Roman Catholic Clergy in St. Munchin’s Parish (Part 3)

Succession of Curates in St. Munchin’s Parish since 1900

1902 – Patrick Woulfe was born in March 1872 and studied at the Irish College, Rome and St. Patrick’s College, Maynooth, prior to his ordination at Maynooth on 19 June 1898. His first assignment was as assistant chaplain to Limerick Workhouse, a position he held until 6 October 1902 when he was appointed to St. Munchin’s parish. In 1905 he was transferred to Kilmallock and remained there until 25 November 1925 when he was appointed P.P. of Cappagh. He died on 3 May 1933 aged 61 and is interred at Cappagh church grounds. He was a native of west Limerick, a prominent Gaelic scholar and in that connection published some interesting and learned works. He took a prominent part in the movement for the revival of the language and was president of the Limerick branch of the Gaelic League for some time.

1905 – Patrick Casey, a native of Ardpadpatrick, was baptised on 20 January 1876. He pursued his education at Maynooth and was ordained there on 17 June 1900. After spells in Liverpool and Donoughmore, he was appointed to St. Munchin’s parish in 1905. On 2 February 1908 he was transferred to Graigue and remained there until November 1919 when he took up curacy at Ballycraigy. In 1920 he was transferred to Askeaton and on 20 January 1921 became P.C. of Mahonough. On 5 December 1928 he was appointed P.P. of Loughill, a position he held until 1 June 1940 when he returned to Askeaton, this time as P.P. He died on 6 January 1946 aged 69.

1908 – David Barry, a native of Effin and a distinguished writer on moral issues, was baptised on 18 May 1879. He studied at Maynooth and was ordained at St. John’s Cathedral on 28 June 1903. After ordination he studied at Darbyne College until 1905 when he was appointed C.C. of Parteen. On 2 February 1908 he was transferred to St. Munchin’s parish and the following 23 June was assigned to Templeglantine until 13 November 1911 when he was appointed C.C. of Bruff. He was transferred to Patrickswell on 13 February 1931 and in May 1933 was appointed P.P. of Cappagh, succeeding Fr. Patrick Woulfe. He remained in Cappagh until his death on 10 January 1937, aged 58, in the Mater Hospital, Dublin and is buried in Cappagh church grounds alongside Fr. Woulfe.

1908 – John Moloney was baptised on 21 March 1875 and hailed from Abbeyfeale. He studied at Maynooth and was ordained there on 18 June 1899. His first clerical assignment was in the parish of St. Alphonsus in the diocese of Liverpool until September 1904 when he returned to the Limerick diocese, taking up curacy at Fedamore. On 15 September 1907 he became C.C. of Miltown and on 25 February of the following year took up duty at St. Munchin’s parish. On 21 November 1910 he was transferred to Ardpadpatrick and the following November was appointed to Croom until 19 May 1915 when he took up curacy duties at Parteen. In December 1918 he was transferred to Mahonough until 10 June 1921 when he became C.C. of Croom. Early in 1922 he was appointed C.C. of Ardpadpatrick until February 1926 when he was transferred to St. Mary’s parish, and in July 1927 he returned to Parteen, this time as P.P. He retired as P.P. of Parteen on 4 June 1949 and died on 5 October 1957 aged 84. He is interred at Parteen church grounds.

1908 – Michael Hayes was a native of Rathkeale where his father was principal of its national school. He was baptised on New Year’s Day, 1870. He studied at Maynooth and was ordained there on 21 June 1896 but is not recorded in clergy listings until his appointment as C.C. of Parteen on 5 September 1899. The following year he took up curacy at St. Mary’s parish until 1902 when he was transferred to St. John’s parish. In St. Mary’s parish he also served as chaplain to the Sisters of Mercy, and in St. John’s parish he served as chaplain to St. John’s Hospital. On 12 April 1904 he was appointed to the teaching staff in St. Munchin’s College, and also chaplain to the Presentation Convent, positions he held until 1906 when he returned to active ministry as C.C. of Killeedy. On 16 September 1907 he was transferred to Tournafulla until 23 June 1908 when he was appointed to St. Munchin’s parish.

