CORA Cork Open Research Archive
Cartlann Taighde Oscailte Chorcaí

Title	The history of Kilshinahan RC church
Authors	Desmond, Ann-Marie
Publication date	2017
Original Citation	Desmond, A.-M. (2017). The history of Kilshinahan RC church. Kilbrittain Historical Society, Articles and Records from the Past 2017/18. 3, pp.58-76.
Type of publication	Article (non peer-reviewed)
Rights	©2017, Ann-Marie Desmond.
Download date	2024-03-29 07:33:10
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/5194

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

The History of Kilshinahan RC Church

By Dr. Ann Marie Desmond

Location

The ruins of this Church lie close to the Argideen River basin on Route R602/L6088 on the border of Kilbrittain and Timoleague parishes. The Archaeological Inventory of West Cork situates it near OS 123:10:3 -a *"large sub-circular enclosure (200m) with a Church (3154) and graveyard* (3229)".[1] My mother`s mother Catherine Burke came from this farmland; she married Batty O`Leary, Skeaf. My father also came from Kilshinahan – which explains my great personal interest in this site but does not necessarily make me an expert on it!

Throughout this article I will endeavor to answer some of the questions people have been putting to me about this church ruin – such as: When was it built? Who built it? When was it last used? What visible features still remain? What caused it to be forgotten about over time? What written and anecdotal evidence is available about this site?

I will also explain how the Kilshinahan Meitheal Group transformed it over the summer of 2017, and outline our hopes for this sacred space in going forward?

When was it built?

When exactly it was built is uncertain – if only these walls could talk! What remains of the church today are three good walls almost two meters high and an eastern wall which is virtually collapsed. This Church has an east to west orientation, characteristic of all Christian churches. The altar was always situated on the eastern wall to face the rising sun. The remains of this church suggest that it is a Romanesque Church; a typical stone building with stone or slate roof, rounded arches and doors with arches, which were decorated with stone carvings.

It is built on the site of a pre-existing graveyard. The existence of a graveyard suggests there was an earlier monastery or church on this site, probably that of St. Sinchilin the sixth century[2] (see Mass booklet at the end of this article).His original church would have been most likely made of timber, with a thatched roof and a timber altar. Post-holes have been found under some early stone churches which suggest that stone churches such as this were built over the sites of timber churches around the 11th century, when stone churches became the norm. If this site is excavated sometime in the future it will give us a more accurate date of construction.

The graveyard which lies to the south of this church is unmarked according to the Historical Environmental Viewer. Back then grave markers were reserved for only the very important of the clans. Headstones began to be used from the 17th century onwards for the general population.[3]

---

[1] *Sites and Monuments Records*, Co. Cork POWE TR936.19, UCC, Special Collections.

[2] *Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, Vol. 106, 2001. p.94.

[3] Noonan, Sleeman, Nelligan, (2015), *Heritage Churches of County Cork*, Heritage Unit of Cork County Council, p.67.

Fig. 1: Nun's Chapel, Clonmacnoise is an excellent example of the Hiberno-Romanesque style. The church at Kilshinihan would have been designed with similar architectural influences

Architecture

This ruin has some Romanesque features such as the arched doorway on the west gable which has a semi- circular arch overhead. There would probably have been a carved architrave or frame around the opening – often three deep, with hood moldings decorated with chevrons, zigzags or animal and human heads, or floral motifs.(Similar to one on cover of Mass Booklet; St. Senan`s Chapel, Scattery Island, Co. Clare). Also similar to Cormac's Chapel in Cashel, Nun`s Chapel in Clonmacnoise and Moninaacha`s Chapel in Roscrea. They were built in the mid-1100`s so we guess that this church was built before or around that time, approximately one thousand years ago. It was before the Normans came to Ireland and before the new wave of large monastic orders such as the Cistercians and Franciscans brought continental monasticism to Ireland.

The portal doors were decorated above and to the sides, to remind people they were entering a sacred space. It would have had a stone or slate roof. Two Italian Archbishops of Canterbury were enthusiastic advocates of Roman reform in Ireland, so from the 12th Century onwards Gregorian reform spread to Ireland. Gregorian chant would probably have been heard resounding from the rafters here! Irish building design remained relative conservative in comparison to their European counterparts, so much so that the unique Irish style became known as Hiberno-Romanesque; *"They are best expressed in the emphasizing of the rounded arches with low relief sculptures using a combination of native and continental inspired motifs"*.[4]In Cork, it seems that no complete Hiberno-Romanesque Church survives.

