribute until the debt was cleared. He hoped that this was the beginning of a new era for the Christian community.

After the ceremony at the Church of Our Lady and St Brendan, a reception was held in the C.Y.M.S. Hall for those who helped in the fund-raising effort during the previous five years. A running buffet was provided, which was thoroughly enjoyed. Bishop Casey repeated his thanks to the fund-raisers whom he exhorted to continue raising funds until the debt on the new church was completely cleared. He thanked the Architect, Dan Kennedy and the Contractors, Fitzgerald Brothers. Finally, he led the gathering in the singing of three songs and then departed amidst loud applause.



*Dedication by Bishop Eamonn Casey.*



*Some of the Congregation at the Dedication Ceremony.*



*Faces at the Dedication Ceremony – 21<sup>st</sup> October 1970.*



# HOMILY BY FR EAMON PRENDIVILLE AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE CHURCH OF OUR LADY AND ST BRENDAN WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 1970

## GOD'S CREATION

We are constantly being reminded on all sides that this is the age of technology, of science and of progress. Man's domination of the material world has been brought to a pitch of perfection never known before. Each of us in his daily life, without any doubt, benefits from this – at work, at home, at play – and this is just as things should be. “Dwell on the earth and bring it to subjection”, God said when He handed over His creation to man. All peoples, Christian and others alike, clearly welcome this progress. We cannot but thank God sincerely for these improvements in the quality of living.

## A GREAT NEED

And yet, science by definition, can hope to deal successfully only with some of the problems of the human race. Science, through no fault of its own, knows nothing of a mother's love for her newborn child. Science knows nothing of the happiness felt by a youngster on its First Communion day. Science knows nothing of the fear of death or of the fear of ill-health. Science has no solution for enmity between neighbours. We cannot and must not depend totally on technology and science or human endeavour because there still remain problems – strictly human and personal problems.

And so, paradoxically as it seems, those of us living in this sophisticated world of 1970 find within ourselves a great need for conversation with our Creator; a need, from time to time, to step out, as it were, of the fast moving life we live to turn to God in order to examine ourselves – to ask ourselves questions like:- What is my aim in life? What is the purpose of it all? Do faith, hope and charity dominate my life? Do honesty, truthfulness and patience?

Basic questions such as these occur to some of us only when serious problems arise, or maybe at the graveside of a relative or a good friend. But, irrespective of when we ask ourselves these questions, the important thing is that they must get asked and answered. It is appropriate, I feel, that these questions should be mentioned on this occasion because it is in this church that the answers to these questions will be sought after by the parishioners of this district. It is in this church that the grace and assistance and encouragement for life will be asked. It is here that the needs and desires of each family will be voiced and prayed for in a community effort. I am the Way, the Truth, the Life ..... Without me you can do nothing.

With one swift glance history can view a hundred years or a thousand years, all at once. Yet, all history necessarily has a starting point. We, here today, are seeing the beginning of a new chapter



in the history of Tralee. This new Church of Our Lady and St Brendan has been blessed, has been forever set aside for divine worship. The “no admittance” notice is gone. The church is ready for use. Today, a Catholic community has been set up by the Bishop in this area of Tralee and it has been given a proper and elegant focal point. Today, in addition to Holy Cross and St John’s, we have another House of God in this town, a new church where new spiritual opportunities are being offered to you, the residents of this area, right on your doorstep.

I mentioned at the beginning that modern progress has had the unexpected effect of making us turn more readily to God and His Church in order to get a meaning for our lives. Now this is plainly not true for some people. For them indifference has set in – religion and the whole business of being an imitator of Christ don’t seem to matter. They feel they are getting along fine – there is new wealth and affluence, more career opportunities and higher entertainment standards. Everything certainly does seem fine, on the surface, but there is something lacking, namely a purpose in life, a meaning, an overall plan. These people are scared to ask themselves the basic questions of life. They are scared because they have no answer to give. They have no firm rock on which to base their lives. They are, as it were, in a car with a perfect engine but no steering wheel. The “steering” system for life is the knowing and living of the gospel message. It is prayer and the sacraments. All this and more is available as of today in this very building.

As citizens and as native sons of this town, we are proud of this town. We are proud of its achievements – its achievements in the past, and we are proud of its latest achievement – this splendid church where we are gathered – a church dedicated both to a man who was born within a few miles of Tralee and to a woman of whom the Son of Man Himself was born. This church is dedicated to St Brendan whose generous zeal for the salvation of men, whose local origins make him a fitting patron of a Tralee church and to the Blessed Virgin, who has always had a special place in the devotion of Irish Catholics, indeed of Tralee Catholics, under the title of Lady of Perpetual Succour.

## THE FUTURE

In order to face the future with some degree of confidence, we need always to take account of the past and its successes. For most of us here tonight, St John’s Church has been our parish church for a lifetime. It is the church where we were baptised and confirmed, where we have attended Mass and received the Sacraments. Some were married there. I said my first Mass there. All have been to pray there. The Church of Our Lady and St Brendan will be for future generations what St John’s has been for us all. St John’s is the expression by the people of the 1850’s and succeeding generations of their strong faith, of their dedication to God. This church here is the expression by the people of the 1970’s of their strong faith and dedication to God.

What do we ask of the future? My wish for you, the young people, is that you will come to pray and think in this church; that your enthusiasm for noble ideas will continue; that you will apply your working principle of “all or nothing” to your religion also; that you will be the enemies of lip service and lukewarmness and hypocrisy. Now is the time for you to make a decision. My wish for you, the women and mothers of this area, is that you too will come to this church to pray and think; that you will realise the real influence you have in your homes and that this influence may at all times be for the good. Just as St John’s and Holy Cross regularly have large numbers at weekday Mass, that you, of this area, amid the morning shopping and getting the children ready for school would find a half-hour for daily Mass each morning. Now is the time to decide. But it is to the men and fathers of this area that we especially look to – to provide the strength of this



Catholic community, to show that a man is not less a man because he takes his religion seriously – rather, that he is all the more a man, a full man. We look to you, men, to value and cherish your home life, to be interested and appear to be interested in the welfare of your family. That, in a clash of interests, all of which are good in themselves, your family come in first place.

