

ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS

THE KELLY NEWSLETTER

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MSGR. CHARLES A. KELLY, JR. DIVISION 1



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MATT DULLAGHAN



Happy February! We are blessed with much more seasonal weather recently, and I hope many of you will take advantage of it and join us at our next monthly

meeting on February 12. We hope to resume our Irish history highlights and look for a good audience for them. We will also have important proposals, including an updated annual budget and the formal initiation of our 2017 officers.

Think ticket sales! We're well into the season – by the time you're reading this, we will have been to several of the parishes, and can always use help on the remaining dates. Check the

rest of the newsletter for more our committee's progress and plans for continued good sales.

Finally, the Church Hill Irish Festival (www.churchhillirishfestival.com) will be on us before you know it. March 25 is less than seven week away.

Until we meet again, Sláinte mhaith agat!

Upcoming Events

NEXT Business Meeting at St. Joseph Church on February 9th at 7 PM.

Regular Monthly Business Meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of the month. No meetings are held during July and August.



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NOTICE: Annual dues of \$40.00 or, if over 75 it's \$20.00, are now payable for 2017. Please mail your check to our Financial Secretary Larry Kelly, 1711 Bellevue Ave. D1216, Richmond, Va. 23227

*Please make checks payable to "AOH Msgr Kelly Div".
Dues can also be paid at our monthly meetings.*

A SPECIAL THANKS AGAIN TO ALL THOSE ON THE INVOLVED ON THE KELLY TEAM, GREAT EFFORT

ANY GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS THAT POSSESSES A STRONG LEADERSHIP CADRE **AND** A CLOSE BONDED MEMBERSHIP IS A WINNING TEAM.

DIVISION ACTIVITIES REPORT

Upcoming Events:

- March 23: Fourth Thursday, Sports Page Bar and Grill, 14245 Midlothian Turnpike
- March 26-27: Church Hill Richmond Irish Festival, 25th & Main
- April 2: St. Patrick's Dinner, O'Toole's Restaurant, 4800 Forest Hill Avenue

Note:

The AOHKelly.org website is currently down as we transfer the AOH domain host to iPower.com and undertake a site redesign.

Raffle Tickets Parish Weekend Schedules:

- St. John: 2/18, 2/25
- St. Joseph's: 3/4, 3/11, 3/18

St. Edward's: 2/19, 2/26?
 Above schedules are subject to change.

New posters for Raffle Ticket sales are here and will be available at the next meeting.



ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR PRAYER

Personal prayer is important in the promotion of our living relationship as children of God with our Father who is goodness itself, with Jesus Christ his Son and our Redeemer, and with the Holy Spirit our Sanctifier. A life of prayer is the habit of being in the presence of the thrice-

holy God and in communion with him (cf. CCC, n. 2565).

Personal prayer promotes and improves our participation in liturgical and community prayers. If heart and mind are to be properly engaged in these two forms of prayer, then personal prayer is very

useful to help us internalize and make our own the liturgical and communal texts and rites. If this attention is not paid, these prayers for that one individual will be in danger of approaching words ritually recited, but not coming from the heart.

PRAYER LIST AND IN MEMORIAM

Please notify Brother Mike Dougherty to add or change the prayer or In Memoriam list.

Mike Dougherty and his wife, Diana. Also Mike's brother-in-law, James Cramsie.

Paul Kiniry, Recovering from a series of strokes.

Kevin Walsh-Heart attack.

Past President Mike McGee, recovering from surgery.

Dan Harrington's wife Joyce and Dan, in remission-leukemia.

Sonny Dorish-Heart attack

Bob Strutton

Rick Brennan's wife

In Memorium

Andy Jennings—He helped get the AOH started in Richmond.

Ray Olson's sister

Sister-in-law of Marie, Lady Hibernian-St. John's

Division Treasurer Bill Murphy

God grant them eternal rest



A Bit of History

St. Bridgit's Association With Fire

On the first day of February, somewhere in Ireland, a ewe is born. This is a pleasing sign of spring, as are the days which are visibly lengthening. In Ireland, the first day of February is widely celebrated at St. Brigid's Day for Christians, and as Imbolc for present-day pre-Christians.

Brigid is also associated with fire, although this association seems to date back to the pre-Christian goddess Brigid. There was an inextinguishable fire at Brigid's religious house in Kildare which burned for 500 years but produced no ashes. I think most of us can relate to the idea of an inextinguishable fire, be it burning in a fireplace or in our hearts. But the lingering mystery for me in this story is that men were not allowed near this certain fire in Kildare.

Brigid is also said to have wailed the first keening in Ireland upon the death of her son. I was familiar with keening from Irish literature, but I was not aware that the origin of this in Ireland was a woman mourning her son's death. But this should come as no surprise that this dreadful sound, a direful moaning chant, would come from the heart of a woman who has lost her son.

My final story about Brigid rests with what is known as a St. Brigid's Cross. The story tells us that St. Brigid converted a man on his deathbed. In the

process of conversion, she held a cross over him that she had made of rushes found on the floor around her. Women in Ireland still plait rushes into a cross, as St. Brigid did, and these women hang their creations in their kitchens. The St. Brigid's cross I have, which is pictured above, was plaited by an extraordinary Irish woman, Nancy Stevens, a woman whose pantry was always full in spite of her endless giving to her family, friends, and strangers who crossed her threshold. She was also the first one up each morning to tend to the fire that was always burning in her kitchen, a fire that warmed me on many days and in as many ways.

