

NEWS — *from the* — PEWS

It's all about the light these days, particularly in the back garden! The hens are roosting at 5pm now, if not before, and rising at the far later time of 7:45. It seems very precise doesn't it? The fact of the matter is that it is precise. The workings of nature cater for the smallest of details and I

observe the changing of the light little by little through these creatures in my care. I often feel sorry for them when the frost is hard on the grass but they seem to have little self-pity as they get on with their day. This coming week we watch for the light at the

darkest time of the year. The approach of Advent every year provides a small pocket of time to reflect and to remind ourselves not only of the Nativity story which happened so long ago, but of the light that still remains within this world as a result of its first coming. This light does not change or lessen with the changing of days; rather it has the potential to grow unceasingly if we allow it to, within our hearts. This has been a difficult year and yet a year in which Church has had an opportunity to outreach in a myriad of ways to people it had never touched before and this still continues



and should do so into the future whatever restrictions are lifted. Our Wednesday Fellowship Group this week prayerfully reflected on a painting called *'The Light of the World'* by Holman Hunt. This beautiful painting offers a host of noticeable and deliberately placed objects within his pictures which add to its meaning. For example, the Christ in the Picture wears a royal robe over a much lesser garment; his royal golden crown is woven with thorns and his knocking hand bears the marks of a nail. But look at the door he is knocking upon! There is no handle or chink; no lock or glass panel. There seems to be nothing to allow this beautiful Christ light inside unless the door is opened from the inside itself. The Light of the World is present and patiently waiting for us to open ourselves to allow his light to permeate our lives.



Perhaps this advent we could concentrate on observing this light in the many facets and faces within our lives; but first – we must open the door to allow him access! The decision is ours!



Spiritual Advent Calendar

In chapter 9 of Esther, the Jews (who are under law) “took it on themselves” (v27) to commemorate annually one of God’s great deliverances of his people. The holiday was to be “a day of joy and feasting, a day for giving presents to each other” (v19) and “gifts to the poor” (v22), just as “Queen Esther had decreed for them” (v31). What’s more, the actual dates were chosen by mere *humans* (see verses 17–22). How much more are Christians, under grace, at liberty to do likewise with key events in the unfolding of God’s great redemptive plan—events such as Jesus’ birth.

Since the Fourth Century the period leading up to December 25th has traditionally been referred to as “Advent” (ie. ‘coming’). In a passage commonly known as ‘The Magnificat’ (Luke 1:46–55), Mary ascribes no fewer than 27 characteristics to God—each of which,

curiously, begins with the letter ‘P’. As we prepare to commemorate Christ’s birth (and indeed prepare for his return in glory!), we would do well to ascribe those same 27 attributes to our heavenly Father. The chart below may help anyone who wishes to focus on a different attribute each day...

28 th November	“My soul glorifies”	a PRAISEWORTHY God
29 th November	“The Lord”	a PRE-EMINENT God
30 th November	“And my spirit rejoices in God”	a PLEASING God
1 st December	“My Saviour”	a PROPITIATORY God
2 nd December	“For He has been mindful”	a PERSONAL God
3 rd December	“of the humble state of his servant,”	a PROTECTING God
4 th December	“From now on”	a PERPETUAL God
5 th December	“all generations will call me blessed”	a PERSUASIVE God
6 th December	“for the Mighty One”	a POWERFUL God
7 th December	“Has done great things for me”	a PHILANTHROPIC God
8 th December	“holy is His name;”	a PURE God
9 th December	“His mercy extends”	a PARDONING God
10 th December	“To those who fear Him”	a POTENT God
11 th December	“From generation to generation;”	a PROGRESSIVE God
12 th December	“He has performed mighty deeds”	a PERFORMING God
13 th December	“With his arm; he has scattered”	a PROACTIVE God
14 th December	“those who are proud in their inmost thoughts;”	a PERCEPTIVE God
15 th December	“He has brought down rulers from their thrones”	a PERFECT God
16 th December	“But has lifted up the humble;”	a PROMOTING God
17 th December	“He has filled the hungry with good things”	a PROVIDING God
18 th December	“but has sent the rich away empty;”	a PRUDENT God
19 th December	“He has helped his servant Israel”	a PRAYER-ANSWERING God
20 th December	“Remembering to be merciful to Abraham”	a PURPOSEFUL God
21 st December	“And his descendants”	a PATERNAL God
22 nd December	“For ever”	a PERMANENT God
23 rd December	“just as he promised”	a PROMISE-KEEPING God
24 th December	“our ancestors”	a PROPHECY-FULFILLING God