On 30 October 1911 he left the diocese to join the Redemptorist Order at Dundalk, but returned to Limerick the following year when he left the Redemptorists and was appointed C.C. of Monagaga. On 30 December 1913 he was transferred to Newcastle West and remained there until 29 September 1924 when he was appointed P.P. of Stonehall (now Killcullen). On 20 January 1929 he took up parochial duty at Ardpad and remained there until his death – in the Mater Hospital, Dublin, on 16 June 1934, aged 64. He is buried at Ardpad church grounds and charged his name to the Irish version Miscell HíOathch around 1920. Both he and Fr. Thomas Wall were the priests mentioned in General Maxwell’s letter to Bishop Edward O’Dwyer and the latter’s famous reply in May 1916.

1911 – Patrick Conway, a native of Tournafulla, was baptised on 18 February 1877. He studied at Maynooth and was ordained there on 22 June 1902. After ordination he served in Ballycullion (Derry diocese) until 1907, and after a brief spell at Donoughmore was appointed C.C. of Shandaken on 18 September of that year. On 13 November 1911 he took up curacy at St. Munchin’s parish on the following April when he was sent on a retreat to Mount Melleray due to health issues related to alcohol. He was subsequently appointed C.C. of Ardpadpatrick until December 1913 when he was transferred to Miltown. The following June he returned to Ardpadpatrick until 24 March 1919 when he took up curacy at Croom. He retired from the priesthood in July 1922 and went to live at Belmont Park, Waterford, until his death on 12 October 1933 aged 56. He was a relative of John Conway, C.C. of St. Munchin’s parish for the period 1895 to 1903.

1912 – Patrick Carroll, a native of Bruff, received his education at the Irish College, Paris, and was ordained there on 9 June 1907. After ordination he served on mission in Liverpool until August 1911 when he returned to the Limerick diocese as temporary C.C. of St. Munchin’s parish. The following nine months saw him serving as temporary curate in the parishes of St. Patrick’s, Bruff, St. Munchin’s again, and Mahonough until he returned to
St. Munchin’s parish on 10 May 1912 to succeed Fr. Conway. On 18 April 1915 he was appointed C.C. of St. Mary’s parish and remained there until 18 January 1926 when he took up curacy at Newcastle West. He also served as chaplain to the Sisters of Mercy convent for a four-year period during his tenure at St. Mary’s parish. He was appointed P.P. of Killeedy on 10 July 1934 and remained there until 3 July 1944 when he took up parochial duty at Abbeyfeale. Upon his appointment to Abbeyfeale he was created Canon. He died in Abbeyfeale on 3 June 1959 aged 76. Two of his brothers, James and William, also served as priests in the Limerick diocese. James was P.P. of Ardfert at the time of his death in June 1954, while William was P.P. of Rathkeale at the time of his death in 1964.

1915 – Christopher Halpin was baptised on 22 June 1878. A native of Limerick city, he studied at Maynooth and was ordained there on 19 June 1904. His first assignment was to Our Lady’s parish in Elton Street, Liverpool, until 21 June 1907 when he returned to the Limerick diocese as C.C. of Banogue. The following 12 December he was transferred to Abbeyfeale and remained there until 18 April 1915 when he took up curacy at St. Munchin’s parish. On 28 September 1931 he was appointed P.P. of Glenroe, a position he held until his sudden death on 18 March 1937 aged 59. He was a very popular pastor who took a great interest in national affairs and he erected national schools in Glenroe parish and made improvements to Glenroe and Ballyraggan churches. He is interred at Glenroe church grounds and was a relative of Jeremiah, John and Timothy Halpin, who were all P.P.s in the Limerick diocese. (Timothy served as C.C. of St. Munchin’s from 1857 to 1858)

1915 – James Molony hailed from Bulgaden and was born on 31 May 1882. After receiving his education at Maynooth, he was ordained there on 23 June 1907. After ordination he served in Glasgow (Scotland) until 1909, and after a brief period in Dromcollogher was appointed C.C. of Manister on 8 September of that year. The following July he took up curacy at Kilfinane until 19 May 1915 when he succeeded Fr. Begley in St. Munchin’s parish. On 26 November 1926 he was transferred to Kilnamock until 17 November 1933 when he became C.C. of Rathkeale. On 28 January 1936 he was appointed P.P. of Fedamore, a position he held until 1 July 1948 when he took up parochial duty at Effin. He remained there until his death on 25 October 1957 aged 75 and is buried at Effin church grounds.