No matter what age group we belong to, what income bracket we belong to, we cannot depend totally on ourselves and other mere men to satisfy our needs and desires. We find we must turn to God because of our dependence on Him, in the last analysis, because of our own inadequacies. And so we need to be close to Him – we need His holy sacrifice to adore Him, to ask our needs, to atone for our sins; we need His baptism to become members of His Church; we need His Body and Blood to be the food of our souls. We need His Absolution to regain spiritual life; we need His Sacraments to grow in grace and love, to find the true meaning of things. This is why we need to be close to Christ. This is why Christ founded His Church. This is why we need a priest, an altar, a baptistery, a confessional. This is why we need a church building. This is why we are all here tonight.





## A NEW PARISH

Our Lady and St Brendan's formally became a Parish on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 1985. Fr Pat Horgan was appointed as its first Parish Priest. His vision after consultation with the "Partnership in Parish" group was for the new parish to have its own identity. The mission was to promote the role of the laity in the life of the parish. Many groups were already in place in the parish and this facilitated the vision. A survey was undertaken to refine and define the needs of the parish. The results of this survey were of great assistance in formulating the parish plan. It highlighted that a facility was needed. It was agreed that the provision of a multi-purpose building including the Presbytery, be undertaken as soon as possible. The Development Fund collection was established to defray the costs.



*The altar boys approve the new parish.*



*Bishop Diarmuid O'Suilleabháin blesses Fr Horgan.*



## THE PASTORAL CENTRE

The design of the Pastoral Centre was to include a general purpose hall, two meeting rooms, offices, kitchen, a prayer room as well as the Presbytery. The services provided by this excellent facility are too numerous to mention. Various groups in the parish benefit from the facilities of the Pastoral Centre, as a help in promoting their organisations and associations. Many visitors to the parish feel that we are very privileged to have such a worthwhile place for activities, meetings and prayer. We are very fortunate that our Parish Sister, Sr de Lourdes, ably assisted by the parish staff, manages the Centre with such dedication and commitment. We appreciate the help of many people who give their time in assisting the parish for special events and occasions. This Centre would not be the success it is today without the support and encouragement of the priests of the parish.



*The Parish Pastoral Centre was opened on Tuesday October 30<sup>th</sup> 1990.*



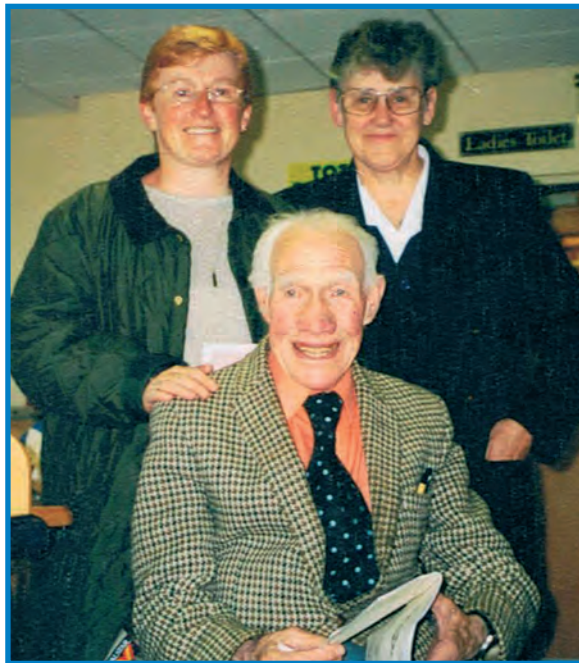
*Parish Team 2010*

*Left to right: Fr Patsy Lynch C.C., Fr Padraig Walsh P.P., Sr de Lourdes Fleming, Parish Sister.*





## REELING IN THE YEARS



*Race Night 2001  
Máire Bean Uí Mhurchú,  
Martin "Bracker" O'Regan,  
Sr de Lourdes Fleming.*

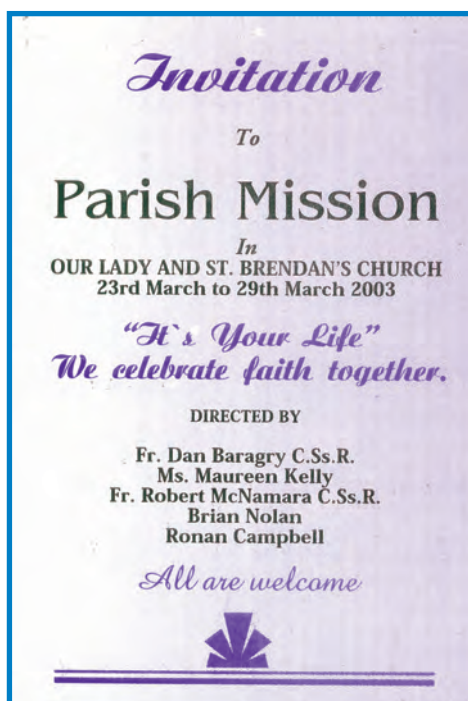


*John O'Connor and Fr Tadhg Fitzgerald at the Parish Social 2001.*



*Kathlynn and Nicola Sheehy present a bouquet to President McAleese in 2002.*





*Invitation to Parish Mission 2003.*



*Some of the babies baptised in 2003 with Fr Tom Leane P.P.*



*Left to right: Maria Denihan, Sr de Lourdes Fleming, Ryan Tubridy, Eileen Holden and Maggie Fealy at the Pastoral Centre in 2003.*





*Wethers Well Pilgrimage 2004.*



*Left to right: Mary Martin, Nicky Comerford, Joanie Hobbart in 2004.*



*Fr Tadhg Fitzgerald leaves for further studies in 2004.*

*Left to right: Paul Trant, Marie Murphy, Fr David Gunn, Patsy Prendeville, Maria Denihan, Nora Fitzgerald, Eileen Holden, Fr Tadhg Fitzgerald.*





*The Parish Choir 2005 with Fr Tom Leane P.P.*



*St Joseph's Young Priests Society 2007.*

*Left to right: Tom Lally, Phil Lynch, Séan Kelly, Eddie Howard, John Howard and Sr Winifred Nelligan.*





