

ANNUAL DIOCESAN COLLECTION FOR OUR STUDENT

PRIESTS – There are currently eight young men in training for priesthood for the diocese, one of whom, Manuelito is a deacon. The other students are Tony, Christopher, Stofan, David, Christopher, John and Kevin. Please remember them in your prayers. The second collection on the Sixth Sunday of Easter is the yearly collection for the education of our student priests. Thank you for your support of this collection last year. Your continued support of this annual church collection on Sunday 21st May 2017 is again requested. Your financial contribution is another concrete way of supporting our students as they journey towards priesthood for service in our parishes.

DOWN AND CONNOR LIVING CHURCH – Are organising a 3 day pilgrimage to Lough Derg from Friday 23rd – Sunday 25th June 2017. Transport to be confirmed. Cost is £60. If interested, please contact Geraldine Mullan at the Living Church Office – 02890690920 or email: livingchurch@downandconnor.org.

MID SUMMER CHARITY SETS CEILI – In aid of Guide Dogs For the Blind will be held at Ballymacward Primary School (Behind The Rock Parish Hall) on Friday 23rd June 2017. Music by Copperplate Ceili Band. Admission £8 (Includes supper) 9pm- 12.00. Contact Mary: 02892648404 or Nuala & Eamon: 07763940454.

THE ANNUAL DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO KNOCK – A one day pilgrimage led by Bishop Noel Treanor will take place on Sunday 11th June. Buses will be leaving from various parishes throughout the Diocese. For further information please contact Fr Vincent Cushnahan, the Pilgrimage Director, at cush25@hotmail.com.

TOBAR MUIRE - ANNUAL SUMMER INSTITUTE – As part of the Annual Tobar Mhuire Summer programme there will be a 2 day reflection from 5th – 6th July 2017 entitled: *The Cross –The Call to Mercy and Compassion* Speakers: **Rev John Dunlop (former Moderator Presbyterian Church in Ireland); Rev Trevor Williams (former Church of Ireland Bishop of Limerick) Pat Coyle (Director of Communications for the Irish Jesuits).** . For further information on this programme contact: secretary@tobarmhuirecrossgar.com or telephone: 02844830242.

Parish of Hannahstown - St Joseph's & St Peter's

21st May 2017 – 6th SUNDAY OF EASTER

REFLECTION ON THIS SUNDAY'S GOSPEL

We do not instinctively associate the concept of love with the demand to be faithful to a series of rules. People often speak about love as if it is in opposition to rules and regulations: 'All you need is love' and 'Love and do what you will' are the type of sayings that are used in discussions as evidence that we do not need to worry about rules. Yet in the farewell speech to his disciples, Jesus was uncompromising when he explained the necessary connection between loving him and keeping his commandments. 'If you love me you will keep my commandments' In that speech, Jesus dealt with several other concerns. But he then returned to the link between love and the commandments. 'Anyone who receives my commandments and keeps them will be one who loves me; and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and show myself to him.' The fundamental message of Jesus' moral teaching is that we are obligated to love God and our neighbour. We cannot love one without the other. It is impossible to compartmentalise God and people such that they remain unconnected. Our dealings with others have implications for our friendship with God. This is how, in practice, we connect love and rules. If we love God, we will keep his commandments. If we love our neighbour, we will not treat him or her unjustly. The teaching of Jesus offers us clear instructions to enable us to be faithful to God's will. It summarises what is required in order to live a wholesome life that reflects God's truth and beauty. Its purpose is to rid our lives of selfishness and self-centredness so that we can learn to put God and other people first and ourselves last.

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