

Parishes of Swords Clonmethan & Kilsallaghan with Donabate & Lusk

Newsletter October 2025



**St David's
Kilsallaghan**

*Harvest
Service*

**Sunday
5th October
At 3:00 PM**

Everyone Welcome

Join us to celebrate this very special Harvest Thanksgiving service in St David's Kilsallaghan, a event which will feature live music performances, will include the dedication of the new Columbarium by Archbishop Michael Jackson, and will be followed by refreshments.



CELEBRATING GOD'S GIFTS

Harvest SERVICES

ST COLUMBA'S
SWORDS

5

OCTOBER
11.30

ST DAVID'S
KILSALLAGHAN

5

OCTOBER
15:00

ST PATRICK'S
DONABATE

12

OCTOBER
10:00

Help with the decorating the churches for the Harvest services would be welcome. Donations of fruit, flowers, and vegetables would be very welcome too.

St Columba's Church decoration will take place on Saturday 4th between 10.30am and 12.30pm. For decorating times in St David's Church, please call Ian Falkiner on 086 889 2680. For decorating times in St Patrick's Church, please call Brian Scott on 01 890 3285. Thank you.



It's back! The 2025 Pet Blessing will form part of a Family Service in Saint Patrick's Church in Donabate, and will be followed by a photo being taken of the Ladies of the Parish. Come and do your part for your pets and/or posterity.



INVITATION

would you like to try bell ringing?

Recently the big church bell in the square tower at Saint Columba's in Swords was put back into service after many years of silence.

Andreas, one of the Churchwardens, rang the bell before Sunday service. It could be heard all over Swords. This will be a regular prelude to services, it is hoped.

If you'd like to try ringing the bell yourself, just show up early for the 11.30 a.m. service any Sunday morning and ask a Churchwarden.

Opportunities to ring the bell are entirely at the Churchwardens' discretion, and their decision is final. First come, first served. :)



**"MAKE A JOYFUL
NOISE UNTO THE
LORD."
PSALM 100**



parishes of swords donabate & kilsallaghan

OCTOBER!

PRAISE 'N' PIZZA

an evening FAMILY service

+ prayers

+ songs a.k.a. hymns!

+ talk

+ activity (optional for parents ;-)

and

PIZZA!

6.30PM



EVERYONE is very welcome!

Sunday October 19th Old Borough School Hall



Rev Canon Robert Deane

1952 - 2025

The death of the Reverend Canon Robert Deane occurred on Sunday September 21st 2025, following a long illness, bravely borne. Our condolences go to his wife Anne, his daughter Sarah, (pictured above with Robert at his retirement party in 2018), his son-in-law Paul, his grandson Alfie, and his extended family and friends.

Robert had a career in the insurance field before discovering he had a vocation in the church. He was ordained a deacon in 1985 and a priest the following year. He then served as curate in Raheny and Coolock before becoming rector of Edenderry in the Diocese of Meath and Kildare, where he was a canon of St Brigid's Cathedral in Kildare and of Trim Cathedral in Meath.

He was appointed rector of these parishes in 2000, and he also held the position of Rural Dean of Fingal. Additionally, he was appointed a Canon of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, in 2008 and became Canon Treasurer of the Cathedral in 2014. He served here until his retirement in June 2018. In retirement, he became All-Ireland Chaplain of the Mothers' Union.

Paying tribute, Archbishop Michael Jackson wrote: "Robert served in these dioceses with pastoral sensitivity, human kindness and liturgical nuance... over a lifetime of ministry. We remember Robert with gratitude and affection and commend him with joy to his Heavenly Father."

May Robert rest in peace



The Old Borough School is hosting an Open Night for prospective parents of incoming Junior Infants on Tuesday, 7th October at 6 pm. Please share this within your neighbourhood, or with friends or relatives living in Swords and its surrounding areas who may be looking for a place for their child (who is turning 4 on or before 1st April 2026) in Junior Infants next year. Questions? Call the School Secretary on 01 8407 036.

A Week in the Life: Eric Hughes



Eric Hughes has a day job as the Church of Ireland chaplain at Dublin City University. He's a married man with a young daughter. You probably know him from his role as a lay minister in the Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough. He has been attending Saint Columba's for nearly three years.

