



PARISH OF CASHEL NEWSLETTER  
 FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER - 22ND APRIL 2018  
 FR. MERYLYN KENNY-043 3325112



#### Mass Times & Masses for the dead as follows:

Sat 21st April	8.00pm	Michael, Lena James Casey, Greenhall.
Sun 22nd April	10.30am	Gerry Collins & Dec'd members of the Fayne Family, Cullentra.
Mon 23rd April	8.00pm	Deceased members of the Farrell Family, Streamstown.
Tues 24th April	8.00pm	Special Intention.
Wed 25th April	No Mass.	
Thurs 26th April	9.30am	Mass for the people of the Parish.
Fri 27th April	8.00pm	Patrick & Mary Liz Brennan & D.F.M. Derrygowan.
Sat 28th April	8.00pm	Danny Farrell, Ellect. (3rd Anniv)
Sun 29th April	10.30am	Michael Healy, Pollagh.

**Please pray** for the happy repose of the soul of Tom Skelly, Cornaguillagh, Newtowncashel, whose funeral took place during the week.

**Eucharistic Adoration** continues on Wednesday 3pm-9pm and Friday 8.30pm-9pm.

**Rosary** continues on Saturday evening at 7.45pm.

#### Eucharistic Roster:

8.00pm	Sat 28th April	Anna Costello & Thomas Dennigan.
10.30am	Sun 29th April	John Flood & Carmel Hopkins.

#### Readers' Roster:

8.00pm	Sat 28th April	Laura Dermody.
10.30am	Sun 29th April	Tara Farrell.

**World Meeting of Families:** A second collection will be taken up next weekend in conjunction with the Pope's visit in August.

**Trocaire:** Please return any outstanding trocraire boxes. Thank You.

**Reflection:** The man who would become St. Damien of Molokai was born in rural Belgium, on January 3, 1840. His name was Jozef De Veuster, and he was the youngest of seven children. Growing up on the farm, Jozef was expected to take over his family, but he did not want the responsibility. Instead, he wanted to follow his older brother and two sisters who took religious vows.

Jozef attended school until the age of 13 when his help was needed on the family farm full-time. He aided his family until he was old enough to enter the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. He took the name Damien, after a sixteenth century martyr. In 1864, Damien's brother who was also in the same order of religious, was ordered to Hawaii. But his brother became ill, so Br. Damien offered to go in his place. The brothers worried that Br. Damien was too uneducated to become a priest, although he was not considered unintelligent. Br. Damien demonstrated his ability by quickly learning Latin from his brother. He was also devoted in prayer, Br. Damien prayed each day before an icon of Saint Francis Xavier to be sent on a mission. Eventually, his religious brothers agreed to send him and have him ordained.

Br. Damien arrived in Hawaii in March 1864, and was ordained as a priest on the island of Hawaii two months later. For nine years, he worked on the island as a priest, leading an as yet undistinguished life.

In 1866, Hawaii established a leper colony on the Kalaupapa Peninsula. People were terrified of leprosy as there was no cure for it then. This belief resulted in the forced quarantine of leprosy patients (as in the film "Ben Hur").

These people received absolutely no spiritual or medical care, so to Fr. Damien discerned his call to serve them. In 1873, Fr. Damien made the trip to be with these people in their colony.

Upon arrival, he found the colony was poorly maintained. Anarchy reigned among the people living there. Many patients required treatment but had nobody to care for them. Other patients took to drinking and became severe alcoholics. Every kind of immorality and degradation was on display in the lawless colony. Even the dead were not even buried properly. There was no law or order.

Fr. Damien realized the people needed leadership, so he provided it. He asked people to come together to build houses and schools and eventually the parish church, St. Philomena's. The church still stands today. The lepers were amazed to see him hauling the huge logs himself and began to join in.

The sick were cared for and the dead buried with proper funeral rites. Damien would dress the bodies, tend them with loving care, dig the graves and bury them personally. Order and routine made the colony liveable. Where hate and despair reigned, the island became a paradigm of peace and respect. The lepers were moved profoundly by the bravery and kindness of this perfectly healthy and powerfully strong man sacrificing himself for them. As a result, they began to imitate his example.

He was only supposed to work in the colony for a time - then he would be replaced by one of three other volunteers for the work. But the leper colony was to become his permanent home. Fr. Damien grew to love the people and his work. He asked permission to stay at the colony to serve. His request was granted. There were no volunteers looking for his job.

One day, Damien placed his foot into scalding water by accident... *but felt no pain.* This was a common way by which people discovered they were infected. Leprosy attacks nerve endings and a victim may hurt themselves but not feel any pain. Next morning at Mass, Fr. Damien began his sermon with the following words:

*"My dear fellow lepers, I am now truly one of you ..."*

Fr. Damien continued his work, despite his illness, which slowly took over his body. He derived strength from prayer and devotion. He often went to the cemetery to pray the Rosary and spent time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. *"It is at the foot of the altar that we find the strength we need when all hope seems lost," he wrote.*

After contracting leprosy, Fr. Damien was even more courageous and resilient in his work for the lepers. His personal toughness served to inspire others. Many remarked that he was always so cheerful one would think he was in Heaven already - *a common phenomenon for those who pray and work hard to serve others and the Lord.*

After sixteen years in the colony, Fr. Damien succumbed to leprosy on April 15, 1889. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II in Brussels, Belgium on June 4, 1995. His sainthood was confirmed on October 11, 2009 by Pope Benedict XVI. His feast day is May 10.

**Moral:** "The Good Shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep" - **Matt 10:11.**

Whilst the church recognises that everyone receives a vocation from God, be it a married life, single life, or some form of ministry, the church focuses, on this day, to pray for vocations to ordained ministry and to religious life in all its forms. Is there someone you know who would make a good priest, deacon or religious? Could you consider encouraging them to take the time to reflect on this possibility? Three things to do this week: 1. Pray for more young men and women in our diocese to respond to God's call. 2. Pray for the priests and religious who have ministered to you throughout your life. 3. Keep your priests and religious in your prayers throughout the week.