

Church of

# St Columbanus

Parish of Ballyholme



July/August 2011



Putting on the  
Style  
Photos Page 6



## The Parishioner

BALLYHOLME R.W. 1961  
©National Museums Northern Ireland

The Church is open every weekday morning for private prayer and meditation

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### ◆ Front Cover

Crowds on marine  
promenade; aeroplane on  
beach, Ballyholme  
(BELUM.Y.W.05.15.56)  
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Ireland  
Collection Ulster Museum  
For further information  
see story on page 4.

### ◆ Magazine Contact

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## The Rambling Rector



It seems scientists in the US are developing a sticking plaster to help heal damaged hearts. The inch-long plaster is made out of carbon fibre and is as thin as a human hair. It would be applied after a heart attack, providing a platform on which healthy heart cells could grow. Since more than 100,000 people had heart attacks in the UK last year interest will no doubt be high. Of course mums and dads know all about the restorative power of 'magic' plasters, but surely if a wonder-drug did suddenly arrive to heal damaged hearts we would all be rushing to the chemist's. Christians in every generation have pointed to Jesus

as a provider of coronary care nowhere else available. While we would never claim that in one fell swoop Christ completely erases the pain of life's deepest losses and let-downs, Biblically there's no question: Jesus' personal example of taking rest and time apart are key to God's healthy heart policy. However and wherever you spend your downtime this summer, do enjoy your holiday to the full but don't underestimate the power of God to mend the wounds of your heart through the busyness of doing absolutely nothing!

SED

### Going to Church on Holiday

Every summer in Ballyholme we look forward to the company of tourists, day trippers and holiday makers at many of our Sunday services and we hope to make them all warmly welcome. Welcoming the stranger is one of the most basic expressions of our Christian faith and, the Scriptures make clear, it is also a blessing to us as we welcome them. In exactly the same way when we go on holiday it is up to us to bless other churches with our presence, to give them a chance to welcome us. It is also fascinating to see how other Christians do things; even if language barriers mean we can't follow the whole of the service often there will be a word or a theme for us to take away. If you are making the trip to somewhere further afield this summer the Intercontinental Church Society have a helpful website to point you to the nearest Anglican Sunday service (address below).

Go on: be brave. You'll be glad you made the effort and so will those who greet you!  
[www.ics-uk.org/churches](http://www.ics-uk.org/churches)

### Inner Peace : This is so true

If you can start the day  
without caffeine,  
If you can always be cheerful,  
ignoring aches and pains,  
If you can resist complaining  
and boring people with your  
troubles,  
If you can eat the same food  
every day and be grateful for  
it,  
If you can understand when  
your loved ones are too busy  
to give you any time,  
If you can take criticism and  
blame without resentment,  
If you can conquer tension  
without medical help,  
If you can relax without  
alcohol,  
If you can sleep without the  
aid of drugs,

Then you  
are  
probably . . .

the family  
dog!



## Gathering some “information” on Don

“Making a contribution to church life” has always been a philosophy that has rung true for parishioner Don Todd.

And during the 37 years he and wife Patricia have belonged to St Columbanus he has certainly lived up to that attitude.

Both Don and Patricia are originally from Belfast. After finishing school Don trained with the then Electricity Board for Northern Ireland as an engineer. Upon completion Don got a placement in Coleraine in 1971, the same year that the couple married. After a stint of three and a half years, Don was promoted back to Head Office in Belfast and he joked that as Patricia decided that she would really like to live in Bangor, that was where they ended up.

Although he was initially a bit reluctant, Don and the family soon settled into their first home in Ballymacormick Drive, just a “stone’s throw” from where they now live and helped by the fact that his brother was already living in the area.

Don’s work with the electricity service at this time involved planning network services for rapidly expanding urban areas such as Bangor. With the housing “boom” in the area new networks were badly needed and substations in other parts of the Province were also expanding so his work took him all over Northern Ireland.

Indeed, such was Don’s prowess at planning ahead that he joked he had the foresight to marry a geriatric nurse!!

Although Don found his work “enjoyable” he decided to move out of engineering and into the then relatively innovative work of Information Technology within the electricity service.

“I was responsible for the IT for engineers. At that time engineers didn’t get much money spent on IT but there was a thought that this needed to change and I moved in on that,” he explained.

Don spent the latter years of his career working as Project Manager in the IT sector of Northern Ireland Electricity and in total spent 33 years with the company.

