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Deadline for next issue: 26 October

## Nenagh Union of Parishes October 2026

|                         |          |                                                                 |                     |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Sun 4 <sup>th</sup>     | 9:30am   | Templederry, Holy Communion 2                                   | Trinity 18          |
|                         | 11:00am  | St Mary's, Holy Communion 2                                     |                     |
| Sun 11 <sup>th</sup>    | 11:00 am | St Mary's, Morning Prayer 1                                     |                     |
|                         | 12:15pm  | Killodiernan, Holy Communion 2, <b>Bishop Michael presiding</b> |                     |
|                         |          | Feast of St Philip the Deacon                                   |                     |
| Mon 12 <sup>th</sup>    | 11:00am  | Killodiernan, Brendan the Navigator - Joc Sanders               |                     |
| Sun 18 <sup>th</sup>    | 11:00am  | St Mary's, Family Service, <b>Harvest Festival</b>              |                     |
|                         | 2:00pm   | St Mary's, Baptism of Rosanna Jean Wallace                      |                     |
| Sun 25 <sup>th</sup>    | 11:00am  | St Mary's, Holy Communion 1                                     | Fifth before Advent |
|                         | 12:15pm  | Killodiernan, Holy Communion 2                                  |                     |
| Sat 31 <sup>st</sup>    | 11:00am  | Ballynacclough Graveyard, Memorial Observance                   |                     |
|                         |          | All souls (transferred)                                         |                     |
| Sun 1 <sup>st</sup> Nov | 9:30am   | Templederry, Holy Communion 2                                   | Trinity 18          |
|                         | 11:00am  | St Mary's, Holy Communion 2                                     | All Saint's Day     |

### Parish Prayer List

Andy, Arthur, Avril, Emma, Marjorie



It is time to start thinking about the Christmas Tree Festival again. This has become an event so important to our community and elsewhere. Some parishes have tried to copy us but the efforts of those who work so hard here make this difficult to do. Put on your thinking caps—among other things, what would be good things to contribute to the bric-a-brac stall; what special food can you fix for the afternoon teas; and most of all, what trees can you create for the Wow! factor which we always have.

A big thank you to all of you contribute so much. It is appreciated.



## From the Rector

Welcome to the eighth month of the year. But, wait, shouldn't that have been a couple of months ago? So why does October mean 'Eighth Month' in Latin (Octo means eight as in octagon, an eight sided shape) but it's actually the 10<sup>th</sup> month?

The ancient Romans actually had a very curious calendar. For them, the only real purpose of dividing the year up was to facilitate a knowledge of agricultural timing and their calendar was based on a lunar month of 28 days and had only ten months, hence the 'numbered' months that still end the year, September, October, November and December which mean the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth month respectively. Even more oddly, their year started on the first full moon of March, called the 'Ides of March', the date upon which Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44 BC. Some may see a certain cruelty in this date because it was Julius Caesar himself who reformed the Roman Calendar, making it twelve months long by inserting two new months, one which later became posthumously named in tribute after him as July and another named after one of his successors, Augustus as August.

So, in early Roman times, the calendar started in mid March and ended at the end of the year in December. So what happened in the missing two and half months between the end of the year and the Ides of March? Well, life went on as usual but at a slower pace and the period was considered, quite literally, unremarkable - there was no need to mark the time because the Earth had gone to sleep for the winter and humanity slumbered - there was no agricultural work to be done and civilisation kindled fires for warmth, drew its curtains tightly against the cold air and lived off stored food until the Spring. Even the famed Legions went into 'Winter Quarters' as no serious campaigning could happen over wet mud or frozen earth.

Can you imagine a two and half month yearly sabbatical (a Sabbath-like time away from full time work every year)? A space to rest, consider and recharge? Maybe that's why the Romans had such a huge and successful empire? They had a winter season to slow down, consider the past year, plan the future one and ponder life.

Long periods away from daily concerns are good for us. We see this in the ministry of Jesus who took long periods away to pray and prepare for his coming future. We hear of his withdrawing from crowds when the hubbub became too much and his 40 day separations from civilisation (and they weren't 40 actual days - 40 is an idiom in Hebrew that just means 'lots' like we might say a handful to mean an approximate small volume).

As our modern calendar year enters its last quarter, maybe we should ask ourselves if we could do with a break from the hubbub and cares of modern civilisation for a bit; the incessant need to be connected via our smartphones, the urgent desire to hear the news (almost always bad since that sells but is therefore injurious to our mental health), to know what the weather will be like tomorrow and for the rest of the week and just be. Just be ourselves, alone and able to be still for a while and let God break through into our consciousness. That would be fallow time that could allow us to flourish mentally and spiritually into the future.