*Parish Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2007.*



## ANNIVERSARIES THROUGH THE YEARS



*Mary and Dick Kelter.*



*Amy and Paddy O'Connor.*



*Rose and Paddy Hussey.*



*Bernie and Bertie Conway.*



*Eileen and Eddie Howard.*





*Parish Fund-Raising Committee 2009.*

*Left to right: Johnny Commane, Anna Looby, Noreen Guerin, Fr Danny Broderick P.P., Catherine Commane and Bryan Kearney.*



*"Gael Force" from Na Gaeil GAA Club who performed at the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of Our Lady and St Brendan's Church.*

*Left to right: Amy Stone, Katie O'Riordan, Eogháin Sheehy, Anna Hayes, Janna Foley and Hilary White.*





***Parish Sisters.***

*Left to right: Sr Katherine Tierney, Sr de Lourdes Fleming, Sr de Lellis Considine.*



***Siblings in Religion.***

*Left to right: Fr Dan Ahern, Fr Pat Ahern, Fr Michael Fleming, Sr de Lourdes Fleming, Fr Tom Crean and Fr Billy Crean.*



***36 Years Later.***

*Left to right: Fr Seán Hanafin, Fr Martin Casey and Fr Patsy Lynch who were ordained in the Church of Our Lady and St Brendan in 1974.*



# NAOMH BREANDÁN

*Le Pádraig Ó Domabháin*

Saolaíodh Naomh Breandán nó Bréanainn ar imeall na farraige, i gCuan Thrá Lí, taobh leis an bhFianait sa bhliain 484 A.D. de réir an traidisiúin. Ina luath shaol, tháinig sé faoi thionchar Íde agus Erc agus rinne sé staidéar ar an scríoptúr, ar Laidin agus ar Ghréigis. Tar éis oirniú dó, chuir sé a chéad mhainistir ar bun in Ard Fhearta. Deirtear gur thóg sé teampaillín ar bharr Cnoc Bhréanainn in iarthar Duibhneach áit ar chaith sé tréimhsí ag troscadh agus ag paidreoireacht.

Is mar thaistealaí mara agus mar fhear farraige go háirithe a smaoinítear ar Bhréanainn. Sheol sé thall agus abhus ar an aigéan i dteannta na manach a bhí faoina chúram. De réir an tseanchais, bhí siad ar thóir na tíre Tairngire. Tharla sé seo agus Éire ag fás mar lárionad Críostaíochta nuair a bhí impire na Róimhe cloíte ag na barbaráigh.

Leathadh cáil Bréanainn ar fud na hEorpa de bharr na tuairisce a tugadh ar iomramh leis ins an Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis, lámhscríbhinn Laidine de chuid an naoú nó an deichiú céid. Bhí eolas forleathan ar an mór-roinn ar an Navigatio go luath tar éis a chumtha. Cuireadh lámhscríbhinn eile ar fáil sa Ghearmáin, De reis van Sint Brandaan, agus dá bharr, mhéadaigh béaloideas na linne ar chlú agus cáil an naoimh sa chaoi go raibh iliomad scéalta faoi i dtíortha éagsúla na hEorpa. Ba é Bréanainn an tÉireannach ba mhó cáil sna lámhscríbhinní agus scaipeadh na scéalta i bhfad i gcéin san Eoraip sna meánaoiseanna.

Sna scéalta, bhí Bréanainn mar laoch agus tugadh cur síos ar eachtraí a bhain dó – an míol mór a nocht mar oileán roimhe, na hiontais a chonacthas, áiteanna mar Oileán na gCaorach, Parthas na nÉan, Oileán na nGaibhne agus Limistéar an Cheo. Táthar den tuairim gur bhain Bréanainn an-chuid tíortha amach agus é ag trasnú an aigéin.

Ina measc tuigtear go raibh An Íoslainn, An Ghraonlainn, Talamh an Éisc chomh maith le hoileáin agus cóstaí na hEorpa. Bhí sé ráite go raibh An Bhreasail mar thír san Atlantach siar ó chósta na hÉireann cé nach raibh tasc ar an dtír sna céadta níos déanaí. Is dóigh lena lán gur bhain Bréanainn amach Meiriceá féin. Is cosúil go raibh cur amach ag Bréanainn ar Sceilg Mhichíl agus ar Oileán Í mar ionaid spioradálta.

Deirtear gur bhunaigh Bréanainn mainistreacha eile in Éirinn. Ina measc bhí Inis Dá Dhrom, Inis Ghluaise agus Eanach Dúin. Ba é Cluain Fhearta an mhainistir ba mhó agus ba cháiliúla a bhunaigh sé agus creidtear go raibh breis is trí mhíle mac léinn ann tráth. Is anseo atá an naomh adhlactha tar éis dó bás a fháil thart ar 577 A.D.

Áirítear Naomh Breandán mar cheann de dhá aspal déag na hÉireann. Tá dlúth cheangal aige leis an ré nuair a tugadh Oileán na Naomh agus na nOllamh ar Éirinn. Ní miste bheith mórtasach as an inspioráid spioradálta a fuarthas ó shaol agus ó scéal Bréanainn.



*Naomh Breandán.*



# MEMORIES OF ST BRENDAN'S AND KEEPING THE FAITH

*By Fr Bernard Healy*



*Fr Bernard Healy.*

A while ago, I was reminded of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Our Lady and St Brendan's when Fr Pádraig Walsh sent me a copy of an article I wrote to mark that event. It's a mortifying thing to re-read the pontifications of one's teenage years! I had much to say about the challenges to the faith of young people back then, but I couldn't have anticipated the storms which were in store for the Irish Church at that time. However, at least one idea has remained fixed in my mind from then until today – whatever challenges we face, we need to keep the faith, and the faith will keep us.

When I wrote that last article, I was finishing up secondary school and preparing to study mathematics in university. Since then, the Lord has led me through university and work in Dublin, to discern a call to priesthood. I finally

made up my mind when attending the Jubilee World Youth Day in Rome as a representative of the parish. I've studied philosophy and theology in Rome, did pastoral training in Kerry General Hospital, Tralee and the Cathedral in Killarney and was ordained to the priesthood in the Church of Our Lady and St Brendan in 2007. I now find myself entering my third year as curate in the Parish of Dingle, but St Brendan's remains very much a spiritual home to me and I often return to celebrate Mass.

