

The Irish Catholic

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Parishes taking the lead on becoming more green

EXCLUSIVE
David Quinn & Colm Fitzpatrick

A number of churches are leading by example on green energy and showing parishes all over the country how they can affordably move, with State support, from fossil fuel heating systems to renewable energy ones that will save them money over time.

The Government recently announced a major plan aimed at drastically reducing Ireland's carbon emissions and part of this will involve a switch to green energy.

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) has pointed to two churches as examples of how this can be done. One is the North Cathedral in Cork and the other is St Oliver Plunkett Church in Dundalk.

SEAI told *The Irish Catholic* that both churches received substantial grants to assist them in becoming more green.

North Cathedral installed solar panels, the lighting system was upgraded to envi-

ronmentally-friendly LEDs, a heat pump was installed to eliminate electric heaters and a charger for electric cars was also installed.

The total cost was €77,000, but the church received almost half of this, or €36,000, in grant funding.

It is estimated that carbon emissions by the church will reduce by 24,000kg per annum.

Green

St Oliver Plunkett's also installed a more energy-efficient heating and lighting system as well as upgrading its windows and doors. The cost was €99,000, but this was offset by a grant of €49,000.

The annual carbon saving in this case is 10,000kg of CO₂.

SEAI says other churches around the country have received Government funding to complete energy upgrades. The grants have also enabled churches to insulate attics and cavity walls.

The Energy Authority told

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Heading for the hills



Pilgrims climb the rocky mountainside of Croagh Patrick, Co Mayo.

Photo: Stephen Farragher

MARY KENNY

A disability campaigner's welcome face
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THE BRUDERHOF

An inspirational radical experiment
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RON ROLHEISER

Our grandiosity and our wounds
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Call for Catholics to keep Croagh Patrick spirit alive

Chai Brady

The priest in charge of Croagh Patrick has appealed to Catholics to push for its preservation as a place of pilgrimage and contact Mayo County Council.

After almost 9,000 pilgrims summited Croagh Patrick over the weekend, the mountain's stakeholders are calling on all members of the public to make submissions to the council regarding plans to renovate the mountain.

Fr Charlie McDonnell, administrator of Westport parish, said that he welcomes everyone to make their voices heard, but "particularly" those who want it to continue being an important holy site.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* he said: "Ultimately this is about the mountain, this is about the care of the mountain. This is about corporate responsibility to ensure that the mountain is preserved for future generations and that basically it's restored to where it needs to be."

"There are many different stakeholders in the mountain, my priority is Croagh Patrick as a place of pilgrimage. That's the corner I have to fight for and basically I welcome all submissions, but particularly from those who are of a Catholic background who see it as a place of pilgrimage."

The Croagh Patrick Stakeholders Group, established in 2015, have already built a 20-metre path in a trial run and have begun the evaluation process into a more substantial trail leading up the mountain.

The trial path is two metres wide with steps and landings created using local stone from the mountain. It aims to halt further erosion and make the trek safer for Croagh Patrick's 100,000 people who climb it each year.

Fr McDonnell added: "My responsibility towards Croagh Patrick is number one: towards the mountain itself so its preserved, my title is custodian of the mountain, and then my responsibility ultimately is

towards the pilgrimage - that's where I'm coming from."

Regarding plans for the mountain on the Mayo County Council website, under the heading 'Nature and extent of proposed development', it describes "Sustainable access works to include aggregate and stone pitched paths, path drainage consisting of culverts, cross drains and water bars, fencing for managing access during construction work together with habitat restoration of eroded areas."

The stakeholders group includes representatives of the Church along with Mayo County Council, Mountain shareholders, Mountaineering Ireland, Mayo Mountain Rescue, South West Mayo Development Company and more.

Electronic submissions can be made at www.mayococo.ie/en/planning/or in writing to: John McMyler, Senior Planner, Mayo County Council, Aras an Chontae, The Mall, Castlebar no later than 5pm on September 24.



Minister prayed at local parish when she took over FG abortion campaign

Staff reporter

Minister Josepha Madigan, who ran Fine Gael's campaign to repeal the Eighth Amendment last year and pave the way for abortion here, has said the first thing she did when given the role was to attend a Taizé prayer meeting at her local church.

Ms Madigan, a family lawyer by profession, was asked by Leo Varadkar in March 2018 to lead Fine Gael's campaign to remove the pro-life clause from the Constitution.

According to the *Sunday Business Post*, rather than convene an immediate meeting of strategists and backroom staff, her first step "was somewhat more unconventional".

"It was on Holy Thursday, and the first thing I did was to go to the Taizé prayers in Mount Merrion," she said.

Ms Madigan also backed same-sex marriage and led the recent campaign in favour of making divorce quicker, all positions at variance with Catholic teaching. She is a reader at her parish in Mount Merrion, Dublin, and on one occasion last year stepped to help lead a liturgy when a priest failed to turn up to say a scheduled Mass.

It's a family affair



Ann Burns with her daughter Louise and her grandchildren attend a special Grandparents Mass in Kingscourt, Co Cavan.

JOE WALSH TOURS

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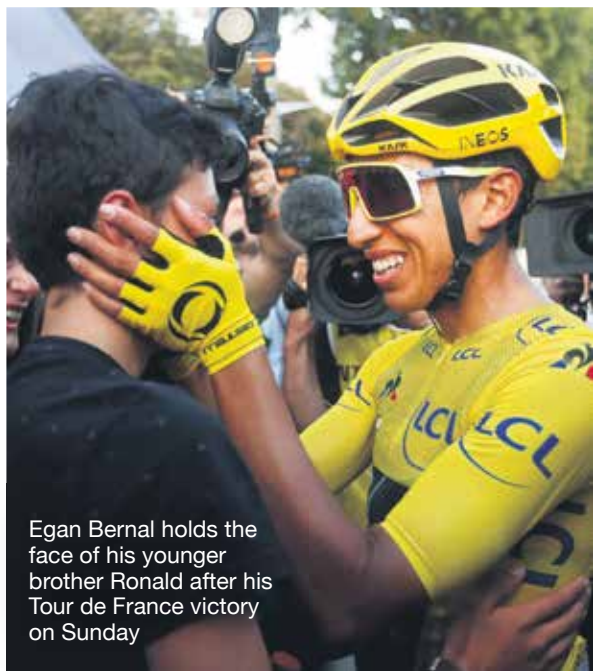
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'By this sign shalt thou conquer...'



Egan Bernal holds the face of his younger brother Ronald after his Tour de France victory on Sunday

Columbia's first ever Tour de France winner wrapped up his historic victory on Sunday by making the sign of the cross with his younger brother and again with his mother.

Egan Bernal, 22, the youngest cyclist to win the world's most famous bicycle race in 110 years and the first Latin American to do so hugged his younger brother Ronald before the two brothers blessed each other, doing likewise with his mother Flor Gomez. Now riding for UCI WorldTeam Ineos, Bernal was inspired to take up cycling by his father German, who cycled in his spare time while working as a security guard in the famous 'salt cathedrals' of Zipaquirá, the small town in central Columbia from where Bernal hails. Carved from salt in the town's salt mines, the first underground chapel in Zipaquirá was built in 1932, with a cathedral with capacity for 8,000 people being inaugurated in 1954. It closed in 1992 due to structural problems, with a second cathedral being built in 1995. Over 600,000 people visited the cathedral in 2017.

Time-limited backstop wanted as Boris 'plays hard' says Nuala O'Loan

Chai Brady

Baroness Nuala O'Loan has said she believes the new UK PM Boris Johnson aims to renegotiate a time limit on the Brexit backstop in order to "buy time".

Currently he "is playing hard", Baroness O'Loan told this paper. Without a time limit "the backstop doesn't cease to operate until all the member states agree, and if all the member states have to agree they'll have a price for agreeing, so we're in a very, very weak position," she said.

Without a backstop in

place and Mr Johnson committing to deliver Brexit by October 31, the possibility of a no-deal Brexit is being treated more seriously.

"I think a time-limited backstop, whatever it may be, two years, three years, five years, it allows time for proper trade negotiation, allows freedom of movement of goods across the border in the meantime, it takes care of it," said Baroness O'Loan, who is a member of the House of Lords, a human rights lawyer and former Police Ombudsman.

"I have no doubt that what

he [Mr Johnson] is doing is he's saying 'I can play as hard as anyone else', and I agree that the backstop in its current form is unacceptable because it's not time-limited in any way and because it can't lead to fair trade negotiations. That doesn't mean the backstop has to go..."

A customs arrangement would be "advantageous" to both Unionist and Nationalist communities in the North of Ireland, she said, because both communities have interests in agriculture and industry "which require some provision for movement across the

border, so I think our interests are common".

Mr Johnson's spokeswoman has said he will not hold face-to-face meetings with EU leaders until they agree to renegotiate the backstop, which puts the UK at significant odds with Ireland and the EU.

"I'm quite sure that work is going on in the background, I don't see Boris going to Brussels until he's got some reason to go, and he doesn't have a reason to go until they've got movement," said Baroness O'Loan, who said she believes Boris will deliver Brexit.

Nuns ship 'life changing' supplies to disabled in Kenya

Staff reporter

After an anonymous donation Irish nuns were able to ship a large number of wheelchairs, standing frames, crutches and more that they had gathered to help children and adults with disabilities in Kenya.

The Daughters of Charity (DC) Services in Ireland described the container load of equipment as "life changing" for people with a disability, according to the congregation's Mission Development Co-ordinator Sr Geraldine Henry.

There were worries about the cost

of shipping the heavy goods to Kenya, which won't arrive until September. Sr Geraldine told the *The Irish Catholic*: "It was going to cost €5,000 and we were worried as to where the money was going to come from, and we just managed to get an anonymous €5,000 donation."

"For some it will enable them to become mobile or even sit up for the first time," she said. Those set to benefit are service users at their centres at Thigio, Kiio, Kitale, and Chepynia.

Leitrim-born Sr Catherine Mulligan, who co-ordinated the development of DC projects in Kenya over the past 12

years, said that in the centre in Thigio and in the other centres in Kenya, they care for children and adults who have physical and intellectual disabilities.

"The school bus can reach most children to bring them to the centre but we have to help them be mobile at the centre moving from one activity to another. Mobility at home too is important if they are not going to sit in one place until someone carries them elsewhere".

Sr Catherine said the consignment is eagerly awaited by staff, teachers, physiotherapists, families and caregivers.

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FF would support assisted suicide debate in Citizens' Assembly

Chai Brady

Fianna Fáil has said they are not opposed to referring the issue of assisted suicide to a Citizens' Assembly for discussion, according to reports.

A party spokesperson is quoted in the *Medical Independent* as saying they "would not oppose" this option. However, when contacted by this paper the party failed to answer a query relating to their position on assisted suicide.

This was the same for the Labour Party and Sinn Féin, who both remained silent on their stance on assisted suicide despite being given several days to respond.

According to the *Medical Independent* a Fine Gael spokesperson described assisted suicide as a complex issue, adding: "The competing interests of the individual would have to be balanced with the wider public interest in safeguarding persons who are nearing the end of their lives and who might be vulnerable and at risk of abuse. As such, the Minister for Justice and Equality Charlie Flanagan has no plans to review the existing legislation."

A Citizen's Assembly was pivotal in the decision to hold a referendum in May of last year on whether to legislate to allow for abortion in Ireland.

'Outrage' at 'malicious' assault on Galway mosque

Bishop Brendan Kelly has dubbed the vandalism of a Galway mosque over the weekend as a "wilful and malicious assault".

The Bishop of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora said himself and many of the people of Galway are "dismayed and shocked" at the attack on the Maryam Mosque in Galway city.

He said: "An attack on a place of worship is an assault on God and an assault on all people of faith. We stand in solidarity with our Muslim neighbours. With them, we reject violence, we reject division and we reject hate."

As well as trashing the Imam's office, the intruders broke locks and windows and security camera equipment was stolen.

"I ask all people of good-will to keep Galway Muslims in their hearts and prayers and to continue showing our fine and welcoming city in its best possible light," Bishop Kelly added.

Bonding in Bavaria



Bridgeen, Emily, Erin and Chris attend a pilgrimage to Bavaria with the Diocese of Down and Connor's youth group, Living Youth

Clarify SF stance on British law in North – bishop

Greg Daly

Elphin's Bishop Kevin Doran has called on Sinn Féin to clarify its position on attempts to impose abortion law in the North, something the party has previously opposed as an exercise of British authority in the region.

Bishop Doran's comments came after senior figures in Sinn Féin welcomed the proposed liberalisation of abortion in the North as detailed in an amendment to the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation) Act, with a statement from the party saying it "welcomed legislative change" in this area.

An amendment to the act will force the introduction of abortion on demand in the North up to 24 (or possibly 28 weeks), unless the Northern Ireland Assembly is restored by October 21.

Speaking to *The Irish Cath-*

olic about Sinn Féin's support for the amendment, Dr Doran highlighted how this appears to stand in sharp contrast to the party's previous stance.

"What strikes me very forcibly is that senior figures in Sinn Féin have welcomed the legislation, imposed by Westminster on the people of Northern Ireland," he said. "Sinn Féin have long told the electorate that they reject the extension of the 1967 Abortion Act to Northern Ireland and I think it is very important at this stage that they clarify their position, because that is precisely what this new legislation proposes to bring about."

Irish bishops have already criticised Westminster for undermining the Good Friday Agreement by attempting to legislate in this devolved area, Dr Doran said.

"The equal right to life, and love, of a mother and her unborn child is so funda-

mental to the common good of every society that citizens deserve the fullest participation in the democratic debate about the legislation which governs it," he quoted the Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland as having said in a statement.

"What is happening in Westminster during these days recklessly undermines this fundamental right of citizens and the principle of devolution at the heart of the Good Friday Agreement," the Northern bishops added.

Aid agency condemns West Bank home demolitions

Staff reporter

Trócaire has condemned the demolition by Israeli authorities of Palestinian homes in the West Bank, describing such demolitions as illegal and driven by a desire to disconnect communities.

Responding to reports from the Israeli human rights organisation B'Tselem that authorities planned to demolish 13 buildings – including at least 14 apartments – last week, the Irish bishops' aid and relief agency called on the Irish Government to take a stand on the matter.

"Demolitions in the village of Sur Baher serve only to undermine the human rights of Palestinians and jeopardise hopes for long-term peace and a two-state solution," said Trócaire CEO Caoimhe de Barra.

The buildings scheduled for demolition are along the perimeter of the West Bank Wall in Sur Baher, along both sides of which the Israeli mil-

itary has designated a buffer zone.

Commenting on how Israeli media had detailed how Palestinians have invested their savings in building homes for their families only to see them destroyed, Ms de Barra said: "Decisions taken in relation to planning in this community are clearly motivated by the Israeli Government's unjust desire to disconnect Palestinian communities in the occupied Palestinian territory."

She described the demolitions as "yet another example of the need for Ireland and the EU to take a stand against Israeli authorities' flagrant disregard of international law", and called on the Government to support the Occupied Territories Bill, which is expected to return to the Dáil in the autumn.

The bill attempts to ban the sale in Ireland of imported Israeli goods from the occupied territories.



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A disability campaigner is a welcome face

I hear the words “Marie Antoinette” increasingly used about Meghan, Duchess of Sussex – invoking the late (largely naïve) Queen of France as a symbol of privilege without responsibility. “Doing a Marie Antoinette” is shorthand for availing of every entitlement possible while play-acting at being just a simple milkmaid or shepherdess.

Duchess Meghan’s latest caper is to guest-edit the September issue of the fashion magazine *Vogue*, in which she nominates 15 women who are leading social change throughout the world. A certain degree of scoffing has occurred at her choices, which are seen as emblems of “wokeness” (the new name for the Politically Correct) and celebrity: disabusing privilege while being privileged.

Although for some of us of an older vintage, we might be hard put to identify the exact role of these ladies. I am little acquainted with the activities of Juameela Jamil, Yara Shahidi, Adwoe Aboah, Adut Akech, and Chimamanda Ngozi.



Mary Kenny



Meghan, Duchess of Sussex

Some of them are models and actresses: some are apparently well-placed to speak about “privilege”, being women of wealth.

However, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern has no doubt earned her spurs,

Greta Thunberg has awakened the world’s conscience on climate change, and Francesca Hayward is an exquisitely accomplished ballerina. Jane Fonda is Hollywood royalty and has enjoyed all its



Sinead Burke

privileges, but let’s say she represents old age with some glamour.

And I do think it’s excellent that Sinead Burke, the attractive Irish disability rights campaigner, has been included and is to the fore. On those grounds alone, I’d personally welcome Meghan’s list.

Disability rights are a really important and compassionate cause. I suppose, however, it would be going too far to hope that Duchess Meghan might campaign to extend disability rights to the unborn?



Benedict Cumberbatch in *The Current War*

There’s a movie just released called *The Current War* – about bringing electric light, and power, to America, in which Thomas Edison (Benedict Cumberbatch) rivals George Westinghouse (Michael Shannon). I found the film lacking narrative coherence – we learn little about the back stories of the two rivals – and it’s a bit over-technical about AC/DC electrical currents.

But it does illuminate the power of light, and the impact of electricity, and it turned my mind to the remarkable achievement of the Ardnacrusha Shannon Scheme, which brought electricity to Ireland in 1929. It was a major innovation by the early Irish Free State, and had a huge psychological, as well as material impact on ordinary lives. There’s a 90th anniversary exhibition at Ardnacrusha – until September 13 – and I hope to see it before it finishes.

Incidentally, the Catholic clergy greatly supported the electrification of Ireland. And doesn’t the Book of Genesis contain those stunning words: “Let there be light.”

A life well lived

During the month of August, a weekly focus on a personality who appears in the most recently published volumes of the *Royal Irish Academy’s Dictionary of Irish Biography*, which shows portraits of Irish lives.

Cyril Barrett, (christened Denis) who died in 2003 aged 78, was a Jesuit priest, art critic, historian and philosopher, who was noted for his “charm, eccentricity and intellectual brilliance”. His father was assistant commissioner of the old Dublin Metropolitan Police: his mother died of cancer when he was three, and his father remarried. Cyril formed a warm and affectionate relationship with his stepmother and subsequent half-siblings.

Study

The family were sometimes described as “Castle Catholics” and Cyril was educated in both Clongowes and Ampleforth. He joined the Jesuits in



Cyril Barrett studied in Dublin 1942, when he was only 17, but encouraged by the order, went on to study Latin and philosophy at UCD, which had a strong philosophical department. Barrett continued studying and teaching philosophy in Ireland, France, London and the University of Warwick, where he built a reputation as an outstanding

academic, specialising in Wittgenstein. He was also a champion of modern art and did much to popularise contemporary art in Ireland. He was something of a bon viveur, liked a bet on a horse, was an accomplished cook and a great pal of Sean MacReamonn, with whom he attended the Merriman School in Co Clare.