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As some of you will know, the infrastructure of our churches is degrading, some very badly indeed due to the well meaning but unfortunately completely wrong application of concrete render by our forebears who thought that they were doing the right thing at the time. As a result, water has been channeling up the walls blowing plaster out, peeling off paint and rotting wood. When you attend church you may very well have no idea that certain loyal and self-sacrificing people have been clearing up falls of plaster that have happened even after those on the cleaning rota have already cleaned during the week.

Shortly after I arrived I saw a small chunk of plaster fall down two feet away from me during a service. This is a continual process of degradation.

We do not have the money to correct these failures but we can access grant funding to help - as long as we pay for 20% of the work ourselves.

This however is money that we simply do not have.

As a result an appeal will be sent out shortly asking parishioners and friends to donate towards a fabric fund in memory of a loved one (the loved one donated in memory of to be publicly noted at All Souls-tide at the beginning of November, if wished).

If we can raise enough money to be earmarked for infrastructure use only, we can unlock grants from both Church of Ireland funds and the State.

If we wish the Church of Ireland to have a viable future in this part of the world, we must act generously now.

A letter will be circulated this month explaining this in more details; please give it your full attention when it arrives.

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#### **Dates to Note:**

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October: Dr Jessica Brown begins her Song Circle in St Mary's at 7.30 pm. Open to all to help develop both singing and community spirit.

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> Oct: Bishop Michael will be visiting Killodiernan to celebrate the Holy Mysteries and meet the local parishioners at 12:15pm.

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> Oct: Harvest Festival in St Mary's at 1100am.

Your Friend and Rector, Keith

Hello to you all!

October 4<sup>th</sup> is the feast day of St Francis, Il Poverello ("the little poor man") from Assisi. As one who embodied and lived out the call of Christ to see those in need and care for them; as one who expressed great love for the natural world and fellow living creatures; and as one who understood that the way of simplicity is a way of freedom, this saint still speaks to us through the ages. One thing about Francis, his love for Christ was so multi-faceted, our response can be too. See what lands as his feast day comes around:



Is your heart especially moved by the plight of the poor? Could you find a way to follow through, however simply, in order to echo Christ's actionable love?

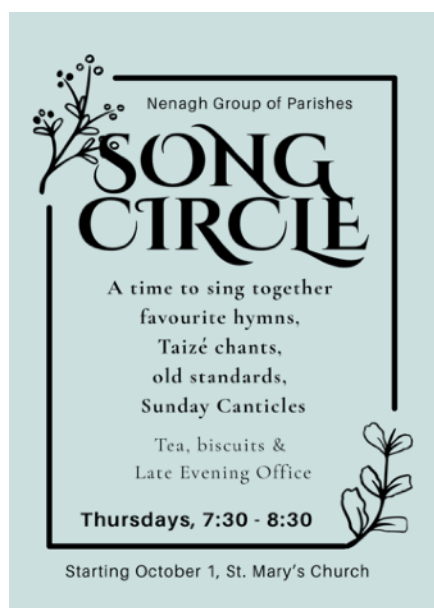
Do you long to spend a little time in the woods or by the shores, or give your animal friend a special treat?

Or perhaps this year, St Francis' 'Lady Poverty' might mean something to you. For Francis, our 'lowliness' — our shortcomings, our losses, our missed opportunities, our blindspots, our wounds, our sadnesses, anywhere where we don't come up with the goods — is a chance for Christ to minister to us and to shape our hearts. As such, Lady Poverty becomes a unique way into richness and goodness. I wonder if this resonates with you . . . .

However you might consider and respond to St Francis this year, I pray you will be encouraged by his realistic, practical, kind, visionary legacy of love. Here's a prayer for the day:

Father of all creation —  
the sun, moon, stars; wind, sky, trees;  
earth, plants, animals, and us:  
may we be heartened and encouraged by St Francis  
and his visionary, practical love for you and for others,  
and may we, with all creation,  
respond to your love with our whole lives.  
In Christ's name, Amen.

Every blessing to each of you,  
Jessica



On another note (no pun intended) our Harvest Festivals have taken place in Killodiernan and Templeberry and great events they were. We remembered especially how much we owed those who raise the food which we require and the God who makes it happen.

Here are some pictures for each and we thank both Laura and Joc for them. Here are some from Killodiernan:



And from Templeberry:



## **How should we as Christians respond to existential threats?**

In the last few days, we've been hearing 'tech bros' speculate that AI may choose to eliminate humanity sooner rather than later, unless action is taken urgently to mitigate the threat. AI technology promises wonderful things, such as cures for cancer, but could also be used to engineer pandemic viruses. We can all see how current AI models pollute social media with dangerous nonsense. It is easy to see how in future AI can eliminate millions of jobs, creating a crisis of unemployment, with unpredictable, nasty, social effects. And military-industrial complexes around the world are already developing automated weapon systems to fight deadly wars without human intervention.