The Jesuit writer Fr Daniel Lord once wrote that no priest can write convincingly about his ordination day – there's something about the importance of the occasion that can't be put down on paper. I don't think that I can put in words what it was like to return to the church of my baptism to be ordained to the priesthood. Certain things stand out, of course – knowing that I was supported by the prayers of the parish as I lay in front of the altar during the Litany of the Saints and the joy of being welcomed into the brotherhood of Kerry clergy by the Bishop and other priests. The late Fr Micheál Galvin, a native of the Rock and then well in to his eighties, was there to concelebrate as well. It was a particularly touching reminder that the Lord had led me to that day through the work and prayers of generations of laity and clergy who kept the flame of faith alive throughout the challenges of their times.

Whenever I think back to my ordination day, my mind is inevitably drawn further back to my time as an altar boy in Our Lady and St Brendan's when much of the foundation for my vocation was laid. Fr Pat Horgan was the parish priest at the time and even as a youngster, I knew that celebrating the liturgy well, was a priority for Fr Horgan. We were always put through our paces for the Easter Ceremonies, and the care and attention to detail paid off. Assisting at Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil, we *knew* that something life-changing was being celebrated. It wasn't simply a case of rushing through the motions or putting on an entertainment,



but rather doing our best to help people travel the journey from the Upper Room to the desolation of Calvary and onwards to the joy of the empty tomb. We were celebrating something vitally important and it was vitally important for all of us that we celebrate it well.

Our Lady and St Brendan's is the place where I learned that we meet Christ in the sacraments and in the liturgy. This discovery was central to hearing the call to priesthood. I am convinced that if we wish to 'keep the faith' and renew the Church we must turn to the sacraments and the liturgy in order to meet the living Christ. The church building is the place where we are called together by Christ in order to meet Him and draw life from His Holy Spirit. We are drawn back to the mystery of His death and rising again; we are schooled and strengthened for our tasks in this life; we are prepared for the world which is to come. Whatever else happens to us as a Church and a society, we only live a second-class Christian life if we don't carefully and prayerfully treasure our encounter with the Lord in the prayer and liturgies of the Church.



*Fr Bernard Healy with Bishop Bill Murphy and family at his ordination – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2007.*

*Left to right: Aidan Healy, David Healy, Fr Bernard Healy, Bishop Bill Murphy and Bridie Healy.*



# 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

On September 24<sup>th</sup> 2010 at the close of day crowds gathered at Our Lady and St Brendan's Church. They came to celebrate the building, which has been the centre of prayer and devotion at the top of the Rock for forty years. As people walked through the pristine grounds and past waving banners, the personal events of those years must have flashed across many minds. This Church with architecture so brave and innovative in its day has wrapped its walls around us all in celebration and sorrow through the years.

On this night the Church sparkled, its wonderful windows boldly narrating the stories of Our Lady and St Brendan in the fading evening light. Forty years ago it was a stunning achievement for a fledgling community. Today it is mature, anchored and central to the landscape of the Rock. It has aged with dignity.

At 7.30pm people switched off their mobile phones, an added chore of forty years of developing technology. The choir burst into song and the procession began. The chapters of history unfolded as we acknowledged the faces of former priests of the parish, slowly approaching the sanctuary. The Bishop warmly greeted us all and spoke of the joy and celebration this occasion afforded the parishioners.

Mass began. The liturgy was very uplifting and encouraging, and a fitting tribute to the occasion. The Procession of symbols at the beginning adopted the theme of growth from seed to mature plant, reflective of the story of the Church to date. In a very moving ceremony the students of Mounthawk dressed the altar. The participation of the laity in these ceremonies and as commentators, Ministers of the Word and Eucharistic Ministers marked another development in the Church over those forty years.



*Mounthawk students in procession.*



Fr Horgan gave us a very personal account of his life as the first Parish Priest of Our Lady and St Brendan's. Though apprehensive leaving the academic world for pastoral duties he worked tirelessly to promote every aspect of parish life. He supervised the refurbishment of the interior with great sensitivity and passion. He can be justly proud of his accomplishments as he created an interior as unique and distinctive as the building itself. The Pastoral Centre which was opened in 1990, has become the hub of activity he envisaged at the planning stage.

Fr Walsh, our present parish priest, spoke of the recent renovations and acknowledged the tremendous support of the parishioners. Forty years later the project looks complete and resplendent. After Mass the crowds adjourned to the marquee, another invention of the past forty years, for refreshments.



*Bishop Bill Murphy with concelebrating Priests at 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Mass – 24<sup>th</sup> September 2010.*



*Fr Tom Hickey,  
Lena and  
Walter Lyons.*



## 40<sup>TH</sup> CELEBRATIONS ON 24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2010



*Children of the Parish.*



*Left to right: Catherine Ryan, Eilish Hayes, Aileen Kelliher, Aine McQuinn Ryan.*



*Ena O'Shea reminisces.*



*Left to right: Fr Padraig Walsh, P.P., AJ Spring, Mayor of Tralee and Fr Tom Hickey.*



*Sr de Lourdes and Sr Katherine cut the cake.*



# HOMILY FOR 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

*By Canon Pat Horgan*



*Canon Pat Horgan.*

I feel I may have to introduce myself to some of you. I am Fr Pat Horgan, a blow-in from County Cork. In 1985, after 30 years of teaching, I was asked to come here by Bishop Diarmaid O'Suilleabháin to be the first Parish Priest of this new parish. To be truthful, I wasn't looking forward to the challenge, and I probably would not have survived without the backup of the priests who worked with me, and the generous voluntary support of the sisters of the parish. But in a very short time I realised that there was a great pool of goodwill and support from the parishioners too. So I am glad to be back. I feel I am among friends and there are many pleasant memories.

It is especially good to come back and find the whole place looking so well – the grounds so well kept, the impressive new entrances to the church and pastoral centre, so sensitively in keeping with the buildings already there, and the new roof completed as if it were the original. Somebody told me that the work was started by Fr Danny and completed by Fr Padraig. Congratulations to everyone.

When Fr Padraig gently reminded me recently of his invitation to preach at this special Mass, my very first reaction was to go to the internet to find out what jubilee was being celebrated. It seems that the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Our Lady and St Brendan's Church is its Ruby Anniversary. But as I came in 1985, this year also happens to be the Silver Anniversary of the foundation of the Parish.

