

Webcam Broadcast C-19 24

Hello Everyone! I hope you continue to keep safe and well.

It's Monday 31st August 2020.

Around the time of the lockdown in March, I noticed a new resident in the garden area at the back of my house in the form of a grey mouse. I reckon he, or she as the case may be, was staying around because he had discovered a food source. I have some bird feeders for the little birds, and some crumbs fall to the ground. This was of interest to the mouse.

I didn't pay very much attention to the mouse over the intervening months other than to spot his presence from time to time, and to make sure he did not gain access to the house.

He came to my attention again a week or 10 days ago when I spotted him on the bird feeder. I wondered about this. Bird activity at the feeder has dropped in recent times, partly due to the fact that I have not been replenishing the food so as to encourage the birds to search for a better variety of food from nature that is necessary for their needs.

I wondered how the mouse had climbed up the slender steel pole supporting the feeder. I kept an eye on things, and I spotted the mouse climbing the pole to the feeder, and then making the return journey. It was no bother to him. What a feat of agility!

On one occasion when the mouse was on the feeder I decided to step out the back door to see what he would do when he spotted me. I approached with caution. Sure enough, the mouse was aware of my presence straight away. I wondered how he would make his escape? He simply let go his grip and fell to the ground and disappeared in the foliage.

On another occasion I observed the mouse climbing the pole to feed. The pole is less than 2 metres high. Very soon he beat a hasty retreat, scurrying headfirst down the pole and jumping to the ground from about 1 metre. I wondered what the alarm was? Then I noticed a magpie on the scene. The mouse obviously

detected the presence of the magpie and decided on the safer course. The magpie may have been in search of lunch!

I have come to the conclusion, rightly or wrongly, that this mouse has learned a new behaviour and adapted to new circumstances. When he discovered a week or 10 days ago that the crumbs were no longer coming his way, he decided to launch an investigation. This led him to climb the pole and discover the source. Where it's all going to lead, I'm not sure.

But for the moment I find myself thinking that if the mouse has the wit to take a practical course of action to get food, then surely we humans have the capacity to re-organise ourselves in the context of Covid-19.

For the moment and for the foreseeable future we cannot revert to where we were before Covid-19 was diagnosed in Ireland over 6 months ago now. We have a new reality to contend with now, and that is not going to change in the near future.

For the mouse, his reality is climbing the pole and being able to make a quick escape when necessary.

For us, the new reality is the regulations offered by the Public Health Authorities and adopted by Government.

The objective for the mouse is, to find a food source.

The objective for us is, to continue to live as fully as possible despite Covid-19.

Parish-wise, we have succeeded, despite difficulties, in celebrating the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion. I want to thank all who expressed solidarity, support and appreciation during these times. That support mattered, along with the prayers that accompanied it. I thank Bishop Eamonn for his practical support and encouraging word during this time.

Now we turn our attention to Baptisms.

We plan to proceed first with those Baptisms that were scheduled to take place before lockdown in March.

This of course will be subject to Public Health Regulations.

Parents are being contacted with new dates for the Baptism of their child, which hopefully can take place in September 2020.

In the case of new Baptisms where parents have not yet registered for Baptism, details of our New Schedule for Baptisms will be posted on the Parish Website next week, the second week of September.

The sounds of children on their way to school can be heard again as schools reopen after being closed for 6 months. This is a welcome step and a huge challenge for all teachers and for all concerned.

Until next time.

Keep safe and avoid situations of risk regarding your health.

Slán agus beannacht.