When he began in IT he says he was literally “thrown in at the deep end” but went on to complete an Open University degree in computer related subjects, reinforced by in-house training.

“It was still very much in its infancy and it was very new. The PC had just been invented,” he added.



In fact, one of the landmark tasks that Don carried out in St Columbanus was helping to establish the parish office some 26 years ago, complete with a then state of the art Amstrad PC and staffed by our very own Sue Bleakley.

Praising Canon Jack Mercer for his “forward thinking” Don added that having a parish office and secretary then was ahead of its time.

Don and Patricia have been members of St Columbanus since they moved here though, technically, where they lived meant they were in the Groomsport parish catchment area rather than Ballyholme.

Their eldest son Steven was baptised in Coleraine but both their daughters Julie and Nicola were baptised and confirmed in St Columbanus and the family has been closely involved with church activities down the years.

Don served on the vestry for 11 years, he was confirmed as an adult in the church and served as Rector’s Churchwarden. His philosophy is very much about making a contribution to church life - underlined by the fact that he is also a Parochial Nominator.

It doesn’t come with any training but Don feels that experience is a very valuable asset to bring to this most important of posts. He has also been a House Group leader for many years.

Golf has become a passion of his and his only regret is that he didn’t start when he was younger. Twice a week, weather and schedules permitting, he and a dedicated band of fellow golfers can be found on the greens at Blackwood and it’s as much about the good humoured banter as anything else.

“If I hadn’t had the craic I would have thrown the golf clubs away years ago,” he joked. Retirement has also given Patricia and him the chance to indulge their love of travel.

Don’s IT expertise has proved a valuable asset in the production of the parish magazine as well as his love of photography reflected in his many eye catching photographs published in the magazine.

Looking after their grandchildren keeps the couple active - Julie and her husband Darren have three girls and live nearby while their son Steven, who lives in England, has two boys.

Recently the family celebrated Don and Patricia’s Ruby Wedding anniversary with a family get together which they all thoroughly enjoyed.

Rosie Lawther

## What's on your iPod?



Hi, my name is Carolyn Larmour and I have been a member of Ballyholme Parish since I married Mark 14 years ago. I have two wonderful daughters, Darcy and Cara, who keep me busy rushing them from one activity to the next. Most of my day is spent at Glenlola Collegiate School, where I teach Biology, and am currently Acting Vice Principal. When I do get some free time I like to run, and that's when I listen to my iPod. My top 10 tunes may not be the most up-to-date, or even sophisticated, but they all help to keep me motivated as I run.

- |    |                                    |                 |
|----|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1  | I Don't Feel like Dancing          | Scissor Sisters |
| 2  | I Gotta Feeling                    | Black eyed Peas |
| 3  | We will rock you                   | Queen           |
| 4  | Lady of The Sea (Hear Her Calling) | Seth Lakeman    |
| 5  | Chasing Pavements                  | Adele           |
| 6  | Brown-eyed girl                    | Van Morrison    |
| 7  | Fatty Boo                          | Faithless       |
| 8  | The Irish Rover                    | The Pogues      |
| 9  | That's not my name                 | The Ting Tings  |
| 10 | The Lamb                           | Tavener         |

## Aviation at Ballyholme Background to our cover photo

Ever since we started using photographs on the front cover of the magazine, we have tried each month to have a different view of Ballyholme, either of the local scenery, or of events in the parish. This month's is a very different view. The cover shows the scene on Ballyholme beach in June 1914.

The picture was spotted on view in the pavilion of Crawfordsburn Country Park. On investigation, it was discovered that the picture came from a collection held by the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum. Further research on the internet and in the local library gave the following background to the events in Ballyholme.

In the early days of aviation the Daily Mail was keen to promote its paper and encourage the development of aviation so it sponsored a number of events. This included an Aeroplane Tour around Britain in 1913 and 1914. The local council convinced the organisers of the tour to come to Bangor.

The renowned French aviator Monsieur Henri Salmét was the pilot of the 80H.P. Bleriot monoplane used for the tour. (A second seaplane was to be part of the tour to Bangor but this was damaged in Carlingford Lough and had to be left behind.)

M.Salmét was quite famous having held the British height record and also the record for the quickest non-stop flight from London to Paris.

In anticipation of the big event,

and in fine weather on Wednesday 18th June, 1914, Bangor was inundated with visitors arriving by rail, road and sea. Special trains were run and the steamers from Belfast were packed. Local school children were even given a half-day holiday.