I met Cyril Barrett back in the 1980s with my late friend Fionnuala O’Shannon (sister of Cathal) and, being ignorant in the ways of philosophy, didn’t really appreciate just how distinguished he was. But I argued with him about Pope John Paul II, who I supported, having recently been to Poland, and who Father Barrett did not.

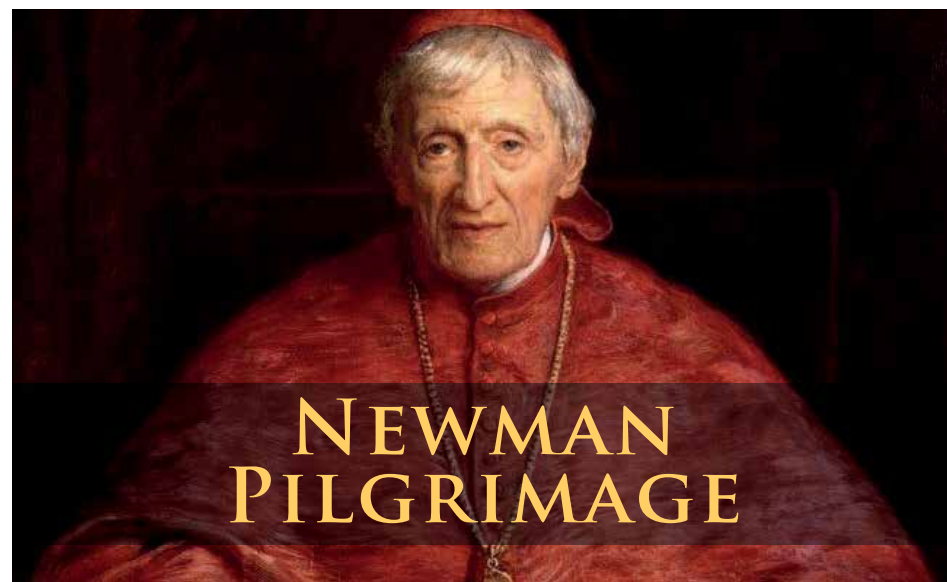
He died in Dublin, his birthplace, of cancer, having written a “philosophy autobiography” and a revision of the spiritual exercises of St Ignatius Loyola.

Parishes taking the lead on becoming more green

» Continued from Page 1

The Irish Catholic: “The costs vary depending on a number of factors like the size of the building, the work being carried out, and how efficient the building was in the beginning etc. Many churches have great historical value, so a conservational officer may need to be consulted to do some additional checks before any upgrade works are planned”.

Pope Francis has pleaded that we do more to save the environment and many priests and bishops speak regularly about the matter. It is unknown how many parishes in total have made significant moves to cut down on their carbon emissions.



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John McGuirk

The great national lie: us and them

I'm always interested in the stories we tell ourselves about who we are, and the kind of country we live in. The English, bless them, still think that the world should give them thanks for civilising so much of it. The Americans are convinced that no country has ever been as special as they are. The French believe that no nation has ever been as cultured, or artistic. The Irish? Well, we're the nicest people on earth. You'll never get a better welcome than you will here. Some country, lovely people.

RTE has produced, over the summer, two investigative documentaries that, it is fair to say, have appalled and disgusted those who watched them. The first, some weeks ago,

was an investigation into practices in the greyhound racing industry, exposing a situation where up to 2,000 dogs a year are disposed of in the most horrendous fashion. Many are sent off to China to be cooked alive in that country's barbaric dog-meat festival. Others, the lucky ones, are put down by vets.

And some are dragged to an unlicensed knackers yard by their owners, who in one case were shown waiting to have the dog's collar handed back as the poor, trusting animal writhed, in agony, on the ground, bleeding to death from an incompetent attempt at a gunshot. For dog lovers like me, it was completely sickening stuff.

Then, this week, we saw that our national predilection for cruelty is not confined to the dogs. A

second *RTE Investigation* programme, this time into Childcare, discovered scenes inside a creche that would not have been out of place in those regular RTE dramatisations of the mother and baby homes of our past. Children shouted at, shaken, held down by force, their cries met with mockery and scorn, their supposed carers displaying horrifying cruelty and ignorance while taking extortionate sums from the unsuspecting parents.

This is not, we are told, a cruel country anymore. Our politicians fall over themselves to claim for Ireland the mantle of the earth's most kind and compassionate and understanding country, a land of milk and honey, where the people and those who lead them are the most understanding, accepting, and sympathetic beings ever to have graced the cosmos.

Our laws have changed, we are told, to reflect this. The old powers are gone, the cruel Princes of the Church deposed; the wicked nuns banished from our land to hide behind increasingly rare convent walls; a new enlightenment has replaced the religion and dogma of old with a church of kindness and decency and cupcakes and avocado sandwiches in the park. It is all nonsense.

“These days, those people no longer have an avenue to power by becoming a man or a woman of the cloth”

It is easy to blame institutions for human failures. In an overcrowded hospital, where the sick and the elderly are left on trolleys for days, we are told that we should not blame the staff, for they are under-resourced, and under pressure. The system is to blame, not the people. When we see the mistreatment of residents in a nursing home, we are told poor training is to blame. The system, not the people.

People in Ireland are never cruel, these days. Only institutions, and companies, and Government departments are cruel, have you noticed?

Real problem

Perhaps we have never understood the real problem.



There is no doubt, after all, and it is widely agreed, that in the days when the Church was the pre-eminent cultural power in the land, it attracted to the priesthood and to the religious life many of those who sought power and influence for themselves. The Church in those days was a good career move if you were somebody who fancied a bit of status and influence in Ireland, and as always, those who most fancy status and influence include the most cruel and capricious amongst us.

These days, those people no longer have an avenue to power by becoming a man or a woman of the cloth. That does not mean that those people no longer exist. Liberal Ireland may congratulate itself for banishing the alleged cruelty of the Church, but the cruel and the monstrous are amongst us still – they're just wearing different hats.

Perhaps it is time, as a country, that we confronted

this fact head on. For as long as we have been writing and talking about our country, we Irish have had a unique talent for pretending that every misfortune done to us was inflicted by someone else, some foreign or institutional cruelty.

“We see an old person moaning on a trolley, and it's the HSE, the devils, who are doing this...”

Vast numbers of us died in a famine, and it was all England's fault, and we had no choice – none – but to walk past the sick and the dying or condemn them to workhouses, did we?

We left mothers and children to perish and suffer abuse in Church-run institutions, and it was the Church that did it to us – we had no choice but to walk past those walls

and ask no questions about what happened inside, or why these girls were disappearing, quietly, from our communities, did we?

We see an old person moaning on a trolley, and it's the HSE, the devils, who are doing this, and there's nothing we can do about it, is there?

We're just a country of kind and compassionate and nice and decent and lovely people who just happen to have all these horrible things done to us by monsters, British monsters, Catholic monsters, Government monsters, and monsters yet to be discovered. No Irish person would watch their own dog being shot, or shake a crying child, or leave a sick person moaning on a trolley all by themselves, would they?

No, that's not us. That's *them*. They're not us, are they? After all, it's some country.

Lovely people.

“For as long as we have been writing and talking about our country, we Irish have had a unique talent for pretending that every misfortune done to us was inflicted by someone else, some foreign or institutional cruelty”

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The View



Welcoming a realistic union

The 2018 *Annual Report of Christ Church Oxford*, where I was at college 50 years ago, arrived recently. Christ Church is one of those institutions, which are both academic and ecclesiastical, with the cathedral of the Diocese of Oxford at the back of the front quadrangle. It was founded by Cardinal Wolsey, who oversaw the building of the Great Hall, and re-founded by Henry VIII. Despite its subsequent Anglican character, a recent history by Judith Curthoys carries the title *The Cardinal's College*, and the symbol carried both on the college tie and sported by the college boat club is a cardinal's red hat and tassle.

The opening article-cum-editorial written by Mark Edwards, Professor of Early Christian studies and Tutor in Theology, ruminates about Brexit. He lists three precedents, the first of which, the late 3rd-Century Roman usurper, Carausius, would have stumped most readers.

Roman rule

According to *Wikipedia*: "Carausius appears to have appealed to native British dissatisfaction with

Roman rule", and briefly established a breakaway empire of the north, consisting of Britain and Belgian Gaul. He issued a coin with his effigy, carrying the inscription 'Restitutor Britanniae' (restorer of Britain). After a few years, he was assassinated by his finance minister, who briefly succeeded him. It would be premature to speculate on a analogous metaphorical outcome today.

Edwards also cites King John as being "forced into a reluctant Brexit by the French", who removed him from their country, and of course Henry VIII, whose original wife Katharine of Aragon, 'humble et loyal' as her tomb in Peterborough Cathedral proclaims, was aunt of the powerful Spanish emperor Charles V. Edwards, writing of Brexit, speaks of "consternation in academic circles – arising partly from a real sense of loss and partly from its exposure of our negligible influence on those whom we have educated".

A recent programme shown on RTÉ tracked innumerable meetings that the European Parliament's principal spokesman on Brexit and former Belgian Prime Minister Guy



Verhofstadt of the Liberal group had held on the subject in the past two years.

He explained that what made him so passionate about the European Union was the fact the territory of today's Belgium had been a central battlefield of European wars for centuries, under attack from all quarters. The EU had given Europe the opportunity to put all that behind them. Countries are very foolish, if they take peace and prosperity for granted, as something independent of the EU.

In face of discouraging developments around us, there have also been positive ones. The dignified and harmonious transfer of power to a new government in Greece was one of them. The ability of the European Union to agree after arduous negotiation a new team to lead the institutions was also heartening.

The new Commission President-designate Ursula von der Leyen is a progressive Christian Democrat politician of a high calibre with long political

experience and an ability to communicate in many languages.

“Von der Leyen, till recently German defence minister, no longer refers to a European army, but of an army of Europeans, i.e. among the willing”

It is overdue that the Commission President should come again from a larger country. The last one, Jacques Delors, was of great benefit to Ireland, at a time when there was greatly increased structural and cohesion funds to facilitate the introduction of the single market.

Those alarmed by von der Leyen's reported European ambitions should take comfort from her July 20 interview with the French newspaper *Le Monde*. The question was put to her that at the outset of her career she had said she dreamed of

a United States of Europe: had that dream changed?

Her reply (my translation) was: "It has matured and become more realistic. At the heart of the European Union, unity dominates in diversity. It is something different from federalism, and it is the good way, in my opinion."

There is no disposition to create a full-scale EU federal budget of a credible size, especially not in Germany. That means that, subject to overall deficit parameters, the vast majority of spending and taxation decisions continue to be made by member state governments accountable to their parliament and people.

Von der Leyen, until recently German defence minister, no longer refers to a European army, but of an army of Europeans, i.e. among the willing. Again, we need to understand the realities. Notwithstanding President Trump's criticisms of NATO allies, the US remains vigorously opposed to any attempt to erect a rival or substitute European military alliance, in which

countries in central and eastern Europe, who see themselves on the front line, would have no faith. European electorates would be totally unwilling to pay the enormous cost of substituting for the American shield.

A third concern in Ireland in past referendums was that somehow the EU would undermine the ban on abortion. Despite the energy that went into such campaigns, the introduction of abortion in the Republic did not come from the EU. In the case of Northern Ireland now the impetus is coming from Westminster, in part an expression of frustration there with the role of the DUP.

Social matters

Of course it would be far better if social matters of that kind were addressed by a functioning system of devolution sensitive to local opinions and concerns in Northern Ireland. The extension of the 1967 Act is not supported by any of the five main parties. However, as things stand, Westminster's crude threat to move on them will only be averted if devolution is restored.

Some of the case for Brexit is based on outmoded conceptions that the EU either wants or is capable of moving towards a European super-state. The threat of a no-deal Brexit is being brandished by British politicians to procure, they believe, negotiating advantage. The refusal to rule out the device of proroguing parliament is for the same purpose.

The challenge will be to preserve or retrieve as much normality as possible. One could begin with the continuing free movement on this island of animals and agri-food products, with health and veterinary checks as at present at the ports.

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“Much of the alarm about a no-deal Brexit is generated by British politicians to procure, they believe, negotiating advantage. The refusal to rule out the device of proroguing parliament is for the same purpose.”

A radical experiment in Christian living



The Bruderhof community is an oasis of sanity in our world, writes **David Quinn**

A small, little known religious community called the Bruderhof has been gaining a bit of attention lately because of an upcoming documentary about them that is to air on the BBC. The community consists of about 3,000 members spread across 23 locations in five different countries. They try to live the Christian life radically, that is, as described in the Acts of the Apostles. They are an extremely interesting “experiment in living”, to use the words of English philosopher, John Stuart Mill, a founder of modern liberalism.

I first came across them in 2014 at a conference held at the Vatican. Their then leader, Johann Christoph Arnold, addressed the gathering. He was the grandson of its founder, Eberhard Arnold.

The Bruderhof, as the name implies, seek to live in a brotherly way. They take literally the passages from Acts which describe how the early Christians “held all things in common. They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as anyone had a need”.

In some ways, they are quite like the Amish, except that they are more open to technology, and while the women wear distinctive garb (small scarves on their heads and long skirts), the men do not. Their theology is Protestant and specifically Anabaptist, which was one of the most radical Protestant groups that originated in Germany during the Reformation. Baptists and Anabaptists do not believe in infant baptism and their style of worship is plain. Ritual, sacraments and hierarchy are de-emphasised, making them ‘low Church’.

Members of the Bruderhof literally own no private property. Families do have



Members of a Bruderhof community having lunch together.

apartments of their own, but they share their kitchen with the family next door. They eat communally every day.

Bruderhof communities support themselves financially through their successful businesses which make and sell mainly furniture. The money generated goes into a common pot and members receive what they need from this central fund, in other words “as anyone has a need”.

Gender roles are mostly traditional, in that women do more of the domestic work than men, while men work mainly in the factories making furniture. But women work on the sales and clerical side of their businesses and some are dentists, nurses etc. to their communities.

Interestingly, mothers return to work when their babies are only a few months old and the babies are put into creches during the day. This sounds quite like what a lot of parents feel obliged to do today in society in general, but the emphasis again is on communal living, and obviously the care-givers for the babies and small children will be very familiar, constant faces. This is quite unlike most modern creches which often have a high turn-over of staff and the care-givers are not drawn from the same small, tight community as the parents.

The Bruderhof were founded in 1920 in Germany partially as a response to the post-World War I crisis in Germany. Communism was growing in appeal and Eberhard Arnold wondered if there was a Christian way of

rejecting capitalism. He found an obvious answer in the Acts of the Apostles: live communally and share everything in common. A great deal of Bruderhof writing is very critical of capitalism.

At bottom, what they are rejecting is a materialism and consumerism that gives too much prominence in our lives to material acquisition and status based on what we own.

“one of the chief aims of the Bruderhof is to try and remove competition as the basic drive in our lives”

In fact, it seems to me that one of the chief aims of the Bruderhof is to try and remove competition as the basic drive in our lives because competition is too often about acquiring power and rank and dominance over others which ought to be the antithesis of the Christian life.

Even the way the men and women dress plainly is part of that. How we dress and present ourselves can also be a form of competition, a way of projecting status and telling others that we are better than them. The simple way the women in particular present themselves – their garb and lack of make-up – isn’t far off how nuns in the Catholic tradition present themselves also, or for that matter, feminists who believe that an over-emphasis on appearance can become a trap for women.

Earlier in the article I described the Bruderhof as an “experiment in living”.

Religious communities have for centuries been experiments in living, showing an alternative way of life. Within Catholicism that has usually led to the formation of convents and monasteries based on the three vows of chastity, poverty and obedience.

But Catholics have much more rarely formed communities of families whose lives are also, in effect, based on vows (even if not formally taken) of chastity, poverty and obedience.

For me it is fascinating to see how this works when groups of families (which is what Bruderhof communities are at bottom) seek to live in a way that is so radically at variance with how the vast majority of us – Christians included – live our lives. We are very dominated day-to-day by structures of power and material acquisition and competition and status in ways we barely even notice.

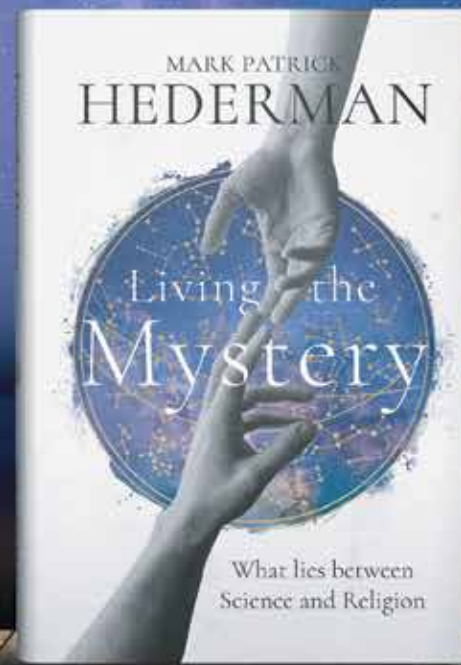
The upcoming BBC documentary has, as mentioned, caused quite a lot of commentary already, some of it critical, likening the Bruderhof to a ‘cult’ and focusing attention on the mainly traditional gender roles and the garb of the women.

But how must society in general look to them with our rampant consumerism, addiction to smart phones, the growing number of children suffering from anxiety or depression, our high divorce and abortion rates, crime, drug and alcohol abuse and so on? Compared with that, they are an oasis of sanity. We should be thankful they exist.

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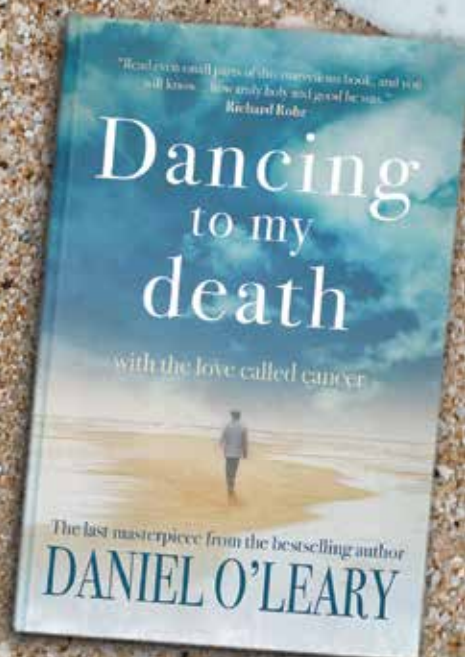
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Bishop Vincent and his teachers visited Glenstal Abbey, welcomed by Bro. Padraig OSB and accompanied by Cian O'Brien and Mary McDaid, both of whom previously spent time working in his diocese.