Submitted by Ronan Scanlan

*What is this life, if full of care we have no time to
stop and stare*

William Henry Davies

One of my favourite pastimes during the summer and early autumn has been cycling my bicycle. Simply putting on my helmet and high viz jacket and setting off. Sometimes with any luck the sun will be on my face and the wind at my back, but oftentimes I have encountered all the seasons in one day and rainbows appear and disappear as if by magic. As I cycle, I don't have to avoid the walkers or the joggers, as we all move about trying to stay physically and mentally fit during these challenging times. Cycling brings me along the highways and byways and helps me to clear my mind. As I freewheel down the hill with abandon, I know that around the corner an uphill is looming, but the freedom is worth it, and I rise to the challenge.



As we move in and out of lockdown and the anxiety and stress that this is causing, I am very aware of creating a balance in my life. Though cycling can take me up, out and away, I also know it is important to acknowledge my own fears and anxiety that at times

creep up on me and can take me unawares. During these times I make sure to reach out and connect in with family and friends while keeping to the relevant restrictions which are in place for our health and safety.



As the days become shorter, I am walking more and giving my bicycle a well-earned rest! This allows me to ground myself and walk mindfully as I engage the different

senses. It certainly allows me lots of time to ‘stop and stare’ as I lean with my back against a large oak tree and feel the beauty and strength of its stature. Looking out into the distance the Sugarloaf Mountain appears to be touching the clouds as the winter sun drenches it in colour. It reminds me to be thankful for the beauty of nature which is only a breath away. As I continue my walk, I notice a few stragglers from the squirrel family foraging for the last of their winter supply as they head into hibernation. A lone horse grazing peacefully, takes a moment to lift his head for a brief glance in my direction before returning to his task. Fellow walkers pass by and we greet each other with a nod, or a smile and I am reminded that we humans, alongside animals and nature are all interconnected as we go about our daily lives in these strange and changing times.....

Sheila Lindsay.



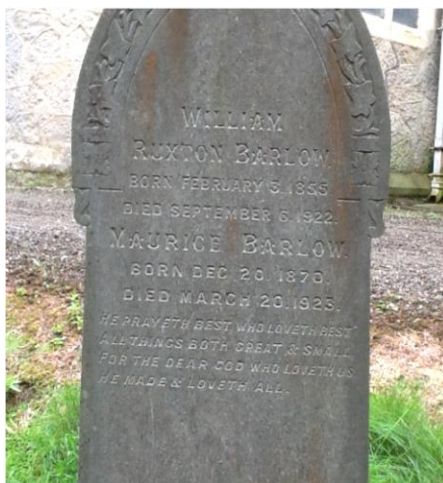
William Ruxton Barlow 1855 -1922 was a Colonel in the Royal Artillery. And a supervisor in the Royal Laboratory. He was an expert on army ordnance and wrote a book about Ammunition. Retired on half pay in 1897.

He was the son of Rev James William Barlow, one-time vice provost of TCD, who was once forbidden to preach by Archbishop Whately, because he declared he didn't believe in the doctrine of Hell. The Rev James was the founder of the Society for Psychical Research in Dublin, a group of people dedicated to proving, among other things, that it was possible to communicate with the dead.

William 's sister Jane Barlow 1857-1917 was, in her day, a famous Irish poet and author. She was the first recipient of an honorary doctorate from TCD in 1904.

She, William, and their brother, Maurice, lived together in St Valerie, the once beautiful and now semi derelict house, which stands above the Dargle river and the N11, between Enniskerry and Bray.

Maurice was a Veterinary Surgeon, and the inscription at the foot of the stone, is for him.





This simple trail is marked by signed beneath the trees in Powerscourt Graveyard on the Cremation Plot side (beside the Rectory Hedge). Beneath some of our finest Pine Trees families will find five stops which explain the Christmas Story and ask questions to make you think! Why not spend a little time in this quiet place with your family and safely outdoors!