This rectangular chapel measuring 37 ft East to West by 17ft North to South was built of mortared rubble from local sandstone quarries. The walls were built without any tools and with no mortar– whatever stones were available were made to fit as well as possible. This style of dry wall requires a lot of skill, with stones carefully selected, positioned and sometimes cut, so that there are few or no gaps, and the wall created was very stable. Kilshinihan church bears witness to having been added to and altered over the last thousand years. It might explain the

[4]*Ibid*, p.12.

presence of non-local stone too -carboniferous limestone which is a harder more resilient stone, but more difficult to cut and source. The semi-circular niches probably once contained endowed altars to the memory of the powerful families such as the McCarthy Riabhach (Rabagh) who ruled Munster at that time, or may have been used as tiered stalls for the monks as time went on.

Softer sandstone was used for the decorated doorways because it was easily carved. If a church could afford it, Dundry – a cream colored limestone was imported from quarries in Somerset and exported from the port of Bristol. The stones here were probably transported across the sea, landed in Timoleague estuary and brought up the Argideen River by boat or barge. Horses and traps probably brought them to Kilshinihan. The floor would probably have been covered with clay, overlaid with scattering of straw, grass or rushes. Stone slabs have been found in some contemporary churches, but mainly limited to the threshold where footfall was greatest. The altars too would have been made of stone at this time.

By the 15th and 16th centuries, this church would probably have looked like a typical rural parish church consisting of a single-roomed, rectangular structure with the influences of gothic style pointed windows and pointed arched openings. These floors would probably have been made of timber boards over time as suggested in documentary sources.[5]

The main door would have been re-located to the western end of the south wall during that era; and now that the vegetation has been cut back, we can see some steps going out from it. The priest`s accommodation was usually to the west end of the church back then. The original door on the west wall would probably have been adapted as a stained-glass window. A bell-cote would have been positioned on the top of the west gable, to call people to Mass or to ring the Angelus bells. There was a holy water font in this church also, probably on the western or southern wall for people to use as they entered the church.

Last year Iah Burke told me that she recalls Tim Burke (her father-in-law) giving permission for the holy water font from this old church to be brought up to the Mass Rock, but was unsure of the date in which that happened. She also spoke of Tim referring to a lost chalice on the family farm which was never recovered.[6]

Another interesting feature is the little miniature bridge-like archon the surrounding wall to the north west of the church – suggesting a water source or drain, perhaps used for the washing of the sacred vessels after mass. A similar feature exists below the northern wall of the oratory on Skellig Rock – *"Some of the lower part of that northern oratory wall was composed of bedrock and contained grooves that channeled water down to the drain*".[7]

[5]*Ibid* p.26.

[6] Desmond, A., 'Kilshinihan Mass Rock', *Kilbrittain Historical Journal*, *Articles & Records from the Past*, *2016/17 vol. 2*, pp. 94-109, at p.107.

[7]O`Sullivan, Mc Cormic, Kerr and Harney, (2013), *Early Medieval Ireland AD 400-1100*, p.156. Royal Irish Academy.

Written sources specifying Kilshinahan RC Church

Cork County Council Records from 1902 refer to Kilshinahan Church in ruins and again in 1985/86; refers to this site as *"a centre of early ecclesiastical enclosure (2577) on N side of graveyard"*.[8]It is described as heavily overgrown. The archaeologist quotes the landowner – Michael Burke as saying it had a bell cote until 1935 (see picture of a bellcote in Mass booklet p.2) and that the east gable fell in 1950. It says the greater portion of the enclosure was leveled by 1975 and that a laneway linked the church with roads to the NNW and E. It says no grave-markers but some bone and stone slab found; one with IHS (Greek abbreviation for Jesus) found during ploughing in the field to the East. It seems that Kilshinahan was the main parish church back then before the parishes were restructured in 1199 (Dates listed on p.5 Mass booklet). The Synod of Kells in 1152 refers to *Cell Sinchil*.[9] In the 1302-06 List of Parishes, Kilshinahan is listed[10]as paying a taxation document – Kilshinahan Church 30 shillings and 3 marks[11] and in 1588 Kilshinahan Church and Chapel 10 shillings, compared to Kilbrittain with 13 shillings.[12]It was "*anciently known as Capella de Kylshinthin de Kilbrittain, it became Ecclesia de Kilbrittain et Kilshinihan, prebenda nataa by 1591.*[13]