A passage from India

A trip to Limerick has proved inspirational, writes Bagdora's Bishop Vincent Aind

Ireland and India may have only two things in common in the past: British Rule and the Education System. For the rest Ireland is quite different, or so it appeared to us a group of visitors from one little corner of India as we went to Limerick recently.

The difference was much more spelt out in the present-day education system which Ireland has developed. One clear difference between India and Ireland is that education in the latter has been taken very seriously.

Not just several changes in policy but so much of the research going on in the field of education was something immediately remarked by our group. There is less politics about education and more quality added to the teaching methods and syllabus, and even to the system.

The role of Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, seems prominent in this ongoing research. The entire staff and students, even the campus, of Mary Immaculate

College strikes the visitors' eyes with genuine seriousness and focused attention on improving the pedagogy and administration. We got this wonderful opportunity to witness as well as learn something of their findings. Thanks to the invitation and generous offer made to us by the college. In our three weeks' sojourn there we noticed that the college gets regular visitors and researchers from different corners of the world.

Mary Immaculate believes that education can and does bring about changes in society especially through modelling quality leadership, having high expectations of students, offering incentives and rewards, culture-building, intellectual stimulation, vision, shared goals, and personal individualised support.

Transformation

It was apparent too us that Mary Immaculate is truly a leading institution working incessantly to improve and to transform. In order to bring about such a transformation in society it begins with the child. It tries to translate into reality what John Dewey had said in 1902: "The child is the starting point, the centre and the end. His development, his growth is the ideal."

Each child is different, each one is unique. There is a need to maintain a balance between inclusive method and differentiation. Paying attention to uniqueness of the child requires reorganising especially the primary

school curriculum. One needs a responsive pedagogy to enable every child to learn and develop. Not one set alone fits to all. The responsive pedagogy aims at holistic nurturing of the child and therefore takes into account all possible dimensions, from spiritual to moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, physical, aesthetic, and social etc.

“The child is the starting point, the centre and the end. His development, his growth is the ideal”

Learning begins long before the child comes to the school. It begins in the family, in the work place of his/her parents, then in the school with and from his/her teacher. From this micro system s/he slowly moves into a macro system or larger environment. All along this journey his/her chrono system [time factor] plays a role.

There is concerted effort to make the child feel at home in the school and classroom. The education is child-friendly. Learning is playful and spontaneous.

The campus, the whole setup, the teachers' approach, everything goes to make education less burdensome for the students. Yearlong and holistic assessment of the child's progress in various dimensions takes away tension. Thus, what is said by Prof. Niamh Hourigan is so true: "Our students are not empty vessels waiting for our

(teachers') wisdom to pour in; rather they are (in our schools) to discover the best in themselves."

We had a wonderful opportunity to visit a few schools both in Limerick and in Thurles. We were much impressed by the atmosphere, the infrastructure, the Staff and the students. They are truly centres of 'education' in the right sense of the word, holistic education, in fact of human formation. The future of Irish society is indeed auguring well.

We have returned to our homeland enriched and much inspired. We hope to adopt and apply some of these elements in our educational institutions, even if it be in a small way. We really wish to make our schools more child-friendly and provide each of them opportunities to discover the best in them. Our contribution to their formation should be a significant contribution to nation building, nay more to building a truly human society.

Once again we deeply and gratefully acknowledge the beautiful gift Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, has offered to us by organising this wonderful project and having sponsored the entire trip and the programme for us and through us for the Diocese of Bagdogra. If our efforts in turn bear good fruits, this small step will prove to be a giant leap in bringing about a desirable transformation in our society here.



The Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Mary Immaculate College hosted a seminar with Bishop Vincent and guests from Bagdogra on embracing religious diversity in Catholic schools while respecting Catholic ethos.

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Land of saints

Something said briefly, as Nietzsche once pointed out, can be the fruit of much long thought, and Fr John J. Ó Ríordáin's *Early Irish Saints* is eloquent testimony to this. A slim book, drawing together 15 pen pictures of holy men and women from the era when Ireland was known as 'the land of saints and scholars', its brevity conceals an extraordinary depth of understanding.

Choosing which saints to write about was sometimes an obvious choice and sometimes required a bit more work, explains Fr Ó Ríordáin, a Limerick-based Redemptorist mission preacher who was born in Kiskeam, Co. Cork, in 1936.

"Especially for the earlier ones – Patrick, Brigid, Colmcille – there were some sources available, and Columbanus too and some others," he says. "A lot depends on the sources available, because in the case of a lot of the early saints you have little more than a name and then you have to piece together some sort of a background from hagiography and folklore."

Piecing the lives together from strictly historical texts and hagiographies – saints' lives intended to provoke wonder and provide models for holy life – entails some thoughtful and creative work, Fr Ó Ríordáin continues.

"I'm eternally working in a kind of multidisciplinary world where I'm drawing on resources from all kinds of sources, whether it be history or theology or hagiography or a whole range of other things. So, I would set out to find out first of all what do we know historically, and very often I would dip into *Thesaurus Paleohibernicus*, which is kind of a collection of pri-

Ireland's early saints are an inextricable part of our national identity, Greg Daly is told



mary sources," he says.

In addition, he says, he typically looks into a few other collections of sources, including Fr John O'Hanlon's nine-volume 19th-Century *The Lives of the Irish Saints*. "That is largely hagiographical, but if I find anything there that would make an interesting little snippet I would draw on that as well," he says.

There is, of course, an abundance of books out there about 'Celtic spirituality' that owe rather more to the 'New Age' beliefs and practices than the historical Church in these islands, but Fr Ó Ríordáin says it's important to focus on the Christian character of the Irish saints.

Focus

"You always have to keep a focus on where does Christ fit into the picture, and the Christian way of life, so I would be looking out for anything that would be pointing in that direction, from whatever century is might be," he says. "The 'New Age' stuff doesn't do a lot for me, and I don't pay a whole lot of attention to it. I know it goes on and it's available and so on, but I don't delve much into that world."

The original texts from the early Irish Church contain "great riches", he says, although he advises that it might be worth reading something introductory on Patrick and the early Irish Church to get a sense of the context in which the texts were written.

"Reading something like my little booklet on Patrick or a little chapter here and there on Patrick would give you the essence of things, because oftentimes I would maybe have distilled a considerable amount of information into a few sentences," he says.

"I would recommend for anybody to read *Patrick In His Own Words*, [Bishop] Joe Duffy's translation – that's kind of a must in my book, annually at any rate to read that anyway. Because it's so simple and at the same time there's such riches in it," he says.

There's a great irony,

of course, in how St Patrick's Day has become a celebration of Irishness, whereas its historical purpose has been to celebrate the conversion of Ireland to Christianity, and Fr Ó Ríordáin says this makes going back to the sources and the inspirational example of Patrick and Ireland's other early saints all the more important.

"The mood at the moment would be hostile to that world, but nevertheless you have to keep asserting it," he says, explaining that St Patrick perennially matters because of how he homed in on the essence of Christianity.

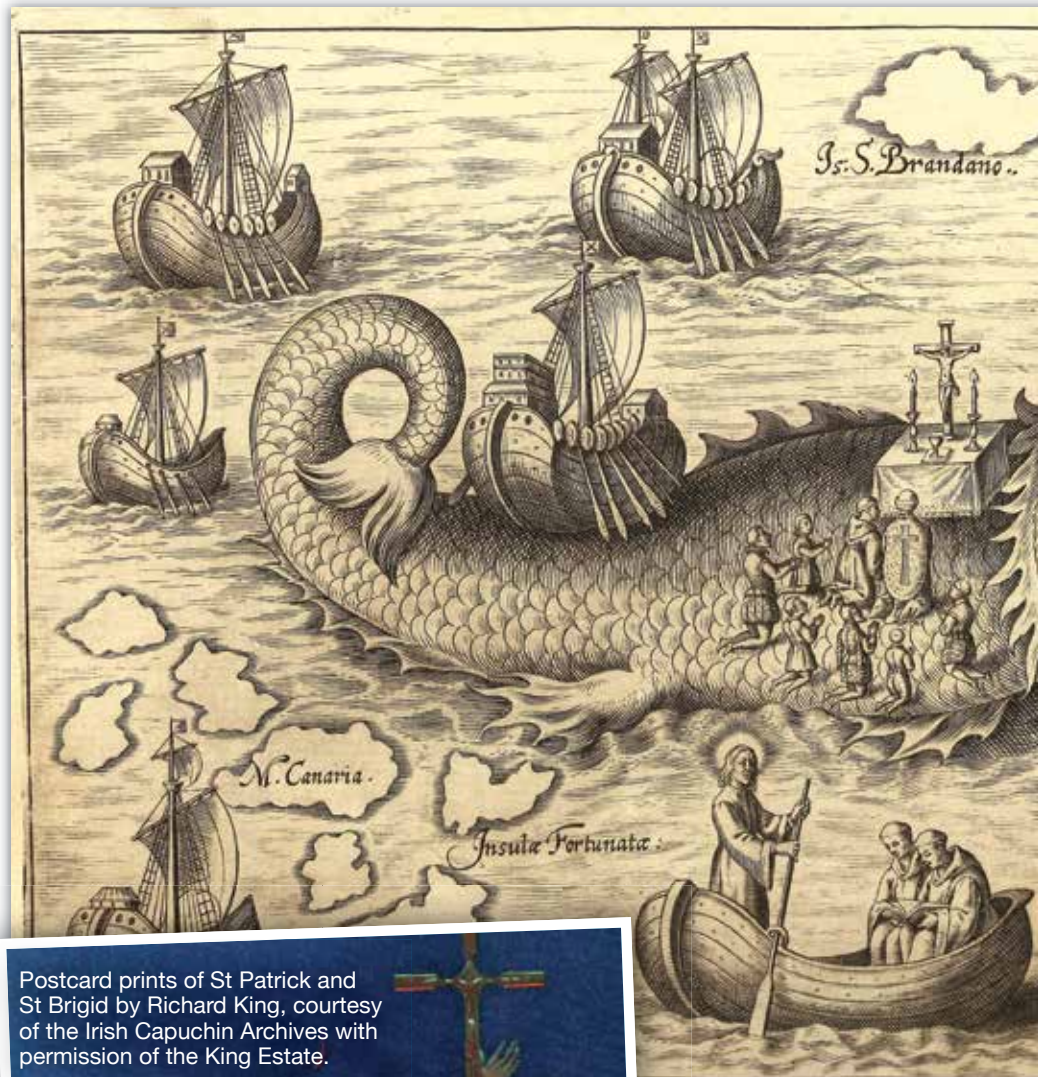
"His relevance is really the heart of the Christian message, namely a personal relationship with Christ as distinct from knowing about Christ," he says, noting that Irish as a language points to different levels of knowledge, where 'aithne' means a basic familiarity, but 'eolas' and 'fios' point to a deeper understanding and an actual relationship.

"people have said to me many times 'I know all about the Bible, I know all about St Patrick'. And they don't!"

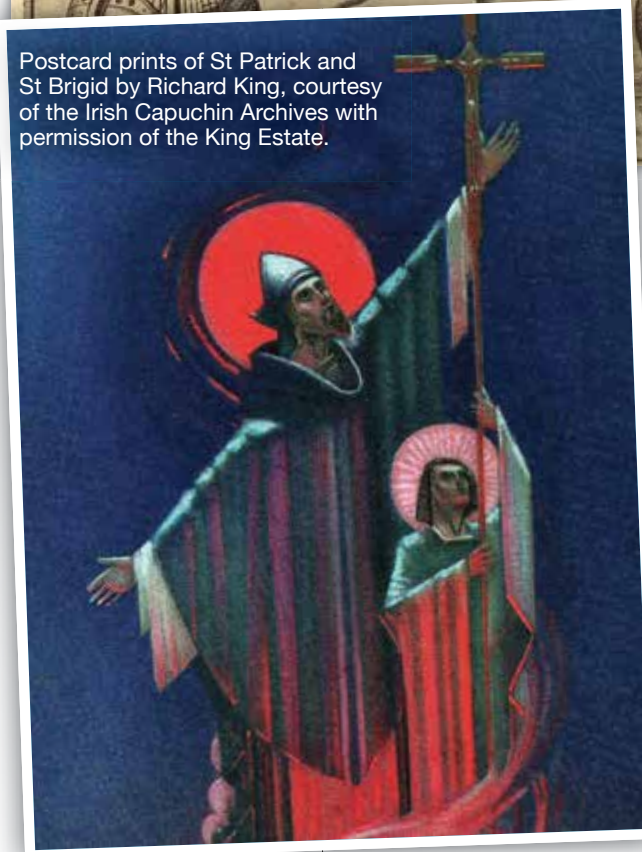
"Our received message today is largely 'we know about' – as people have said to me many times 'I know all about the Bible, I know all about St Patrick'. And they don't! But that's a way of saying that they have 'aithne' – a certain kind of external knowledge," Fr Ó Ríordáin says.

"Whereas, what is your relationship with someone like Jesus? Some of the martyrs in Egypt who were beheaded last year, and one of them muttering the name Jesus as they were about to take the head off him: he had relationship there."

The second of the great trinity of early Irish saints was St Brigid of Kildare, often described nowadays simply as a sanctimonious Christian recasting of a pagan goddess.



Postcard prints of St Patrick and St Brigid by Richard King, courtesy of the Irish Capuchin Archives with permission of the King Estate.



Fr Ó Ríordáin thinks it more likely, instead, that stories and attributes about the pagan Brig became linked with the historical Brigid

"I would see her as like many of those early saints: oftentimes they're inheritors of a pre-Christian god or goddess," he says. "In other words, you have a genuine article, a

religious woman – and St Patrick talks about people becoming monks and virgins for Christ, so you have people in the next generation, like Brigid, who are doing just that, but in Brigid's case she inherits as well the trappings of the goddess Brig."

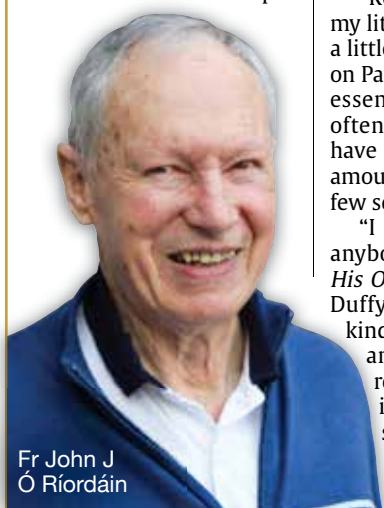
Other saints who would have inherited pagan attrib-

utes and anecdotes would have included St Senan at Scattery Island, who would have acquired details originally linked with the pagan river-god Seanan, he says, adding that St Ailbhe in Emly would similarly have been an inheritor of a long pre-Christian tradition.

That prominent holy people should have become associated with older stories linked with pagan forerunners seems, in fairness, far more likely than folk becoming confused and thinking pagan deities were really Christian monks and nuns. One is reminded of how C.S. Lewis asked a friend who had recently read G.K. Chesterton's *The Everlasting Man* whether he had got it into his head that the ancients had brains every bit as good as ours.

Celebration

The celebration of St Brigid's Day on February 1 – the pagan feast of Imbolc – was probably intended as a symbolic gesture, Fr Ó Ríordáin says, noting that with this being seen as a hinge of the year, with the worst of the winter being over, it was a



Fr John J. Ó Ríordáin

and scholars

St Brendan and his crew celebrating Mass on the back of a whale, from *Nova typis transacta navigatio: Novi Orbis India Occidentalis* by Honorius Philoportunus pseud.



who left Ireland with no expectation of ever returning, and his monastic legacy on mainland Europe was so profound that a 1950 conference marking 1400 years since his birth provided the backdrop for a political gathering where key Christian Democrat politicians laid the foundations for today's European Union.

Curiously, though, the monastic rule by which Columbanus' monasteries at Annegray, Luxeuil, Fontaine, Bregenz and Bobbio lived did not last into the later Middle Ages and has left little imprint in wider Christianity. Was it too rigorous, and was so rigorous a rule the norm in Celtic Christianity?

"It was certainly quite common in the Celtic world," says Fr Ó Ríordáin. "What happened to the Columban rule is that it was too strict for the continentals, with the result that they moved towards the Benedictine rule, which was more benign. As a result nearly all the Columban monasteries on the continent became Benedictine abbeys.

"It was that bit more benign," he continues. "Columbanus' rule was tough, no questions about it, and he expected it from his monks, and wouldn't expect anything more than he'd put up with himself."

Given how strict Celtic monasticism could be, it's striking that in the development of penitential books and personal confession it took major steps towards realising the Church's capacity to be a channel of God's mercy.

"Things had reached a very constricted pitch in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Centuries in terms of how you had one opportunity of repenting after baptism, and if you blew that you were gone," he says. "The Irish come along then, when they're going to the continent, and they had this notion of the 'anam cara', the soul friend or spiritual director, and they would hear, if you like, the confession of a fellow monk, people admitting their faults and failings, and then gradually the tradition coming in of letting it go, and going ahead and living your life.

"The absolution side of it was something that developed from the spiritual direction of a person," he adds.

Legacy

St Ciarán of Clonmacnois is another saint who left a profound legacy on early medieval Europe, with scribes from his monastery on the Shannon – as from elsewhere in Ireland – going on to have a deep impact on learning in Britain and mainland Europe, establishing Ireland as being as much an island of scholars as of saints.

"The basic tradition with that you entered a monastery, illiterate, presumably, and the first thing is you got a slate to scribble on or a bit of wax that you could write on, and you learned the alphabet," Fr Ó Ríordáin says. "And then from the alphabet they learned the psalms in Latin, and it seems that they probably learned the whole psalm book off by heart – a number of them did, anyway."

Everything the Irish monks did was built on that, he says.

“their literary output in the Middle Ages wasn't very great, in terms of how their commentaries on the Bible were utterly boring”

"Now, their literary output in the Middle Ages wasn't very great, in terms of how their commentaries on the Bible were utterly boring," he says. "They weren't developing, if you like, they were just repeating. Whereas on the poetry they had some lovely little poems – a limited number, but nonetheless still lovely in terms of love of nature and so forth."