The story of Brigid resonates with women, which is why I wanted to post her story on the first day of February. In honoring her this day, we honor all women who have showered us with both tangible and intangible gifts from their pantry, stoked those inextinguishable fires which burn in all women's hearts, and taught us to wail like a banshee should a child be taken from us. (Susan O'Dea Boland; [WildGeese](#))

The Gaelic Quatrain

A Gaelic Quatrain is a four-line verse using a complex, ancient Gaelic structure. The first line of the verse is three syllables; the following three lines are seven syllables each. The rhyme structure tasks the poets to rhyme lines one, two and four, and **to cross rhyme the third line rhyme with the third syllable of the fourth**

line. The challenge of this Quatrain tests the students' creativity and facility with language. An example:

Forgiveness—

It confirmed your saintliness

To people needing heroes.

The world owes you endlessness.

From "The Irish Cultural Society Writing Contest". See "[Wild Geese](#)".

Anybody feel game?

The Holy Wells of Ireland

by Bridget Haggerty

About 60 years ago, a survey claimed there were as many as 3,000 holy wells in Ireland - more than in any other country in the world. Where once a pagan sacrifice may have taken place, today a bride might look into the waters for good luck - or a cripple might bathe in them, hoping for a cure.

In Irish myth, wells and springs are depicted as originating in the Otherworld - that parallel dimension whose inhabitants have the power to control the natural forces of this world. From sources in the Otherworld, water flows into our world to fill springs or gush forth as rivers such as the Boyne and Shannon. These bodies of water

(Continued on page 4)

OTHER

St. Patrick's Day will be here soon!

(Continued from page 3)

and others are closely identified with goddesses - Bóann and Sionann, for example, who are thought



to be part of the water's flow.

Such sacred water sources are also often linked to the fruit of certain trees, such as the hazelnut.

It was believed that drinking from these holy waters or bathing in them would bestow the power of the Otherworld in the form of poetic inspiration, wisdom, or healing. Supernatural fish, especially salmon or trout, are

still said to appear in a well's depths to those seeking omens for the future. The fish motif may derive from a belief that well goddesses could take the form of a fish. Also, salmon were often credited with being bearers of "iomas" - the "light that illumines" - meaning the insight and wisdom that comes from a supernatural encounter, rather than the knowledge acquired through conventional study.

In pagan Ireland, the wells were visited at special times of the year: Imbolc on February 1, Beltaine on May 1, Lughnasa on August 1 and Samhain on November 1. These were all special turning-points of the Celtic year when the gates of the Otherworld were opened. This is especially true for Samhain, where the veil between the liv-

ing and the dead was at its thinnest point, and often visions of the good people were seen in sacred places.

Elements of pre-Christian Celtic religion persist in the configuration of holy well sites and the practices that have been performed for generations. Surveys of well sites by researchers such as Walter and Mary Brenneman indicate that many sites actually consist of three elements: the well, spring, or other water source; a sacred tree - usually very large and very old; and a hill or standing stone. These features played a part in the prescribed rituals for pilgrims who came to the sites seeking favors. These were called "patterns" and almost always included some sort of circular walk, always

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CLOSING THOUGHT/PRAYER

Hail glorious Saint Patrick,
we honor thy name

Tho' Erin may claim thee, the
world knows thy fame

The faith of our fathers is our
treasure too

How holy that faith that they
learned from you

Through crosses and trials its

fires burn bright

It shows us the way, the truth
and the light

Great Saint intercede, that we
always may be

Devoted and loyal true chil-
dren of our heavenly father

And the Blessed Mother and
thee

Our faith and devotion be
ever like thine

Our thoughts be of Jesus,
Our hearts, minds and souls
be his shrine

And when to the end of life's
path we have trod

Be near and intercede for us
great bishop of God

2017 Officers

President-Matt Dullaghan
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Vice President-Jack Simila
jacksimila@gmail.com

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Sentinel-John Frampton
firemedic45@comcast.net

The Msgr. Charles Kelly, Jr. Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians was formed in December, 2009 and conducted it's first meeting on January 21, 2010 at St. John Neumann Church, Powhatan, Virginia. The next few meetings were taken up with election of officers and the many procedural items needed to get our group started.

Since that time we continue to grow, adding new members and supporting and donating to Catholic schools and Churches in the area, in line with our commitment to Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.AOHKELLY.ORG

IRELAND

"TRIP FOR TWO TO IRELAND"

Cash Prize
\$4,000

\$10 per chance, 10 Chances \$90

Trace Your Roots
Visit Family
Enjoy the Craic

Drawing will be held at 5:30 PM, March 26, 2017 on the bandstand at the St. Patrick's Church Irish Festival (25th & E. Broad Street, Richmond, VA).
Winner will be posted on our website, www.aohrichmond.org, after 8 AM on March 27th.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians
Msgr. Charles A. Kelly Division

The Ancient Order of Hibernians is America's oldest Irish-Catholic Fraternal organizations, founded concurrently in the coal region of Pennsylvania and New York City in May, 1836.