1926 – Thomas Mortell, also a native of Bulgaden, was ordained at Maynooth on 20 June 1915 having received his education there. After ordination he served in the parishes of Assumption and St. Gabriel (Brooklyn, U.S.A.) until September 1919 when he became C.C. of Templeglantine. After a short spell there and another brief period at Ballingarry, he was appointed C.C. of Abbeyfeale on 16 October 1922, until 26 November 1926 when he succeeded Fr. James Molony. He remained here until 24 May 1935 when he was appointed P.P. of Banogue, a position he held until his death on 8 October 1946 aged 53 in Milford Nursing Home. He is buried at Banogue church grounds.

1931 – Edmund McCarthy, a native of Ardpark, was educated at St. Munchin’s College and Rome and was appointed C.C. of Tourmakeilla in 1927. The following year he took up curacy at Feenagh until 1931 when he succeeded Fr. Halpin in St. Munchin’s parish. He was appointed P.P. of Cappagh in 1933 and in January 1964 was transferred to Rockhill, but his tenure there was short as he died on 3 October 1964 aged 60. He is interred at Rockhill church grounds. In his youth he featured on the St. Munchin’s College hurling team which won the Harry Cup in 1922, and is not to be confused with his namesake who was C.C. of St. Mary’s parish from 1935 to 1939.

1939 – Michael Minihan hailed from Knocklea and was born in April 1906. He first studied at St. Munchin’s College and then at Rome where he was ordained on 1 November 1928. In July 1929 he returned to Ireland when he was appointed C.C. of Banogue. The following year he took up curacy at Crough and in 1932 was transferred to Bulgaden where he remained until he succeeded Fr. Mortell. In 1944 he was appointed C.C. of St. Michael’s parish until 1953 when he took up a similar role at Dromcollogher. In March 1959 he was appointed P.P. of Templeglantine, a position he held until January 1970 when he took up parochial duty at Shanagolden and was also created Canon. On 20 August 1975 he was transferred to Kilnamock where he remained until 1982 when he retired from active ministry. He died on 18 January 1984 aged 78, having spent his retirement residing at San Michele in Corbally, and is interred at Kilnamock church grounds. He took a keen interest in community organisations throughout his ministry, in particular being very committed to the Fingal and Currabinny Catholic Association and was a very charitable priest who visited his parishioners and was very charitable to the poor and caring to the sick.

1940 – Patrick Gerard Ryan was born in 1916. A native of Catherine Street, he was ordained at Maynooth on 23 June 1940. On his appointment to St. Munchin’s parish after his ordination, St. Munchin’s became a three-curate parish. He was appointed C.C. of Bruree in 1945 and in 1948 took up curacy at Kildimo. In 1953 he was transferred to Graiguecullen and in 1958 when he was appointed to St. Patrick’s parish. In 1961 he returned to St. Munchin’s as C.C. where he remained until his appointment as P.P. of Manister in 1965. In early 1975 he took up parochial duty at Feenagh and held this position until his retirement in 1981 due to ill health. Upon retirement he went to reside at Carrigoran House, Newmarket-on-Fergus, where he died on 21 April 1984. He is interred at Kilmeedy church grounds. The Irish Catholic Directories from 1965 onward give his Christian name as Gerard. He was a quiet and gentle pastor who was talented musically and an expert on sport, being for some years the sports correspondent of Our Catholic Life which was published regularly from 1954 until 1979 and was the magazine of the Limerick Diocese.
1944 - John Godfrey, a native of Millmount, Kilnamade, was born on 12 March 1907. Having pursued his studies at St. Munchin's College he was ordained on 17 June 1934. Following a spell as C.C. of Minihan, in 1936 he was transferred to Feenagh. The following year he took up curacy at St. Patrick's parish until 1944 when he succeeded Fr. Minihan. In 1963 he was appointed P.P. of Kilalane, a position he held until his death on 11 June 1977. He is interred in the grounds of Kilalane church, which he had built in 1969. He also built two new national schools at Kilalane and Pallaskenry, a new parochial house, and renovated Pallaskenry church. In his youth he was a noted hurler with St. Munchin's College, being a member of their Harry Cup winning team in 1922. He played with the Limerick hurling team that won the Munster Junior championship in 1827 and featured with the Young Ireland team which won the Limerick Senior hurling championship in 1928. He also played one Munster Senior Hurling championship match with Limerick, against Waterford in 1929.