It didn't take long, in any case, before the country as a whole was liberally dotted with monastic sites, with these being especially common around north Leinster and along the river Erne. The country seems to have been replete with saints, with there hardly being a county in Ireland that can't lay claim to at least a handful of them. It's perhaps all the more remarkable then hardly anyone in Ireland would be able to name any Irish saints – with the notable exception of St Laurence O'Toole – between roughly 800 and 1600AD.

"After the 8th Century the Church here went into a period of decline that lasted up to about the 12th Cen-

tury, which was a natural decline because if you have the early Irish Church pumping energy for hundreds of years, you're bound to run out of steam sooner or later," Fr Ó Ríordáin says.

"Then in the 12th Century you had the reform of the Church which meant the transition from a monastic church to a diocesan structure," he continues. "That's basically the Norman Church – even though they had reform before the Normans came but that's another matter, but from about the 12th century onwards you didn't have the same approach towards the canonisation of saints."

This seems to have been key to why so few of Ireland's holiest people from the later Middle Ages and even since are familiar to us, he explains.

"They were popularly canonised in the early church, where a person who was recognised as walking with God was a saint, but that kind of transferred in the later Middle Ages into being a more formal thing, namely something that had to go to the bishop or go to the Pope," he says.

"The Irish never took too much to that, in the sense that even as I sit here in the monastery garden now I'm looking down at the graveyard and I know several fellows who I pray to as saints but there'd be no question of them ever being canonised," Fr Ó Ríordáin says, before adding with a laugh: "Whereas if they were in Italy they'd probably be universally known at this stage!"

Increasingly, of course, even those saints who remain household names are little more than names, so an obvious question is why the Irish of today, and especially the young Irish of today, should care about them.

"I would say they are part of what we are the part of a legacy," he says. "Liam de Paor in one of his books says that no matter what happens in Ireland today, or what people in the future do, one thing that cannot be denied or changed is that we are people who have had 1500 years of Christianity. Whether we like it or not, that's us."

"We can deny it all we want, but that's who we are and that's what we've come from: 1500 years of Christian living."

Early Irish Saints is available from Columba Books for €9.99 at columbabooks.ie

fitting day to celebrate somebody who represented a new beginning for Ireland.

"I think that's important – when you reflect on that it makes total sense, because you're establishing a new tradition," he says, recalling Chesterton's line that pagans were wiser than paganism, which was why they became Christian. It strikes him as plausible too, he adds, that Brigid may have deliberately Christianised an earlier pagan shrine, as St Gregory the Great would later advise St Augustine to do in his mission to the English.

"It is on the cards that Bridget – this is only speculation but nevertheless it fits – could have actually inherited a whole druidic site and turned it into a monastery. She could have converted it," he says.

The third member of Ireland's trio of patron saints is, of course, St Colmcille, sometimes known as Columba, who Fr Ó Ríordáin describes as "one of those magnetic figures that kind of transcends time".

The affection for this 6th-Century monk can be striking, he says, citing how a year

or so ago he was talking to a woman at a parish in the Midlands. "She was talking about Colmcille and had I not known it I'd have got the impression that he had emigrated a few weeks ago," he says.

"He kind of transcends all the centuries and that affection is there and has been there all the centuries," he continues. "I can't explain it otherwise, except that it is what it is. I suppose the whole thing of going into exile, with our most recent history of emigration has a lot of meaning for them."

St Colmcille is famous, of course, as having pioneered the Irish missions to northern Britain, while St Columbanus led the way in mainland Europe and St Brendan of Clonfert became proverbial through the Middle Ages and beyond for his voyages to – it was believed – distant lands in the north and west. With St Patrick himself having come to Ireland from Britain or perhaps Gaul – modern France – one thing Fr Ó Ríordáin conveys is a clear sense that the early Irish Church was anything but insular, but instead was an integral part of a wider world.

“there was something very strongly missionary about the Irish converts to Christianity”

"I would think there was something very strongly missionary about the Irish converts to Christianity," Fr Ó Ríordáin says. "Now, part of it would be finding a desert, a desert in the ocean, somewhere to go and say their prayers, but when they got there there'd be people living about the place and they'd reach out to them in need – the good decent thing in an Irish situation where you look after the neighbours and if you find them in need you look after them."

"In that way I'd say a lot of Christian Communities grow up around someone who might have set out to live on his own in the woods, but in fact was drawn into becoming missionary by the needs of those around him," he says.

St Columbanus would be a classic instance of a monk

Hearing and heeding God's call

Vocation is about becoming who God wants us to be, writes **Sr Mary David Totah**

You must ask: what does God want from me? It's not just about ourselves. Vocation can't leave him out. Many of us have been surprised by our call. And yet we knew that our calling was much bigger than such things, and that if God was truly calling us, he would provide all that we needed.

It is good that the cloth of our vocation is cut a bit large, that it is something we have to grow into, that there are aspects of it that are challenging. If it is something that only fits our requirements, or where we are now, there is a danger we will grow out of it!

In the Gospel we hear those parables of the treasure in the field and the pearl of great price. And note, to obtain the treasure the man has to buy the whole field. We can't say: "I like this but not that." Or rather we can say it, but we don't allow it to condition our response, because of the treasure, the greatness of what we have found. Our calling is a gift; it is a relationship with the Lord that transcends its institutional and human expressions.

Hands

When Jesus called the apostles and they began to follow him, they, like Abraham, did not know where they were going. They let themselves be led. On one occasion Jesus said to Peter: "When you were young you put on your own belt and walked where you liked; but when you grow old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will put a belt round you and take you

where you would rather not go."

In a sense we cannot fulfil our calling as followers of Jesus without learning "to go where we would rather not go". We cannot follow him unless we learn to leave all things behind and accept him as master and guide of our actions. And this requires that we be ready and willing to make any sacrifice and any renunciation, even of life itself.

Our call is not a vision or an apparition; it is not an extraordinary message we receive. It is much more an intimate encounter with Christ in the different circumstances and situations of life. There is often a persistent niggle, a feeling that won't go away, as if someone were knocking on the door of our heart or mind, especially in moments of prayer, silence and adoration.

“It's not the Lord's yoke that causes us to stumble, but only all the other yokes we don't have the humility and daring to lay down. It doesn't all depend on you”

At such moments we can perceive a voice, a voice without words, but very clear and penetrating. We may find that we get less satisfaction in our work or social life, not because they are wrong, but we somehow feel that they are not enough.

"Has the potter no right over the clay?"

God's love is behind every call. These calls on the part of God are completely independent of all that is natural in man. Two people may have the same natural characteristics – one may be chosen, one not. There are no psychological tests to determine who will hear and follow the divine point of view. Aaron by all accounts was more gifted than Moses,

more suited to the mission entrusted to him, but God chose Moses.

It is not by enquiring into a person's aptitudes that we discover the mission God has decreed for him. Everything is determined by God's holy call that he utters from his own freedom. Sometimes his call responds to the personal inclinations of the one who receives it, sometimes not – Moses and Jeremiah both felt a discrepancy between God's call and their mission.

Have confidence and trust in the call of God. It's not something that happened once and for all in the past, but continues to make itself felt throughout our life. Nor is our calling given all at once. We mustn't think of our call as something programmed in advance by some computer in-the-sky. It's a dynamic thing, and it's important to keep the attitude of one who is called anew each day, of one who tries to be led by God at each moment.

I would counsel: a bit more humility. Not having all the intelligence; that is not going to change! We are limited; we are not angels and so cannot see in a flash all the implications of a choice.

It's a bit like St Thomas' dreaded *curiositas*, which he says is the unbridled appetite to know all, which undermines, defeats the attainment of truth. It's an unreasonable appetite for reason!

A refusal to accept our limited condition and its consequences. It is an enemy of the truth. And the remedy is not a sort of stoic fortitude, an affair of gritted teeth and clenched fists, but humility and temperance, a directing, a channelling of that appetite.

I have been reading a little book on prayer by a Dominican, and he says that the reason prayer is not easy or spontaneous to us is because prayer makes us conscious that we are limited. "It is painful to realise that there are whole areas in the life of the mind that will never be revealed... There is an impatience with one's limitations, a

natural temptation that urges us to flee before such limitations" and take refuge in distractions, "a refusal of our real condition, an evasion of it in favour of illusion, dream, mirage".

“When Jesus called the apostles and they began to follow him, they, like Abraham, did not know where they were going. They let themselves be led”

While distractions draw us away from the road to real happiness, prayer brings us back; it is "the great pedagogy of God" by teaching us our limitations and our need of God, to obtain from him what is lacking to us. And giving only what we know does leave out a lot of the gift – i.e. it

leaves out what God may be asking us to give.

That's why, when we give ourselves, there's always going to be an area which we can't foresee, can't know. "You see, Aslan didn't tell Pole what would happen. He only told her what to do."

It's not the Lord's yoke that causes us to stumble, but only all the other yokes we don't have the humility and daring to lay down. It doesn't all depend on you. Yes, Jesus needs more of a look-in to allow him to be the Saviour. And just make sure that all this might not be a way of rationalising.

If God created us and called us for his glory, there can be no real conflict between our vocation and fulfilment, between God's will, God's programme for us, and our interests. We are sometimes tempted to think, especially in times of discouragement, that our happiness lies one way and God's will another;

or that God's will sometimes demands the sacrifice of our happiness.

But if we look deeply at our life, from the perspective of our call, we see that this conflict can never be more than an apparent one. The service which God requires of his true servant, the goal of the workman, the purpose of God's soldier, is to fight for the glory of God. But the glory of God, St Irenaeus tells us, is the man who truly lives, the man who is fully alive. The saint is the man who is truly alive.

"The saints are the living ones," says Origen, "and the living ones are the saints." Holiness is life in its fullness."

1 Sr Mary David Totah was a Benedictine sister of St Cecilia's Abbey in Ryde, on the Isle of Wight. The above is an extract from *The Joy of God: Collected Writings*, newly published by Bloomsbury Continuum.



“Two people may have the same natural characteristics – one may be chosen, one not. There are no psychological tests to determine who will hear and follow the divine point of view”

A pilgrim
descendsGathering
on Croagh
Patrick

Pictures: Brenda Drumm



Thousands of pilgrims brave Croagh Patrick for Reek Sunday

Huge numbers of pilgrims took part in the annual pilgrimage on Croagh Patrick in Co. Mayo for Reek Sunday over the weekend.

As the day progressed the clouds lifted from the mountain's peak, while up to 9,000 pilgrims made the trek. Archbishop Michael Neary gave his homily at the summit where he spoke of concerns and "anxiety" about the future for many of the faithful.

He said: "Parents are very concerned about raising their children. There are so many voices other than parents, from outside the home and indeed from the internet and social media within the home that are clambering for attention and contradict the voices and the authority of parents."

Chai Brady

However, he said that although there are many who "may not share our beliefs, our language, our concepts", they are journeying in the same direction.

"The presence of genuine faith, albeit in different forms is a source of encouragement and hope," Archbishop Neary said.

"This is particularly true in the Ireland in which we live today, an Ireland where culture-Christianity, based on inheritance and convention has disappeared."

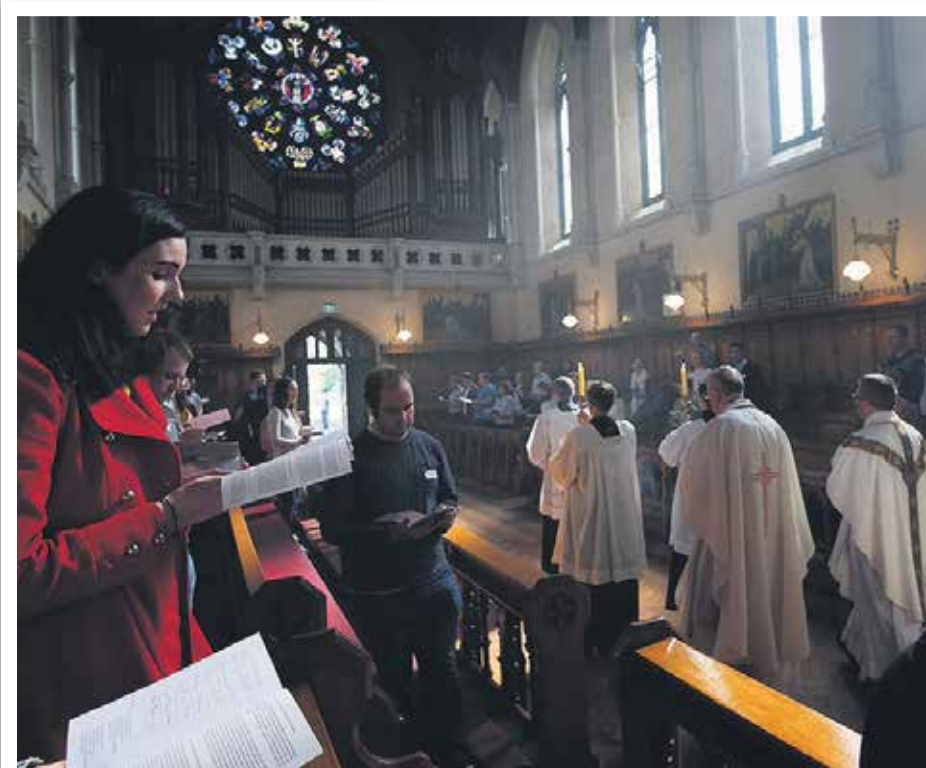
Many people make the journey to the summit of Croagh Patrick for reasons other than religious pilgrimage, he said, "they may not share our belief in the Lord but if they are searching for the peace

which only He can give they are most certainly welcome on the journey".

During the homily he criticised the "production and consumerist" world which is "governed by money, power and possessions with the emphasis on speed, popularity and control".

"As followers of Christ, however, we have been entrusted with a mission to positively enable and encourage people to be open to a sense of wonder and therefore open to a God who, far from competing with us, challenges us to become our best selves as men and women who are created in His image. This will involve naming and working against those forces that tend to negate and destroy life, depriving people of hope," he added.

Archbishop Michael Neary
of Tuam attending Mass
with some young peopleIrish Army Air Corp
touch downPilgrims
set off on
the right
footInez Lonergan and Zelig-Louise
Turpin at the Love Both stand



‘Record number’

Staff reporter

While it can be a source of worry for many to think about the future of religion in Ireland, a Dublin conference which gathers young believers from all corners of the island is proving that the Faith is in strong and able hands.

The Evangelium project seeks to be a platform to inspire and encourage young Irish Catholics to live out and share their Catholic faith in the modern world.

These young people will be the next generation of Catholic priests, religious, wives and husbands and will help rebuild and reignite the Catholic faith in Ireland.

In 2014, the first Evangelium conference was held in Ireland, taking place in St Patrick's College Maynooth and ran continuously up until 2017. After a brief hiatus to celebrate the World Meeting of Families, the Evangelium conference was relaunched this year. In mid-July, over 80 young Catholics from across the island of Ireland gathered in All Hallows DCU for the Evangelium conference.

Talks

This large group of eager and enthusiastic young Catholics were not disappointed with the conference.

They were treated to excellent and engaging talks by Prof. Andrew Meszaros on Sacred Scripture, Dom Hildebrand of the Benedictine Monks in Sliverstream Priory spoke on the Eucharist and Fr Eamon McCarthy from Radio Maria explored the subject of sin. There was also the opportunity for workshops on authentic masculinity and femininity led by the Dominican sisters from Limerick and Senior Counsel Ben O'Flóinn.

Mass was concelebrated in the historic old college chapel with the choir providing a beautiful array of hymns and Gregorian chant. The day



concluded with an apologetics panel much added to by Fr Seán Corkery, which raised some very relevant and interesting topics for discussion. A social was held afterwards with discussion continuing long in to the night.

Describing the conference as a “great success”, spiritual director of Evangelium Fr Damien Lynch said: “The enthusiasm of the 80 young participants from all corners of the island, a record number for the conference, was truly uplifting. It indicated for me that not only is there a

hunger among young people for ‘more’ but that this hunger can only be satiated by the fullness of the Catholic faith in its beauty and in the challenges it presents.

“The speakers, the topics treated, the reverent celebration of Holy Mass, with its beautiful music and time spent in one another's company all converged to make it a wonderfully Catholic occasion and one that I look forward to experiencing again next year.”



turnout for Faith conference





The parishioners of Graiguecullen and Killesbin who attended the pilgrimage to Lourdes.



Parishioners ready themselves for the start in the Candlelight Procession



Mass in Bartres.

Renewing the Faith in Lourdes

Colm Fitzpatrick

More than 100 pilgrims from a Carlow parish packed their sunscreen and shorts this month as they made their way to France to celebrate camaraderie and Faith.

Parishioners of Graiguecullen and Killesbin took part in the 43rd annual pilgrimage to Lourdes, and with the help of parish fundraisers, 30 people with disabilities were also able to attend.

"There was a whole feel-good factor about the whole pilgrimage...everyone was in good form, everyone was healthy out there, and we had a great bunch of young people who helped in different ways," parish priest Fr John Dunphy told *The Irish Catholic*.

Highlighting the four 'Fs', he said: "There was a Faith element; a lovely friendship element, friendships built up over the trip; we do have fun as well, there were little sing-songs at night; and we do have food, it's important to us."

Journey

All pilgrims participated in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and many took great comfort in the Anointing of the Sick. Noting that pilgrimage is not just an outward journey, but also an inner one, Fr Dunphy said that people were "genuinely spiritually renewed" on the trip.

While it's much easier



Senator Jennifer O'Connor who received a medal in recognition for her five years in the hospitality in Lourdes.

to express your religious beliefs in an environment where spirituality is extolled, Fr Dunphy stressed that the challenge for pilgrims is to firmly hold onto their renewed sense of Faith when they return to a more secular Ireland.

"The challenge now is perhaps coming back to

an Ireland where it's more difficult to live your Faith, it's easier to do it when there's thousands more out there living and practicing their Faith – it's a big challenge to go back and live your Faith at home. Hopefully their sense of renewal, the experience that they had, will help them to do it."



Philip and Ann-Marie Rowan with Ann Hickey lighting the parish candle.



Parents Claire and Joe Nolan, with their four daughters, who renewed their wedding vows on their silver anniversary.



Some young helpers relaxing after a hard day's work.



Mass in the Rosary Basilica.



A sing-along after prayers.



Parish volunteers who work in hospitality each year in Lourdes, with Fr John Dunphy.



The group participating in the High Stations of the Cross.

Speakers and Themes

Wednesday, 14th August

John Bruton

Theme: Faith, Future and Europe
12pm Seminar/3pm & 8 pm Novena

John Bruton is a former Irish Fine Gael politician who served as Taoiseach from 1994 to 1997. He was also the EU Ambassador to the United States and held various other Leadership and Ministerial roles throughout his career.

