

### Why This Year?

The announcement of a special year in honour of St Joseph came as something of a surprise. The year 2020 marked the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the proclamation of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church by Pope Pius IX in 1870.

That was a difficult time for the church and the papacy. The first Vatican council, which began on December 8<sup>th</sup> 1869, defined the infallibility of the pope in July 1870. The approach towards Rome of the armies of the new Italian state brought it to a hasty conclusion. On September 20<sup>th</sup> 1870, Rome, the ancient city of the popes, was declared capital of the newly-united Kingdom of Italy. The state confiscated the Quirinale, the popes' summer residence, for use as the palace of Victor Emmanuel, the first king of Italy. In the aftermath of these events, Pius IX proclaimed St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church by the decree *Quemadmodum Deus* – opening words for “just as almighty God appointed Joseph, son of the patriarch Jacob over all the land of Egypt . . .”. While it had been in session, the council had invoked the prayers of Joseph for what it anticipated would be difficult days ahead: And now, therefore, when in these most troublesome times the church in beset by enemies on every side and is weighed down by calamities so heavy that ungodly men assert that the gates of hell have at length prevailed against her, the venerable prelates of the whole Catholic world have presented to the Sovereign Pontiff their own petitions and those of the faithful committed to their charge, praying that he would deign to constitute St Joseph Patron of the Church . . . Accordingly, it has now pleased our Most Holy Sovereign, Pope Pius IX . . . to comply with the prelates' desire and has solemnly declared St Joseph Patron of the Catholic Church. In 1883, Pope Leo XIII instructed that the rosary be recited each day of October along with a special prayer to St Joseph. One of its invocations summed up the reasons for special prayer to St Joseph: “As thou didst snatch the Child Jesus from danger of death, so now defend the holy Church of God from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity.”

### “With A Father’s Heart”

The title of Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter initiating the Year if St Joseph is *Patris Corde* – ‘with a father’s heart’. The Holy Father identifies seven aspects of the paternal relationship of Joseph and Jesus which are an excellent summary of the meaning of devotion to St Joseph.

1. First and foremost, Joseph is a beloved father who has been venerated and honoured by believers on account of the special relationship they share with him. “Thanks to his role in salvation history, Saint Joseph has always been venerated as a father by the Christian people. This is shown by the countless churches dedicated to him worldwide, the numerous religious Institutes, confraternities and ecclesial groups inspired by his spirituality and bearing his name, and the many traditional expressions of piety in his honour.”
2. Joseph is a tender and loving father. Pope Francis considers that Joseph learned the deeper meaning of fatherhood in his daily prayer of the Psalms that often invoked God’s memory as father. Being a father was not something that came without some degree of struggle, but Joseph believed God was at work in him. His example, Pope Francis suggests, “teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture.”
3. Joseph was an obedient father. His obedience was manifest in his willingness to respond to the will of God that was often revealed to him in dreams. This same spirit of obedience was transmitted to Jesus. During the hidden years passed in Nazareth, Jesus learned from the example of Joseph how to become at the most difficult moment of his life “obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8). During the hidden years in Nazareth, Joseph was Jesus’ tutor on how to do the will of the Father.
4. Joseph was an accepting father. From the very beginning of the infancy Gospel, Joseph was a model of unconditional acceptance. He accepted the shock of Mary’s pregnancy unconditionally, even when he could only grasp its importance by trusting totally in what was revealed to him. This is something, Pope Francis suggests, that makes him a model of authentic masculinity. “Today, in our world where psychological, verbal and physical violence towards women is so evident, Joseph appears as the figure of a respectful and sensitive man. Even though he doesn’t understand the bigger picture, he decides to protect Mary’s good name, her dignity and her life. In his hesitation about how best to act, God helped him by enlightening his judgment.”
5. Joseph is an example of creative courage in facing the challenges of life. Francis singles out the holy family’s stay in Egypt as an occasion when that creative courage was manifest. What did it mean for a young couple with few resources to head off into the unknown of a strange land? Although the gospel narrative tells us little about their stay in Egypt, “they certainly needed to eat, to find a home and employment. It does not take much imagination to fill in those details. The Holy Family has to face concrete problems like every other family, like so many of our migrant brothers and sisters who, today too, risk their lives to escape misfortune and hunger.” This makes them the special patrons of those people so close to the heart of Pope Francis, “all those forced to leave their native lands because of war, hatred, persecution and poverty.”
6. Joseph is a working father. This has been central to the church’s teaching on St Joseph throughout the modern age. We will return to this again.
7. Joseph is a father in the shadows. Here Pope Francis addresses some of his most telling words to fathers today. Fathers, he reminds us, are not born but made. Men do not become fathers simply by begetting offspring. One of the tragedies of family life today is that children, even when both their parents are still alive, often seem orphans, lacking fathers.

