

Parishes of Swords Clonmethan & Kilsallaghan with Donabate & Lusk

Newsletter September 2025



IT'S BACK!

PRAISE 'N'

PIZZA

an evening FAMILY service

- + prayers
- + songs a.k.a. hymns!
- + talk
- + activity (optional for parents ;-)

and

PIZZA!

parishes of swords donabate & kilsallaghan

6.30PM ➔ **EVERYONE is very welcome!**

Sunday September 21st Old Borough School Hall

A Weekend In The Life Of...

Diocesan Lay Minister David Snow

Andrea Patterson here, with the first in a series of ~~interrogations~~ of interviews with interesting people of our parishes.

It was great to catch up with David Snow who is a Diocesan Lay Minister, located in Swords, North County Dublin. He has been serving in this capacity over the past two and a half years as the Rector is on long-term illness leave. David has been a parishioner of St Columba's Swords for more than fifty years and attended the local Primary School, Swords Old Borough. He also covers St Patrick's in Donabate, St David's in Kilsallaghan, and travels as needed to other Churches located throughout North Dublin.

He is married to Jess. They have three daughters, Kirsten (27), Olivia (20) and Sarah (18). He is employed as the Managing Director of Allied Universal Compliance & Investigations Ireland. In his spare time, he enjoys keeping fit by going to the gym and jogging, and spending time with his family.

The following is an example of what he does in his so-called 'spare time' but as he says *"serving the Lord is what it's all about and my time is His time."*

So it starts on Tuesday evening when he attends a Select Vestry Meeting. Then meets with myself, as we discuss the weekend Services and design a Facebook post advertising our Sunday Services in both Donabate and Swords.

I ask him to keep a diary for the weekend and here it comes...

Saturday

A nice sunny morning, not raining and warm. Travel to a large Nursing Home in Swords, meet with the Administrator, some Care staff and Nurses, and visit some private rooms with residents who are unable to attend the Chapel for our Service, along with meeting with anyone who has requested a visit. This can be time consuming as people like to talk and share their problems and concerns.

Then visit two Church of Ireland residents, check they are okay, if they require anything and provide them with copies of the Church Review. Not all people in Nursing Homes are older people, some residents are young, but require full time care, due to accidents, usually acquired brain injury caused by road traffic accidents or medical issues such as Multiple Sclerosis. This can be both challenging and demanding, but bringing a smile to a person, praying with someone, or talking and offering prayer with a family as their loved one prepares to return to our Lord, is Ministry in the truest sense of word.



A Weekend In The Life Of... Diocesan Lay Minister David Snow, continued

Sometimes when in the room, being present and staying silent is all that is required, to help a family come to terms with the eventual passing of their loved one. I have come to realise that prayer and faith is all that we need.



Last Christmas the Parishioners of Swords and Donabate donated wrapped Christmas presents for the Residents, which was so appreciated. My visits to the Nursing Homes, all started when Reverend Neal Phair asked me to drop a Church Review into a resident, which was about four years ago.

Saturday afternoon, provides a Service of Holy Communion by Extension, which is an Ecumenical Service, in which one of the residents covers some prayers from the Roman Catholic tradition.

The Service is always well attended, with residents reading the Gospel, partaking in the service and singing hymns. We have one hymn which we always play and have built our Service or gathering for prayer around - "Here I am Lord" - which is based on Isaiah 6:8 "Here I am, send me." Apart from being a beautiful hymn, we gather together in friendship and the knowledge that the Lord accepts us just as we are.

All always elect to receive Holy Communion, which is a most spiritual experience. It's also a great way to get some of the residents to talk and share their interesting life stories.

Later Saturday afternoon, on to another Special Care HSE Residential Care Unit for residents who are mentally and physically impaired, also located in North Dublin. Meet with staff and discuss any issues, which could also be simply a chat over a coffee. This is demanding work for these Carers and Nurses.

Meet with another Church of Ireland elderly lady, who is confined to a wheelchair, unable to speak or communicate in any way other than by shaking her arms and hands. Sadly she is also blind. However she loves when you pray with her as she will hold and grip your hand and radiates a beautiful smile on her face. Her brother, who never falters in his love for his sister, attends with her as much as possible.