Thursday, 15th August

Most Rev. Rino Fisichella, Rome, Italy

Theme: Mary in the life of the Church
12pm Seminar/3pm & 8 pm Novena

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, is the President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation. He has served as President of the Pontifical Academy for Life and as President of the International Council for Catechesis since 2013. Previously, he taught fundamental theology for 20 years at the Pontifical Gregorian University. He also served as an Auxiliary Bishop of Rome, Rector of the Pontifical Lateran University and in various curial positions.

Friday, 16th August



Olive Foley

Theme: Family and Faith
12pm Seminar / 3pm & 8 pm Novena

Olive Foley is the mother of two young boys and wife of the late Anthony Foley, the Munster Rugby coach who died suddenly in his sleep at the age of 42 in 2016. Olive is an ambassador for the Children's Grief Centre in Limerick, which offers support services for children who have lost a loved one.

Saturday, 17th August

Most Rev. Alan Mc Guckian, Bishop of Raphoe

Theme: What Knock means to me
3pm Novena

Bishop Alan Mc Guckian is a native of Cloughmills, Co. Antrim and has been Bishop of Raphoe since 2017. As a Jesuit priest, he worked in communications for many years. In recent years, Bishop Mc Guckian ran the Living Church Office in the Diocese of Down & Connor. A key element of the work of the Living Church has been the rolling out of Facilitative and Discerning Leadership training which aims to foster a culture of co-responsibility for the mission of the church between clergy and laity.

Dr. John Feehan

Theme: God in Creation – learning to read the other
Book of Revelation

12pm Seminar/8pm Novena

Dr. John Feehan is an Irish geologist, botanist, author and broadcaster. He was a Senior Lecturer in the School of Agriculture and Food Science at University College Dublin, where he taught for twenty years up to his retirement in 2012. In recent years he has devoted his attention more particularly to the interface between religion and science. His book on creation spirituality, *The Singing Heart of the World* won a Nautilus Book Award in 2013.

Sunday, 18th August

FAMILY DAY AT KNOCK SHRINE

A day to celebrate all things family throughout the grounds at Knock Shrine. Activities include drumming, kite design, face painting, games and much more! The day begins at 12 noon.



Most Rev. Kevin Doran, Bishop of Elphin

Theme: A joy that lies ahead of us
3pm Novena

Bishop Kevin Doran has been Bishop of Elphin since July 2014. He is a member of the Council for Marriage and Family, the Council for Justice and Peace, the Council for Healthcare and he chairs the Consultative Group on Bioethics and Life Questions of the Irish Bishops' Conference.

Rt. Rev. Mgr. John Armitage, Rector at Our Lady's Shrine, Walsingham, UK

Theme: Mary and the reality of family life
8pm Novena

Mgr. John Armitage is the Rector of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, known as 'The Nazareth of England.' Walsingham has been a place of pilgrimage for almost a thousand years since Richeldis de Faverches was inspired to build a Shrine in perpetual memorial of the Annunciation.

Monday, 19th August

Carole Coleman

Theme: Motherhood, media and me
3pm & 8pm Novena

Carole Coleman is an experienced multimedia journalist. Carole is well known to Irish audiences as the former Washington correspondent and Education and Environment at RTÉ. She is currently a presenter and reporter on 'This Week' on RTÉ Radio One.

**12pm : Seminar : New shoots
Knock Youth Ministry**

The Youth Ministry Team at Knock Shvrine run a vibrant faith centre for school retreats and summer youth programmes. Their aim is to give young people a positive experience of Knock and a powerful encounter with God. They do this by celebrating the Sacraments, spreading the Gospel message and giving witness to the loving presence of Jesus in our world.

Tuesday, 20th August:

Rev. Trevor Sargent

Theme: Faith in Action
3pm & 8pm Novena / 12pm : Seminar

Rev. Trevor Sargent is a Church of Ireland Minister and a former Irish Green Party politician who served as Minister of State for Food and Horticulture from 2007 to 2010 and Leader of the Green Party from 2001 to 2007. Trevor was ordained in 2018 and serves the parishes of the Waterford Union.

Wednesday, 21st August – 140th Anniversary of the Apparition

Most Rev. Michael Neary, Archbishop of Tuam

Theme: The message of the Knock Apparition then and now
3pm & 8pm Novena

On the 140th Anniversary of the Apparition at Knock, Archbishop Neary will be the main Celebrant at the ceremonies as we gather to celebrate this momentous occasion. We will remember in particular the local people of all ages who witnessed the heavenly vision on a wet August evening in 1879.

12pm Seminar: Place, People and the Knock Apparition

Nollaig O Muraile & Tom Neary

Nollaig Ó Muraile is an Irish scholar. He published an acclaimed edition of *Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh's Leabhar na nGenealach* in 2004. He was admitted to the Royal Irish Academy in 2009. Tom Neary served as Head Steward of The Knock Shrine Society for many years and is the author of many books and publications on the Knock Apparition.



SPECIAL EVENTS ON AUGUST 21ST:

Unveiling of the historic model of Knock Village in 1879

For the 140th anniversary of the Knock Apparition, Knock Museum unveils a unique and historic model of Knock Village as it was in 1879. The village recreation is filled with wonderful miniature details of the Old Church, the houses the Witnesses lived in, schools, people, animals, roads, pathways and farmland. It offers a fascinating insight into village life in Knock and into the historical and social context of the Knock Apparition.

Blessing of the new Processional Statue of Our Lady of Knock at 3 pm Mass.

To mark this special occasion in our journey so far, a new processional statue of Our Lady of Knock will be blessed at the 3pm ceremony. This beautiful piece was hand carved in Italy by the Stuflesser studio in Ortese, Italy, known as the European capital for wood carving and sculpture

'Meeting heaven at harvest time' Witness Walk at 7pm

Step back in time as we commemorate the events of a wet August evening in 1879. The local people who witnessed the Apparition lived and worked in the village of Knock. On this special evening, we reflect and pray as we retrace their steps from their homes to the Parish church.

Thursday, 22nd August



Fr. Peter Mc Verry

Theme: Following the dream of Jesus
3pm & 8 pm Novena
12pm Seminar

Fr. Peter McVerry is the founder of Peter McVerry Trust, one of the country's largest organisations responding to the issue of homelessness. In 2017 the charity worked with over 4,900 vulnerable youths. As a social activist, Peter is a strong advocate for those who have no voice in society. He has written widely on issues relating to young homeless people.

DAILY SEMINARS TAKE PLACE AT 12PM IN ST. JOHN'S REST AND CARE CENTRE
ANOINTING OF THE SICK AT 2.30PM DAILY IN KNOCK BASILICA
KNOCK NOVENA TAKES PLACE AT 3PM AND 8 PM DAILY

KNOCK

140 *years*

1879 CONTINUING
OUR JOURNEY 2019

Novena speakers

John Bruton *'Faith, Future and Europe'*

Archbishop Rino Fisichella *'Mary in the life of the Church'*

Olive Foley *'Family and Faith'*

Bishop Alan Mc Guckian *'What Knock means to me'*

Dr. John Feehan *God in Creation – learning to read
the other Book of Revelation*

Bishop Kevin Doran *'A joy that lies ahead of us'*

Msgr. John Armitage *'Mary and the reality
of family life'*

Carole Coleman *'Motherhood, media and me'*

Rev. Trevor Sargent *Faith in Action*

Archbishop Michael Neary *'The Message
of the Knock Apparition then and now'*

Fr. Peter Mc Verry *'Following the
dream of Jesus'*

NOVENA

14–22 August

3pm & 8pm daily | Seminars 12noon
Anointing of the Sick at 2.30pm

www.knockshrine.ie



Out&About

Campettes salute Michaela



ANTRIM: Young Campettes take part in the Michaela Foundation's Summer Camp in Ballycastle.



FERMANAGH: Religious lead an ecumenical service on White Island, Lough Erne. (l-r) Tommy Laird, Nikita Ward (Lady of the Lake), Rev. George Bowes, Canon Paul Thompson (Rector of Derryvullen North and Castle Archdale) and Fr Kevin Duffy (Parish Priest of Devenish Parish, Irvinestown). Photo: Joe Mahon



LAOIS: Parishioners gather in Portlaoise Parish Centre after Mass for a coffee morning in aid of St Fintan's Cemetery Restoration Fund.



MEATH: Killaloe's Bishop Fintan Monahan and Meath's Bishop Tom Deenihan pay a visit to the Benedictine Monks at Silverstream Priory.



CARLOW: Kildare and Leighlin's Bishop Denis Nulty lends his support for a community initiative known as An Gairdín Beo in an attempt to win the annual IPB Pride of Place Competition.

Edited by Colm Fitzpatrick
colm@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



KILDARE: Bishops and religious gather to celebrate the new Knights of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem in Maynooth.



► **LIMERICK:** Diocesan Youth leaders spend a fortnight in the Gaeltacht surrounding Brú na Gráige.

▼ **CORK:** Students graduate in Clinical Pastoral Education in the Chapel of Christ our Saviour, University Hospital Cork.



MAYO: Bishop Fintan Monahan enjoys Reek Sunday with the Cooke family from Monivea, Galway on Croagh Patrick.



IN SHORT

Get ready for Knock pilgrim Walk

Pilgrims across Ireland will soon be donning their hiking boots as they prepare for a 10-day walk to Knock Shrine this month, to celebrate the 140th anniversary of the famous Apparition. Pilgrims will set out from St Mary of the Rosary Church, Nenagh, on August 11, marking the beginning of the 180km walk.

The first stage of the walk will be along by the

Nenagh river to Domineer. There will also be a boat trip celebrating Irish Christian heritage on the Ku-ee-tu from Domineer to Portumna with refreshments at the Ferry Inn. Pilgrims will travel then through Co. Galway via the Himany way onto the Suck way through Co. Roscommon to within a few miles of Castlereagh before turning due west for Ballyhaunis in Co. Mayo.

The pilgrimage commemorates the silent apparition witnessed by village people at the gable-end of St John the Baptist

Church on August 21, 1879.

In March 1880 the first organised pilgrimage to Knock Shrine came from the Redemptorist Holy Family Confraternity, Limerick city. These 50 Limerick pilgrims came by rail to Tuam, and travelled onwards to Knock in nine horse drawn cars.

The second official pilgrimage came from Cork city, who presented Knock Parish Church with a beautiful marble altar. This altar has a depiction of the Pieta set into it, and today it's the central altar at St John the Baptist Parish Church

Knock.

While the 1879 Knock apparition was in silence, this pilgrim walk will be full of talk, laughter and camaraderie with a prayer or two to help guide the pilgrim walkers safely along the way. There will be many times of silence also, as the pilgrim walkers connect with the sound of nature and their true self.

If you would like to join other trekkers on the pilgrimage, contact Donie Mackey on 087 2761442 for further information.

ARMAGH

A Centre Prayer Meeting is held at Mount Oliver (near Ballymascanlon Dundalk) every Wednesday evening at 7.30 pm.

Special Mass of Thanksgiving in St Patrick's Cathedral on Saturday, October 1, at 1pm to celebrate the 80th year of Apostolic Workers in the archdiocese.

CLARE

Youth 2000 prayer meeting every Friday at 7pm in the Poor Clare's Oratory, Ennis. Join other young adults for prayer and reflection followed by tea and chats in the Friary.

Cloughleigh Oratory will continue to pray the Novena Prayer to St Anthony every Tuesday morning at the 9.30am Mass.

Outdoor Novena of Prayer at Drumellihi Shrine, Cooraclare Parish on August 15 from 6-7am.

CORK

Medjugorje prayer meeting in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament every Wednesday night at 8pm in Holy Trinity Church, Fr Matthew Quay. Prayers for healing are on the first Wednesday of every month.

Rosary conscious group prayer meeting on Fridays from 7.30-8.30pm in the Portiuncula Chapel, St Francis Church, Liberty Street. Entrance to the rosary through the Mass office door.

DERRY

Dungiven Parish: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Monday to Friday, 8-12pm and 3-9pm.

St Maria Goretti Prayer Movement: Prayer for healing for victims of abuse and reparation for the Church. First Holy Hour of prayer in the Immaculate Conception Church, Trench Road Derry at 8.15pm led by Fr Sean O'Donnell, on the third Tuesday of every month.

DUBLIN

Our Lady of Knock prayer meetings take place on the last Thursday of every month in St Gabriel's Nursing Home, Glenayle Road, Raheny, Dublin 5, from 8-9pm.

A three-day Tridium in honour of St Maximilian Kolbe will take place in Our Lady of the Visitation Church, Fairview, from August 12-19. The solemn act of consecration to Mary Immaculate and the Blessings of the Relic of St Maximilian will take place each day at the end of the 10.00 am Mass.

Novena to St John Vianney in the parish church of St John Vianney, Ardlea Road, Artane. It runs from August 3-12 and services will be led by the resident Sacred Heart Fathers.

Ewe Thina: We Walk God's Way. Want to get fit? Embrace God in nature and build true friendships? Join other young adults for reflective hikes around Dublin area. Monthly event. Contact: siobhan.tighe@dublindiocese.ie

FERMANAGH

A Mass to St Peregrine for all the sick is prayed each Tuesday evening in St Patrick's Church, Derrygonnelly at 7pm: www.churchservices.tv/derrygonnelly. There is also a St Peregrine Novena Mass in Holy Cross

Church, Lisnaskea on Tuesday nights at 7pm. www.churchservices.tv/lisnaskea

GALWAY

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at St Croan's Church, Ballymoe, every Monday, 10-11am and Thursday, 8-10pm.

Emmanuel House Clonfert: Monthly first Saturday of prayer and reflection on August 3 at 10.30am. Guest speaker Fr Pat Collins. Please bring a packed lunch.

KERRY

Weekly Monday prayer meetings led by Ben Perkins, from 8-9.30pm in the Ardret Retreat Centre.

KILDARE

Praying, reading and sharing the following Sunday's Gospel in Resurrexit, Kilmeague, every Wednesday from 8-9.30pm. See www.resurrexit.ie for details, or ring 087-6825407.

KILKENNY

Traditional Latin Mass every Sunday at 5pm in St Patrick's Church, College Road, Kilkenny (opposite St Kieran's College).

LIMERICK

Eucharistic Adoration takes place each Friday in Raheen church following 10am Mass until 10pm, Creora on Thursdays, following morning Mass until 12pm and from 6-10pm, and in Mungret Church on Wednesdays, from 10-12pm.

LOUTH

Mass in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary will take place at 10.30am every first Saturday of the month in St Malachy's Church, Anne Street, Dundalk. Organised by the Legion of Mary, Presidium of Our Lady of the Listening Heart. Spiritual Director Fr Bede McGregor OP.

A Centre Prayer Meeting is held at Mount Oliver (near Ballymascanlon, Dundalk) every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm. Contact 00353 863623361 from the North of Ireland or 0863623361 from the Republic of Ireland.

MEATH

Enfield Prayer Group meets every Monday evening at 7.30pm in the parish centre.

Adoration in St Patrick's Church, Stamullen, after 10am Mass every Thursday until 5pm in St Mary's Church, and in St Mary's Church, Julianstown, on Wednesdays from 9am and after 10am Mass.

ROSCOMMON

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at St Bride's Church, Ballintubber, every Wednesday, 7.30-8.30pm.

WICKLOW

The Glencree Parish Group hold a special Mass for healing in St Kevin's Church, Glencree on the first Saturday of the month.

St Patrick's Prayer Group, Wicklow town, meet on Thursdays at 7.30pm in the De La Salle Pastoral Care Centre.

World Report

IN BRIEF

New law shortens euthanasia wait time

● New legislation in Oregon shortens an initial waiting period for some persons seeking assisted suicide, allowing them to receive quicker access to life-ending drugs.

Governor Kate Brown signed the bill into law on July 23. It had passed the Senate in May and the House of Representatives in June.

If the terminally ill patient has fewer than 15 days to live, the legislation will bypass a 15-day delay required under the Death with Dignity Act. The waiting period usually takes place between the first verbal request and second written request for assisted suicide.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement on medically assisted dying in 2011. It stated that palliative care is better suited for the dignity of the human person.

Female foeticide suspected in Indian region

● A northern Indian district has launched an investigation into a region in which the birth rate of baby girls is in dramatic decline. Government data has revealed that among 216 babies born across 132 villages in the last three months, not even one of them was a girl.

The district administration of the Uttarkashi region has announced that it will form a task force to examine the reason why no girls have been born in the region.

The region's district magistrate, Ashish Chauhan, told reporters that the matter is "suspicious, and has highlighted female foeticide".

Revenge porn criminalised in New York

● New York Governor Andrew Cuomo has signed a bill criminalising revenge pornography – the distribution of sexual or nude images without the subject's consent.

Cuomo signed the bill into law on last week. It will go into effect in 60 days.

"Our laws have not kept pace with technology and how abusers can use it to harass, intimidate and

humiliate intimate partners," he said after the bill's signing, the Hill reported.

"By criminalising the publication of revenge porn, we are empowering victims of this heinous act to take action against their abusers and showing them a path to justice."

Convictions may result in one year of jail time, and victims may seek additional civil recourse.

Priests protest Indian cardinal's return

● Catholic priests are reportedly protesting Pope Francis' reinstatement of a cardinal who is facing allegations of financial mismanagement, and has been previously accused of failing to respond to reports of misconduct from a nun who claims to have been raped.

Cardinal George Alencherry heads the Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, an Eastern Catholic Church in union with Rome and one of the two main Eastern Churches in India.

Cardinal Alencherry has been accused of involvement in dubious land deals dating back to 2015. He reportedly bypassed Church law requiring consultations before a land sale that resulted in heavy financial losses for the Church.

Mexican bishops criticise migrant policy failings

● The Mexican bishops reaffirmed last week its concern over the lack of a humanitarian reception for migrants, whose dignity has been violated, and exchanged for "a plate of lentils".

The bishops' conference criticised Mexico's lack of migration policies in a July 23 statement, saying that as a result, the country has submitted to the policies and impositions of the United States, "accepting the incoherency of tying business interests to the right and need to migrate, seeking a better life".

"Sadly we can see that this dignity as persons and children of God is being violated, since it has been 'exchanged for a plate of lentils'", they lamented.

Pope appeals for safety of migrants after deadly shipwreck

As up to 150 migrants are feared to have drowned in a shipwreck off the coast of Libya, Pope Francis made an appeal to the international community on Sunday to act decisively to ensure the safety and dignity of migrants.

