



St. AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH LIMERICK

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Nigerian Visit

By Fr. Iggy O'Donovan OSA

Writing in last week's bulletin I commented in a general way on my recent visit to my colleagues in Nigeria. In particular I mentioned my visit to Fr Michael Walsh who is a native of Knocklong Co Limerick.

One could but not help noticing the enormous contrast between life in the Church in Nigeria and here in Ireland. Let us clear one thing up at the start. Economically Ireland is streets ahead of Nigeria at least the part which I visited. In every way our standard of living is vastly better. Take one simple example water. At the moment this is a contentious issue in Ireland. It is not an issue in Nigeria because most people do not have any access to a decent water supply. But to return to the Church. I was flabbergasted to experience a young vibrant, confident and thriving Christian community. I will illustrate this with one small example. I visited the parish of St Thomas in the town of Zing in the diocese of Jalingo. The parish is very "out of the way" with very poor communication. The roads are appalling and sometimes non existent and the electricity supply is at best hit and miss.

Anyhow my visit to the parish coincided with the celebration of Confirmation. It took place over three days as there were some five hundred candidates to be confirmed. This required three sittings on successive days. Some two hundred were confirmed out in "bush stations" on the first two days while some three hundred received the sacrament in the central station on the final days. Each ceremony lasted at least three hours. It was a magnificent carnival atmosphere. The sense of joy and celebration was palpable. They BELIEVED in what was happening. The music, the reverence, the sense of awe was for me beyond description. To see these very poor people who live in the most basic conditions turn out as if they were visiting Buckingham Palace or the Vatican was quite amazing. In the days leading up to the ceremony one could sense the expectation. The joy at the arrival of the bishop. If the children received a little gift like a cheap plastic rosary beads their joy knew no bounds. These were displayed proudly as if they were diamond necklaces. Fr Michael presented each child with a simple commemorative prayer card. I could see that these will be treasured heirlooms. As I watched these poor and simple people exult in joy and celebration in the midst of so much want and deprivation I began to understand the immortal words of St Paul:



Fr. Iggy O'Donovan, Bishop Charles Hammawa & Fr. Michael Walsh
Confirmation in Fr. Michael's Parish in Zing

"There is nothing in all of creation which can ever come between us and the love of God which is given us in Christ Jesus our Lord"

Thought for the Day

The question raised in today's Gospel is never out of date or out of season. It is perfectly natural to think of our neighbours as literally the people next door, people "like us" as we say. But, that is to stay well within our comfort zone and, as Jesus puts it sharply elsewhere, "even the Gentiles love those who love them." Far more is demanded, especially in today's context of spiralling migration, with all its challenges of finance, housing, income, education of the young, work for the able and so forth. While bearing in mind the practical and social consequences, the whole thrust of the Gospel passage is to see my neighbour as any fellow human being in need.

Prayer:

Generous God, as we rejoice in your kindness towards us, help us to imitate your love for all without distinction.

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City of Culture Celebrations

This week sees jury's visit Irish cities to choose a city of culture 2020. In Limerick city this is the culmination of much planning, celebrating and creating! Mayor of Limerick Councillor Keiran O'Hanlon has issued an open invitation to join the festivities from midday **Tuesday July 12th** to evening. Take the day off and bring the family to the full day food carnival spectacular! This party is the culmination of Limerick's 2020 bid efforts. There will be surprises around every street corner as this party is bigger than any celebration Limerick has ever seen.

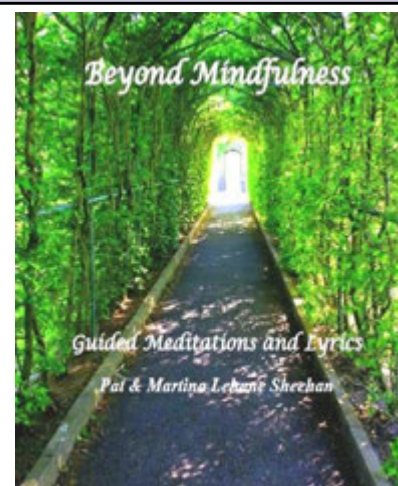
Deputy Director of the Limerick 2020 bid team, Sheila Deegan says "We wanted to throw a big street party for the people of Limerick, for everyone who played a part in the magical journey we have had so far. Win or lose with the 2020 bid, we have achieved an awful lot and it is time to celebrate so we are asking that as many people as possible to turn out and enjoy this party with us."

Personal Reflection

Beyond Mindfulness' is a CD of guided meditations and lyrics by Martina and Pat Lehane Sheehan. It comprises of a Morning, Midday, and Evening Meditation.

There is a short introductory talk preceding each Meditation. The Scriptural Dimension, combined with the soothing lyrics will create a unique and beautiful experience of contemplation. You will find yourself more attuned each day, not just to The Present Moment, but also to the 'Presence' in the Moment.

This CD is a response to requests from listeners of Pat and Martina's previous best selling CD entitled 'Soul Space.' Available from **Veritas €15.95**



New CD Launch by Micheal Downes



The long awaited CD by Mícheál Downes has just been launched. Mícheál is well known to many in church circles as he has written lots of beautiful inspirational songs some we sing here like "This I Know", Mother and Child, Don't set your heart' are but a few. . A Limerick man living in Coonagh was once part of the Caherdavin Folk Group and continues to be part of the music ministry for the Family Summer Camp in Fanore Co. Clare.

This CD showcases some old and new favourites all written by Mícheál like 'Precious in my Eyes' (the name of the CD), Only God, The Shepherd of Israel and a beautiful instrumental 'Fanore'. This is truly a beautiful CD and we would like to wish Mícheál the very best hoping this is just the beginning! This new CD is now available.



Carnival Spectacular !!

Augustinian Annual Pilgrimage To Knock

Saturday 23rd July
Bus leaves outside the church at 9.00am
Tickets available in the bookshop.€15



On Wednesday last people were queuing to get a glimpse of the three famous cups on O'Connell St.

European Champion League Cup,
Premier League Cup & the European Champion Rugby Union Cup.

This promotion was by **eir sport formally Setanta Sports.**