1945 - Gerard Griffin, a native of St. John's parish, was ordained at Maynooth on 17 June 1945 and after ordination took up curacy at St. Munchin's parish, succeeding Fr. Ryan. He remained there until 1974 when he was appointed P.P. of St. Patrick's parish, and remained there until his transfer to Glin on 22 August 1976. He remained at Glin until February 1980 when he took up parochial duty at Parkeen. Due to failing health he retired as P.P. of Parkeen in June 1986 and went to reside at Mill Road, Corbally. He died on 30 December 1987 in Limerick Regional Hospital and is interred at Mount St. Laurence cemetery. He is remembered as an outstanding worker who possessed a wonderful sense of humour. He was also a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, and an acknowledged expert in both church music and plain chant.

1950 - Michael Neville was ordained on 19 June 1949. Born on 19 November 1923 and a native of Kildimo, he served on temporary mission in the diocese of Waterford until he took up curacy at St. Munchin's parish in 1950. Upon his appointment St. Munchin's became a four-curate parish. He was transferred to Our Lady of the Rosary parish in January 1965, a position he held until 20 August 1975 when he was appointed P.P. of the Holy Family parish at Salthill. On 23 August 1978 he took up parochial duty at Templeglantine until March 1986 when he became Administrator of Killeedy, a position he held until his retirement from ministry in September 1994. He spent his retirement at Lakes Nursing Home, Killaloe and died at St. John's Hospital on 9 May 2001. He is interred at Kilmurry. He was instrumental in the foundation of the Limerick Federation of Youth Clubs and while at St. Munchin's parish was very involved with Treaty Sarsfields G.A.A. Club.

1953 - James Cagney hailed from Limerick city and studied at St. Munchin's College and Maynooth prior to his ordination at Maynooth in 1948. After ordination he served as C.C. of Crumlin (Dublin) for one year before being recalled to the Limerick diocese in 1949 where he was appointed C.C. of Killeedy. While in Killeedy he did fine work for Gaelic games while chairman of its GAA club. He succeeded Fr. McCarthy (his uncle) in St. Munchin's parish in 1953, where he involved himself in numerous parochial and religious organisations, in particular the Pioneer Association and the Legion of Mary. He died on 28 June 1959.

1959 - John Browne, a native of Abbeyfeale, pursued his studies at Maynooth and was ordained there on 19 June 1943. In July of that year he was appointed assistant priest at Dromcollogher. He served as C.C. of Tournafulla from September 1946 until March 1947 and as C.C. of Ahearn until April 1949 when he was appointed to Bruff. He was transferred to St. Munchin's parish in September 1959 and in 1964 became C.C. of the newly-created Our Lady of the Rosary parish, until 19 February 1970 when he was appointed P.P. of the newly-created Christ the King parish at Caherdavin. He was transferred to Adare on 3 February 1976 and remained there until his death at the Regional Hospital, Limerick on 9 December 1990. While in Adare he refurbished the church there. He possessed a magnificent singing ability and was a fine preacher.

1961 - Patrick Gerard Ryan became C.C. in 1961 as outlined above. He was appointed to St. Munchin's parish following his ordination in 1940. He left in 1945 and returned for a second term as curate from 1961 to 1965.