M. Salmét kept the large crowds thoroughly entertained. Display flights were interspersed with flights for selected passengers, the most commented on being that of the wife of the MP for East Belfast. The monoplane took off from the beach, flew over Groomsport, circled Bangor Bay, flew back over the heads of the spectators then landed on the beach.

A military band concert and fireworks display was held in Ward Park in the evening and attracted thousands. Similar exhibition and passenger flights were held the following day to even bigger crowds. After another band concert and fireworks display, a function was held in the evening at the Grand Hotel where presentations of silver souvenirs were made to M. Salmét and his tour manager. The proprietors of the Daily Mail were thanked for giving people

the opportunity of witnessing the progress made by 'heavier than air machines'!

This information is a condensed version of the events reported in the County Down Spectator of 26th June, 1914. The full article is available for perusal on microfilm in Bangor Library.

Don Todd



*If you have any old photographs of Ballyholme which you think may be of interest, and are suitable for publication in the magazine, then please get in touch with the parish office.*

*We are always interested in views of Ballyholme, both old and new.*



## INDOOR BOWLING CLUB DINNER & PRIZEGIVING

On the 13th April, the club held their annual prizegiving with a supper in the Parish Centre. Prior to the formalities, a fun bowling competition was organized by the ever enthusiastic Norman Munnis. It was great fun and could set the trend for future years! (even the Rector had a go!) The winner was Colin Atkinson with Norman as runner-up. This was followed by a light supper in the Kajiado Room organized by May Henry with assistance from the other ladies. After a few words by the outgoing Chairman, Jack Mercer, it was on to the main event of the evening, the annual prizegiving. Club Secretary, Derek Coates was MC for the evening with the trophies presented by the Rector Simon Doogan. Derek commenced proceedings by reading out a message from the newly elected chair, Roberta Munnis. Roberta unfortunately couldn't be there due to another commitment, but she wished all an enjoyable evening. Derek focused on how the club badly needed more (and younger) members and the club should try hard to work towards this goal in the new season. He also pointed out Colin Atkinson for a special mention, having got to three finals. Among the few anecdotes on the night, the best went to Canon Jack Mercer, in his reply to Derek about the club's age profile, he said, on receiving his second award of the evening, "life begins at 90" !! Just another 30 years to go!



Derek Coates, Secretary

### AWARD WINNERS

#### Ladies Singles

Winner:	Berry Cup	Roberta Munnis
Runner Up:	Conn Cup	Margaret McMeekin

#### Mens Singles

Winner:	Nixon Cup	Colin Atkinson
Runner Up:	Wilson Cup	Derek Coates

#### Handicap Singles

Winner:	Walsh Cup	Jack Mercer
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#### Rinks

Winner:	Trenier Cup	May Henry
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#### Pairs

Winners:	Jack Mercer & Margaret McMeekin	
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## BOOK REVIEW

### Across Many Mountains: Three daughters of Tibet



Think of the trials of the Von Trapps' escape from the Nazis, multiply it by 1,000 and you may get some idea of the hardships endured by Tibetans trying to escape from the Chinese invasion.

This book is about Kunsang and her family and is written by her granddaughter. She tells her story and shows the great courage,

ingenuity, strength of character and above all, how Kunsang's faith (she is a Buddhist nun) and culture sustained her, not only during the journey, but also in adjusting to the life in alien cultures. This is a wonderful tribute by a granddaughter to her grandmother and, at the same time, gives an insight into the Buddhist faith and Tibetan culture then and now.



Nancy Baker

**Around the Parish**



**WAG's & M.U. Style Night**



**Celebration bacon buttie breakfast for newly confirmed, family & friends**







**Ladies  
on  
Tour**  
  
**Glenada  
2011**





## IF THE HAT FITS

The man in the trilby hat walked down the road towards the church. Up three steps, through the porch, he entered the building. He was presented with a hymn book and a few loose sheets. The man walked down the aisle and took a seat in a pew. The buzz of chatter subsided as all eyes turned to him. It was whispered that here was a man in church wearing a trilby hat. A lady rose from her seat and slipped to the back to point this out to a steward. He approached the man and politely suggested that whereas ladies wore hats in church it was not the custom for a man. The man kept his hat on his head. Word passed to a church warden. He too spoke to the man in the trilby hat. The hat remained in position. The warden went to the vestry and informed the vicar who suggested that the man be left in peace. He would have a word with him after the service. As the congregation left, the vicar and the man in the trilby hat exchanged pleasantries. The man said that he had been coming to church for several months and nobody had spoken to him until that morning. He was now delighted that at least three people had engaged him in conversation.

