



St Mary's Parish, Headford & Claran, Headford, Co Galway, H91 PXH5

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Parish Policy on Church Gate Collections

Charities and voluntary groups depend on the generosity of the public to support their good work. These groups have traditionally organised street collections to coincide with Saturday and Sunday Mass times.

Sunday Mass is the weekly gathering of the Catholic parish to worship as a community of faith. "Church gate collections" are outside the jurisdiction and responsibility of the parish. Such collections are sanctioned by permit by Án Garda Síochána as "street collections".

We ask that voluntary groups and charities observe the following points when holding an authorised street collection at Headford or Claran Churches:

- The Parish Priest is to be notified in advance of any proposed collection as a matter of courtesy. Please note that there are certain dates that "church gate collections" are not recommended.
- A copy of the permit must be sent into the parish office in advance of the proposed collection.
- The Charities Act 2009 specifies that permitted collections must take place in a "Public place", defined in the Act, as any place to which the public have access whether as of right or by permission and whether subject to or free of charge *but does not include a Church or building used for public worship or the grounds of a Church or such building.*
- No posters or advertising material should be placed on the gates, walls or railings.
- All collectors must carry a copy of their Garda permit.
- People have a right to attend Mass unhindered. Those coming to Mass must be allowed to pass freely. They must, in no way, be made feel obligated by any action or word of collectors to support a particular collection.
- Collectors must not interfere with the traffic-flow coming in or out of Mass.
- The Parish of Headford and Claran strongly encourages anyone with concerns or complaints about the organisation and conduct of so-called "Church Gate Collections" to contact An Garda Síochána.