# Parish of Ahamlish and Inishmurray

Grange ♦ Cliffoney ♦ Mullaghmore

Rev. Christy McHugh

Tel: 071 9163100

Web address: [www.ahamlish.com](http://www.ahamlish.com) Email: [ahamlishparish@gmail.com](mailto:ahamlishparish@gmail.com)

Postal Address: Parochial House, Grange, Co. Sligo. F91 HR26

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E A S T E R  
S U N D A Y

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&

*Ahamlish Parish Sligo Facebook Page.*

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Fatherhood is a challenge, for becoming a father “entails introducing children to life and reality. Not holding them back, being overprotective or possessive, but rather making them capable of deciding for themselves, enjoying freedom and exploring new possibilities.”

### Conclusion

The Year of St Joseph, as Pope Francis sets it before us, is a challenge and invitation to the whole church, but especially to its younger male members who are already fathers or who are preparing to face the challenge of fatherhood.

## THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH PRAYER

Pope Francis has never made any secret of his devotion to St. Joseph. He inaugurated his pontificate on St. Joseph's feast. In his homily, he spoke of St. Joseph's role as protector and reminded us that we are all called to be protectors of creation, "protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of creation, "protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment.

"One of his first official acts was to approve a proposal his predecessor had not been able to ratify, namely to include the name of St. Joseph in all the Eucharistic Prayers of the Mass and not simply in the first (the traditional Roman Canon), where it had been inserted in 1962 by another papal lover of St. Joseph, Pope St. John XXIII. A curious, and usually unnoticed, feature on Francis' papal coat of arms is the symbol of the spikenard, an ancient fragrant plant mentioned in the Bible. This has been identified as the flower that often appears in representations of St. Joseph. On another occasion, Pope Francis told visitors how he kept a sleeping St. Joseph figure on his desk and slipped requests for prayer under it, confident that St. Joseph would think about it while he slept. He joked that, like a good carpenter, Joseph might keep you waiting, but you could be sure he would do a good job when he got around to it! In a footnote to the apostolic letter instituting this special year in honour of St. Joseph, he reveals another of his devotions to the saint. "Every day, for over 40 years, following Lauds I have recited a prayer to Saint Joseph taken from a 19<sup>th</sup> century French prayer book... It expresses devotion and trust and even poses a certain challenge to Saint Joseph: *'Glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph, whose power makes the impossible possible, come to my aid in these times of anguish and difficulty. Take under your protection the serious and troubling situations that I commend to you, that they may have a happy outcome. My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain, and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power. Amen'*"

**Weaving the Tapestry of Death and New Life** - Lenten and Easter Scripture Based Opportunity. Details available @ [www.elphindiocese.ie/lent-easter](http://www.elphindiocese.ie/lent-easter) . All welcome.

**Affordable Live-in Homecare** provides live-in carers for the elderly in your area. If you are looking for a live-in carer for your relative, please call Eileen or Tom today on 087 9916791 or 087 7440729. Our website is [www.alhomecare.ie](http://www.alhomecare.ie)

### Cliffoney to Clifden Challenge: 4<sup>th</sup> April – 6<sup>th</sup> June (9 Weeks)

You can Walk, Jog, Run or Cycle the distance of 180 kilometers. You can register now via the Club's Facebook Page or the Online Platform organised by My Run Results. People who register will automatically be entered into a free draw with 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> prizes.

<https://www.facebook.com/cliffoney.celtic>

<https://www.myrunresults.com/events/cliffoney%20to%20clifden%20180km%20challenge/4075/details>

Badges will be given for reaching each of the 8 stages; 1) Cliffoney to Sligo, 2) Tubbercurry, 3) Charlestown, 4) Bohola, 5) Castlebar, 6) Leenaun, 7) Letterfrack and 8) Clifden. You can also order Club Merchandise (e.g. Club t-shirts, hats and medals): Available through My Run Results who handle orders directly. Registration Fees: Individual €20, Couple €30, U16s €10, Family €40. All debit and credit cards accepted. In aid of Cliffoney Celtic FC's Development Project for new dressing rooms.