It only seems like a very short time since the church was built. But change takes place very fast these days, and it is good to commemorate what has happened while the memories are still fresh. The community owes a great debt of gratitude to everybody who was involved in building this impressive church, from the architect down to the last man who worked here. I hesitate to make a list of names, for I would surely leave out some important people if I did.

But I feel I have to mention Dan Kennedy's name. He designed this church at a time when there was still a great surge in church building in Europe after the war that ended in 1945. This is a church of its time, a holy place that concentrates on the essentials. There is no paint or plaster here unless it is a necessary part of the building, and everybody has an unobstructed view of what is going on at the altar. In that sense it is a modern church.

However, many times during my years here it was suggested to me that it would be helpful if some colour was introduced into the church. I asked Dan Kennedy if he would be ready to make proposals to me, but he had already closed his practice, and he was reluctant to become involved. I invited Vicki Crowley, an artist who lives in Galway, to make some suggestions. She had worked in many churches in the west of Ireland. She was anxious that an architect be involved, so I asked a man who had done a lot of church work in the diocese, to do some drawings. His name is Eamon



Hedderman. The new work in the church is the result of the efforts of both of these talented people.

So it is obvious that starting at the beginning that it was the vision and the foresight, the skills and the hard work, the generosity and the commitment of a great many working together with a common purpose that went into providing this imposing church at the top of the rock. It will stand forever as a worthy monument to the strong faith of all who were involved. We honour and remember them today.

The understanding of the pioneers of this project was that you could not have a living community without a heart, a focal point where the special events of people's lives would be celebrated in a worthy setting, a place where the weekly gathering for the celebration of Mass on the Lord's Day would build an ever stronger sense of community. Tralee was one of the fastest growing towns in the country. Other urban areas of the same size had then an average of four parishes. So Our Lady and St Brendan's Church was marked out to be in time, the spiritual heart of a new parish community, not just a chapel of ease for St John's Parish. There was no talk then of a shortage of priests! But in the Church as well as in society, change can sometimes come very quickly.

To be ready to take advantage of change if at all possible, and to use it as an opportunity to grow, rather than to waste one's energy in trying to resist the inevitable, there had to be a place to train groups of parishioners for new roles in the parish. So the Pastoral Centre was built. Over the years there have been many courses held there to cater for people's needs and interests, as well as to train volunteers for various new ministries. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the sisters who have directed this work since the beginning – Sr Katherine, Sr de Lellis, and now Sr de Lourdes. We must not forget the great work that Sr Norrie and Sr Nellie did with the active retired. The Pastoral Centre was and is, an extension of this church.

At the ceremony to inaugurate the parish I remember that I referred to my first glimpse of the church as I came in from Listowel over the parish boundary on Brewery Road. It reminded me of a group of fishermen carrying their upturned currach out to sea.

Fishermen would get nowhere, unless they rowed together. But getting people to row together was never a problem in this parish. I will be eternally grateful for the generous co-operation of the parishioners all the time I was here. And I know that the many fine priests who served here before I came and those who were with me for my eleven years would bear me out on that, as would all who came afterwards. This was a happy place to live and work. The sense of family was always present, and it was a continuing support and encouragement for all the priests who have worked here. I know that the sense of willing co-operation is still a feature of life in Our Lady and St Brendan's. So this evening, as well as celebrating the work of those who began the project, we celebrate also the strong faith that sustains the community that gathers to worship here in this sacred place.

Our presence here is also about preparing for the future, preparing for another generation to carry the flame of faith forward, to pass on their Christian values in rapidly changing circumstances. In this sacred space they will leave behind the worries and cares of everyday. In coming here they must surely be influenced by what Jesus did on the night before he died. He gathered his apostles around him to celebrate a Passover Meal. During that evening they would have recalled with gratitude how God helped his chosen people to escape from the slavery of Egypt, how he

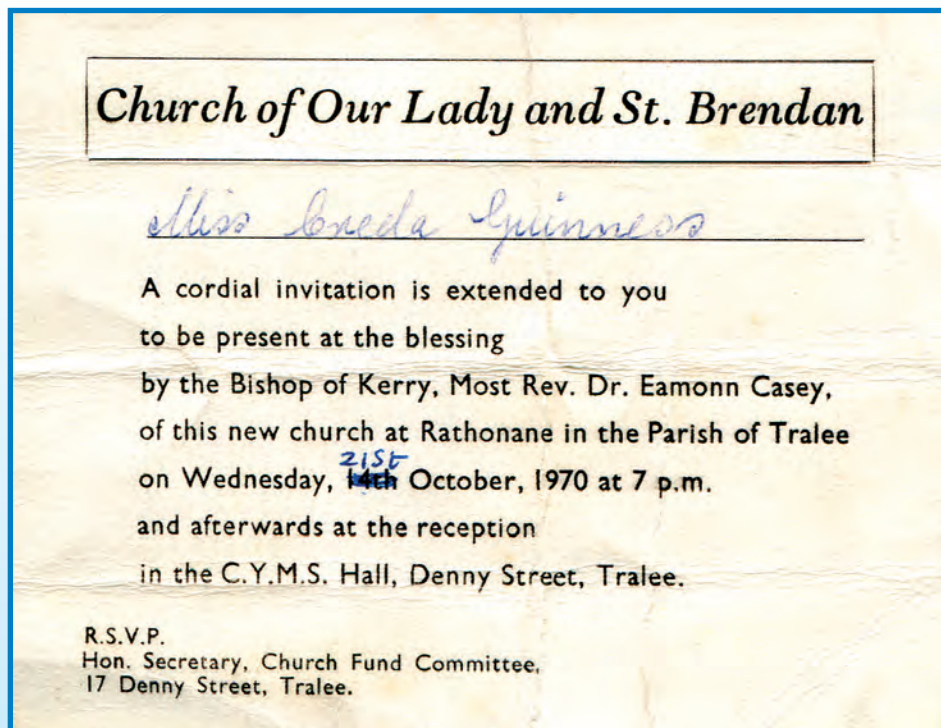


parted the waters of the Red Sea so that they could escape from Pharaoh's army, how he nourished them with manna and quail on the journey through the wilderness to the Promised Land, how he went before them as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The artwork by Vicki Crowley will remind them of this story of the Passover.