We can deduce from these sources that this church fell into disuse after the passing of the Act of Uniformity by Queen Elizabeth in the 1560`s which claimed all churches and their lands as part of the Anglican Church. Some Medieval churches were refurbished for Protestant use, but the Anglican community worshipped locally at the chapel on Mary O`Sullivan`s farm, to the east of this church. Mary and her cousin Michael wrote an article on it for last year`s *Kilbrittain Historical Journal*.[14]Kilmalooda and Rathclaren Churches were converted to Anglican style also, and interestingly in most cases the entire population of both Catholic and Protestant believers continued to bury their dead in the graveyards surrounding these churches. An archaeological inventory of County Cork suggests that some of these churches were left fall into ruin at this time which is what I expect happened to this Church here.[15]

The Penal Laws were then passed, which forbade Catholics to attend Mass or be educated.[16] It is at that time that the local population relocated their place of worship to the Mass Rock on the NW of this site. There was a bounty of £10 on each priest`s head and according to Clogher diocese records: *"The penalty for anyone allowing Mass to be celebrated in his house is a fine of £30 and imprisonment for a year"*.[17]During the period 1601-1750, the Penal Laws led to secret masses held in safe houses or at mass rocks. Sr. Evelyn Bolster writes in vol. 3 of her work about a Teide Riabhach Mc Carthy(in 1730-The Bishop of Cork, Ross &Cloyne – of the Mc Carthy's

[8]Sites and Monuments Records, Co. Cork POWE TR936.19, UCC, Special Collections
[9] Bolster E., (1972), *A History of the Diocese of Cork from the Earliest Times to the Reformation*, *vol.1*, p. 86.
[10]*Ibid*, p.272.
[11]*Ibid*, p.317.
[12]*Ibid*, p.334-335.
[13] Brady Records, 1863, p.133/Bolster, vol.1, pp.238/9.
[14] O`Sullivan, M. and M. 'Did Kilshinihan have two churches?', *Kilbrittain Historical Journal*, *Articles & Records from the Past*, 2016/17 vol. 2, pp.90-92.
[15] *Archaeological Inventory of County Cork*: *vol. 1*. West Cork, Stationery Office, Dublin
[16] Desmond, A., 'Kilshinihan Mass Rock', *Kilbrittain Historical Society*, *Articles & Records from the Past*, *2016/17 vol. 2*, pp. 93-109, at p.99.
[17]O`Gallachair, "Clogher`s Altars of the Penal Days: A Survey", *Clogher Record*, *vol.2*, *no.1* (1957), pp.97-130.

of Burrane Castle),who tried to celebrate mass at the mass rock, but had to make a quick getaway when warned of the approach of British soldiers.[18]

Local legend has it that the Burke family of Kilshinahan provided a safe house for priests on the run, and one time the bell from this church rang out autonomously to warn a priest that the authorities were searching for him. Thanks to the bells he escaped from being captured! In 1743, Fr. Lar Calnan (Garrendruig) is said to have rebuilt Kilshinahan Church, and it was the parish Church until 1790.[19]The present day parish church replaced the mass-house here in 1790. In 1823-29-Catholic Emancipation passed, which meant that the Irish Catholics were free to practice their faith again.

On 3rd August 2017 – two hundred and twenty seven years later – mass was once again celebrated at this site, and we continued to sing songs such as *Faith of Our Fathers.*

Kilshinihan Church in the 20th Century

In 1937 Cáit de Búrcha`s account of the Mass Rock in the Friars Glenn between Baurleigh and Barleyfield says that between the rock and the stream is a green level patch where people knelt for mass during the Penal times:*"Both rock and level ground is now covered in briars*".[20]

In 1959 under the direction of Fr. Coakley the mass rock and church were cleaned up, and stones from the grounds of Kilbrittain Castle were used as steps down to the mass rock. I am thinking that this is the time when the holy water font was relocated from the church here to the mass rock below with Tim Burke`s permission; he would have been in his full health then.

In 1981 locals prepared the mass rock for a mass with Fr. Dan O`Flynn (homily by Fr. Christy Walsh). In 1997 a Famine Commemoration plaque was added to the entrance of the mass rock, and an oration was given by Eileen Lyons, Bandon.