### Pope's Intention (universal) for April 2021

We pray for those who risk their lives while fighting for fundamental rights under dictatorships, authoritarian regimes and even in democracies in crisis.

### Indonesian Catholics attacked on Palm Sunday

As Catholics in Indonesia were marking the beginning of Holy Week, they were attacked by two Islamist suicide bombers. None of the congregation were killed but around 20 were injured. This is part a disturbing trend in recent years of Christians being attacked while worshipping during Holy Week. For more info visit [www.ahamlish.com](http://www.ahamlish.com)

<b>Masses Grange</b>		
Sat 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	8pm	Great Easter Vigil
Sun 4 <sup>th</sup> April	12.00	Ger Francis (16 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary) Mai Cunnane Months Minds Mary Feeney, Grogagh (4 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary) Easter Sunday – Christ is risen, he is risen indeed. alleluia, this is the ancient Christian greeting on this day of great joy and happiness for all.
Mon 5 <sup>th</sup> April		Easter Monday for People of The Parish Funeral Mass of Brendan Carolan
Tue 6 <sup>th</sup> April		Private Intention
Wed 7 <sup>th</sup> April		Feast of St. John Baptist de la Salle
Thur 8 <sup>th</sup> April		Feast of St. Bernadette Soubirous
Fri 9 <sup>th</sup> April		
Sat 10 <sup>th</sup> April		Maevae Conway Months Mind
Sun 11 <sup>th</sup> April		Second Sunday of Easter Divine Mercy Sunday Brendan Kiernan (3 <sup>rd</sup> Anniversary) Paddy + Mary Kate Leonard and son Tom, Augharrow
<b>Grange Collections:</b> (Sunday March 14 <sup>th</sup> / 21 <sup>st</sup> / 28 <sup>th</sup> ): <b>€1505</b>		

### Please remember in your prayers:

**Luke McGloin**, Shesnaun, Glenade, Co. Leitrim suddenly on Mar 29<sup>th</sup> at home. Our sympathy to his wife May, daughters Majella, Breege Burns, Cliffoney, Rita Watters, Cliffoney, Pauline, sons Martin, John, Luke, Hubert and David; sister Winnie Brawley, sons-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandchildren, nieces + nephews and friends. Mass of the Resurrection was celebrated in St Michaels Church, Glenade on Mar 31<sup>st</sup> at 11am with burial in Conwell Cemetery.

**Brendan Carolan**, Moneylahan, Ballinrillick, Co. Sligo suddenly on Mar 31<sup>st</sup> at home. Our sympathy to his fiancée Niamh and her daughter Emily, his daughter Leah, sons Jack + Daniel, former wife Noreen, son-in-law Andrew, grandchildren, parents Jackie + Emily, sisters Bronagh + Marie, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces, cousins, neighbours + friends. Funeral Mass will take place in church of the Mary Immaculate, Grange on Mon 5<sup>th</sup> April at 12noon with burial in Rathcormac cemetery. Mass can be viewed on

<https://www.facebook.com/ahamlishparishsligo/>

### Easter Message from Bishop Kevin

"The cross of Jesus is the most important symbol of Holy Week and Easter. We would not be celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus, if he had not first given his life for us. There has been a lot of the cross in all our lives during this past year. I know that many of you have prayed in a different way in recent months and that your prayer was not just for yourselves, but for the world and for the Church. You can never know how important that is. If you have carried a cross over this past year, you probably didn't choose it, any more than Jesus chose the cross that he carried to Calvary, but what counts is that you accepted it in a spirit of generosity and faith. I encourage you in these days to take your cross and to lay it spiritually beside the cross of Jesus and the crosses of all your brothers and sisters". –

Read Message in full at [www.elphindiocese.ie](http://www.elphindiocese.ie)

**Easter Sunday is the 'Feast of feasts', a day of joy and happiness as we celebrate the resurrection of Christ. Light a candle and pause for a few moments to become aware of God's presence. Make the Sign of the Cross, as you pray:**

Lord of all life, you are our hope and our joy, our source of true happiness.

We have journeyed to Easter and in the most difficult of trials we have renewed our baptism

And proclaimed your resurrection.

We embrace with gladness the new life to which you call each one of us.

Bless us, our families and all the world, with your constant presence and protection.

May we give you thanks every day and share the good news of our faith with all we meet.

Any may the light of our Easter faith guide our footsteps in your ways of love, peace and truth.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen

In Easter joy we proclaim, Christ is risen! Alleluia, alleluia!