But here in the sanctuary we also have the fulfilment of the Passover Meal. We are now God's chosen people, on our way to the Promised Land of Heaven. The Lord is with us too, day and night. From the ambo we hear His word, telling us how to travel if we are to reach our destination. From the altar the Lord nourishes us with living Bread from Heaven, food for the journey of life. In response to His invitation we come together here to express our gratitude for His total giving of Himself for us on Calvary, and, as we leave, we commit ourselves anew, to building up His Kingdom of Justice and Love and Peace.

Those who have gone before us have created here a place that is a worthy setting where you can bring all the gifts of the community to enhance your worship, so that you can deepen and sustain your own faith, and help a new generation to express their own faith in their own way, in this, their own place.

The flame of faith that we carry, is both a privilege and a responsibility. It is a great privilege to be part of a vibrant faith community, but each of us has a responsibility too to pass on that faith, in its fullness, to the generations that come after us. That is why you keep this time of Jubilee. May God be with you on another stage of life's journey.



*Invitation to the Mass of Dedication in 1970.*



# DOWN MEMORY LANE



*Distinguished People of the Parish.*

*Left to right: Paddy Brosnan, Ena O'Shea and Bertie Conway.*

## BERTIE CONWAY

### 1. What is your earliest recollection of Our Lady and St Brendan's Church?

My earliest recollection was the collection of one shilling a week from every house in Tralee and the model of the new building displayed in Lee Strand window near St John's Church.

### 2. What is your outstanding memory to date in the life of the Church?

I have many wonderful memories of Our Lady and St Brendan's, the official opening ceremony in October 1970 when the church was packed to capacity and the fantastic celebration held in the C.Y.M.S afterwards. Other outstanding memories include the many ordinations held in the church, the 10th, 25th and 40th year celebrations, parish missions, parish socials and the untimely death of Fr Joe McCluskey in 1974.

### 3. What does Our Lady and St Brendan's mean to you?

For the last 40 years the church has been the focal point of my everyday life. During the past 40 years I have seen people coming together to our church in times of great joy and great sadness. The great community spirit, camaraderie and deep faith have been ever present since the establishment of the church.

### 4. What would be your hopes and aspirations going forward?

I would hope that this great sense of community, empathy and deep faith would continue to flourish in the future.

## ENA O'SHEA

### 1. What is your earliest recollection of Our Lady and St Brendan's Church?

Passing O'Connell's field and seeing the church being built. Then the opening ceremony which was unforgettable. Everyone was so excited – we had our own church at the top of the Rock.



**2. What is your outstanding memory to date in the life of the Church?**

In 1986 the Ministers of the Eucharist started. We had our meetings in St John's to prepare. On Holy Thursday many of us became Ministers of the Eucharist On Good Friday three men and I gave out communion for the first time. I was rather nervous being the only female.

**3. What does Our Lady and St Brendan's mean to you?**

It means the start of everyday. Rosary at 9.15 a.m. and Mass at 9.30 a.m. It is wonderful to see so many people every morning. Then every Thursday there is Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the Prayer Room. We have been blessed with all our clergy past and present, they are always there to help.

**4. What would be your hopes and aspirations going forward?**

That the youth will continue going to Mass and that more to answer the call to the priesthood. People to continue becoming Eucharistic Ministers, Readers and to be involved in whatever way is needed.

**5. Have you any anecdote to share with you?**

One morning Fr McCloskey R.I.P. was coming down Buntaloon and his car went into a flood. His legs got pretty wet so he called here for a pair of socks as he had other calls to make. He wondered what took me so long to get them but I was looking for black ones thinking that's the colour priests wore. He never left me forget that story.

## PADDY BROSNAN

**1. What is your earliest recollection of Our Lady and St Brendan's Church?**

My earliest memory of the church was when my mother died in St Catherine's Hospital in April 1972, she was brought to the church of St Brendan's and buried in Rath. Fr Scott was the celebrant of the Mass. The dignified manner in which the funeral was conducted left a lasting impression and made me aware of the wonderful community to which I belonged.

**2. What is your outstanding memory to date in the life of the Church?**

I have many fond memories of my time involved in the church. These include being bestowed the honour of being the first adult altar boy in the parish, becoming a Reader and Eucharistic Minister and attending my first Chrism Mass in St Mary's Cathedral Killarney on Holy Thursday 1973, and the sudden death of my dear friend Fr Joe McCluskey.

**3. What does Our Lady and St Brendan's mean to you?**

It has been an integral part of my life, attending daily Mass with my wife, meeting friends and praying together and assisting clergy whenever possible and participating in all parish activities. This has given me a great sense of belonging in the parish. I feel privileged to be part of such a wonderful church community.

**4. What would be your hopes and aspirations going forward?**

I would like to see more people get involved in the work of running the parish with the priests leading and more vocations to the religious life. I believe greater youth participation is of paramount importance to ensure the future of our church.



# THE SOUND OF MUSIC



*Sr Colette.*

Sr Colette, a member of the Mercy Order at St John's Balloonagh was involved with Our Lady and St Brendan's Church from its beginning in 1970. She was privileged to be appointed organist and choir mistress to the fledgling choir. She is a member of a musical family in Waterford. Her sister Joan Stafford was choir mistress and organist in Ballybricken Parish Church for fifty years. Joan was awarded the Benemerente Medal by Pope John Paul II in recognition of her great service and dedication to the Church.

Sr Colette held her position with the Choir until her transfer to the Mercy Convent in Killarney. From humble beginnings the choir grew in stature and excellence. Sr Colette has wonderful memories of the

many celebrations which took place in the Church. However her most poignant memory is the sad and untimely death of Fr McCluskey R.I.P. during the ordination ceremony of Fr Sean Hanafin, now Dean of Kerry, and Fr Patsy Lynch, now ministering in the parish. The outstanding performance of the choir on that memorable day encompassed both the joy and the unexpected sorrow of the occasion. Sr Colette was always mindful of Pius X motto 'he who sings prays twice'.

## OUR LADY AND ST BRENDAN'S PARISH CHOIR

Our Lady and St Brendan's Parish Choir is a mixed voice choir made up of approximately 26 members from various parts of the parish.