"I learned with pain the news of the dramatic shipwreck that occurred in recent days in the waters of the Mediterranean," Pope Francis said on July 28.

"I renew my heartfelt appeal for the international community to act promptly and decisively, to avoid the repetition of similar tragedies and to guarantee the safety and dignity of all. I invite you to pray with me for the victims and their families," the Pope said during his Angelus address.

According to the United Nations, the capsized migrant ship last week resulted in the worst loss of life in the Mediterranean this year. Prior to this shipwreck, 669 people died in the Mediterranean Sea so far in 2019.

Pope Francis' appeal echoes the call from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, who said on July 26: "The worst Mediter-



Migrants help in search and rescue for the missing off the coast of Libya

anean tragedy of the year has just occurred. Restoring rescue at sea, an end to refugee and migrant detention in Libya, increasing safe pathways out of Libya must happen now before it is too late for many more desperate people."

At least 147 people were rescued from the vessel that sank five miles off the coast of Libya after suspected engine failure. The ship held somewhere between 250-300 migrants, including women

and children, from Eritrea, Sudan, Bangladesh, Palestine, and other countries.

Pray

Pope Francis said that in praying for the victims one can ask God from the heart, "Father, why?"

He said that Jesus teaches us through the Our Father prayer that we can enter into prayerful and direct dialogue with God as a child talks to their father.

"Here is the novelty of

Christian prayer. It is dialogue between people who love each other, a dialogue based on trust, supported by listening and open to solidarity. It is a dialogue of the Son with the Father, a dialogue between children and the Father," Pope Francis said.

The Pope said it is important to feel God's fatherhood in one's heart. He said that God will turn His gaze to us if we ask Him for an explanation, just as a father would to his three year old son.

Suspected culprits of Philippine terrorist attack identified

Indonesian authorities released the names of a couple whom they believe to have orchestrated a January terrorist attack on a cathedral in the Philippines.

Dedi Prasetyo, spokesman for Indonesia's National Police, said last week that Rullie Rian Zeke and his wife Ulfah Handayani Saleh had detonated suicide bombs at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral in Jolo.

Prasetyo said police discovered the identity of the bombers last month when they arrested an Islamic militant who recruited the Indonesian couple.

Before the husband and wife had

underwent a government sponsored deradicalisation programme, they had been involved with Jemaah Anshorut Daulah, an outlawed Islamic extremist organisation allied to the Islamic State group.

Bombs

Two bombs exploded during Mass at the seat of the Vicariate Apostolic of Jolo on January 27, killing at least 20 and injuring at least 111 others.

The Filipino bishops' conference condemned the attack as an "act of terrorism". The Islamic State, which has ties

to the local Muslim insurgent group Abu Sayyaf, claimed responsibility for the attack. Attacks by Abu Sayyaf against Catholics in the region are not uncommon.

The cathedral was rededicated on July 23 during a Mass said by Archbishop Gabrielle Caccia, Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, along with Cardinal Orlando Quevedo, Archbishop Emeritus of Cebu.

Jonathan Luciano, national director of Aid to the Church in Need in the Philippines, said the clerics offered words of hope and encouragement.

Notre-Dame architect fears building collapse

Almost four months after a fire destroyed the roof of Notre-Dame de Paris, officials are concerned that the building is still at risk of collapse. Now instead of a fire threatening the 850-year-old building, it is the record summer temperatures that may further erode the stonework.

France, and most of Europe, is in the midst of

a record-setting heatwave. Temperatures reached 108.7 degrees Fahrenheit (42.6 C) in Paris last Thursday, the highest ever recorded.

Philippe Villeneuve, the cathedral's chief architect, is worried the Parisian heat wave combined with the water damage sustained during the firefighting effort could spell disaster for the

cathedral's vaults.

"I am very worried about the heat wave because, as you know, the Cathedral suffered from the fire, the beams coming down, but also the shock from the water from the firefighters. The masonry is saturated with water," he told Reuters on July 24.

While there has been no movement detected in the

cathedral's structure since the fire, Villeneuve is nonetheless very concerned about the integrity of the stonework.

"What I fear is that the joints or the masonry, as they dry, lose their coherence, their cohesion and their structural qualities and that all of sudden, the vault gives way," he said.



Edited by Colm Fitzpatrick
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Madonna making waves



A Marian statue known as Madonna Fiumarola travels by boat during a procession on the Tiber river in Rome on July 28

Church leaders rally against death penalty introduction

A senior Catholic Church official called on Philippine legislators to work for the benefit of the people and not blindly follow what President Rodrigo Duterte wants, including his plan to reinstate the death penalty.

Rodolfo Diamante, executive secretary of the Episcopal Commission on Prison Pastoral Care, urged members of Congress "not to pass measures just to please the president," *ucanews.com* reported.

The call came after Duterte said during his State of the Nation address last week that he wanted capital punishment reinstated.

Diamante urged the legislators to study whether the death penalty would solve the problem of illegal drugs.

"Don't give our people an illusion and

a quick fix 'solution' to our problems," he said. "They deserve something better."

The Church official called the death penalty "anti-life" and "anti-poor" and that instituting it would not reduce crime.

"[It] will only enhance the culture of violence and death that is now prevailing in our country," he said.

Duterte asked Congress to reinstate the death penalty for "heinous crimes related to illegal drugs and plunder".

The president highlighted how illegal drugs kept by terrorists had led to the May 23, 2017 attack that led to a five-month siege in the southern city of Marawi.

"It pains me to say that we have not learned our lesson. The illegal drug prob-

lem persists," Duterte said.

Senators, however, were divided on the issue, especially after Duterte said he wanted to include plunder among crimes punishable by death.

"We'll try to convince some of our colleagues. It's a heavy debate. But we'll just have to work on it," said Senate President Vicente Sotto.

Philippine Church leaders repeatedly have warned against any moves to pass a law that will revive capital punishment.

The death penalty was abolished under the country's 1986 constitution, but the nation's charter gave Congress the power to reinstate it for heinous crimes.

Italian bishops gift South Sudan with needed aid

An injection of \$1.1million (€1m) will benefit humanitarian programmes, the resettlement of refugees and internally displaced people, and peacebuilding efforts in violence-ravaged communities in South Sudan under a programme initiated by the Italian bishops' conference.

Spread over three years, the gift coincides with South Sudan's eighth anniversary of independence and will aid the country's recovery

from a deadly civil war, said Nicoletta Sabbetti, East Africa regional coordinator for Caritas Italy.

The programme will be coordinated through Caritas South Sudan and the Church's umbrella humanitarian aid agency, Caritas Internationalis.

Sabbetti said that the funds will help vulnerable communities recover from conflict, overcome food shortages and promote peacebuilding in

the seven dioceses of South Sudan.

"On the eighth anniversary of the independence from Sudan, Caritas Italy joined the appeal of Pope Francis and the bishops of South Sudan for promoting peace in the country," she said.

"The interventions will mainly concern food assistance and cash grants, shelter for vulnerable groups returned to the communities of origin, including hosts, dis-

tribution of seeds and agricultural tools, socio-economic support and rehabilitation, a programme on reconciliation and peaceful coexistence," she explained.

Sabbetti said the programme aims to strengthen local ambulance service, procurement and distribution of drugs and medical supplies, restoration of health care facilities and development of an alert system for health and nutritional emergencies.

Vatican roundup

Pope calls for 'apostolate of prevention' against abuse

In an unscripted video message that appears to have been recorded on a mobile phone, Pope Francis spoke of the need for an "apostolate of prevention" to protect minors from abuse.

"Prevention. Prevention. Because you never know where a child will be abused, where the child will be misled, where someone will teach him to smoke drugs, a form of corruption. Let us not think that only sexual abuse is the only type of abuse. Any type of corruption is an abuse of a child," Pope Francis said in Spanish in a YouTube video published by the Pontifical University of Mexico.

The Pope sent the video message to participants in a July 1-26 course on the protection of minors organised by CEPROME, the Center for Interdisciplinary Research and Formation for the Protection of Minors.

Pope Francis said that courses on abuse protection are important "for all children so that no one abuses them, no one prevents them from reaching Jesus".

The Director of CEPROME, Fr Daniel Portillo told *ACI Prensa* that the Pope's message was an encouragement to the participants in this month's course.

"Above all, because he comes to ask us, to ask what our commitment to prevention really is," Portillo said.

Catechism cardinal Jose Llaurens dies age 93

Spanish Cardinal Jose Estepa Llaurens, a former military bishop of Spain, died on July 21 in Madrid. He was 93.

Pope Francis, offering his condolences in a telegram, praised the cardinal's "generous service to the Church".

Cardinal Llaurens was one of the six bishops who worked with then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in editing the Catechism of the Catholic Church in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He also was in charge of overseeing the Spanish edition of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Born in Andujar, he

studied in Salamanca, Rome and Paris and was ordained to the priesthood in 1954. In 1972, St Paul VI named him an auxiliary bishop of Madrid, where he served for 11 years as rector of the archdiocesan seminary.

Pope Benedict XVI elevated him to the college of cardinals in 2010; he was one of four cardinals over the age of 80 the Pope named that consistory because they were "distinguished for their generosity and dedication in service of the Church".

Francis appoints new Press Office vice director

Pope Francis has appointed Cristiane Murray as vice director of the Holy See Press Office. Murray (57) has worked for Vatican Radio for more than 25 years, where she provided live commentary on papal events and international trips. "I accepted this appointment with emotion. For journalists and colleagues in the Dicastery of Communication it is a great recognition of our daily work in bringing the Gospel to the world, the message of the Pope and the Church," she said on July 25.

A native of Rio de Janeiro, Murray has collaborated with the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri since April 2018 in preparation for the Special Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazonian Region.

Murray is married and has two children. In addition to Italian and Portuguese, she speaks three other languages.

"The choice of a woman with roots in Brazil and an open outlook to the world testifies to the desire to build a team that can speak the language of those who listen to us," Prefect of the Dicastery of Communications Paolo Ruffini said of Murray's appointment.



Letter from Rome



John J. Allen Jr

Within just the last few days, two senior Catholic prelates from Iraq have referred to plans for Pope Francis to visit the country next year as, essentially, a done deal.

Of course, this is the Middle East we're talking about, where the best-laid plans go to die. St John Paul II had every intention of visiting the Iraqi city of Ur as part of his pilgrimage to the origins of the faith for the Great Jubilee of 2000, but security concerns derailed those hopes. A widening conflict between the US and Iran is merely one scenario that might have a similar impact on Francis's agenda this time around.

If the Pontiff does end up going, however, it may be Francis best shot at the title of "most important papal trip of all time".

Last month in Rome, Cardinal Raphael Louis Sako of Baghdad, Patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church, told a Rome conference on anti-Christian persecution that he hopes Francis will use the occasion to sign an agreement with leaders of Shi'a Islam similar to the document he issued jointly with the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, the leading institution in the Sunni world, when he was in the United Arab Emirates in February.

Last Wednesday, Chaldean Archbishop Alnaukali Habib Jajou of Basra in southern Iraq told the Asia News agency that the Pope's trip could represent a moment of "rebirth" for the Christian community. (Last year all the Church's extra-liturgical activities in Basra had to be suspended due to violence generated by anti-corruption protests.)

“The Pope's trip could represent a moment of “rebirth” for the Christian community.”

The drumbeat suggests just how keenly anticipated the Pope's presence in Iraq is, and how high the stakes would be.

Since St John XXIII first set foot outside Rome in 1962 by taking a train to Loreto, ending more than a century of Popes considering themselves “prisoners of Rome”, Pontiffs have made a grand total of 168 overseas journeys, by now



Iraqi women attend a Mass for the rehabilitation and inauguration of a Catholic church in Basra June 16, 2019. A top British official said the government would commit itself to a robust defence of persecuted Christians following a new report into their plight.

Iraq could be Francis' shot at 'most important papal trip of all time'

having touched down in virtually every nation on earth at one point or another.

Just as every presidential trip can't be Nixon in China, it's probably no surprise that only a handful of these papal outings seem to have passed the test of time, leaving a permanent mark on the popular imagination - Paul VI's 1964 trip to the Holy Land, for instance, featuring his historic meeting with Orthodox Patriarch Athenagoras in Jerusalem, or John Paul II's first homecoming to Poland in 1979, which set the dominoes tumbling that would eventually bring down the Soviet empire.

For sheer drama, it would be hard to beat Benedict XVI's 2006 visit to Turkey, which took place just a couple of months after his infamous Regensburg speech set off a firestorm of protest across the Muslim world and stirred fears of a global “clash of civilizations” between Christianity and Islam.

In terms of iconography, John Paul's 2000 visit to the Holy Land, with its indelible image of this

Polish Pope who grew up in the shadow of the Holocaust standing alone at the Western Wall and leaving behind a handwritten note apologising for centuries of Christian anti-Semitism, likely remains unsurpassed.

To date, Francis has already made several memorable outings of his own, though few seem quite in that league.

“This would be the first time a Pope has ever visited Iraq, and in the present context, no other outing by any major world leader likely would be as scrutinised, dissected and analysed.”

There was his 2013 trip to Brazil, which featured the “Who am I to judge?” soundbite; a February 2016 trip to Mexico, which included a

prayerful stop at the US/Mexico border and the Pontiff questioning then-candidate Donald Trump's credentials as a Christian; a 2016 day trip to the Greek island of Lesbos, which ended with the Pontiff bringing a dozen Syrian refugees with him back to Rome aboard the papal plane; and his brief but dramatic outing earlier this year to the UAE, offering a powerful counter-narrative to extremism and Christian-Muslim tension.

It's possible, however, a trip to Iraq could tower above them all in terms of the images it would create and the impact it might have.

This would be the first time a Pope has ever visited Iraq, and in the present context, no other outing by any major world leader likely would be as scrutinised, dissected and analysed. In effect, it would afford Francis the opportunity to be a game-changer, rolling out his vision for reconciliation and a “culture of encounter” in one of the most contested pieces of real estate on the planet. If he succeeds, he

could embolden moderates all across the region.

Beyond its political, diplomatic and strategic significance, a papal visit would have an almost incalculable impact on the Christian minority in Iraq.

Christianity there is presently on life support after centuries of second-class citizenship and decades of attrition due to economic and political upheaval, on top of the more recent genocidal carnage inflicted by ISIS. The presence of a Pope would literally mean the world to these people - as in, the world hasn't forgotten them and won't abandon them.

One can imagine that if Francis goes to Iraq and Christianity does somehow endure, decades from now the world will remember the moment a Pontiff stood on Iraqi soil as a pivotal turning point.

Of course, Popes don't make their travel decisions based on grubby considerations such as cracking a “most important trip” list. The rest of us, however, sometimes can't help thinking in such terms - and, in this case, dreaming of what might be.

“Beyond its political, diplomatic and strategic significance, a papal visit would have an almost incalculable impact on the Christian minority in Iraq.”



Boris Johnson speaks after being announced as Britain's next prime minister on July 23, at the Queen Elizabeth II Centre in London. Johnson defeated rival Jeremy Hunt, winning two-thirds of the votes in a ballot of about 160,000 Conservative members.

Boris Johnson gives British Church Trump-like conundrum

Lenin once famously asked, "how can you make a revolution without firing squads?"

Boris Johnson, Britain's newly appointed prime minister, has taken that advice to heart – in his first hours in office, over half the ministers in outgoing prime minister Theresa May's government were pushed out or resigned.

Much like Donald Trump – a figure that Johnson openly emulates – he has entered his new office like a bull in a China shop.

Some newspapers accused Johnson of settling personal scores, as well as removing political opponents, in his cull; in other words, following Lenin's playbook in keeping the Conservative Party in line.

Johnson's seeming ruthlessness is in contrast with the befuddled PG Wodehouse-esque image that he has cultivated for decades.

Version

Although born in New York to British parents (he gave up his US citizenship after the IRS came calling) and baptised into his mother's Catholic Faith, Johnson has presented himself as a slightly savvier (and certainly more promiscuous) 21st Century version of Bertie Wooster.

The new prime minister comes



Charles Collins

with an upper-class pedigree – he went to both Eton (where he quit Catholicism for Anglicanism) and Oxford – and had a long career in journalism before becoming a politician. (He was dogged with accusations of playing fast and loose with the facts, both when he was a reporter and when he was editor of *The Spectator*, Britain's leading conservative weekly.)

Much like Trump, Johnson cultivated a following on TV, and often appeared on Britain's popular panel quiz shows, which bring together politicians and comedians to make fun of current events in a *faux* game show format.

After serving as a member of parliament, he became the mayor of London in 2008. The most famous image of his term was when he got stuck on a zipline waving two Union Jacks to celebrate Britain's first gold medal

during the 2012 Olympic Games.

In the national press, and among the political class, this epitomised 'Boris' – a silly stunt performed badly by a publicity hound.

But he continued to have a national platform, and was generally well-liked by television audiences, and – most crucially – was an early high-profile supporter of the 2016 Brexit campaign.

“Much like Trump, Johnson cultivated a following on TV, and often appeared on Britain's popular panel quiz shows, which bring together politicians and comedians to make fun of current events in a *faux* game show format”

Brexit narrowly won the popular vote – by 52 to 48% – but wasn't supported by the leadership of any major party.

When Theresa May couldn't deliver a Brexit deal in three years – basically, the only thing she had to do – the Conservative Party turned to Johnson, who has promised

to deliver Brexit by October 31, whether or not the UK hammers out a deal with European Union.

This has been the one litmus test issue for Johnson: every minister in his cabinet must pledge that they will support a no-deal Brexit if needed (infighting on this issue plagued May's government.)

Leaders

Christian leaders from seven denominations warned Johnson that a no-deal Brexit would be a “huge gamble to take with the basic needs of our poorest citizens and communities” in an open letter.

“At a time when increasing numbers of families have difficulties putting enough food on the table, we believe it is irresponsible to consider a course of action that is expected to make that situation worse,” the signatories wrote.

However, the Catholic Church didn't sign the letter, and will probably have a “wait and see” attitude to the new resident of No.10.

Johnson addressed Parliament for the first time last Thursday, and there were several points with which the bishops would probably agree:

- Increasing funding for the National Health Service, the single-payer system existing in the UK,

with a promise to cut waiting times to visit family doctors.

- Giving more money for education, especially important for the bishops, since Catholic schools receive public funds in the United Kingdom.

- Giving attention to the “forgotten” parts of the UK – that is, the Midlands and North of England that have not enjoyed the boom experienced in London and the South over the past two decades.

- Support for Britain's efforts to cut CO2 and tackle climate change.

- An “absolute certainty of rights” for the estimated 3.2 million EU citizens currently living in the UK, most of whom come from Catholic countries.