1963 - James Humpke was born in 1935. A native of Ballyshannon in the parish of Eflin, he was ordained at Maynooth in June 1960, having studied both there and at St. Munchin's College. He served as chaplain at Cardiff Cathedral (Wales) until November 1962 when he was appointed C.C. of Feenagh. Further brief spells were spent ministering at Askeaton and Clenore until 1963 when he succeeded Fr. Godfrey. In December 1964 he was appointed C.C. of Mahoonagh, a position he held until his retirement in 2002. While there he organised a rural water scheme and during his tenure was offered several promotions but preferred to remain at Mahoonagh. He took particular interest in the pastoral care of the sick, and died on 19 August 2009.
1964 – Francis Moriarty, a native of Croom, was ordained in 1954. After ordination he served in Scotland until his return to the Limerick diocese in 1958 when he was appointed chaplain to Mount Trenchard Convent at Foyles. The following year he was appointed C.C. of Patureen and remained there until 1961 when he took up curacy at St. Michael’s parish. In 1963 he was appointed to the newly-created Our Lady of Lourdes parish, until his transfer to St. Munchin’s parish in 1964. Upon his appointment St. Munchin’s reverted to a three-curet parish. In 1969 he became chaplain at Sarsfield Barracks and served until the next seven years with the Irish Army both in Cyprus and in the Middle East until 1976 when he returned as chaplain to Sarsfield Barracks. He was appointed C.C. of Christ the King parish on 4 February 1978 and in 1979 returned to St. Michael’s parish, this time as P.P. In May 1988 he took up parochial duty at St. Paul’s parish until early 1991 when he was transferred to Adare following the death of Fr. John Browne. He retired in September 2005 and at present resides at Adare. He is the nephew of Fr. Charles Moriarty who was P.P. of Athenry at the time of his death on 12 January 1965.

1965 – Donal (Daniel) Madigan, a native of Shanagolden, attended St. Kieran’s College, Kilkenny and was ordained at Kilkenny on 7 June 1964. After ordination he was appointed C.C. of Glenroe in 1964 until he was transferred to St. Munchin’s parish in 1965, succeeding Fr. Ryan. In March 1966 he went on mission to Sacramento diocese in the United States and spent the remainder of his ministry in Sacramento. His first appointment was as C.C. of Our Lady of Lourdes parish at Del Paso Heights. In 1972 he took up curacy at Sacred Heart parish at Sacramento and remained there until 1976 when he was appointed P.P. of the parish of the Immaculate Conception. He remained at this parish until 1985 when he took up parochial duty at St. Joseph’s Church at Clarksburg. He remained P.P. at Clarksburg until his retirement from ministry on 1 July 2014. While at Clarksburg, where he continues to reside, he distinguished himself with several charitable ministries and shortly before his retirement established a library there. He is also the author of several literary works and is the holder of a Doctorate of Philosophy.

1966 – Michael Culhane, a native of Cappagh, was ordained in the summer of 1966 having studied at Rome and was appointed C.C. of St. Munchin’s on 16 August of that year. While in the parish he was much involved in working with its youth. On 23 August 1977 he went to Rome to pursue further studies and returned to Ireland on 1 September 1980 when he was appointed Professor of Theology at St. John’s College, Waterford.Exactly two years later he took up a similar position at St. John’s Seminary in Wornen (England). During this period he obtained a Doctorate in Divinity and served on temporary mission in the diocese of Arundel and Brighton. He returned to Limerick on 19 June 1984 when he was appointed to a teaching position at Mary Immaculate College where he remained until 2004. He also served as C.C. of S. Paul’s parish from 1985 until 1986 and combined that role with chaplaincy duties at the Regional Hospital. On 20 October 1997 he was appointed assistant priest to Craughie parish and during this time also served as chaplain to Mary Immaculate College and took a sabbatical to pursue postgraduate research. In September 2004 he was appointed C.C. of Tullamore and held this position until his death on 3 July 2005. He is buried in the local graveyard in his native Cappagh.

1969 – David McNamara hailed from Glenroe and was ordained at Maynooth on 21 June 1953. After ordination he taught in St. Munchin’s College until 1956 when he took up curacy at Mungeret, and also became the first chaplain to the newly-opened Regional Hospital. He held these positions until October 1969 when he was transferred to St. Munchin’s parish to succeed Fr. Moriarty. He was appointed P.P. of Monaleen in September 1979 and on 8 June 1989 took up parochial duty at Rathkeale. He was created Canon and Vicar Forane the following August. He suffered a stroke in 1998 and resigned as P.P. of Rathkeale, but on 14 August of that year became Prior Emeritus at Maynooth while serving as Associate Pastor at Monagre-Cregora, until his retirement in 2006. He died on 19 February 2013 and was a brother of Canon Gerard McNamara who was dean of St. Munchin’s College for many years and was P.P. of Granagh at the time of his death in December 1988. Another brother, Michael, has spent his entire priestly life in Scotland.