Saturday evening, home now, catch up with the wife and order a Chinese takeaway, which was horrible.

Iron the clothes for Sunday and make sure the shoes are polished to the standard as taught to me when in the Boys Brigade... be that many years ago!

Sunday

Meet with Dr Niall Minto, Parish Reader at St Patrick's Donabate, to run over the order of service, the choice of hymns and who is covering the different parts of the Service, a Holy Communion by extension. Identify some readers and discuss any issues.

A Weekend In The Life Of... Diocesan Lay Minister David Snow, continued

After Church, meet with a parishioner who has a sensitive matter in mind and appreciated some time to talk. Arranged to meet an evening during the week. Any significant issues of concern, will be brought to the attention of Reverend Yvonne Ginnelly or Reverend David Gillespie. Both of these Reverends have been so supportive, especially with any sensitive pastoral care matters.

Travel to St Columba's Swords, for Holy Communion by Extension, again assisted by Niall, who also controlled the music and delivered a beautiful Sermon. Overall a lovely Service and a great turnout by the Parishioners.

I'm keen that we advertise our Services, such as on social media, and make sure that people are aware when our Churches are open and the times of the weekly services.

It's always lovely to meet the parishioners after the Church Service in which they comment on the Sermon or a particular area of the service. Thankfully all went according to plan. It was possible to feel the Spirit assisting us through the service.

Many ask how I get ideas for and the words for my Sermons. That's easy - I'm guided by the Church lectionary, I pray, I read the Bible, I love watching the late Reverend Billy Graham Reverend Charles Stanley and Reverend NT Wright who have many videos and podcasts on YouTube and Spotify. But most of all, its life experience, faith and prayer which I draw on for divine inspiration.



Sunday afternoon, that's family time, lunch in Malahide, a walk in the park or down by the sea, quality time. Often the Church Services on a Sunday are the comparatively easy part. Being on call for Nursing Homes and Parishioners can be very challenging when you have a family and also work full time, but with support and divine guidance - in Christ, anything and everything is possible.

Sadly, the Team in Swords and Donabate have lost Stephen Vincent, who is moving address, but has gained another Diocesan Reader in the shape of Eric Hughes, who is also a gifted guitar player. Teamwork is critical and so important in any walk of life. We have a team and a great leader in Christ, how can we fail?

When Andrea asked me to keep this weekend's diary, she asked me why I'm involved in the ministry – why do I do it? My response was simply *"I do it, because I feel called to Christ."*

Finally for my own Divine Guidance and spiritual enrichment, I would of course pray and attend weekly at St Andrew's Malahide, for an 8am Sunday Holy Communion Service, in which Reverend David Gillespie delivers a Type One Service.

It's now Monday morning and it's back to work. Have a nice week!

All That Glitters Can be Gold



Niall Minto writes, "The sign outside Saint Patrick's in Donabate went away for its periodic renewal and, as usual, returned looking like gold.

We are very fortunate to have Deirdre Unger, who has been maintaining the signs ever since she took over from her Dad, William (known as Billy) Johnston.

Creating and caring for these signs is a true skill and we are delighted that Deirdre has continued.

Our resident craft expert, Deirdre Unger, has restored a number of photos and records associated with Donabate and Lusk parish.

These include records of the rectors over the years, as well as pictures capturing great moments in our history. They have been beautifully restored by Deirdre and are now on display at the back of the church, thanks to Brian Allen and Jean Elleker.

However, it struck me that they do not reflect the balanced nature of our parish in terms of gender. We are fortunate to have so many women involved in church life.

With this in mind, we are arranging for a photo to be taken in early September of the ladies who, both in the past and the present, that have contributed to parish life. This photograph will then be displayed alongside the other restored pictures at the back of the church, showing the full extend of our parish life."

Parish Registers – Swords – Bereavement

The funeral of Caroline Stavert took place in Saint Columba's Church, Swords on the 28th of July.

To her husband David Smith and to all the family, we extend our deepest sympathies.



Farewell

Stephen Vincent, Gillian Haynes, and their daughters Rachael (with her father in the photo on the left), Louisa, and Amelia are moving house at the end of summer to a new place nearer to Dublin and the girls' new school.