Our Living Room concept began by embracing the Wednesday Fellowship Group and encouraging it to expand. Now, under present restrictions, this little group has expanded even further as it is now held as a zoom meeting and possible for people to attend who may not be

from the locality. With this in mind we encourage you to join us on Wednesday Mornings at 10am on Zoom. If you would like to take part in this group please contact the Rector at cathyhallissey@hotmail.com.

PROPOSAL FOR ENNISKERRY TO PARTICIPATE IN A COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME



A core group of Enniskerry residents has begun the process of welcoming a refugee family into the community under the Community Sponsorship Ireland initiative. The purpose of this note is to give you some information on the initiative and to alert the community that help will be sought

through volunteering and fundraising in order that this programme can be brought to fruition.

What is Community Sponsorship?

Following a pilot scheme begun in 2017, the concept of sponsoring and welcoming a refugee family into the community was launched by the Government in 2019 under the name of *Community Sponsorship Ireland* (CSI). Unlike traditional refugee resettlement models, such as state supported Direct Provision which we are all familiar with, CSI encourages citizens to play a key role in delivering supports. Refugees resettled in this manner tend to have better outcomes in terms of integration and overall wellbeing. In 2015, in response to the humanitarian crisis in Southern Europe as a result of war in the Middle East and elsewhere, Ireland committed to resettling 4,000 refugees through the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP). The first family under the CSI pilot scheme arrived in Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath in December 2018. To date, refugee families have been settled through CSI in Cork, Meath, Waterford, Wicklow, with many more communities in the process of resettling families including our neighbours in Roundwood.

Enniskerry Welcomes

The core group mentioned above came up with the idea of engaging in such a resettlement programme and we have named it *Enniskerry Welcomes*. With the help of a Regional Support Organisation, in this instance the Irish Red Cross, with whom we are registered, we have undergone training to enable us to carry out such an operation. Should this come to fruition, it would involve sourcing a suitable house for rental and welcoming a family into our community. Support would be given to the family in education, health, language, employment and leisure as well as help to enable them access a range of social services and supports. In other words, the family would be given an in-built support system until such time as they become self-sufficient and ensure their integration into the community and Irish society. It is envisaged that they would need to be supported for at least two years.

Responsibilities of the Sponsorship Group

Community Sponsorship is a substantial undertaking with significant responsibilities and can only be undertaken with the support of the whole community. A wide range of skill sets are required and it relies on people to participate in whichever way they can. At the outset, the core group must raise a minimum sum of €10,000 to support the sponsored family so, in the near future, donations will be sought and fundraising activities will be undertaken. Obviously, this would not cover all of the expenses envisaged so on-going fundraising through different means will be necessary. When the family arrive, they would be eligible for Housing Assisted Payment (HAP) but it is up to the group to find suitable accommodation for rental. The core group will also be reaching out into the wider community looking for volunteers as the sponsorship programme progresses.

Selection process of family if application is approved.

Any family that is being considered for resettlement will have been nominated and given 'refugee status' by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Irish authorities, having been provided with detailed fact sheets on the family, will then carry out their own vetting and screening process. On completion of all the necessary safety procedures, the Irish government will have the final say on their suitability for resettlement. The origin of the family is not known but the likelihood is that they would come from one of the refugee camps in Lebanon or Greece, though this is not set in stone. However, once a family is selected and assuming that they are open to the resettlement plan, they will then be fully briefed before arriving to their destination.

We thank you for taking the time to read this and hope it gives you an idea of what Community Sponsorship looks like. If you would like further information on CSI, a good website is www.integration.ie.

The following are the names of the core group:

Melanie Corrigan (084 3642439)

Tom Carey (086 8069398)

Jackie Gallagher (086 1082340)

Rev. Cathy Hallissey (01 2863534)

Philomena Kenna (087 9721491)

John Kelly (087 2520448)

Mary Muddiman (087 9557801)

Charlotte Windsor

Please feel free to contact any of the above if you would like to become involved.



These little 3-minute prayer pockets can be found on our YouTube channel. The aim is to encourage some quiet time to spend with God.

MyMind is a government-funded on-line counselling service for people experiencing poor mental health during this Pandemic. This service is free of charge and can be accessed using www.mymind.ie (Covid 19 Project)



Helping Hands!



Please don't forget we have had several offers of help from among our Parishioners to those who may be struggling a little at this time. We have some very willing volunteers to help with whatever is needed within these

restricted times. Please let the office or the Rector know if you are in need of assistance.