The first choir performance was at the official opening in 1970. That choir was from St John's Church, Castle Street, as ours had yet to be formed. That choir was conducted by Fr O'Sullivan, a curate in St John's and the organist was well known Tralee organist, Anne Hanbidge.

A church choir for Our Lady and St Brendan's church was subsequently formed by Sr Colette who conducted and played for the choir for the following 10 years. They were again joined by Anne Hanbidge as organist in 1980, and she remained there with Sr Colette until 1989. On various occasions they were aided by Sr Winifred, a well respected music teacher, also from Balloonagh Convent.

After the retirement of Sr Colette, the choir was delighted to acquire the services of Mr John O'Roarke as choirmaster and organist in 1989. John came to Tralee as a teacher in Mercy Moyderwell Secondary School and is currently Principal of Mercy Mounthawk Secondary School, Tralee. He is an accomplished organist, and brought a new dynamic to the choir, especially with the installation of the new digital pipe organ in the church.

The choir was then joined by Mrs Máire Jones as choir director in the mid 1990's. Máire is a teacher in Mercy Moyderwell Primary School, Tralee. Again, this was a progressive event for the



choir with the introduction of new and more modern music for worship introduced by both Máire Jones and John O'Roarke.

The choir is currently under the directorship of Martina Egan, a music teacher from Tralee. She joined John O'Roarke and Our Lady and St Brendan's choir in 2002 as choir director. Martina is a director of two other adult choirs in Tralee, Opus '96 Chamber Choir and Ardfert Ladies Gospel Choir. She also works with the Mercy Mounthawk School Choir.

The type of music performed by the choir can be described as a mix of the old and new. The choir constantly strive to build a new repertoire of music for worship which is hoped will enhance the prayerful experience at Mass. The choir sings every Sunday at the 11.15am Mass, but also sings at many special events throughout the year.

The choir members always like to encourage new members to join and to share the joy of singing with a choir. We are blessed also to have such commitment from Martina Egan and John O'Roarke to lead and to support the choir. We are very fortunately to have a wonderful dedicated choir, enhancing our liturgy, as it continues a great tradition of our parish choirs over many years.



*Choir of Our Lady and St Brendan's.*

*Front row (left to right): Mary Ryan, Terry Griffin, Kay Walsh, Bridget O'Hea, Eilish O'Daly, Joe Cotter, Tim McCarthy, Haulie O'Connor, Martina Egan.*

*Second row (left to right): Anne Lacey, Helen Lyons, Elizabeth O'Halloran, Julianne O'Leary, Ann O'Keeffe, John Baily, Kevin Woods.*

*Back row (left to right): Eileen Tansley, Pidgie Cavanagh, Sr Carmel Downing, Joan Doody, Mary Martin, Eilish Hayes, Colette Quinn, Frank O'Connor, Arthur Townsend, PJ Ryan.*



## FOLK TALES

Our Lady and St Brendan's Folk Group finds its origin in the Shanakill community folk group founded in the late 1970's and over the years has blossomed and developed into a wonderful asset to the Church of Our Lady and St Brendan. Bro. Joe Tynan, a teacher in Tralee CBS, requested Eddie Bailey to deputise for him for six months while he underwent further studies in Dublin. That was 28 years ago, and Eddie has been ever-present, along with Pamela Teahan and Deirdre O'Keeffe since. Many dedicated musicians and singers have come and gone, and today Eddie and John Lynch (The Boherbee Boys) are the mainstay of the group. Having spent 40 years in our parish, the time has now come to bestow these men with the title of honorary "Rockies"! Both these men have given great service and commitment to the church over the years. In fact, Eddie has been absent from the 12.30 Mass only on two occasions in 28 years, such is his dedication. They both had a desire to bring a different style of music to the liturgy and they have composed and adapted many modern folk songs to great effect to enhance our ceremonies. Indeed, many people have commented that the 12.30 Mass is an integral part of their Sundays. The Folk Group has also given many young people an opportunity to be involved in the parish. Both Eddie and John have very strong connections with the Church of Our Lady and St Brendan. Eddie's late brother Patrick Bailey and his wife Judy were the first couple to be married in the church while John's eldest son, Michael Lynch, was the first child to be baptised in the Church of Our Lady and St Brendan. Over the years the folk group has played for the 12:30 Mass every Sunday as well as providing music for weddings, funerals, graduations and examination Masses. The parish owes a great deal of gratitude to Eddie Bailey and John Lynch for sharing with us their God given talents. They are without doubt two of nature's true gentlemen.



*Our Lady and St Brendans Folk Group.*

*Front row (left to right): Pamela Teahan, Fr Padraig Walsh P.P., Brenda Litchfield.*

*Back row (left to right): John Lynch, Sharon Walsh, Janna Foley, Clodagh Foley, Deirdre O'Keeffe and Eddie Bailey.*



# FR MICHEÁL GALVIN – A LOYAL SERVANT OF GOD AND OF THE ROCK

*By Billy Ryle*



*Fr Micheál Galvin.*

It was with much sorrow and deep sadness that word circulated around the Rock that Fr Micheál Galvin, beloved and long serving President of Austin Stack's Hurling and Football Club had passed away peacefully at Fatima Home shortly before midnight on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2010. Even though Fr Micheál's passing was expected, when it eventually happened, it cast a dark cloud over an area to which he had given a lifetime of service. Fr Micheál had retired as Parish Priest of Ballybunion in 1999 and returned to Tralee to spend his golden years amidst his own people in the Rock.