COPYRIGHT Francis Wood

*Francis Wood is a retired Anglican Priest living in Newcastle upon Tyne. Ordained in Newcastle Diocese, he served several curacies and as Vicar of St Mark, Shiremoor.*

*He then sought a wider ministry as Producer (Religion) at BBC Radio Newcastle. Francis has a weekly Church Matters column in the Newcastle Evening Chronicle, and continues to publish articles, homilies and sermons for a wide variety of well known church and secular magazines and journals, including Redemptorist Publications. He is a member of Sarah Ferris's last church in Newcastle upon Tyne.*

A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, "I know what the Bible means!" His father smiled and replied, "What do you mean, you 'know' what the Bible means?" The son replied, "I do know!" "Okay," said his father. "What does the Bible mean?" "That's easy, Daddy..." the young boy replied excitedly, "It stands for 'Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.'

## St Columbanus Walkers



## Church Picnic

would be delighted if you, your family and friends, perhaps your house group, could join us at the Parish Picnic on **Sunday 7 August.**

The venue will be the Walled Garden in Killynether Wood at the rear of Scrabo Country Park (well signposted by brown signs out of Newtownards).

Please bring your own eats and join the crowd at a time which suits you between **12.00 noon and 2.00pm.**

After the picnic, if you feel like being adventurous, why not join the walkers and explore some of the several paths around the Forest Park or the Scrabo sandstone quarries? You might even spot a Peregrine Falcon!

The Parish Picnic is primarily intended as a family fun event but if you wish you can make a small contribution to church funds on the day.

Why not take the opportunity available through the picnic to invite along friends and neighbours who may not be part of our church family? If you know someone who would enjoy a picnic and maybe a walk to Scrabo Tower, this could be the day to introduce them to St Columbanus.

Leslie Adams

## The Wednesday Club



On a calm June afternoon, the ladies of the Wednesday Club and the Rector, set off on their mystery end of season outing.

This year, we travelled to Ballymena, to have our afternoon tea at the Galgorm Resort & Spa. There was a short time to sit in the lovely grounds before heading home by the Antrim coast road.

This outing brought to an end our programme for this year - it begins again on the 7th September. We were very pleased to welcome some new members this year, but we would always be happy to meet new ones - why not pop in and give us a try? See you then!

Sue



## End of an era, but the praying goes on

After 20 years of meeting twice a month, very regrettably the Missionary Prayer Meeting has had to fold. We used to number 7 or 10 sometimes, but for the last couple of years we have been down to 3. We had hoped that holding it in the Parish Centre would encourage a few more to join us, but alas, no.

### Does this matter?

Many of our Church members would claim to believe in prayer: that it does work and make a difference to people and situations, yet they could not spare just 1 hour twice a month for the Missionary Prayer Meeting. There is so much need in the world today and it is such a privilege to be able to do something to meet this, to some extent - both in UK and overseas, in our community and church family.

Our Lord commanded us to share our faith with people of all nations. It is such a thrill to hear so much good news - of whole communities coming to faith, of wonderful work, like that of the staff at Kiwoko Hospital where many find salvation as well as physical healing. It is very sad to hear of so many of our fellow Christians being tortured and persecuted for just owning a Bible or praying with another Christian. How they need our support!

We have been getting news from CMS, The Leprosy Mission, (you can get regular literature from Ann Shaw for the former and Carole Caruth for the latter), MAF, Jonathan & Joanne Bailie, Open Doors, Christian Solidarity Worldwide and the Barnabas Fund.

Prayer can be hard work but the Bible tells us *"Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy"* Psalm 125:5



We know the clergy team pray every weekday morning in Church but what about the rest of the parish? There's still the Parish Prayer meeting at 7.00 pm on the first Thursday of each month. It would rejoice God's heart if you could join us - not to mention the hearts of those who come along so faithfully month after month, rain, hail or shine.

Sheliagh Jebb



### Seize the day

Today is the oldest you've ever been, yet the youngest you'll ever be, so enjoy this day while it lasts.

### I know

I'm not bossy. I just know what you should be doing.



### HOME

In my garden  
there is a bird's nest  
Where cats won't reach,  
and hawks won't guess.