Stephen, originally from Raheny, and Gillian, originally from Malahide, have been active members of Swords Parish over the past twenty-four years. Both have contributed to parish life in too many ways to count.

Stephen has served for many years on the Select Vestry, as one of the most dedicated and efficient members.

Countless hours of work by him and colleague Eric Wolfe have been spent on securing grant funding for the towers, and managing the restoration works, protecting these listed monuments.

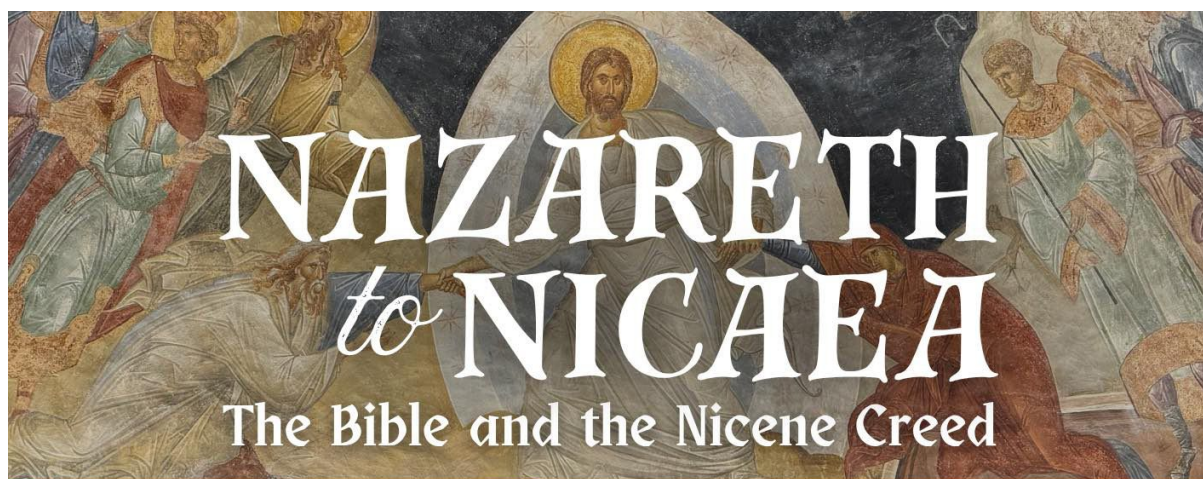
Both Stephen and Gillian have led the youth ministry in Swords, arranging events and services such as Sunday Club, Prayer and Pizza Services, and the annual Christingle Advent Service. Stephen is a long-standing member of the Boys' Brigade and has served as Captain of the 7th Dublin Company since 2019.

As a Parish Reader, Stephen has also taken Sunday services on a regular basis in our Rector's absence. His challenging preaching and thought-provoking prayer leadership, balanced with compassionate pastoral care, will be much missed. His departure has left a big gap in the ministry team that others can only try to fill.

Gillian will be continuing in her role as School Secretary in the Old Borough School so at least we will still be able to keep in touch. We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to Stephen and Gillian for all their work in the Parish. We wish them and their daughters every health and happiness in their new home, and every blessing for the future.



Stephen and Gillian and the twins at their baptism by Reverend Deane



NAZARETH *to* NICAEA

The Bible and the Nicene Creed

The Ecumenical Bible Week for 2025 has organised events in Dublin to reflect on the Nicene Creed and celebrate the anniversary of the first ecumenical council of the church, held in 325 CE...

THINKING ALLOWED

Wednesday, September 10th - Donnybrook Parish - 19:30-21:00

Join six representatives from different Christian denominations as they reflect on what the Nicene Creed means to them.

SATURDAY SEMINAR

Saturday, September 13th - St. Brigid's Church, Stillorgan - 10:30-14:00

Hear presentations from three speakers on the role of Scripture within the Council of Nicaea.

CLOSING CEREMONY

Sunday, September 14th - Christ Church Cathedral - 15:30-16:30

Join us for Choral Evensong on the final day of the Ecumenical Bible Week.

All Events Are Free to Attend.
Scan the QR Code for More Information



ECUMENICAL
BIBLE WEEK 

 United Dioceses of
Dublin & Glendalough

 Archdiocese of Dublin
Ard Deoise Aitha Cliath



Caring for Children overseas – how do Christians in Ireland engage?

