



*Hospitality*  
MINISTRY

# What prompted action in our Parish

- Our Parish Priest, Fr Gerry Campbell, was investigating initiatives to introduce into our Pastoral Area which is called Our Lady, Queen of Peace. He came upon Divine Renovation, which was established by Fr James Mallon in Nova Scotia.
- As part of this initiative, whose goal is to move parishes from maintenance to mission, hospitality was highlighted as a need and an easy way to begin changing the culture in our Pastoral area. Initially, we only had 2 parishes, but that has since increased to 5.
- Our parishioners in Kilkerley, where hospitality has been established now for 2 years, are very supportive of the initiative and look forward to the cuppa after Mass. At the moment, we limit this ministry to one Sunday per month (the first Sunday) which coincides with our Children's liturgy. It is hoped to increase the frequency. However, it is important to establish a team to ensure that the responsibility doesn't fall on the same few people all of the time. A small few will help initially, but I find that when people actually experience it and get a feel for what's involved, they are able to make a more informed decision about getting involved.

# Why hospitality is important

Hospitality holds a significant place in Christian ministry, deeply rooted in biblical teachings and exemplified by the early church. The practice of hospitality is not merely a social nicety but a vital expression of Christian love and service, reflecting the character of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Hospitality in ministry is more than providing food and shelter; it is a spiritual act that embodies the love of Christ. [Hebrews 13:2](#) reminds believers, "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing, some people have entertained angels without knowing it." This verse suggests that hospitality can have divine implications, serving as a conduit for God's presence and blessing.

In essence, hospitality is a tangible expression of the Gospel, demonstrating God's love and grace to the world. It breaks down barriers, builds community, and opens doors for evangelisation and discipleship.

# So how did we get started?

We did an inventory of what we would need to run this ourselves and you'll be glad to know that it doesn't take much to get started!

- Foldable table
- Tablecloth
- Catering flasks (labelled)
- Paper cups (8 oz size is sufficient)
- A couple of teaspoons
- Wooden stirrers (although you could use teaspoons)
- Some bowls/plates
- Teabags, green teabags coffee, decaf coffee, milk (dairy), milk (non-dairy-I usually buy Oat), sugar (sachets are handy), biscuits
- Juice and treats for the children (I'd suggest jellies or chocolate, but the latter can be expensive)
- Bin/bag/box for rubbish



**Table from Home Store and More, catering flasks and stirrers from Amazon, although we also source these from a local Hardware Store, sugar sachets available in local supermarkets-these are from Dunnes Stores**



# Costs

- Table €60 (note there may be a delivery charge if you need it delivered)
- Flasks (we use 4-2 x tea, 1 x coffee, 1 x boiling water) 4 x 5L @ €43 each =€172 (+ delivery if necessary)
- Double wall 8oz cups (box of 500) €64
- Wooden stirrers €12 for 1000, but our local catering supply shop sells for €5.20
- I had a tablecloth and some spoons at home, so I didn't buy these.
- The plastic dishes were bought in Dunnes Stores for €50-€60
- The 'shop' for last weekend's hospitality was roughly €40, but it included teabags, coffee and sugar which will be used for 6 months, so ongoing costs are roughly €25 per session.
- Total  $\cong$ €680 for first year factoring in 11 more months @€25 each. Going forward, an annual investment of €300 would be sufficient, once the flasks don't need to be repaired. Of course, this is for usage similar to Kilkenny-if you're in a larger parish or have a greater uptake, it may increase cost. Similarly, you might use less. This is just a guideline

# Practical information

- I usually shop on the day before hospitality/welcoming Sunday. I buy biscuits, fresh milk and oat milk, juices and treats for the children. I don't always need tea/coffee/sugar. Sometimes I have biscuits left over from previous sessions too. If I see a special offer on non-perishable items, I will buy and store them for future use. I keep receipts and give them to the parish office for reimbursement. I would advise that you ask whoever is shopping if they're OK with that arrangement. Don't assume that everyone would have €25-€40 disposable income to spend up-front
- On the Sunday morning, I make 2 flasks of tea, one of coffee and I fill one with boiling water. This is handy if anyone wants to weaken their tea/coffee, or make a decaf coffee or green tea. (I bring a jar of decaf coffee and some green teabags)
- I wet the tea in teapots, let it draw and then put it into the flasks minus the teabags
- I also make the coffee in a pot and pour into the flask. With 2 kettles and 2 teapots, it usually takes me about 40-45 minutes. If you have a Quooker tap or similar, it would speed things up!
- I arrive at the church about 20 minutes before the start of Mass and set everything up and then come out just before the end of Mass to be there as people exit. I have a team of volunteers who help me.
- I also have a few stools available if anyone needs to sit down. Most people stand around having a chat! Then enjoy the buzz and celebrate the joy and fellowship, thanking God for bringing everyone together!