Three little chicks safe and sound,  
feeding on worms from under the ground.

Sadly they will soon leave this place,  
to meet the world face to face.

Although they'll soon abandon this home,  
next year perhaps they'll have  
one of their own.

MICHAEL PARR AGED 12

### POETRY COMPETITION

Michael Parr's poem set  
Mus thinking - What  
about a Poetry Competition  
over the summer? So here  
goes!

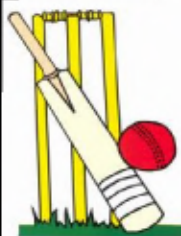
The categories are:-

Under 7 years

7 to 10 years

11 to 16 years

Poems don't need to rhyme, so, get writing  
and send your entries to Betty Armstrong's  
email - [armstrongbetty1@gmail.com](mailto:armstrongbetty1@gmail.com) or leave  
with Sue in the office, by August 31st.



### Cricket

"Well, well," said the old gentleman to some boys who were playing cricket. "I wish I could join your game, but I'm too old."

"You CAN join in," said the 'captain'.

"Our ball has just gone through that window. You can go and ask for it back."

## A New Chapter ...

Many parishioners have been asking about what stage I am now at with my training for ordination and I am pleased to be able to write about my own journey and inform the parish about the new training structure in the Church of Ireland. I have now completed my second year as an Ordinand studying for the Church of Ireland ministry through the new Masters in Theology (MTh) course at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute in Dublin.

I began the training after my Selection Conference in 2007 with a Foundation Course in 2008-09 which was done through distance learning. It seems like another lifetime ago when, with the blessing of Alan Abernethy, I went in trepidation to see the Diocesan Director of Ordinands in March 2006 about the next step forward. This second year has been particularly busy, especially the last term. We have had to fit in a placement on Sundays and Fridays during term-time. I chose to work alongside Denise Acheson at Dunmurry for my placement, although it was punctuated by ill health and bad winter weather. Losing Fridays to study made completing assignments difficult, a difficulty typical of a first year of a brand new course. No doubt such difficulties will be ironed out in future years, so I and the other 17 students in my year hope we get some credit as guinea pigs!

My third year further integrates theory with practice as I will be undertaking an internship at Willowfield Parish, Woodstock Avenue, East Belfast, with Rector Canon David McClay. This is a brand new feature of the training, so once again we are forging the way. The idea is that we work four days a week including Sundays in our intern parish, have two days study leave for the dissertation and one day off. Every four weeks I will go down to Dublin to receive further practical pastoral training and attend seminars to do with a dissertation. So life will continue to be busy!



During my internship, my status is not yet Curate but Intern Deacon. The next thing on the horizon is my ordination as Deacon, at Shankill Parish, Lurgan, at 4 pm on Sunday 28th August. I hope folk from Ballyholme, as my home parish will come and support me. There will be three other ordinations from my year group - Emma from Knocknagoney who is going to St Jude's Belfast, Colin from Shankill who is going to Seagoe Parish and Matthew from St Judes who is going to Shankill Parish. The ordination is coming up fast and the prospect is very daunting. I feel as if I have only begun to learn. But every one of us is called to serve God in some way; it is about being faithful to that call. Whether you can join us on 28th August or not, Nigel and I would value your prayers both for ourselves and for the other students.

I am then introduced to Willowfield officially on the following Sunday, 4th September, and work there until the middle of the following June. Nigel, who has been such a support, hopes to join me at Willowfield Parish. Over the past year he has gradually withdrawn from his own service, including serving at Holy Communion in Ballyholme, to support me and also because his work has taken him over to England during the week.

Such a process of withdrawal is necessary for us both, yet a hard one. I am sure Stephen and Simon can relate to undergoing almost a grieving process when moving churches. Yet we thank God for our time in Ballyholme and for the friendships formed there that we hope will continue on, and with our partners in Kajiado diocese. Ballyholme Parish has been a place where we have encountered and entered into new ministries in serving God and where I finally responded to my call to ordained ministry. St Columbanus was Nigel's home church when growing up and will always have a special place in our hearts and our prayers.

Caroline Mansley

## A Special invitation for you

You are invited to come to Shankill Parish in Lurgan on Sunday 28th August at 4.00 pm to support Caroline as she starts on her journey in ministry.



