

ATHBOY PARISH*Parochial House*

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Mass will be broadcast on our parish facebook page**MASSES TIMES this week:****Sunday:** Vigil: 6.15pm (Sat)
10.15am (as Gaeilge)
& 11.30am**Tuesday:** 7.30pm**Wednesday, Thursday &****Friday:** 9.30am**Saturday:** 10am**MASS INTENTIONS this week:****Sat Vigil:** Vytas Petrauskas**Sunday morning:****11.30am:** Larry & Jenny Reilly
& dec family
Anna Mai Buckley &
Brian Kelly
John McCormack**Tues 7.30pm:**

Mary, Dan & Tom Butler

Wed 9.30am:

Billy McCole

Sunday morning**11.30am:** Sean Phelan

Vocations Sunday: “Today’s Gospel uses the imagery of the Good Shepherd laying down his life for His flock. Sacrifice and generosity are central to the Christian calling and are integral to Priesthood. That imagery has been appropriate too in the context of the current pandemic where priests risked life and health to minister to the sick and dying and by administering the Sacraments to those in need. Their ministry was valued by those who experienced it in a dark and lonely time and reflects the care of the Good Shepherd. That image of the Good Shepherd causes today to be known as Vocations Sunday.

There are currently 119 priests in this Diocese, 19 are on loan from foreign dioceses or religious congregations, of the remaining 100 priests of the diocese, 37 are over seventy and 21 of these men still serve in parishes.

The Diocese has 63 priests of its own who are under seventy and given that we have 69 parishes and the fact that some parishes need more than one priest, you can see that this cannot continue for long. Pastoral Development, Parish Councils and Faith Development initiatives as well as Vocation promotion will require much attention in the immediate future and will be an immediate priority when restrictions lift.

In practical terms, a few parishes in the diocese will be without a priest shortly, other parishes have already been linked with a neighbouring parish and more will be so linked this year. There has been a corresponding decline in the number of Masses in some parishes already and an increase in workload for those priests who remain working and are covering a greater area.

There are, I believe, many people who still consider the idea of a vocation to religious life. In a sense, today’s feast is directed towards them. The universal Church, this country, this diocese and this parish needs priests. The work remains and it is inconceivable that Christ has stopped calling people to serve Him in priesthood and religious life. There is an obligation on all of us to support and encourage those who may be considering a life as a priest, brother or sister.”

Bishop Tom Deenihan

Prayer for those considering a vocation - Pope Francis

*Lord, help me to respond to your call,
with the aid of wise and generous guides,
and realize a proper plan for my life to achieve true happiness.
To dream great dreams and always have a concern for the good of others.
To stand with you at the foot of the cross and receive the gift of your mother.
To witness to your Resurrection and the hope that it brings.
To be aware that you are at my side as I joyously proclaim you as Lord. Amen*

Athboy Anois: have planned a series of six online talks which will be posted to the Athboy Anois YouTube channel, and will also be shared on their Facebook page. The first talk is presented by Bernard Walsh, and tells the story about a disagreement in the town of Athboy back in the late 19th century. The talk will broadcast on Sunday, April 25th at 8pm and will remain on YouTube for future viewing.

**Parish Finance** - Sincere thanks for your ongoing financial support.**Offering Envelopes** can be placed in the collection box in the centre of the church or in the letter box at Parochial House**Donate online** via athboyparish.ie - click on the “Make a donation” icon**Direct Debit** - forms available in the church or from Parochial House