"When I first visited, I thought I'd just sit back and observe," he says with a laugh. "After decades of being heavily involved in church ministry, I didn't want to get pulled in again. But, of course, Saint Columba's has a way of drawing you in."

Andrea (A): So Eric, what does a typical week look like for you?

Eric (EH): Well, this week was anything but typical! Monday and Tuesday were all about Freshers' Week at DCU. Students arrive from all over Ireland, Europe, and even further afield. For some, particularly our Muslim friends, the chaplaincy can be their first port of call. They use the Interfaith Centre for prayer and to find a sense of community. It's a space designed to be welcoming for students of all faiths, with prayer rooms and quiet spaces, so it's really a hub for support.

A: What's involved?

EH: I spend a lot of time at the clubs and societies' stands, chatting with students and introducing the chaplaincy. I make a point to meet the faith-based student groups in particular—the Christian Union, the St Dominic's Catholic Society, and the Islamic Society (ISoc). I let them know the chaplaincy is here for them, and that the Interfaith Centre is available for meetings, services, and gatherings. It's a festival-like atmosphere, but those conversations make all the difference in helping students feel welcome and supported.

A: Do you do any outreach during Freshers' Week?

EH: Yes, on Wednesday. We set up a hot chocolate stand midweek as another way to meet students. Along with a hot drink, we give out little gift bags containing chaplaincy-branded pens, sweets, and a 'survival guide' cookbook. It's simple, but it sparks conversation and allows students to get to know the chaplaincy in a relaxed way.

A: Doesn't DCU have more than one campus?

A Week in the Life: Eric Hughes: continued

EH: Right. Thursday, I visited Church of Ireland students at DCU's All Hallows campus. I gave talks to orientation classes, introduced myself, and invited them to our student lunches and morning prayer services. It's a great opportunity to get to know students and help them settle into DCU life.

A: And Friday?

EH: Fridays are an important day for the Muslim community at DCU—they gather for Jumma prayer. We support them in preparing the space and making sure everything runs smoothly. After that, I start turning my attention to Sunday in our parish church—preparing for Holy Communion, reviewing parish prayer needs, and making sure the service flows smoothly with hymns and transitions.

A: Is there a connection between your role as a lay minister and your chaplaincy work?

EH: Absolutely. Being a lay minister means I assist in leading services, especially Holy Communion, and I help co-ordinate prayers and readings. I also prepare sermons, prepare the music, and make sure everything is ready so the congregation can have a meaningful worship experience. While my chaplaincy work is focused on students and university life, my parish ministry is about serving the broader community, bringing people together, and supporting the spiritual life of Saint Columba's. They're connected in that both roles involve pastoral care, prayer, and guidance, but the context and rhythms are quite different.

A: So how does a Sunday at Saint Columba's go for you?

EH: Sunday is the culmination of the week. I arrive early, check everything is in place for communion, coordinate with Reverend Yvonne, prepare prayers, and think through the flow of the service. It's a mix of practical preparation—hymns, readings, timing—and quiet reflection and prayer. During the service, I assist in leading prayers, administer communion, and ensure the transitions are smooth. Everything done during the week, from student interactions to planning prayers, contributes to creating a worship experience that feels thoughtful and welcoming for the congregation.

A: Sounds interesting.

EH: Absolutely. Every week is different, every person is different, and every service is different. That variety keeps me engaged and reminds me why I'm here—supporting the community, guiding students, and serving both in the chaplaincy and in parish ministry.

A Week in the Life: Eric Hughes: continued

A: How or where do you get the ideas for your sermons?

EH: Honestly, it's different every time. I start by sitting with the passage itself, trying to understand what the author was saying in its original context. Then I ask, "What is this passage saying to me?" and finally, I picture the congregation I'll be preaching to and ask God, "What might they need to hear this week?" Once I have a sense of the main point, I spend time thinking about how best to illustrate and communicate it. Not to get too nerdy, but the genre of scripture makes a big difference too.

A: I imagine that process must be easier with the Gospels than the Old Testament.

EH: Yes, with one of Jesus' parables, the takeaway can be quite clear, whereas with an Old Testament passage or something from Paul's letters I often need to do more research. At the end of the day, I think of Sunday morning as a kind of team huddle at the start of the week. My hope is always that people leave with some encouragement or inspiration to carry with them into the days ahead.