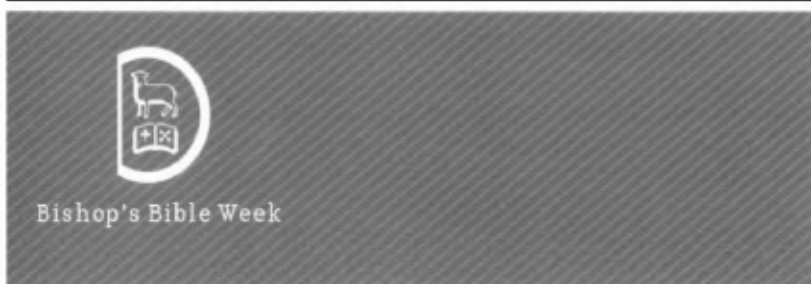
Jumpin' is back  
on  
15th -19th August 2011

In

The Parish Centre

Contact Sam for more details

sam@ballyholmeparish.co.uk



LEADERSHIP THAT  
**TRANSFORMS**  
A STUDY OF ELIJAH AND ELISHA

**Speaker: Canon John Hughes**  
**Dates: 22-25 August 2011 at 8.00 pm**  
**Venue: The Jethro Centre, Lurgan**

**Cafe Rhema will be open for the purchase of light refreshments after the event**

### Healthier eating with a fishy idea

#### Creamy Salmon Pasta

300g pasta eggs, spaghetti or linguine, 60ml Hellmanns Real Mayonnaise, 100g low fat yoghurt, 1 tablespoon of chopped dill, 15g capers, 150g smoked salmon, finely shredded, 10g parmesan, finely grated, 1 pack rocket leaves (optional), Black pepper

#### Method

Cook the pasta according to packet instructions, drain.

Meanwhile, mix the mayonnaise with the capers, chopped dill and shredded salmon.

Add the pasta to the sauce, along with the rocket if used, and stir well.

Season with a little black pepper and sprinkle the parmesan on top, then serve.



#### Quote of the month

*"You know, he's really a fine looking man out of uniform"*

**Other quotes and photos welcome contact Betty on 9146 5372**



*Tania Baker and her husband Paul started work in Kiwoko earlier this year. He is a Medical Engineer and Tania works with the Women's Resource Centre and also with hospitality at Kiwoko. Before leaving Bangor they worshipped at Hamilton Road Methodist and before that Tania was a parishioner at Bangor Abbey.*

I'm not sure how much has hit the news in the UK and

Ireland, but the last few months have been very eventful in Uganda. After elections in February fuel prices began to rise, followed quickly by food prices. In fact at the time of writing, inflation stands at 17%. On a national scale this has caused great civil unrest. The opposition party launched a "walk to work" campaign every Monday and Thursday in Kampala, protesting against the rise in the cost of fuel. Conveniently (or quite the opposite) the government declared all form of protests illegal and so arrested everyone who was walking to work. This has resulted in violent outbursts in the capital. On a personal scale the riots have only affected our travel. A team visiting Kiwoko from London a few weeks ago had to change their flights; they were unable to get to the airport as the police had blocked all the roads going in or out of Kampala.

But for the poorer Ugandans around us, who have no interest in protesting, and already walk to work, the rising cost of food brings serious problems. A few weeks ago the ladies at the craft project were complaining about how much things were



now costing to buy. They joked that soon they would have to start eating rats. The following week the joking had stopped. One of the ladies, Grace, had been admitted to the hospital the night before because she had collapsed. It turned out the day before she had left early, without breakfast, to work at our HIV clinic. The clinic employs local people on a 'on the day' basis to help out at the clinic. At

the end of the day they get paid, which they often use to buy food on their way home. The clinic usually finishes around 3pm but this day was busy and ran on until 6pm. Grace arrived home that evening at nearly 7, having worked on her feet all day and not having eaten since the day before. On taking her ARV drugs for her HIV with no food in her stomach, she promptly collapsed.

Grace had chosen to work at the clinic that day to get the extra money she desperately needed to cover the rising cost in food. But the result was that she was in hospital the day of the craft project and so could not earn the one wage she can usually totally depend on.

This event really shook me. My natural reaction is to want to go out and buy huge hampers of food for all the ladies in our craft project. But the importance of this project is that it is not charity. These women work for the money we pay them and that gives them a dignity and encourages the local economy.

Of course there are small changes we can make. In keeping with inflation, we have raised the price of their crafts to visitors, thus allowing us to pay the women more for what they make. Bringing homemade chocolate cake to the project isn't charity - it's just good fun and a much needed sugar burst!

