

OGULLA HOLY WELL INFORMATION



Ogulla Holy Well is the reputed baptism site of High King Laoghaire's daughters, the Princesses Eithne and Fidelma, by St. Patrick. An account of the baptism was first recorded in *Collectanea*, a collection of writings on St. Patrick by a bishop named Tirechan in the late seventh century. Ogulla Well has been a place of pilgrimage down through the centuries. Tulsk church is dedicated to Sts. Eithne and Fidelma and contains a stained glass window depicting their baptism. A banner showing the Ogulla baptism scene also hangs in Tulsk Church. It dates back to 1912 when it was designed by the Tulsk branch of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

30 June 1974 – Bishop Dominic Conway, Canon Joe Kilmartin P.P. and several other priests concelebrated the first Mass at Ogulla Well on the last Sunday of June, the traditional day of pilgrimage. A temporary covered altar was erected by a newly formed committee and a pageant was performed by local school children depicting the baptism of the princesses.

29 June 1975 – Alan Patrick Nolan, a grandson of Elizabeth Owens, the owner of the land where the well is situated, was baptised during the Mass by Canon Kilmartin, assisted by Bishop Conway.

27 June 1976 – Spearheaded by the enthusiastic Ogulla Well Committee, a steel structure was erected at the well in time for the annual Mass. Roscommon County Council workers improved and tidied up the approach roads.

1977 to 1979 – Mass was concelebrated annually by Bishop Conway. Canon Kilmartin retired in September 1978 and acted as curate in Killina until his death in December 1980. Fr. Enda O'Farrell took over as Tulsk parish priest.

29 June 1980 – Bishop Conway concelebrated Mass in a new setting. The Ogulla Holy Well Committee had purchased the plate glass and steel girders which surrounded the altar used for Pope John Paul's Mass at Knock Shrine in September 1979 and had it erected as a permanent fixture at Ogulla Well. A statue of St. Patrick and Stations of the Cross were also added. A group of Tulsk people living in London, led by Jim McGann, arranged fund-raising events for the Ogulla improvements.

27 June 1982 – A mosaic floor had been laid prior to the annual Mass.

25 June 1990 – This was the last occasion for Fr. O'Farrell to concelebrate Mass at Ogulla as he died suddenly the following October. Fr. Austin McKeon was appointed to succeed him.

25 June 1995 – Bishop Conway concelebrated his last Mass at Ogulla, having done so annually since 1974. He had retired in March 1994 and died in August 1996. His successor, Bishop Christy Jones continued officiating at the annual Mass until 2014. Both bishops were closely connected with Tulsk parish. Bishop Conway was born in Longford Town but grew up with his aunt in Shrove and went to Cloonfree N.S., while Bishop Jones was born and reared in Rathcroghan.

3 July 2011 – The Ogulla Mass concluded the Tulsk N.S. centenary celebrations. New additions to the site included a pathway bridge over the Tulsk River and boundary rails.

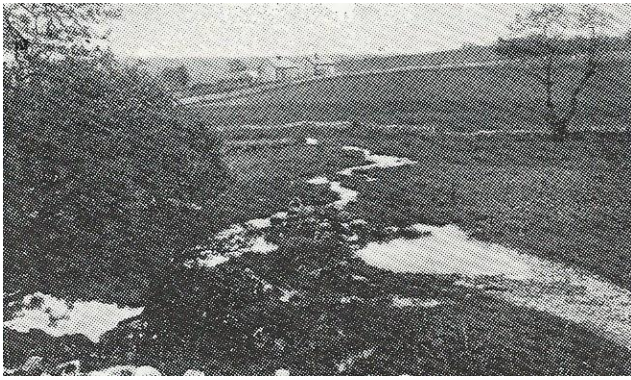
1 June 2014 – A few weeks before his retirement, Bishop Christy Jones concelebrated his final Mass at Ogulla. Bishop Jones died in May 2018.

28 June 2015 – After a continuous annual run of thirty years, Monsignor Austin McKeon officiated at the last Mass to be celebrated at Ogulla until its resumption in 2023. Monsignor McKeon died in April 2016.

17 May 2022 – While various County Council schemes ensured the surrounding grass was cut and foliage trimmed, the condition of Ogulla Shrine itself had fallen into serious disrepair. Tulsk History Society decided to take on its restoration as a project and applied for a Roscommon County Council Municipal Districts grant of €5,000 towards the cost of the first phase of carrying out extensive renovations. The grant was approved and the phase one works were completed in the spring of 2023.

4 May 2023 - A further €5,000 grant was approved towards the cost of the phase two works, most of which have been completed.

21 July 2023 – The Ogulla Well Mass is revived by Tulsk parish priest, Fr. John Gannon who is joined by Bishop Kevin Doran as the chief concelebrant. Alan Nolan, who was baptised during the 1975 Mass, has accepted Tulsk History Society's invitation to attend.



Ogulla Well site before being developed by the Ogulla Well Committee



Alan Nolan who was baptised during the 29 June 1975 Mass with his parents, Kay (née Owens) and the late Gay Nolan



Tulsk A.O.H. Banner 1912



Ogulla Shrine before Tulsk History Society restoration works started in 2022.



First Ogulla Mass 30 June 1974



The Shrine after Phase 1 restoration work – July 2023