So, to bring us to the 2017 renovations; we formed a Meitheal group under the leadership of Fr.Cremin, Niall O`Brien and myself with the blessing of Iah Burke, landowner. Our group, consisting of locals on both sides of the Argideen River, was motivated to revive the church and to clean up the mass rock. We are what World Archeologists describe as 'Community Archaeologists' or a 'Descendent Community' – with a commitment to, and a relationship with a site, where our ancestors congregated and worshipped This explains why we have a personal affiliation and interest in the preservation of these ruins: *"Most community archaeologists begin by identifying the site on which they wish to work and the emergence of a community with interests in those sites follows from that choice. It consists of people who live locally or close to the site and/or descendents who can trace descent from the people who once lived at or near the site".*[21]Our group met every Tuesday night and we were blessed with beautiful sunny evenings. When we began last June all we could see was a large green mound of trees and vegetation

[18]Bolster, E., (1989), *A History of the Diocese of Cork (Vol.3) From the Penal Era to the Famine*, Tower Books, p.44.
[19]Fr. Christy Walsh, Mass Rock homily, July1981.
[20]Dúchas site: *The Schools Collection*, Volume 0313, p. 306A.

[21] Marshall, Y., "What is community Archaeology?" *World Archaeology*, Vol.34, No. 2. October 2002,p.216

growing out of some sort of building. There are photographs of the different stages of revival to view at Kilbrittain Church.

Over the weeks, visible improvements became apparent with three walls intact and a fourth almost completely destroyed. Michael Twohig did Trojan work in clearing and lining the entrance lane. The strong men of the *tuatha* did the stremming and cutting of limbs, while the rest of us arranged directional sign licenses and manufacturing, sand blasting, tree cutting, insurance and so on. We also organized the painting of the crosses – the gold original one is repositioned on the mass rock, and the silver one which was at the mass rock is now placed in the church ruin. We also planned and organized the celebration of mass on 3-08-17.

We cleaned up the mass rock too, and commissioned the erection of a safety glass balustrade around the rock for safety purposes. Paddy Clifford (Iah`s son-in-law) rescued the original cross from Iah`s old farmyard and got it revived and back on the rock. Myles McSwiney (my husband) donated a Lee Valley gate for the entrance here, and he and Padraig Desmond (my brother) built lovely pillars around it recently.

John Freyne (Mary G`s husband) was very active with his metal detector in the hope of locating the legendry lost chalice. For me, it has been a very pleasant experience working with a very willing and able team, backed by the generosity of Fr. Cremin and Iah Burke and family. We were also very aware of inconveniencing local farmers Gerdie Lehane and Conor O`Sullivan, so we are deeply grateful to them for being so patient with us.

Planning for the Future

Some city friends of mine told me recently that they had never seen a mass rock; and another friend who visited the mass rock recently read the commemoration plaque outside it about an Gorta Mór, and so thought the mass rock only went back to the 1840`s. I`m thinking we`ll have to add another plaque there stating it pre-existed the famine by almost 300 years!

In going forward, we hope to have a phase two, where we invite the archaeologists from Cork County Council and UCC to visit here in the hope of excavating this site fully, and where the local community will hopefully continue to be involved. Archaeologists would have the expertise and equipment which we don't have, whereas we have the personal interest and links which they may not have. For example archeological geophysics surveys could use equipment called magnetometers, which are much stronger than metal detectors and could go deeper than the subsurface to detect magnetic variations in far wider areas. Perhaps they might locate old wall structures under this site or some forgotten artifacts which are long buried – so it is very exciting in going forward – provided of course, that they will agree to invest in researching here! People have also suggested that this mass site could be used for Stations or for smaller church ceremonies.

To conclude, I want to draw your attention to the illustrations on the Mass Booklet (pp.7-14), the cover which shows what this Church would have looked like by the 1800`s, and the other photograph of what it was like in July 2017, after two weeks of clearing. The bell cote (p.3) is

similar to the one which would have been in this Church to protect the bell from weathering. The hour glass (p.4) to reflect on the many hours which have passed since the building here was the centre of parish life. The gold cross at the mass rock (p.5) was removed in 1980`s and replaced with a broader one. It lay amid overgrown vegetation at Iah` sold farm yard until Paddy Clifford rescued it this summer. He got it sandblasted and painted and has completely rejuvenated it. The rosary beads (p.7) remind us that the Irish people prayed the rosary to Our Lady while the Latin Mass was being said. The photograph on the back cover captures the energy and enthusiasm of the men-folk of the Meitheal group; inspired by Fr. Cremin at the helm. On the altar during the August 2017 mass we had Fr. James Coombes` gold cross which I bought at an auction for my mother after his death. Fr. Coombes` grand-father, an Anglican, married a Catholic woman; this cross is a beautiful symbol of the interweaving of both religious traditions in this locality since the Penal Times. The cross with IHS on it is a reminder that we all believe in the love of Christ and thankfully today we have come to realize that we have far more in common with the Anglican Community than we have differences. Laudato Si!