Every meal time we give thanks for the food God has provided us with. But did we ever doubt it will actually be there? Do we ever imagine a day when we can not afford to eat that day? Maybe next time you say "Grace" you will think of Grace and be truly thankful for the food we so easily afford.

Tania Baker



## A TWO CENTRE WALK

June's outing had a different look in that we enjoyed a day of two parts, the first in Ness Country Park in the Burntollet Valley and the second a guided tour of Derry's Walls. And a really successful day it was!

Seventeen of us gathered at the Park which derives its name from the Irish 'an las' meaning waterfall. It lies in the steep, wooded glen of the Burntollet Valley east of Derry and has recently been extended to 55 hectares of mixed woodland as well as more open parkland. It has



been designated an Area of Special Scientific Interest. The woods are now linked by Donaghy's Farm, which gives visitors access to 7km of woodland and riverside walks with wooden steps, boardwalks and bridges and affords splendid views across the

valley. At the top of the glen the Burntollet River falls 30 ft to create the highest waterfall in Northern Ireland. It also includes an area of level meadow, providing easy-access walking for less able visitors. The Park has wildlife ponds, picnic tables, wildflower meadows and a new Visitor Centre where you can view an exhibition on woodland biodiversity.

After lunch it was on to Derry where our guide Finola gave us a most informative and lively tour of the City's Walls. It was fascinating to be able to walk the whole length of the massive walls, built 1614 and 1619, which are almost perfectly preserved today. Derry is one of the finest examples of a walled city in Europe and the only city in Ireland which has preserved its Walls in their entirety. The cost of the building was met by the Irish Society, a group of London businessmen who were responsible for the Plantation of Derry. It was their duty to build and maintain the Derry Walls to help control the local Irish rebels. Despite sieges in 1641, 1649 and the Great Siege of 1689, Derry's Walls

were never breached - proof indeed of their careful planning and excellent construction, and reason for the title 'The Maiden City'.

We started at Ferryquay Gate, one of the four original gates and the one which was closed by the Apprentice Boys in the 1689 siege, and proceeded all the way round with great views of many newly refurbished buildings including Jem's old school, First Derry Primary, which is now the Verbal Arts Centre and houses Bloom's Café. As well as having an ideal location the cafe is also steeped in history with the extracts from James Joyce's book Ulysses painstakingly handwritten on the walls. The highlight of the tour was the visit to St Columb's Cathedral. There we were shown round the Chapter House and Museum with its precious artefacts, including the silver-gilt chalice (the 'Promise Chalice') and paten for the Church dating from 1613 which is still in use today. The newly restored cathedral was re-opened on 9th June after 17 months' work. But more was to come when the Dean, the Very Rev'd William W Morton played the 4000 pipe Wells Kennedy organ for us! We were somewhat mesmerized by his 'recital' of the Londonderry Air and Trumpet Tune by Chabrier. And for Peter Harris, himself an organist, it was indeed very special as he was invited to play as well! His rendering was Toccata in D minor by Bach for us! Our next walk is on July 2nd to Island Hill near Comber, followed by Scrabo and Killynether. Meet at 10 am (big lie in!) in the Church Car Park.



## The Times They Are A-Changin'...

One of the favourite parts of my week is sitting down to a cup of tea and having a good old natter with my grandmother. We share the week's news, eat biscuits and generally try to solve all the world's social, political and economic problems. Being family, my grandmother and I hold many things in common, but we grew up in different worlds. In reality our lives are very different, from the way we consume goods and entertainment, to the way we communicate with friends and view the world. I suspect this is true across many generations. Society is on the move.

It seems perhaps, that the (two and a half thousand year) old adage 'The only constant is change' is more applicable to these times than ever before. A cursory look at the past 100 years reveals waves of change passing with quickening pace. The photograph on our front cover shows us a time not so long ago, when an airplane was a cause for great intrigue. Since then, aircraft have become central to our transport networks and few are excited at the prospect of a long haul flight. Now as of 2011, Virgin Galactic have 430 reservations for their tourism flights into space, expected within the next few years.

It's not just technology that has changed. Since the Great War, the world has undergone massive political, social and philosophical change. This change permeates society in different ways and at different rates, but I think we can all identify with the words of Bob



Dylan when he wrote "the times they are a-changin' " nearly forty years ago. Each emerging generation has had to adapt to different challenges and ideas.