The name of Fr Micheál Galvin will always be synonymous with the famous Black and Amber. He was born at 101 Rock Street on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1919 just two years after the establishment of The Rock Street Club. Fr Micheál's family, on both sides, was steeped in the

tradition of the GAA and, in particular, the Rock Street Club. Although The Rock club did not enter into the county championship competition until 1926, Rock Street, as it was called until the thirties, was organised as a football stronghold as far back as 1917. It was in 1917 that the British forces introduced Martial Law in Ireland. In effect, this meant that one couldn't even go for a walk without a permit. Therefore, it was only natural that the youth of the country turned to sport as an outlet for their energies. When in 1917, Fr Micheál's maternal uncle, Christy Barrett bought the team a set of jerseys, the Club, that was to become the stuff of legends, was launched. Rock Street won the Junior County Football championship in 1921 but the early Twenties sorely strained their playing strength with the internment of many young men from the area. Rock Street won its first Senior County Football Championship in 1928. Fr Micheál's uncle, the great Joe Barrett, captained the 1928 team and his brother Séan was team mascot. Joe Barrett went on to win six All-Ireland Senior medals with Kerry. The years 1928 to 1932 were memorable in the history of Rock Street. The club won the County Senior Football Championship in 1928, 1930, 1931 and 1932 as well as the County Senior Hurling Championship in 1928, 1929 and 1931. In 1936, the Club, now named after the great patriot and footballer, Austin Stack, won its next County Football Championship, not winning again until 1973. The '40's, '50's and '60's were barren years at senior level for "The Stack's".

Fr Micheál donned the famous black and amber jersey at an early age and played football at all levels for his beloved Austin Stack's Club. However, at the end of his secondary education he answered a call from God to study in Maynooth for the Priesthood, thereby putting his fledgling football career on hold. Fr Micheál Galvin was ordained in June 1944 and began his ministry as



chaplain to St Catherine's Hospital in Tralee. He went on to serve as Curate in Glenbeigh, Castletownbere, Killarney, Kenmare and Listowel before his appointment as Parish Priest of Glenbeigh. He became Parish Priest of Ballybunion in September 1978, where he remained until his retirement in July 1999. Even though Fr Micheál served as a priest in many parts of the Kerry Diocese he remained a quintessential "Rockie". He rarely missed a game at any level and was Club President from 1944 until his death. No one was more proud than Fr Micheál when the football famine ended in 1973 under the inspirational leadership of Billy Curtin. Another great stalwart of the Rock, the great Joe Joe Barrett, a first cousin of Fr Micheál's, who had given loyal and unflinching service to the club, was finally rewarded with a County Championship medal on that memorable day. The Stack's were back in their rightful place, thanks in no small way to the steadfast and unflinching belief of Fr Micheál and his loyal colleagues in the club.

Fr Micheál Galvin was a man of the people, a humble man, a man of great faith who was devoted to his priestly ministry. His loyalty to his beloved Austin Stack's was surpassed only by his loyalty to his Lord and Master. A friendly, easy-going and approachable man, he had time for young and old, rich and poor, strong and weak. He lived his life according to Gospel values and made a telling contribution in all the parishes where he served the people of God.

On Friday morning, 27<sup>th</sup> August 2010, after his funeral Mass the remains of Fr Micheál Galvin were taken from the Church of Our Lady and St Brendan. His coffin was draped with the black and amber flag of his beloved Austin Stacks. A guard of honour led the funeral cortege along "The Street of Champions", passed the house of his birth and made its way for burial in the grounds of St John's Church. May the green sod rest lightly on a gentle soul who was a loyal servant of God, and of The Rock.



*Left to right: Mr Tunney Galvin, Fr Micheál Galvin and Norrie Galvin Gentleman.*



# OUR PRIESTS 1970 – 2010

## PARISH PRIESTS

Fr Pat Horgan (1985 – 1996) (1<sup>st</sup> P.P.)

Fr Tom Leane (1996 – 2007)

Fr Danny Broderick (2007 – 2009)

Fr Padraig Walsh (2009 – )

## CURATES

Fr Peter Scott (1970 – 1972)

Fr Tom Hickey (1970 – 1972)

Fr Joe McCluskey (1972 – 1974)

Fr Denis O'Mahony (1972 – 1979)

Fr Ned O'Riordan (1974 – 1980)

Fr Liam Comer (1978 – 1985)

Fr Martin Hegarty (1979 – 1984)

Fr Sean O'Leary (1980 – 1982)

Fr Michael Fleming (1983 – 1986)

Fr Danny Broderick (1984 – 1991)

Fr Paddy Kelly, Kiltegan (January – July 1986)

Fr Dan Canniffe (1986 – 1999)

Fr John Kerin (1991 – 1995)

Fr Tadhg Fitzgerald (1995 – 2004)

Fr Neilus Enright (1999 – 2001)

Fr David Gunn (2001 – 2009)

Fr Kevin Sullivan (2004 – 2007)

Fr Patsy Lynch (2007 – )





*Ordinations in Church of Our Lady and St Brendan 1974.*

*Left to right: Fr Michael O'Mahony, Fr Martin Casey, Fr Seán Hanafin, Bishop Eamonn Casey, Fr Michael Lucid and Fr Patsy Lynch.*



*Fr Seán Hanafin on the occasion of his ordination in 1974.*

*Left to right: Tim Hanafin, Fr Seán Hanafin, Mai Hanafin and Patricia Hanafin.*



# PARISH STATISTICS OVER 40 YEARS

**BAPTISMS: 4753**

**DEATHS: 1708**

**WEDDINGS: 961**

**CONFIRMATIONS: 6428**

**ORDINATIONS: 8**

## FIRST BAPTISM:

Michael Lynch, Connolly Park was the first child to be baptised in Our Lady and St Brendan's Church on October 25<sup>th</sup> 1970.

## FIRST MARRIAGE:

Patrick Bailey, Kevin Barry Villas (RIP) and Ms Julia Mary Healy, Connolly Park were the first couple to marry in our church on Saturday November 14<sup>th</sup> 1970.

## FIRST ORDINATION:

Fr Denis O'Connor – 1972.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Finally, many thanks to all who helped in the research of this book, providing photographs, articles and other items of interest.

# HALL OF FAME



Maria Denihan, a native of Caherciveen, became a part-time secretary in St Brendan's Presbytery in 1986. Initially she worked in a small office in the old presbytery at the corner of Brewery Road. In 1990, she moved to the new presbytery in the church grounds. Recently Maria was reminiscing on her experience as parish secretary. "Over the past 25 years, I worked with Canon Pat Horgan, Fr Tom Leane, Fr Danny Broderick and Fr Padraig Walsh. I have enjoyed working with all the priests and staff. I have many wonderful memories of those years, from the day-to-day events to the excitement of Race Nights, Parish Socials and the Parish Missions. It is hard to believe that a quarter of a century has passed since Fr Horgan offered me the job. The parish has blossomed in that time. I hope it will continue to grow in the years to come".