Fig. 2:St. Senan's Chapel, Scattery Island, West Clare is an excellent example of Hiberno-Romanesque architecture.



Fig. 3: Some of the Meitheal Group involved in the project: L-R: Con Hegarty, Niall O'Brien, Fr. Jerry Cremin, Ann Marie Desmond, Paddy Clifford, (seated) Teresa Barry, Iah Burke and Padraig Desmond.



Figs. 4 and 5: How the site looked before work began, and after the trees were cut back to reveal the outline of the three walls. These images give a sense of just how overgrown the site was before the group worked to save it.



Fig. 5: The inside of the church after renovations were completed (Photo courtesy of Michael Prior). Fig. 6: Mass being celebrated in the church for the first time in over 200 years (Photo courtesy of Brian Madden).

Appendix – Mass Booklet Kilshinihan

Mass at Sean-Eaglais Chill Sheanacháin, Kilshinahan RC Church

Thursday 3rd August 2017, 7pm Fr. Cremin, Fr. Hickey & Fr. Cashman

Altar Servers: Clodagh O`Sullivan, Ciara &Cathal O`Callaghan

Entrance Hymn: Christ Be Beside Me

Christ be beside me, Christ be before me,
Christ be behind me, King of my heart.
Christ be within me, Christ be below me,
Christ be above me, never to part.

Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left hand,
Christ all around me, shield in the strife.
Christ in my sleeping, Christ in my sitting,
Christ in my rising, light of my heart.

First Reading: A Reading from the Book of Ezekiel (Eleanor Burke)

Responsorial Psalm: The Lord's my Shepherd, I`ll not want

He makes me down to lie, in pastures green he leadeth me, the quiet waters by.

Second Reading: St. Paul to Ephesians (Fr. Cremin)

Alleluia (Sung)

Gospel Reading: Gospel St. Luke (Fr. Hickey)

Homily: Fr. Cremin

` **Prayers of the Faithful**

Church Leaders (Niall O`Brien)

Community Spirit (Noreen Sweetnam)

Kilshinahan Meitheal Group (Paddy Clifford)

For the deceased members of the Burke family (Dylan Twohig)

Iah Burke and Family (Tara Jackson Hegarty)

Our Ancestors (Myles McSwiney)

Offertory Hymn: Instrumental

Commentary: Ann Marie Desmond

Offertory Gifts

Bread (Iah Burke)

Wine (Mary O`Sullivan)

Rosary Beads (Teresa Barry)

Hourglass (Mary Dineen)

A Plant (Mo Tobin)

A Saw (Niall O`Brien)

History Journal (Con McCarthy)

Sanctus (Sung)

Mystery of Faith- He is Lord (Sung)

Eucharistic Minister: Marie O`Mahony

Prayers of the Faithful, Kilshinahan, August 2017

1. We pray for our Pope Francis, our bishop John Buckley and all the clergy and religious especially those of our local area here; Fr. Cremin and Fr. Hickey in particular for their commitment to the preservation of our heritage. Lord hear us (Magella Mc Carthy)

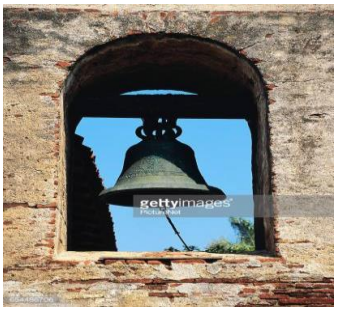
2. We pray for all of us here in this community, that the gift of Christ`s mercy and forgiveness may be ours this summer. May we remember that a church is first and for-most people, and that we are its living stones, based on Christ himself who is the Cornerstone. Lord hear us (Noreen Sweetnam)