Tearfund Ireland survey on Caring for Children overseas

We believe that vulnerable children around the world deserve every opportunity to thrive. We know that children do not always receive the best possible care and that is why a significant part of our work is to help children flourish in safe and nurturing families. To do this we need your help!

We're asking you to tell us about your experience of supporting children who live overseas. By completing this survey we hope to gain an accurate picture of how people (Christians) in Ireland support vulnerable children living in other countries.

To take part, click www.surveymonkey.com/r/W3MT6VK or go to www.tearfund.ie and follow the links. Thank you.

Request for photos to celebrate 250 Years of Children's and Youth Ministry in the Church of Ireland

In September, the Board for Ministry with Children and Families, in partnership with CIYD, will celebrate 250 years of Children's and Youth Ministry in the Church of Ireland. We will hold a service of celebration and blessing that will include all Diocesan CFM representatives and DYOs, with Bishops George Davison, Pat Storey, and David McClay leading the event.

To celebrate this milestone, we would love to showcase photographs from parishes across the island of Ireland that depict Sunday Schools, youth groups, family services, and similar activities from various generations - ranging from historical images right through to those from the present day. I would greatly appreciate it if you could spread the word to parishes in your diocese, asking them to send scanned images or take photos of any relevant pictures they have. They can send them to Rachael Murphy of the Church of Ireland's Board for Ministry with Children and Families via email at cfm@ireland.anglican.org or through WhatsApp/Text at +353868151742.



Corrected date!

The 10 a.m. Morning Prayer Service in Saint Patrick's Church in Donabate, on Sunday the 7th of September, will include a special Blessing of the Backpacks.

This aims to help all students and their loved ones prepare themselves for the new educational opportunities ahead.

All are welcome to attend and bring your schoolbag, your backpack, or any other educational equipment you would like to have blessed along with yourself.

Church Services for the Month Ahead

Sunday 7th September

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Morning Prayer with Niall Minto, including the Blessing of the Backpacks a.k.a. The Schoolbags Service
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Morning Prayer with David Snow

Sunday 14th September

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Holy Communion with Rev. Yvonne Ginnelly and Eric Hughes
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Holy Communion with Rev. Yvonne Ginnelly and Eric Hughes

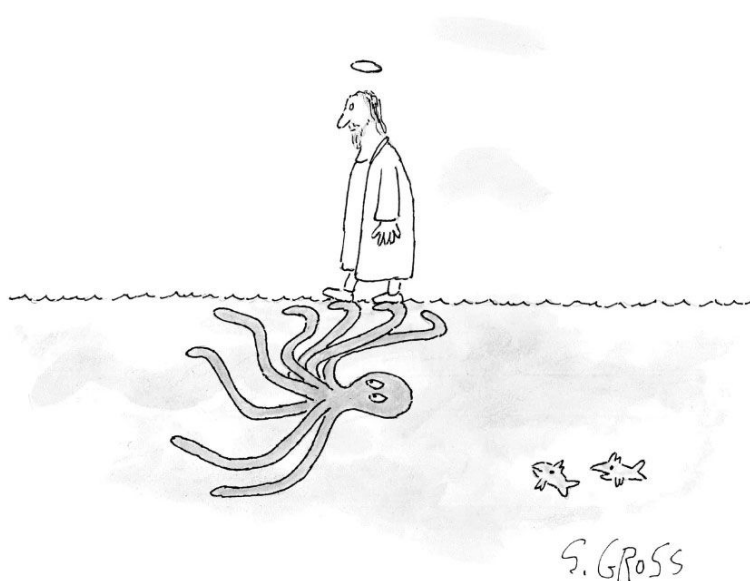
Sunday 21st September

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Family Service with David Snow
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Morning Prayer with David Snow
6.30 p.m.	Parish hall in Swords	Praise 'n' Pizza with Eric Hughes

Sunday 28th September

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Holy Communion with Rev. Yvonne Ginnelly and Niall Minto
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Holy Communion with Rev. Yvonne Ginnelly and Eric Hughes
1 p.m.	Saint David's Kilsallaghan	Holy Communion with Rev. Yvonne Ginnelly and Niall Minto

And, finally...



"God works in mysterious ways."