Yet I remain sceptical. In the short term, I think I fear the global economic shock of an implosion of the AI bubble, more than I do the creation of an artificial general intelligence determined to destroy us. If advanced AI really does attack us, I feel sure humanity will prevail. And this AI panic threatens to distract us from the other existential threats we already know about: climate breakdown, biodiversity loss, nuclear Armageddon.

But it does focus our minds on this question. How should we as Christians respond to existential threats? I have seen nothing wiser than a reflection given as a comment by someone calling herself 'hidden sister', on the Thinking Anglicans web page. Here, with her permission, is a lightly edited version.

### **'hidden sister' writes on the threat that AI may soon eliminate humanity, 9 Sep 2026**

God does not desire our elimination but our consecration and flourishing. Humanity is perfectly capable of eliminating itself. We basically need saving from ourselves, through God's grace, mercy, healing and love. I believe that is God's desire, and always has been. I only believe in 'end times' in the sense of our own 'end times' - by which I mean the fleeting brief lives we have and our transience. In which context, as gift, God calls us repeatedly to open ourselves each day, in the here and now, to God's grace and devotion to us, and asks us to devote our lives in return.

Each day, the eternal Love of God is offered to us, to flow through us, to draw us into the divine compassion for other people and the world. It's not rocket science, but it does come with cost. At heart it's so clearly God's will, though we prevaricate to distract ourselves from responding. But if we pray and devote ourselves each day, and seek mercy for the pitiful needs within us and around us, then by the way of the Cross we may open ourselves to who God is within our hearts, and become conduits for the flow of tender love to others.

We are called to be alive today, in the here and now. Apocalypse can wait. Today is the day to be saved I am told, day after day, and I am reminded that God says, "I desire mercy".

All space and time will run on for billions of years when each of us has long departed from the face of the earth. But here, now, today, God invites us to open our consciousness to God's vast and eternal consciousness, in the eternal now, in the love, the compassion of who God is, and to become sacrifice like God.

To be given in love. And what gift and privilege that is, and what opportunity, in each encounter we have today with people we know, and in prayer for those we have never met. All vulnerable, all transient, all wounded by hurt and sin, in need of merciful compassion and the grace of God. We can leave judgment - the discernment of a person's heart - to our merciful and compassionate God.

What we are invited to do - the whole point of the gospel - is to open ourselves to the flow, the cost, the compassion of God's Love.

The flowing stream of God's Love always seeks mercy, always seeks healing, and always seeks to open our lives - today in the here and now - so that grace, mercy and love may reach out into the darkness and the lostness. In giving our lives to God this day in practical love, we may find ourselves made more of who we are in Christ.

Isn't that the call? To be living sacrifices?

We don't live long, but while we are granted another day, may we become conduits not of judgment but of mercy. So, come let us worship. Let us open ourselves to God. Let us own our own sins. And let us pray for the pitiful needs of the world. For God - the ever-living God - is love. And God's nature is always to have mercy, always wanting to heal, and make people whole.



**The Last Judgement**, Heironymous Bosch (detail)

Joc Sanders

## October

### St Mary's, Nenagh

#### Cleaning volunteers:

Names currently on list: Jack Bayly, Kirsten Bayly-Parker, Lisa and Ciara Drummond, Caroline Hayes, Yvonne Hayes, Lyn Kelly, Helen Leo, Hilary Percy

|        |                         |
|--------|-------------------------|
| 1 Oct  | Lisa and Ciara Drummond |
| 8 Oct  | Helen Leo, Yvonne Hayes |
| 15 Oct | Lyn Kelly, Hilary Percy |
| 22 Oct | Jack Bayly              |
| 30 Oct | Lisa and Ciara Drummond |



#### Reader rota:

Names currently on list: Jack Bayly, Kirsten Bayly-Parker, Audrey Clarke-Gordon, Rose Langley, Lyn Kelly, Ann McKee,

|        |                      |
|--------|----------------------|
| 4 Oct  | Audrey Clark-Gordon  |
| 11 Oct | Rose Langley         |
| 18 Oct | Kirsten Bayly-Parker |
| 25 Oct | Ann McKee            |
| 1 Nov  | Lyn Kelly            |

#### Flower rota:

Names currently on list: Audrey Clarke-Gordon, Yvonne Hayes, Caroline Hayes, Rose Langley

Caroline Hayes

Rose Langley  
Yvonne Hayes

### Killodiernan

#### Reader rota:

Names currently on list: Laura Clarke, Sarah-Jane Clarke, Catherine Lidwill, Mary Ryan, Adrian Gordon

|        |                   |
|--------|-------------------|
| 11 Oct | Catherine Lidwill |
| 25 Oct | Mary Ryan         |

### Templederry

|       |              |
|-------|--------------|
| 4 Oct | Albert Lewis |
| 1 Nov | Hilary Lewis |

## Nenagh Union of Parishes

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Dr. Jessica Brown, Interim Minister

Diocesan website - <http://www.limerick.anglican.org>

NUP website - [nenaghunion.com](http://nenaghunion.com)