3. We pray for all the dedicated members of Kilshinahan Meitheal Group and all the local farmers and everyone who made the restoration of this sacred site possible. As living stones of Christ`s church may we inspire others to be steadfast in preserving our collective spiritual and cultural heritage. Where there is darkness, may we sow light, where there is suffering, may we sow healing prayers of acceptance and love. Where there is disharmony, may we sow seeds of tolerance and mercy. Lord hear us (Paddy Clifford)

4. We pray for the Burke family on who`s land this Church stands on. We remember in particular their loved ones Tim and Sissy Burke, their daughters Sr. Joachim, Nora and Josie, and their sons Michael, Denis and Johnny and their grandson Aiden. May they all rest in peace. Lord hear us (Dylan Twohig)

5. We also ask you Lord to grant Iah Burke and her family an abundance of spiritual blessings which they so richly deserve for their generosity and encouragement in the renovation of this Church. Lord hear us (Tara Jackson Hegarty)

6. We pray for all the dead generations who have worshipped here before us. May they rest in the peace of knowing that their Mass site is once again a living and spiritual heritage. We ask them to guide us in making the right decisions in relation to the future of this spiritual sanctuary. Lord hear us (Myles McSwiney)



Kilshinahan Offertory, August 2017

Iah Burke offers bread which represents the body of Christ and our human labours here during the last few months. We thank you God for the food we eat and for your spiritual nourishment throughout our lives.

Mary O`Sullivan offers wine which represents the blood of Christ and our need for spiritual and physical drink. We thank you God for your gift of life and love.

Teresa Barry offers Rosary Beads to remind us of the esteem in which our ancestors held Mary the mother of Jesus and her wish for us to keep reciting the Rosary. We thank you God for the gift of faith.

Mary Dineen presents an hourglass which represents the importance of time in the lives of each one of us, and in the greater passing of time for artifacts such as our church ruin. We thank you God for the gift of time.

Mo Tobin offers a plant in bloom which reminds us of the grandeur of God's creation all around us. It represents the beautiful outcome of hard work and what can be achieved with a good community spirit. As the Irish monks said; *"To work is to pray-Laborare et orare".* We thank you Lord for the ability to work.

Niall O`Brien offers a rusty saw which is representative of the labours and multitude of talents which the people of this area possess, but also share with one another, so as to bring the light of Christ into our community and home-life. We thank you God for inspirational leaders and altruistic neighbors.

Con Mc Carthy offers a copy of a Historical Journal which is representative of our interest in and respect for culture, History and tradition. We thank you God for the rich heritage which our ancestors bestowed us with.

Communion Reflection: Kilshinahan Church Hymn (To the air of Castle on the Hill)

Chorus
We`re gathered here today
Praying at sunset, down an old country lane
Reviving Kilshinahan Church
Because we remember the way it was back when
They watched the sunset, over this Mass House in the
glen
Verse 1
A thousand years ago they said the Latin Mass
Walking bare-foot to Church through backfields and praying with their friends
They received the host on Sunday morning, I reckon they did it right
Yes things were different then, take me back to when
Pre-Chorus
They found solace in God when they prayed
In the `midst of nature they drank the sacred wine
They and their sagart will not be forgotten –we remember them still
It`s been so long and it was way overgrown
But now we`ve got it restored
Verse 2
In the fifteen hundred`s when Penal Laws were passed
Running from the law they took the back field to the Mass Rock below
Risking life and limb for the Mass-didn`t think the English right
But things were different then, bring us forward to when

Míle Buíochas le: Gerdie Lehane, Conor O`Sullivan, Tony O`Mahony-Agricultural Contractors, John O`Connell-Blastech, Jimmy O`Sullivan, Engineering, Charles McCarthy and Tony O`Brien, Cork County Council, Brian – Rapid Glass Ltd., Ben-First Call Tree Surgeon, John Walsh-Highway Safety Dev. Brian O`Sullivan, Old Chapel Tool Hire, Jim Foley, Arkil Quarries. Michael O`Sullivan, Raheen, John Desmond, Bandon and Eugene O`Connor, Geologist

Mary O`Sullivan, Peggy McCarthy, Teresa Burke and Margaret Slattery-Flowers

Kilbrittain Red Cross

Choirs from Clogagh, Kilbrittain and Timoleague, led by Lucy Lawton & Michael Heaney

History

Kilshinahan/Kilshinihan RC Church Ruin-Cell Sinchil, Capella de Kylshinthin de Kilbrittain;The Irish form of the church in question is **Cill tSinchill**, (St.) Sincheall's church (q.v. Historical Dictionary of Irish Placenames, Fascicle 4, page 51) (See also A Dictionary of Irish Saints page 563 – Pádraig Ó Riain (2011).