A: Apart from services, what do you do to connect with divine guidance?

EH: My own devotional practice is key. I try to say Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer at home every day. I don't always manage it, but I know I need some kind of spiritual rhythm through the week. I also meet regularly with a spiritual director, who helps me to pray and reflect on my faith and where God might be leading me. For me, Christianity isn't just about what happens on Sunday—it's about how we live Monday to Saturday. I try to keep God present in the ordinary parts of my daily life, not just the "religious" bits.

A: Why are you involved in ministry? What do you get out of it—why do you do it?

EH: That's a really good and really difficult question. I've been involved in ministry since I was 15. Apart from a short stint working in Xtra-vision, most of my adult life has been spent in full-time ministry. Sometimes, yes, it can feel like a job or a duty, but at the heart of it, it's my calling. Ministry—whether it's leading services, youth work, or chaplaincy—is the one thing that consistently gives me joy and fulfilment. In many ways, it feels like the only thing I could be doing. Through ministry, I've had the chance to travel, learn lifelong skills, and experience things that changed me. I even met my wife through ministry, and once I ended up appearing in a film series that was shown in schools around the world! Now at 38, I'm sure this isn't just something I do, it's who I am.

Church Services for the Month Ahead

Sunday 5th October

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Morning Prayer
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Morning Prayer & Harvest Thanksgiving
3 pm.	Saint David's Kilsallaghan	Special Service: Harvest Thanksgiving with Dedication of the New Columbarium by Archbishop Michael Jackson

Sunday 12th October

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Morning Prayer & Harvest Thanksgiving
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Morning Prayer

Sunday 19th October

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Family Service & Pet Blessing followed by Ladies' Parish photo
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Morning Prayer
6.30 p.m.	The Parish hall in Swords	Praise 'n' Pizza with Eric Hughes

Sunday 26th October

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Holy Communion
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Holy Communion
1 p.m.	Saint David's Kilsallaghan	Holy Communion

And, finally...

Rock of Ages



It's a little-known fact that the late rock star, Ozzy Osbourne, was an Anglican Christian, so if he'd had the good fortune to be born in Ireland, he would've been Church of Ireland. Famous for founding and fronting the legendary rock band Black Sabbath, and in the process accidentally inventing a new musical genre called heavy metal, he was even more notorious for his extreme rock and roll lifestyle.

For Ozzy, this involved – to phrase it politely as possible – enjoying the company of many young ladies to whom he was not married, and ingesting many pharmaceutical products for which he had not obtained a prescription. As well as several car crashes; two marriages; reality TV stardom; multiple trips to jail including one for attempted murder (the charges were quickly dropped); and at one point, answering the call of nature on the Alamo national monument in the US while in an advanced state of refreshment and wearing one of his wife's dresses. And there were outrageous onstage antics including the infamous incident when he bit the head off a bat during a live show. A reporter asked him if his life was getting out of hand. Ozzy answered, “Sometimes I’m scared of being Ozzy. But it could have been worse; I could have been Sting.”

Despite all the shenanigans, Ozzy was at heart a devoted family man and a devout Christian. Though he used lots of occult imagery in his performances and took the stage name 'the Prince of Darkness,' he stated openly that it was just a role he played in public. Ozzy made no secret of the fact that he believed in God, was a Christian and “a practicing member of the Church of England.” He prayed before every performance, and quietly donated countless millions to charity. He had even briefly considered the priesthood in his youth. The 2011 documentary 'God Bless Ozzy Osbourne' ends as he closes the door behind him to kneel alone in prayer.

Many of his songs had Christian themes, such as the anti-military protest song 'War Pigs,' and spiritual anthem 'After Forever,' which has these lyrics:

'Have you ever thought about your soul / Can it be saved? / Or perhaps you think / That when you are dead / You just stay in your grave / Is God just a thought within your head / Or is He a part of you? / Is Christ just a name / That you read in the book / When you were in school? / ... Well, I have seen the truth / Yes, I've seen the light / And I've changed my ways / And I'll be prepared / When you're lonely and scared / At the end of our days. / Could it be you're afraid / Of what your friends might say / If they knew you believe in God above? / They should realise before they criticise / That God is the only way to love.'