People under the age of 18 will struggle to remember a time without the internet and mobile phones. Likewise they will be very unlikely to remember a time when shops were closed on a Sunday and when the local church was the beating heart of the community. With the explosion of the internet as a means of communication, cultures and sub cultures of young people appear to be changing faster than ever. The life, relationships, pressures and expectations of a 16 year old today seem to have changed significantly from my experiences ten years ago. I find that I almost have to run just to stand still with regards to young people.

Youth ministry can't be founded on simply a good knowledge of popular culture, it has to be built on relationships (after all that's what community is about). I see it as part of my job to try and understand youth sub-culture in Bangor, so that differences don't get in the way of discussion. The same principle of understanding different perspectives applies whether I'm chatting with a teenager or my granny.

Today cultural diversity can be found around any given dinner table. It should therefore be no surprise to us when we find diversity at our communion table. Jesus' prayer for unity in our church family (*John 17*) is a huge challenge, perhaps more so now than ever before. I believe it's something each one of us has to work on if we're going to fit together like different parts of the same church body (*1 Corinthians 12:12-31*).

We need to be ready to engage with those that speak a cultural language other than our own. It might take time, it will certainly involve compromise and we might have to make the first move ourselves. None the less, I think it's the front line in bridging the divides we see all around us, in our world, our country and in our congregations.

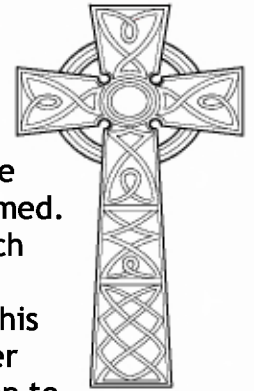
*Father, I pray that all of them will be one, just as you are in me and I am in you. I want them also to be in us. Then the world will believe that you have sent me.*

**John 17:21** New International Reader's Version (NIRV)



# The Quiet Corner

## Listening for the voice of love



Last summer I went to the New Wine Conference in Sligo. Dr Michael Cassidy from South Africa spoke every morning on the topic of prayer. As he spoke, he frequently addressed us as 'beloved' and we all felt our hearts warmed. His reminder that we were loved was enough to make us get up very early each morning to go and listen to him.

It is probably not surprising that so many of those present were heartened by his affirmation. Recently I heard someone say that in her entire life she had never heard her father tell her he loved her or was proud of her. This person went on to say that her spirit hungered all her life to be blessed by her father's words, even though she knew deep down that he loved her.

In our performance-driven world today we hear so many words that tell us that we are not up to scratch, that we are no good at this or that, that we should be ashamed of ourselves, that no one really cares about us.

Beneath all these words is a still small voice saying that that we are loved deeply and always. You may have a difficult time accepting that. 'No' you say 'I've done some terrible things, I've failed God and he wouldn't say that to me'.

It is difficult for most of us to believe this "Good News" that God loves us just as he loved Jesus, unconditionally and infinitely as his sons and daughters. It is easier for most of us to believe that we are loved conditionally, according to our performance, thoughts or behaviour. In turn this is often how we love others, as well as ourselves.

But that is what Grace is about. When God looks at you he doesn't see your mistakes, he sees the goodness he created in you. Once we believe and receive this Divine Love that comes to us, through Jesus, then we are set free from the compulsion to prove ourselves. We are set free to internalise this most significant spiritual truth.

Henri Nouwen writes,

"To hear that voice requires special effort; it requires solitude, silence and a strong determination to listen. That's what prayer is. It is listening to the voice that calls us 'my beloved'".

How we need to listen for that voice of love today!

Sandra Griffiths

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## THINGS I LOVE



When you get a bit older you realize just how many things there are to love - people you love, things you love doing, places you love to visit - the list is endless. But apart from family, I do have some specials, and they have been with me for years. I love walking, especially in new locations and this has been made possible in the last six years with the St.

Columbanus Walkers. And I love the new friends I have made through this very diverse group and the new places we have discovered, and the unexpected talents of many of the members. Then there's sailing.

Sailing and racing boats have been a big part of my life since my late teens but now I've left all that racing round-the-buoys stuff behind to the younger ones in the family, and love the cruising side of the sport. There's nothing like exploring new waters (or even ones closer to home) or arriving in a new anchorage and heading off to explore the surrounding countryside; or meeting new people. AND I love the fact that you don't have to be 'young' either to walk or sail!

Betty Armstrong

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