March 26 is the feast of an early monastic founder, Saint Sinchell (Sincheall, Sinell, Senchell) associated with Killeigh, County Offaly. Tradition records that there were two saints of this name, the younger Sinchell being nephew to the elder. St. Sinell, or Senchell, one of the most distinguished ecclesiastics of his time, founded a Monastery of Killeigh at the beginning of the sixth century. This monastery became afterwards known as the Priory of the Holy Cross of Canons Regular of St. Augustine. St. Senchell, who is stated to have been St. Patrick's first convert, was the son of Kennfinnain, and grandson of Inchad, or Finchada, of the royal blood of Leinster (Colgan, Trias. Thaum)

The Pious Rules and Practices of the School of Senchil. This was Senchil, surnamed the Elder. The Rules and Practices are 38 in number. An ardent desire of hearing, and offering up the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and frequent confession were amongst the rules and practices of a school which was celebrated in the first half of the sixth century, under this system of education Ireland became *'another name for piety, and learning in most of the languages of Europe."*

1152 Synod of Kells, Parish of Kilshinahan is mentioned (Bolster, Vol.1 p.86)

1199 –Cellsinchil mentioned by Pope Innocent 111-Main parish church

1302-06-In list of parish's taxation document-30 shillings and 3 marks

1393 -Kilshinahan Parish on taxation list and again in 1437

1588 -Kilshinahan Church and Chapel 10 shilling, compared to Kilbrittain with 13 shillings (pp334-335, Bolster). It was "*anciently known as Capella de Kylshinthin de Kilbrittain, it became Ecclesia de Kilbrittain et Kilshinihan, pre-bendanata by 1591"* (Brady Records.1863, p133/Bolster, Vol.1, p. 239).

1560-Act of Uniformity passed by Queen Elizabeth 1

1601-1750 Penal Laws enforced. Secret Masses held in safe houses or Mass Rocks

1730-The Bishop of Cork, Ross & Cloyne, Teide Raboch Mc Carthy (of the Mc Cathy's of Burrane Castle) tried to celebrate Mass at Mass Rock but had to make a quick getaway when warned of the approach of British Soldiers (Bolster, Vol.3, p.44)

1743-90 -Fr. Laurence Calnan rebuilt Kilshinahan Church. It was the parish Church until 1790.

1823-29-Catholic Emancipation passed.2017-Two hundred and twenty seven years later Mass celebrated here.

Communion Hymns

1. Soul of my Saviour

Sanctify my breast.
Body of Christ
Be thou my saving guest.
Blood of my Saviour,
Bathe me in thy tide.
Wash me with waters,
Flowing from his side.

2. Strength and protection
May thy passion be.
Oh blessed Jesus
Hear and answer me.
Deep in thy wounds Lord,
Hide and shelter me
So shall I never,
Never part from thee

Recessional Hymn: Faith of Our Fathers

Faith of our fathers, living still
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword,
O how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word!
Faith of our fathers! Holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!

Our fathers, chained in prisons dark,
were still in heart and conscience free;
and blest would be their children's fate,
if they, like them should die for thee:
Faith of our fathers! Holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!

2. How Great Thou Art

Oh Lord my God
When I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds
Thy hands have made
I see the stars
I hear the rolling thunder
Thy power throughout
The universe displayed

Chorus

Then sings my soul
My Savior, God, to Thee
How great thou art
How great thou art
Then sings my soul
My Savior, God, to Thee
How great Thou art
How great Thou art

And when I think of God,
His son not sparing,
Sent Him to die,
I scarce can take it in;
That on the cross, my burden
gladly bearing He bled and died
to take away my sin.



Kilshinahan Meitheal Group: ***"Laborare est orare-to work is to pray"*** **(Irish Monks)**

Fr. Cremin, Iah Burke, Niall O`Brien, Paddy Clifford, Eleanor Burke, Michael Twohig, Padraig Desmond, Myles McSwiney, Ann-Marie Desmond, Mary O`Sullivan, Con Hegarty, Gerdie Lehane, Dan Dineen, Vincent Burke, John Frayne, Teresa Barry, Mo Tobin, Joe Sweetnam, Seamus Crowley, Con McCarthy, Eugene Fallon and Martin O`Hanlon.