

St. Augustine's, Galway.

Sunday, July 25th, 2010.

Web: <http://www.augustinians.ie/galway>

Masses Today

6.30: John Lally, (Anniv).

11.00: Thomas & Nora Francis; Teddi Molloy, (Anniv).

6.30: Freda Jones, (Recently deceased).

Masses for next Sunday, August 1st: 6.30: Willie & Patsy Conneely; 11.00: Tom & Josephine Staunton; 6.30: Pdraic Flaherty.

✦ **COLLECTION:** The Diocesan collection last Sunday, for the Hierarchy Commissions was €1,229.00. Thank you very much.

✦ **COLLECTION TODAY:** The Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (including 'Childline') will hold its annual church gate collection this weekend. Please be generous.

✦ **SUNDAY NEXT:** The outdoor collection next weekend is for the Galway Area Council of the Vincent de Paul. Since you will have plenty of loose € after a number of very healthy excursions to Ballybrit, cough up!

Items of Interest

□ **BAPTISM TODAY:** This afternoon little Cillian Thomas Hunt will be baptised in the Augustinian here. The baby is son of Jon and Ruth (Staunton), and grandson of Betty and Brendan Staunton. We hope you all have a lovely day. Uncle Fr. Anthony Mitchell will do the needful.



□ **RACE WEEK ARRANGEMENTS:** We are now at the height of the holiday season. Some of our patrons fled the awful Irish Summer for sunnier climes. More have simply stayed in bed! Like Noah, they send out the raven daily. On that day, when the raven arrives back at the bedroom window with the olive branch, they will re-emerge! But not a day sooner. To facilitate the addictive traits of our office staff, the Priory Office will close at 1.00 on Wednesday and Thursday this week.



□ **THANKS:** The Irish Kidney Association (Galway Branch) are grateful for the €389.00 collected outside the Augustinian Church recently. This money will be used to provide services to patients, including the vital activity of education and promoting Organ Donation. Thanks again.



"I'm down for a hip replacement."

As I Was Saying...



The coming week is the most important week in the Galway calendar. It is that time of year when we put our feet up and let our hair down. In the pre-recession era, when we still had builders in Ireland, the official "builders' holiday" began this weekend. If you are a visitor to the city, and happen to wander into the Augustinian, you are probably in search of St. Jude, the 'Patron of Hopeless Cases.' Bring the Race Card with you! Jude may be good, but don't push him too far!

Over 170,000 people will descend on the city for the racing festival. Many of these will be returned emigrants, mainly from Britain, with their roots deeply anchored in the west of Ireland. Traditionally, this has always been the case. They came home for the races. As a result, the Galway race festival is a family reunion for many people.

But don't let that fool you.

The Galway Races is not primarily about strengthening family bonds, or promoting Catholic family values! By most estimates, punters will lay over €100 million in bets this week; but the festival will generate an estimated €60 million for the local Galway economy. 1,500 people will be employed at Ballybrit for the week, and 92 bookies will dispense money cheerfully from bulging bags! This is a most welcome injection of cash at a time when we are 'down on our uppers'! Racing here is a serious business, and always was.

But the horses haven't it all their own way. The Donkey Derby, last run in the Claddagh in 1969, is being revived this year on the Thursday evening of Ladies' Day. So here is a bet you may lay with great confidence: the cutest ass in Galway this week will be found, not in Ballybrit on Ladies Day, but that evening at the greyhound track on College Road!

Of course racing was not always as respectable as it is today! A social stigma hovered. John Mulholland was once warned by the Gardai that his betting shop would be closed if he relayed the racing results on the radio there! "When I started working you weren't allowed to have anything that would attract the punter in," recalls Mulholland. "That was against the law. No advertising! You had to 'black out' the shop window. Nobody could see in." The betting shop had the same status as a brothel!

Since then, however, the industry has changed greatly. Increasingly, betting shops are more like luxury lounges. The 'seedy whiff' has disappeared. However, competition now forces Mulholland and other smaller operators to perform against the larger outfits such as Ladbrooks and William Hill. Nevertheless, the Galway Races is bigger than the bookmakers. It is a great annual social event where you meet up with your friends and rejoice in the fact that you have all survived another year. Now, the challenge is to survive the week! -Dick Lyng.