“The most difficult task for the UK bishops will be Johnson's reputation for unpredictability and erratic behaviour”

However, the bishops will be wary of some of the new prime minister's other pledges:

- He said he will jettison the backstop meant to guarantee an open border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland if a no-deal Brexit happens.

- He has pledged a strong “law and order” policing policy, and appointed a Home Secretary – Priti Patel – who has in the past advocated for reinstating capital punishment.

- A promise to cut taxes for corporations.

- Johnson has also made statements about biotechnology, which although primarily aimed at loosening regulations for genetically modified foods, could raise concerns about problematic research with human genes.

- One of the ministers not to survive the firing squad was Jeremy Hunt, the Foreign Secretary who has made persecuted Christians a top priority. It is unknown whether his successor will have the same enthusiasm.

The most difficult task for the UK bishops will be Johnson's reputation for unpredictability and erratic behaviour. His reputation is such that several members of the Conservative Party have joined the rival Liberal Democrats, saying they can't serve under him.

Boris is also a populist, and often copies the methodology of Trump, although in a very British manner.

The US bishops have chosen a middle path with Trump: Commending him on religious liberty and pro-life policies but being strong opponents to his immigration policies.

It is yet to be seen if the Church in the UK – divided between the English and Welsh, Scottish, and Irish bishops' conferences – will be able to reproduce the same balancing act.

❶ Charles Collins in *Managing Editor of Cruxnow.com*

Letters

Letter of the week

Owning up to our phones' real cost

Dear Editor, Chai Brady's excellent piece on the work of Trócaire in Ituri in the DRC (IC 25/08/2019) accurately cuts to the quick of the local ethnic and political dynamics that shape the generous humanitarian response to Ebola. However, there are also international factors at play, namely the international trade in coltan, widely used in mobile phone and digital technology in which the violent militias that disrupt the Ebola campaign are key stakeholders. The Democratic Republic of Congo supplies up to 40% of world demand of

coltan. A coltan source area coincides with an area of Ebola prevalence, where the Mayi Mayi militia and the Islamist ADF militia are also present. Militias control and assist mining and export of coltan and simultaneously kill health workers and obstruct measures to control Ebola. Much of the coltan is smuggled into neighbouring countries, and then marketed internationally. It ends up in our mobile phones.

A degree of awareness of how our digital technology is linked into the global loop of Ebola, human and

sexual violence, religious jihadism and child soldiering can influence more ethical consumer choice. If the Ebola virus spreads in a chaotic manner as a result of conflict, this could lead to a decimation of the vulnerable populations in the DRC, Uganda, South Sudan and Rwanda. As consumers of coltan as well as Christians, we may have to shoulder a share of the blame, although we live some 6,000 miles away from the mines and hospitals.

Dr Joseph Mullen
Eastbourne, England.

Can church diversity include denial?

Dear Editor, Mary Kenny responds to criticism of the requiem for the late Noel Whelan by writing that a baptised person is entitled to a Christian funeral and that Catholicism "has always included 57 varieties" (IC 18/07/2019).

The first statement is more or less indisputable. The second is more contentious.

It is not clear why Mrs

Kenny thinks that a Heinz advertising slogan can be applied to discussion of Catholicism. What she then terms a "certain diversity" can hardly be held to include assaults on the Church's teaching.

It would appear from reports in reputable newspapers that Mr Whelan's attacks on Catholic moral teaching, including his support last year for the

legalisation of abortion, were mentioned in adulatory terms at the service.

Mary Kenny thinks that by attending a requiem mass those secularists present were submitting to a "greater power". That is hardly the case when some of those at the service used the occasion to express anti-Catholic opinions.

I am afraid that when the Church – or at least in this

case an individual parish priest – allows its buildings and its services to be used for the expression of views opposed to its doctrine then wrong has been done.

One hopes that the priest in question, Fr Derek Smyth, will explain why he allowed this to happen.

Yours etc.,
C.D.C. Armstrong,
Belfast, Co. Antrim.

Isn't the Mass also a plea for mercy?

Dear Editor, With all due respect to Mary Kenny (IC 18/7/2019), because a person is baptised, it does not automatically follow that he or she has the 'right' to a Christian funeral.

In fact, the Church makes provision for the denial of a Catholic funeral to one who had led a publicly scandalous life and showed no sign of repentance. Such a step, of course, is only taken in rare circumstances.

The Church's Requiem Liturgy is emphatically not a 'celebration of life' – even though this notion has crept in.

We will all need the infinite mercy of God when we leave this world – all of us – no exceptions. The Requiem Mass is a plea for that Mercy.

Yours etc.,
Fr Patrick McCafferty,
Belfast, Co. Antrim.



5,000 babies aborted this year...where are the bodies?

Dear Editor, In response to John McGuirk's article of July 18, Our Lady of Lourdes Protectors has been formed in response to the legalisation of what Pope Pius XI called "the direct murder of the innocent".

Lourdes Protectors has taken the silence of the pro-life groups as an opportunity to change the strategies of the past that utterly failed to communicate the pro-life message and begin a new movement in Ireland that is both devoutly Catholic and militant.

The primary aims of Lourdes Protectors Rosary vigils are supernatural, firstly to proclaim the Kingship of Christ over Ireland by invoking God's Rights, for as Pope Leo XIII explained, "whether one likes it

or not, the true rights of man spring precisely from his duties towards God", and secondly, our vigils are public acts of reparation, for the abortion law is a public sin, and the Church has always taught that public sin requires public reparation to appease God's wrath.

Thirdly, our vigils engage the public on the natural level, as we hold signs that say, 'abortion is evil', etc. to communicate the horror of the sin of abortion.

So far this year over 5,000 babies have been murdered. Where are their bodies? The HSE website recommends they be flushed down the toilet. Small white coffins have been used to highlight that one of the corporal works of mercy is to bury the dead, but

that instead of a dignified burial babies corpses are now rotting in sewage pipes, possibly underneath the hospital, or are being incinerated as medical waste.

Some of our vigil members are women who themselves suffered miscarriages, still-births and children who died soon after birth with life-limiting conditions.

The coffins are not used to bring grief upon bereaved parents, but to ever remind us of those babies whose lives were deliberately ended and who were denied a dignified burial.

Yours etc.,
Dr. Brian Ó Caithnia,
Blackrock, Co Dublin.

facebook community

Each week we publish a selection of comments from The Irish Catholic Facebook page

Plotting a route for our future Church

To a degree the Church still is a "sort of a monolith in Irish society". Yes, there are new forms of communication, but communication with the Church remains monolithic. For decades now there has been talk of the role of laity and a commitment to laity. Both are necessary but in the absence of action on them both, neither require further mention. – **David Lohan**

We don't need visionaries! We need length of experience stretching back from Pre-Vatican II through the important and superficial changes since and to recognise where we went wrong! – **Sean Conway**

Church will be smaller but much stronger

Then we can be in a better position to bring the faith to others. – **Kevin McMulkin**

How about build it up to be bigger and better, enough of the defeatist nonsense. – **Michael Doyle**

A smaller but more devout church. Many Catholics are Catholic in name only as they ignore Christian teaching, from what we have seen by how they voted in the referendums. – **Mary Murphy**

Smaller but stronger. What a load of waffle. Have they no conscience? Will they ever go back to apologetics or is that gone too? – **Liam Réamonn**

Knock shrine builds for bigger future

I look forward to seeing this new model. History brought more to life for pilgrims. – **Seán de Bhéalatún**

God bless Fr. Richard. It's such a privilege to go to Knock at any time. May Our Lady of Knock and her Son Jesus reward you abundantly today and always. – **Agnes Patricia Mitchell**

Boys' town priest sainthood cause edges forward

If only the Irish State (and the Church but the State held the purse strings) had listened to the sound advice this great man gave them. – **Charles Glenn**

I didn't know he was from Roscommon! – **Mary Fay Shannon**

Goodness is not always what people choose in a politician

Please don't claim him as one of us. He is not a man of calibre constantly unfaithful to his wives. No, he is a shallow buffoon. – **Marion Smith**

I don't think religion of any denomination is something that one would think of when commenting on the new British Prime Minister. And it is not something he would probably like to be associated with himself. – **Brian Thornton**

What do you think? Join in the conversation on The Irish Catholic Facebook page

Letters to the Editor

All letters should include the writer's full name, postal address and telephone numbers (day and evening). Letter writers may receive a subsequent telephone call from The Irish Catholic as part of our authentication process which does not amount to a commitment to publish.

We regret that we cannot give prior notice of a letter's publication date, acknowledge unpublished letters or discuss the

merits of letters. We do not publish pseudonyms or other formulae to conceal the writer's identity, such as "name and address with editor". We do not print letters addressed to someone else, open letters, or verse. Letters to the Editor should only be sent to The Irish Catholic, and not other publications. Letters should not exceed 300 words and may be shortened for space requirements.

Around the world



▲ **USA:** Mexican migrants deported from the US walk toward Mexico at Paso del Norte International border bridge. An immigration policy that seeks to speed up the deportation process "will have terrible human consequences", said Bishop Joe Vasquez, of Austin, Texas, who is chairman of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration.

◀ **USA:** People take part in the refugee-themed Stations of the Cross in Baltimore. Over 200 people participated in the event, organised in response to the news that US Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers were to begin carrying out deportation orders for some immigrants.



POLAND: Police detain far-right protesters as they try to block the city's first 'Equality Parade' rally in support of the LGBT community in Bialystok.



GERMANY: People cool off in a fountain outside the Berlin cathedral, as temperatures reach new record highs.



POLAND: People in La Cumbre are seen near a statue of Jesus.
Photos: CNS



PHILIPPINES: People gather on a field after twin earthquakes struck the Batanes Province on the Philippines' northernmost island. Bishop Danilo Ulep has appealed for prayers and help for victims of the disaster.



We wake up into life with the incurable sense that we're special, that we're the centre of the universe. And, subjectively, we are! In our awareness we're the centre of the universe and life does revolve around us. Our own being is what's most massively real to us. As Descartes famously said, the only thing that we know for sure is real is our own selves; I think, therefore, I am. We may be dreaming everything else.

Spirituality has perennially judged this negatively. Egocentricity, feelings of grandiosity, self-centredness, and pride were seen as the result of the corruption of human nature through original sin. We called it, The Fall. Our first parents attempted to overreach, to be more than God intended them to be, and this irrevocably corrupted their nature and we, their children, inherit this. So we, adult children of Adam and Eve, too instinctually tend to overreach, to puff up in self-importance, to fill with pride, and think first about ourselves.

Pride

That doctrine of original sin has something important to say, but it isn't first of all to shame us in our natural pride and sense of specialness. The real reason pride and grandiosity are incurably ingrained inside us is because God built us that way, and that, of itself, is not a fault or a corruption but instead constitutes what's highest and most precious inside us. Both Christianity and Judaism take as dogma that we're born, every one of us, in the image and likeness of God. That's not to be imagined piously as some beautiful icon stamped inside our souls

Our grandiosity and our wounds



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

but rather as fire, divine fire, which because it is godly brings with it a sense of the preciousness, dignity, and uniqueness, of our lives. But with that too comes (as part of the same package) pride and grandiosity. Simply put, we can't have Godliness inside us and not feel ourselves as special.

“We're now seven and half billion people on this earth, each one with the same innate sense that he or she is the centre of the universe”

And that makes for a less-than-serene situation for the planet. We're now seven and half billion people on this earth, each one with the same innate sense that he or she is the centre of the universe and that his or her own reality is what's most real. That's the real cause behind what you see happening on the world news each night, for worse and for better. Grandiosity is the source of human strife, but equally the source of human greatness.

Important in our understanding of this is that our innate sense of godliness is also the place where we

suffer our deepest wounds. What most wounds the image and likeness of God inside us? These things: humiliation, lack of adequate self-expression, the perennial frustration of bumping up against the limits of life, and the martyrdom of obscurity.

Each of us, by our nature, possesses a divinely-given uniqueness and dignity and thus nothing wounds us more than being humiliated and shamed in our struggle to live this out. A shameful humiliation, even as a very young child, can scar us for the rest of our lives. It's one of the reasons why we have mass killings. Likewise, as Iris Murdoch once said, the greatest human pain is the pain of inadequate self-expression. There's a great artist, composer, teacher, athlete, and performer inside each of us, but few people can ever give that satisfying expression. The rest of us have to live with perennial frustration because what's deepest in us lies unexpressed. As well, we're forever bumping up against the real limits of our own lives and limits of life itself. In Karl Rahner's words: In the torment of the insufficiency of everything attainable, we ultimately learn that here in this life there is no finished symphony. In the end, all of us

die with a life that was never fully consummated. And that isn't easily accepted! Everything inside us militates against this. Finally, almost all of us live a certain martyrdom of obscurity, recognised and famous only inside our own daydreams, our greatness hidden from the world. That too isn't easily accepted.

Shame

What's to take away from this? Since we secretly nurse thoughts of specialness should we also nurse a secret shame? Is our innate pride something that sets us against holiness? Is our grandiosity a bad thing? Is our frustration with the limits and inadequacy of our lives something that displeases God? Are our daydreams of uniqueness and greatness something which taints our contemplation and prayer? Is our nature, of itself, somehow corrupt? Must we somehow step outside of our own skin to be saints?

Each of these questions can be answered in two ways. Grandiosity, pride, shame, frustration, and daydreams of greatness, can indeed be our downfall and turn us into awful persons, selfish, jealous, spiteful, and murderous. But they can also be the source of greatness, of nobility of soul, of generosity, of selflessness, of generativity, of true prayer, and can turn us into selfless martyrs of faith, hope, and charity. Our godliness is very mixed blessing; but it is, no doubt, our greatest blessing.

QUESTIONS of faith

Each week Colm Fitzpatrick looks at interesting and sometimes controversial questions people have about Catholicism...



Do Christians and Muslims worship the same God?

The question of whether Christians and Muslims worship the same God has been a point of contention among different religious denominations and various scholars. It has been suggested that the sheer disparities theologically and philosophically between both religions indicate that its adherents must be praying to separate deities. It seems, however, that arguments which support differentiating the two aren't sound.

Both Islam and Christianity, just like Judaism, are monotheistic religions tracing their roots back to Abraham. While Muslims believe that the Bible has been corrupted or altered in some shape or form, they still hold that God revealed his message to the prophets like Moses and Abraham.

The Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium* makes this clear when it reads: "The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind's judge on the last day." (16)

Distinction

But while the Church teaches that both religions worship the same God, an important distinction must be made, namely that our conception of God is different. Muslims, for example, don't believe that Jesus was the Son of God or hold to the doctrine of the Trinity. This doesn't mean that Muslims aren't referring to the same God, only that they have a different sense of who God is.

It's a difficult concept to get your head around, so an analogy would best serve to elucidate the point. Suppose

there's a man called Fred who has two siblings.

One sibling sees him as charming and kind; the other views him as a cold and self-centred. Both siblings conceive of Fred in different ways, but there's no doubt that they're definitely referring to the same person.

Likewise, even though Muslims don't understand God in the same way as Christians, it doesn't mean they aren't genuinely directing their prayers to him.

Perspective

The famous Church document on religious unity, *Nostra Aetate*, lucidly sums up this perspective.

"The Church regards with esteem also The Muslims. They adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself; merciful and all-powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to men; they take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even His inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God.

"Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere Him as a prophet. They also honour Mary, His virgin Mother; at times they even call on her with devotion. In addition, they await the Day of Judgment when God will render their deserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead. Finally, they value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting." (3)

So, while Muslims and Christians have different conceptions of God, the deity they worship is the same.

Got a question or comment?
Email colm@irishcatholic.ie

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, August 1, 2019

Personal Profile

On the mission
for justice

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Thinking your way to good health



With stresses like work, family, friends, relationships and money, it's hard to stay positive. Some days, people feel like it is just one thing after another.

On days like that, when the alarm doesn't go off, the car won't start and coffee spills everywhere, negativity takes over like a bad cold. Although it's easy enough for people to be certain that the entire world is against them and they just can't catch a break, it's vital to remember one thing: someone has it worse, so be grateful.

There are few things simpler than taking a negative approach to life; complaining is easy. The hard task is being able to recognise everything one should



**Negative thoughts can
cause more damage
than you think, writes
Madison Duddy**

be thankful for and using that positivity to overcome the bad stuff. Taking a pessimistic approach to life creates miserable people, and can be detrimental to one's physical health.

When a person is constantly negative, their brain is affected. As a result, they will not handle stressful situations well. Not only is stress bad for one's

mental health, but it releases the stress hormone, cortisol, which, among many things, weakens the immune system and makes people feel horrible. Side effects like stomach pain can be common when someone is really stressed, making eating a difficult task.

In terms of the immune system, stress caused by

negativity forces dominance on one side of the immune system, the Type 2 side of extracellular threats. This dominance on the Type 2 side is unhealthy and messes with the immune system, making it weak.

Ishita Sangra, a physiotherapist in Dublin, says "the immune system will tire and cause people to be very lethargic and have a hard time to get out. Physically, negativity does all these things. The more you sleep, the more you will want to be sleeping, and this will impact your feelings and behavior quite a bit."

Positive thinking can have short and long-term health benefits. Besides producing lower rates of depression and distress, positivity can

increase one's lifespan, helping them fight off illnesses like the common cold, improve cardiovascular health, and reduce the risk of death from heart disease.

So how can people train themselves to find the silver lining in everyday experiences?

First, focus on the positive. No matter how bad a person's day is, there is always something positive they can focus on. Negative people highlight the bad things that happen in their life rather than the positive. Few days are perfect, but no days are one hundred percent bad. Even if it is honing in on general things to be grateful for like health, family, friends,

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Family News

AND EVENTS

HAVE A BALL AT WICKLOW'S WORLD CUP

If you're aged from 6-9 years old, best get your football boots on and get ready for Wicklow's very own World Cup.

The newly re-established St Peter's Football Academy for boys and girls over four years old, based in Bray, will also host a day full of fun activities.

St Peter's FC family fun day takes place on August 10 from 11am-4pm at Little Bray Community Centre. Bouncy castles, spin the wheel, face painting, arts and crafts, a DJ and many more attractions are promised to entertain and delight.

On the day there will be a 7-a-side mini World Cup which costs €10 per child, for ages 6-9. There will be t-shirts and soft drinks available for children.

The winners and runners-up will get trophies. Anyone interested in the mini World Cup can call or text Robbie at 0862454818 or message the Facebook page. There will also be a penalty shootout for children aged 4-6.