1974 – David Browne, a native of Effin, was born on 9 August 1930 and was ordained at Maynooth on 22 June 1958. His first ministry was in the diocese of Natchez Jackson (U.S.A.) from September 1958 until June 1962 when he was recalled to the Limerick diocese upon his appointment as C.C. of Park. He opened this position with that of Spiritual Director of St. Munchin’s College. In October 1972 he went to work with the Oblate Order at Onex Road, London where he remained until 3 September 1974 when he succeeded Fr. Griffin. He was appointed P.P. of Our Lady of Lourdes parish on 7 March 1985 and held this position until 12 July 1991 when he took up parochial duty at Kilfinane. He was transferred to Ardpatrick on 21 February 1998 where he remained until his retirement in September 2005. He died on 17 October 2011.

1977 – John O’Flynn, a native of Silvermines, County Tipperary, received his education at Thurles and was ordained on 3 June 1961 for the diocese of Pueblo, Colorado, U.S.A. by Bishop Charles Buswell. His first appointment was on the following 1 August when he became curate of St. Mary’s Church in Walsenburg. On 23 August 1963 he was transferred to Our Lady of Guadalupe parish at La Junta and the following July took up curacy at Our Lady of Mount Carmel parish at Trinidad, Colorado. On 4 July 1968 he was appointed chaplain to Trinidad State Junior College and held this position until 6 July 1969 when he became chaplain of the New Episcopal Hospital at Pueblo. On 25 May 1971 he briefly returned to Ireland and the following 22 October returned to the U.S.A. when he was appointed C.C. of St. James’s parish at Pesticus, California. On 1 August 1975 he was transferred to St. Patrick’s parish at Pueblo and in September 1976 returned to Ireland on temporary mission to take up an appointment at Malahide, Dublin, where he remained until the following year when he succeeded Fr. Culhane in St. Munchin’s parish. On 28 June 1979 he returned to Pueblo and was assigned to St. Joseph’s church at Salida, California. On 8 July 1980 he took up duty at Our Lady of Assumption Church at Pueblo. Further periods were spent in the parishes of St. Rita and Our Lady of Victory respectively until 1 July 1982 when he returned to Our Lady of Mount Carmel parish at Trinidad, Colorado. On 31 May 1985 he was assigned to Corpus Christi Church at Colorado Springs and after respective spells at the parishes of St. Francis Xavier, St. Anthony and St. Mary at Pueblo, on 2 April 1990 he was appointed chaplain to Arkansas Valley Correctional Facility at Olney Springs, a position he held until his retirement from ministry on 24 September 2001. He continues to reside at Pueblo.

1979 – Thomas O’Connor, S.M.A. was born in Cashel, County Tipperary in 1924. He was ordained in 1947 and after graduating from University College, Cork in 1948, he went on mission to Nigeria where he served in the diocese of Jos. While in Jos he served as principal of Mary Immaculate Teacher Training College there. He remained in Nigeria until 1979 when he took up curacy duties at St. Munchin’s parish and the chaplaincy of St. Camillus Hospital. He held these positions until his unexpected death in Cork on 3 March 1986 while attending the funeral of a colleague.

1979 – Brendan Murphy, S.M.A. who was ordained in 1962, was appointed to St. Munchin’s parish in 1979 having served
on the African Missions prior to this. He was transferred to Patrickswell/Ballybrown parish in June 1990 and remained there as C.C. until September 2004 when he was appointed P.P. of Feakaha-Kilmaloe. On 14 September 2014 he retired as P.P. and went to reside at Newcastle West, where he serves as Associate Pastor.

1985 – John Keating. Originally from Ballysew Town House, Knockainey, in the Cashel and Emly archdiocese, he was ordained at Bruff on 17 June 1979 for the diocese of Limerick. After ordination he ministered in the diocese of Southwark (England). He returned to Limerick on 15 November 1981 when he was appointed C.C. of the Holy Family parish at Southill and coupled this role with that of chaplain to St. Enda’s Secondary School. In July 1985 he was transferred to St. Munchin’s parish until 2 September 1993 when he took up curacy at Rockhill. On 19 September 1998 he was appointed C.C. of Kilnamo and the following 6 January went on sabbatical to All Hallows College. The following 1 September he took up curacy at Newcastle West until September 2005 when he was appointed P.P. of Knockaderry. In 2009 he succeeded Fr. Michael Culhane as P.P. of Killeedy. He is a grandnephew of Fr. Robert Fitzgerald, C.C. of St. Munchin’s parish from 1892 until 1893 and who was later P.P. of Effin. He is also a great grandson of Fr. Patrick Ryan, who was chaplain to the Irish Free State army between 1922 and 1934, and who at the time of his death in December 1955 was R.P. of Dundrum (Dublin).