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Horse Laughter

A chap at the bookies checks the prices of the next race. There are only two horses in the race and it seems pretty uncompetitive as the favourite is 10 to 1 on and the other is priced at 40 to 1 against. Nonetheless, he makes his way to the counter and asks to place £250 on the outsider.



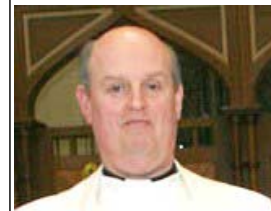
Being a friendly sort, the bookmaker tries to put him off the bet and assures the customer that the outsider has absolutely no chance against the favourite but the man is insistent and demands that the bet be placed. The bookmaker tries again to convince the man he'd be losing his money but eventually agrees to take the bet and gleefully deposits the £250 into his till. They both then watched the race on the television and, horror of horrors, the favourite fell at the third hurdle and the outsider casually trotted to the finishing line.

The customer was straight back to the counter and demanding his winnings. "No problem," said the bookmaker, "I will happily pay you what you have won" and counted out the £10,250. As he did so, he confided to the man, "You are amazingly lucky. Between you and me, I actually own the outsider that you bet on and he is such a donkey, even I didn't back it."

As he collected his winnings and made his way to the door, the lucky punter replied, "What a coincidence! I own the favourite!"

Growing in Faith

One facet of our faith in decline even amongst the faithful, is the idea of practice. Churches have tended latterly to produce people who think it's enough not to do bad things, and be respectable. No wonder the youth are not interested! Attending services, and possibly even saying a few prayers in extremis are not enough; we need to teach meditation, lectio divina, real, deep intensive prayer practices, centralised as part of regular worship and not as some sort



of personal religious hobby, and push the idea that you have to work at and deepen your faith, practice it, move it on. Allow yourself to be changed. Not study and theology, but practice. That's how we experience our faith, are changed by it. Older devotions now look old fashioned and unattractive, but the benefit can be transferred to more acceptable vehicles. It would require people to step out of the rapid flow of the culture to allow space and peace and silence to work their old magic. Shortening the weekly Eucharist to keep the numbers up is a fatal spiral. We must also rethink monasticism and the nature of monastic institutions. The idea of religious community, I think, will be important again, though in a different shape and style.

Meaning in faith is found through practice, not through words. Legalism and control to serve some spurious unity merely for the purposes of power does our faith no good. Not that anything should be permissible; proper order is important. But we will have to rethink the structures and the nature of the boundaries and what unity really means. -Rev. Gary Hastings.

Horse Racing

The Sun rose slowly over the Downs
Deceiving the early risers with its promise of warmth
The half-light gave a spectral air
As the first blue-blooded aristocrats
Moved out of the mist - slowly gaining flesh

Then the Snort Snort of the bellow like lungs
And the Thump Thump of hooves on the dewy ground

Much later the milling crowds
As all throng together with thoughts of winning

See, there walks your pick of the day - how fine
Yet is he right - does he look a winner?

The tension mounts
The starting gate opens

And then it is over
Silence settles with the sun
With only the fluttering of torn up dreams
To give a clue to the spectacle



-Shaun William Hayes

"Horses and Betting..."

- ✓ "Horse sense is the thing a horse has which keeps it from betting on people." - W C Fields
- ✓ "The horse I bet on had four legs and flies - unfortunately it was a dead horse." - Anon
- ✓ "The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but that's the way to bet." - Damon Runyon
- ✓ "In most betting shops you will see three windows marked 'Bet Here', but only one window with the legend 'Pay Out.'" - Jeffrey Bernard.
- ✓ "I am not one of the people who believe that the main reason why a chap becomes a bookmaker is because he is too scared to steal and too heavy to become a jockey." - Noel Whitcombe.
- ✓ "The horse I bet on came in so late, that it had to tiptoe into the barn not to wake the other horses." - Anon
- ✓ "Treat a horse like a woman and a woman like a horse. And they'll both win for you." - Elizabeth Arden



"This conversation is recorded for staff training purposes."