1986 – Thomas Mallaby was ordained in 1960 and served on the African Missions until he succeeded Fr. O’Connor in July 1986. On 5 September 1998 he took up curacy at Monaleen until 15 September 2000 when he was transferred to Donaghmore as C.C., a position he held until September 2002 when he retired to the S.M.A. Community in Galway.

1990 – Terence Loughran is a native of St. John’s parish and was ordained at St. John’s Cathedral on 17 June 1984, having studied at Maynooth. After ordination he served in the archdiocese of Birmingham (England) until October 1986 when he was appointed C.C. of Coolbawn. In January 1989 he was transferred to Partrick and the following year succeeded Fr. Murphy at St. Munchin’s parish. He was transferred to Corpus Christi parish as C.C. in 1991 until 19 September 1998 when he went to Maynooth to pursue further studies. He served as assistant priest at Kilfinane while continuing his studies. On 1 September 1999 he took up curacy at Scailisfleat Kilmallock and Coughaun Cenarath and in September 2002 took up assistant curacy duties at Rockhill. In September 2006 he became C.C. of St. Patrick’s parish until his appointment as P.P. of Cappagh in 2009. In September 2011 he also took up the position of Administrator of Kilmory parish.

1991 – Thomas Harry is a native of Pallaskenry who was ordained at St. John’s Cathedral for the Limerick diocese on 11 June 1989 having studied at St John’s College, Waterford. After ordination he served at St. Patrick’s parish in Penneburn (Derry diocese) until 1990 when he was appointed C.C. of Corpus Christi parish. The following year he took curacy duties at St. Munchin’s parish, succeeding Fr. Loughran. He was transferred to Monaleen in September 1993 and remained there until 1995 when he went on leave. In 1996 he went to Texas (U.S.A.) where he ministered at Denton parish until his retirement from ministry some years later.

1993 – Robert Coffey studied at St. Patrick’s College, Thurles and was ordained there on 8 June 1991. A native of Clarecastle, County Clare, he served on temporary mission at Salthill in the Galway diocese until September 1993 when he succeeded Fr. Harty. On 1 September 1999 he was appointed chaplain to Limerick Regional Hospital, a position he has held since then.

1995 – Alphonsus Cullinan, a native of Ardrahan, succeeded Fr. Keating. He was ordained at St. John’s Cathedral on 12 June 1994 having pursued his education at Maynooth. After ordination he returned to Maynooth for further studies until his appointment at St. Munchin’s on 2 September 1995. On 7 September 1996 he was appointed C.C. of St. Paul’s parish and chaplain to Limerick Regional Hospital and held those positions until 7 September 2001 when he went to Rome on study leave. In 2004 he became Chaplain to Limerick Institute of Technology and in September 2011 was appointed P.P. of Rathkeale, being created Canon in 2013. On 2 February 2015 he was appointed Bishop of Waterford and Lismore.

1996 – Patrick Costello, a native of St. Patrick’s parish, was ordained at St. John’s Cathedral on 13 June 1993 having studied at the Pontifical Beda College in Rome. Like Fr. Coffey, he served in the Galway diocese (Bushypark parish) after his ordination until he succeeded Fr. Cullinan at St. Munchin’s parish on 14 October 1996. He was transferred to Moungret on 15 February 1997 and in 1999 went to the Mater Dei Institute at Dublin to pursue further studies. While there he also ministered at Drimmagh parish. On 13 September 2000 he was appointed chaplain to St. Enda’s Community School and served as Administrator of Monagea from December 2002 until September 2007. From then he worked within the cluster of Pobal Nessan (comprising the parishes of Mungret, Our Lady of Lourdes, Patrickswell, St. Joseph, St. Saviours, and St. Paul’s), until September 2011 when he was appointed assistant pastor at St. Nicholas’ parish where he remained until September 2013. He retired from the priesthood in 2014 due to ill-health.
1997 - Maurice Hynes, a native of Greystones in Our Lady of the Rosary parish, was ordained at St. John's Cathedral, Limerick on 9 June 1986, having studied at Maynooth. He served as C.C. of St. Paul's parish and chaplain to the Regional Hospital from July 1986 until September 1995 when he went to Canada to work with the Arche community. On 4 October 1997 he was appointed to St. Munchin's parish where he remained until 1998 when he retired from the priesthood.

1998 - Richard Crowe, a native of Cappamore, was ordained in 1963 and after ordination served in the diocese of Arundel and Brighton (England) until 1974 when he was appointed C.C. of St. Paul's parish, where he also served as chaplain to St. Paul's Nursing Home. He succeeded Fr. Mullally at St. Munchin's parish on 5 September 1998 as Assistant Pastor and also served as chaplain to St. Camillus' Hospital, where he remained until 2013 when he became pastor at St. Paul's Nursing Home at Dooradoyle.

1998 - Karl Fortune, a native of Bray, County Wicklow, studied at Thurles and was ordained at St. Mary's Church on 7 June 1998. This was the first ordination to take place in the present St. Mary's Church. On 5 September 1998 he was appointed to St. Munchin's parish and remained there until 7 September 2001 when he returned to the Dublin archdiocese to take up curacy at Bayside. In 2003 he was transferred to Donaghmede and remained there until 2007 when he was transferred to Templeogue. In 2012 he was appointed C.C. of Lixnaw.

1999 - Patrick McGrath was born on 1 September 1940 in Cahermorry in Donoughmore parish and was ordained at Thurles on 13 June 1965, having received his education there. After ordination he was assigned to the diocese of Sacramento and on 9 September 1965 took up curacy at St. Mc's parish at Fair Oaks. The following 8 February he was transferred to the Holy Spirit parish at Fairfield and remained there until 1 June 1969 when he pursued further studies, after which he became chaplain to the Christian Brothers community at Sacramento and on 5 November 1970 took up curacy at St. John the Evangelist parish at Carmichael. On 17 September 1974 he was appointed C.C. of Our Lady of Lourdes parish at Sacramento and held this position until 29 September 1980 when he was transferred to St. Philemona's parish. On 5 July 1983 he took up ministry at the Blessed Virgin Mary parish where he remained until 14 February 1989 when he became Administrator of St. Peter and Paul's parish at Rocklin. On 15 September 1994 he took up administrative duties at St. Anthony's parish at Walnut Grove and remained there until 1 September 1996 when he was appointed P.P. of St. Joseph's parish at Rio Vista. He returned to Limerick in September 1999 when he became assistant C.C. of St. Munchin's parish. Due to ill health he retired from ministry on 1 July 2004 and died on 12 July 2009. He is interred at Donoughmore church grounds.

2001 - Michael O'Shea succeeded Fr. Fortune. A native of Rathkeale, he studied at Waterford and Maynooth and was ordained at Rathkeale on 3 June 2001. On 7 September of that year he took up duty at St. Munchin's parish until September 2007 when he was transferred to Monaleen. He remained C.C. of Monaleen until October 2013 when he was appointed P.P. of Fedamore.

2007 - Patrick Seaver succeeded Fr. O'Shea. A native of Ranelagh, Dublin, he was previously a Christian Brother, a national school teacher and a guidance counsellor, and taught in Mitchelstown, Athlone, Dublin, and Templemore respectively, being headmaster at Templemore. He was ordained at St. John's Cathedral on 18 June 1995 and on the following 2 September was appointed C.C. of Kilmallock. On 13 September 1997 he took up curacy at Our Lady of Lourdes parish and remained there until he was appointed to St. Munchin's parish in September 2007.

Postscript: While the compilation of this three part article is not a complete reference work due to limitations in the amount of data available, every effort has been made to limit errors and gaps in clerical histories to an absolute minimum. It is important to acknowledge that many of the aforementioned pastors served and continue to serve the priesthood with distinction, with some having served their people through difficult times, while enduring great hardship in the execution of their duties.

General Sources:
Diocese of Limerick Heritage Project (available on CDROM and on the Diocesan website)
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