IMPLANT A HEALTHY DIET AND DEFY DIABETES

Sticking to a plant-based diet could help lower your risk of type 2 diabetes, a new paper suggests.

The diet is even more beneficial when only healthy plant-based foods – such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and nuts – are included in your daily diet, as opposed to refined grains, starches and sugars, according to the study, published in the journal JAMA Internal Medicine last week.

"We found that eating plant-based diets was associated with, on average, 23% reduction in diabetes risk," said Dr Qi Sun, an associate professor in the Department of Nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Boston and senior author of the paper.

"We further showed that individuals who consumed a healthy version of the plant-based diet by emphasising the intake of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and legumes, and minimising intake of sugar-sweetened beverages and refined carbohydrates, had a further 30% reduction in their risk of developing type 2 diabetes," he said.

THE KEY TO EFFORTLESS SECURITY

In hectic family life there's hundreds of things to remember and tasks to complete on a daily basis, forgetting a key is the last thing you want to do.

A fingerprint padlock removes the need for keys. With the touch of a finger the padlock will recognise your fingerprint and open in one second.

No need to be concerned about family or friends not being able to open it if you want them to be able to, as certain models can record up to 15 different finger prints. Depending on the model – some also have Bluetooth capabilities – they can cost anything from €20-€80.

Check to see the battery life and quality of materials used to make the fingerprint padlock, as it needs to be waterproof and robust enough to deter thieves. Also check if it has a low power consumption and long standby time. Once fully charged, some batteries can last a month.



Checking the changes

Doctors are often asked to do blood tests or checks on people as they get older to make sure all is well and give reassurance to their patients. The old adage of "prevention is better than cure" is so true and indeed early detection and treatment can also make a big difference. However, in a healthcare system under pressure, sometimes the "worried well" might end up getting unnecessary tests and in recent years there has also been a number of private providers offering health screens to adults of varying ages.

So who should get checked and what tests should be considered as one gets older? There are a number of basic tests that should be considered and then are those that are targeted to people who are higher risk of certain conditions.

For example, everyone from the age of 40 should have their blood pressure checked at least annually as this is a silent cause of heart and stroke disease. It has also been recommended to check blood pressure every three to five years in those under 40 and more frequently if you're young and overweight.

"You should get tested for diabetes or pre-diabetes if you are overweight, have a family history or have symptoms and this can be repeated every three years."

Cholesterol is determined not just by diet but in fact about 70% is dependent on your metabolism and genetics. For this reason, you should consider getting your cholesterol checked in your 20's and then every five years.

Medical Matters

Dr Kevin McCarroll



You should get tested for diabetes or pre-diabetes if you are overweight, have a family history or have symptoms and this can be repeated every three years.

In those with a strong family history of coronary disease, or who have other risk factors like heavy smoking then an exercise stress test can be considered. It involves running on a treadmill with heart monitoring. However, in those with significant but non-occlusive coronary disease the test can be negative. In addition, its primary role is in assessing patients who have symptoms of chest pain. In those with moderate to high risk of heart disease then a screening CT coronary angiogram can be done which is a non-invasive test that allows visualisation of the coronary arteries. It involves injecting a dye into a vein in your arm followed by CT imaging which identifies the degree of plaque and narrowing in the blood vessels. When significantly abnormal, it may need to be followed up with further tests.

An irregular heart rate (atrial fibrillation) occurs in about 10% of those over 65 and is a major cause of stroke. If you're visiting your GP it's a good idea to get them to check for this as in many cases there are no symptoms and treatment with blood thinners

reduces your stroke risk by about 70%.

Screening for cancer has been the topic of much recent discussion. Breast cancer screening with mammography is available every two years from the ages of 50-67.

"Breast cancer screening with mammography is available every two years from the ages of 50-67."

You can also get checked for prostate cancer (usually in men aged 50+) with the PSA blood test which is raised in about



80% of cancer cases. However, in older men it may also be elevated due to benign prostate enlargement sometimes leading to unnecessary tests. Despite this, in healthy men checking a PSA can identify cancer at an early stage when curative therapy can be given. Indeed, many men have received treatment on foot of PSA screening who would otherwise have had their cancer potentially diagnosed much later. Furthermore, having a baseline PSA level to monitor for future change may be useful.

Screening for bowel cancer is provided by the HSE every two years for those between the ages of 60-69. It involves collecting a small sample of stool and sending it to a laboratory to test for occult

blood. About 5% will have an abnormal result and some will need further tests. If you have a first degree relative (parent or sibling) who was diagnosed with colorectal cancer before the age of 60, then screening with a colonoscopy (camera test of bowel) should be considered.

An aneurysm or a bulge in the aorta (the main artery in the body) occurs in up to 8% of men aged 65+, can increase in size and sometimes rupture. Guidelines vary but screening with a simple ultrasound has been recommended in men aged 65+ and should also be considered in those who are younger with a family history or who smoke and have high blood pressure.

"If you are female and 65+ or male and 70+, you should consider getting a DXA to assess for brittle bones."

If you are female and 65+ or male and 70+, you should consider getting a DXA to assess for brittle bones. A DXA may need to be done earlier if there are other risk factors such as alcohol excess, smoking and a family history or if you have a fracture from minimal trauma. Finally, if you have a family history of glaucoma you should get your eyes checked every three years by your optician starting from the age of 40.

As always, you should be vigilant for any changes in your body or new persistent symptoms that should prompt you to visit your GP.

Dr Kevin McCarroll is a Consultant Physician in Geriatric Medicine, St James's Hospital, Dublin.

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employment, a place to sleep, and food to eat, these are some of the most important blessings to recognise. Millions of people in the world don't possess some or any of these simple blessings. Even just recognising the opportunity of being able to live another day can put things into perspective and make a person remember that so many people's lives were cut short.

Ishita also emphasised the importance of focusing on the good over the bad.

"You can start with acknowledging the blessings that you have in your life, gratitude about things that maybe you can't see. We always concentrate on what we don't have instead of what we have, so if you can really concentrate on what you have, you can feel more positive and concentrate on here and now."

Negative self-talk can be one of the key aspects of an adverse outlook. Mainly, pessimistic people filter, personalise, catastrophise and polarise.

“Filtering is when one highlights the negative in a situation, causing them to forget the positive. Ignoring the positive creates an unfavourable outlook, feeding into a stressed and depressed person.”

Filtering is when one highlights the negative in a situation, causing them to forget the positive. Ignoring the positive creates an unfavourable outlook, feeding into a stressed and depressed person.

Personalising is simply a case of overanalysing a situation from a negative viewpoint, so

much so that the person always blames themselves when things go wrong. A lot of events that happen in life are out one's realm of control. Trying to control everything or blaming oneself ruins self-esteem and is self-deprecating.

“Stressing about something before it has even happened yet is more or less the equivalent of a person getting upset about their dog dying the day they bring home a new dog.”

Catastrophising is when a person always expects the worst. Negative anticipation can be one of the most dangerous things a person can do to themselves because it causes them to worry about things before they even happen. Simply, they descend into stress at the possibility of a bad thing happening, which makes no sense. The common parental advice of 'don't worry about things until they happen' can be one of the most valuable phrases to live by



and fights a lot of the negativity and stress in people's lives.

Stressing about something before it has even happened yet is more or less the equivalent of a person getting upset about their dog dying the day they bring home a new dog. Yes, some things in life are inevitable, but if people focus their energy on events that will not occur for a long time or may not happen at all, they will never be happy or stop becoming stressed.

Lastly, polarising is when someone cannot see a situation as having good and bad aspects. To them, the event is polar. Although it sounds banal, looking for a silver lining in every situation can change a person's outlook on life. There is always something positive in the negative, no matter what happens. It's hard to find the positive sometimes, but when a person does, they will be grateful for every experience they have in life.

“It's hard to find the positive sometimes, but when a person does, they will be grateful for every experience they have in life.”

If someone passes away, a person can be thankful that they got to know them and share part of their life with them. Especially with love, people will end up heartbroken, and although breakups can look like negative situations, one can consider the lessons they learned from that relationship. In every life experience, there are lessons learned, and those lessons are often a perfect silver lining in a sea of dark clouds.

Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



I'm writing this from Istanbul, where I am for a four-day business trip. It's rare that work takes me away. As I loaded up the car to head for the airport, the children demanded repeated hugs, in turn. Even the baby seemed to know something was up, and she clung to me tightly and had to be prised off. There were sad faces as I pulled away, and my four-year-old was in tears. However, a promise that I would return laden with Turkish delight seemed to ease their sorrows somewhat. After all, if I do not go away, I cannot return with Turkish delight.

Next to me on the plane over was a family, flying onwards to the Gulf. They had kids a similar age to my own, with all the same needs and wants as mine, they played similar games with each other. They were from one of the stricter Islamic traditions, as the mother wore a full veil.

One of the great benefits of travelling is the continued discovery that people all over the world are much the same as one another. Family units especially function in much the same way whether you are in Thailand, India or Africa. Everyone has a mother and father, and most of us are fortunate enough to be raised lovingly by them, perhaps along with brothers and sisters.

The same sibling disputes, and tenderesses, occur in all families around the globe. All children push the boundaries of their parent's rules and, of course, mothers and fathers the world over love their children with the same incredible depth of feeling.

We Irish are famous for our céad míle fáilte, but the Turks give us a run for our money as one of the warmest and most welcoming people you could imagine. Being welcoming and kind is a strong part of Turkish culture.

Since all people have so much fundamentally in common, regardless of their nationality or beliefs, it often strikes me as both tragic, and slightly ridiculous, that nations and different cultures so often end up distrustful of one another. In worst cases, they end up in wars.

This century began with an optimistic feeling of walls falling, and borders

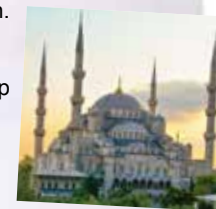
disappearing. Yet the World Trade Centre attack on September 11, 2001 shattered that emerging dream, as wars erupted. Instead, we have lapsed into a time when walls are going up around the world, hostility is increasing, and demagogic politicians are coming to power – and this is the world we are bequeathing our children.

Turkey's proposed membership of the EU was cynically exploited during the Brexit campaign – even by the new UK prime minister, who himself has a Turkish great-grandfather. There is a poignancy to the number plates on Turkish cars: they all have the blue stripe where the EU stars should go – but no EU stars. The stripe was put there in the not unreasonable expectation that sometime in the lifetime of that vehicle, Turkey would enter the EU. Perhaps it will in the coming years, but this recent unfortunate global political tide of building walls instead of dismantling them seems set to delay accession.

Yet perhaps the most famous exponent of walls, President Trump recently did something surprising. After Iran shot down a US drone, he cancelled a planned counter-attack at the last moment, saying he didn't want 150 Iranians to die. He later said he knew a lot of Iranians, and that they were great people, and that this maybe influenced his thinking. It's certainly worth getting to know one another.

As the airplane flew over Germany, I recalled studying there in the late 90s. Not many decades prior the RAF had completely destroyed Würzburg, where I had studied, creating a firestorm that killed thousands and which turned the stone buildings to lava. Bamberg, down the road, was spared such treatment because a US air force officer had studied there before the war, and made a passionate case for it to be spared.

It's worth getting to know each other. It's worth travelling, and approaching the rich cultures we find with a welcoming curiosity.



On the mission for justice

Personal Profile



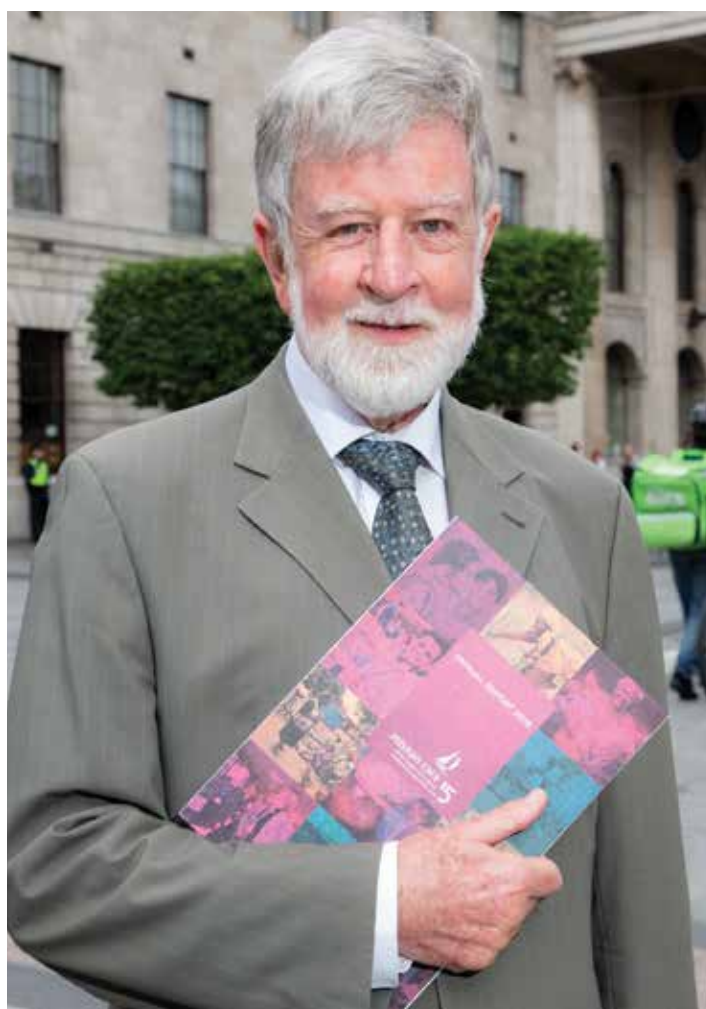
Madison Duddy speaks with Misean Cara Chairperson Justin Kilcullen

“Clearly, the work of the missionary orders as represented by the Irish is actually coming to an end. You can see the numbers are declining slowly, but surely, some things evolve in a different way, and we have to be able to continually change to ensure that we continue to make a contribution as long as we can,” says Justin Kilcullen, Chairperson at Misean Cara.

“For Justin, the decrease in people joining missionary organisations is upsetting because he believes in the value of missionary work that continues the Church’s long history of evangelisation.”

For Justin, the decrease in people joining missionary organisations is upsetting because he believes in the value of missionary work that continues the Church’s long history of evangelisation.

“Misean Cara is a dynamic organisation,” Justin says. “Since its foundation in 2004, it has channelled over €200 million to thousands of projects in over 90



countries around the world. I find myself repeatedly humbled by the dedication and courage of the missionaries I meet...”

In 2015, Misean Cara asked Justin to join their board as Chairperson after his 20 years as the Director of Trócaire, the overseas development agency of the Church. While with Trócaire, Justin worked closely with many missionary congregations and admired their service.

“You can go anywhere, to the most remote community, and you will find a missionary there, living in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, working with people

to create opportunities and better lives,” says Justin.

Although his job with Misean Cara is mainly committee work, he says he is thankful for his missionary travels.

“In the month of June, I was in Cebu in the Philippines with the Presentation Sisters, working in the slums of a small ethnic minority group known as the Sea Nomads. They’re a very marginalised group and the sisters have been working with them now for the last 10-15 years, doing an amazing job and helping these people to survive and to discover their own human dignity and to claim their rights.

This is just one small example of the hundreds of projects that go on around the world with missionaries every day,” says Justin.

Missionary work uplifts the suffering in society, and Justin emphasises that the work is so important because it is a form of Christian witness.

“There is a new era of missionary work now because in the early years of missionary work, there was a lot of evangelisation, and now what we see is that a lot of the missionary countries establish their own local churches with their local bishops and priests and local orders of nuns and so on,” Justin says. “I think missionary work now is about standing in solidarity with these new emerging Church structures, continuing to give what experience we have to help them and at the same time continuing the work at the grassroots, and working in the villages and in the communities. I think development work is very important and I call it the work of justice.”

“Missionary work has been a vital part of the structure of the Church since its earliest days, according to Justin. Although the work of missionaries has evolved, its value is unchangeable.”

Missionary work has been a vital part of the structure of the Church since its earliest days, according to Justin. Although the work of missionaries has evolved, its value is unchangeable.

“The Synod of Bishops working in Rome in the early 1970s specifically discussed the social justice work of the Church and made a very clear statement that the work of justice is a constituent part of the preaching of the Gospel,”

says Justin. “In the early days of missionary life, the preaching of the Gospel was overtly preaching the Word of God. I think at this stage the local churches are initially doing that and continuing to preach the Gospel through the work of justice.”

Having grown up in a traditional Irish Catholic family from Dublin, faith has always been a significant part of Justin’s life. He was called to a life of missionary work and is grateful every day for the 40 years he has dedicated to it, saying it has been “rewarding, personally and spiritually”.

“It has made my life, and I like that I have been able to enjoy and make my contribution to the common good.”

“It has made my life, and I like that I have been able to enjoy and make my contribution to the common good,” says Justin.

Even so, he understands that not everyone has the call to missionary work. As he put it, “people have to do other things as well to make society function”. But for those who heed the call, they can look forward to fulfilling experiences through service.

“There are people who are interested and have a natural inclination to serve other people, and one way to do that, particularly from a faith perspective, is missionary work,” says Justin. “It doesn’t have to be for life as it is for people who have been consecrated in religious orders or ordained as priests, but something that can be done for a period of time.

“It all depends on how it works out for different people, but I think that their missionary work is part of the witness of the Church to behold Jesus for mankind.”



Children’s Corner

Chai Brady

A quick guide to creating and escaping quicksand

A lot can be learned from a certain terror found at some beaches, bogs and riverbanks. It’s a life-threatening natural phenomenon that has been portrayed in a huge number of films but is not completely understood by many.

Quicksand is created when water is trapped in sand or marshy earth, thus creating a soil that is halfway between a solid and a liquid. Although the name quicksand would indicate it is in fact created with sand, it can be any mass of clay or dirt particles that contain trapped water. But how can we learn more about it, while not getting too close?

There’s no better way to understand quicksand than by making it yourself. Although it has been depicted as unrealistically being able to swallow people in seconds, generally it is too dense for this to happen.

This doesn’t mean it’s not dangerous. Quicksand is a master of disguise, it can look completely solid when undisturbed, which makes it easy for people to stumble right into it.

In order to understand how to save yourself if this happens, the best thing to do is study your

own homemade quicksand— which is very easy to make.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of maize cornflour
- Half a cup of water
- A large plastic container
- A spoon

If you add just the right amount of water to cornflour it becomes very thick when you stir it quickly. This happens because the cornflour grains can’t slide over each other due to the lack of water between them. Stirring slowly allows more water between the cornflour grains, letting them slide over each other much easier.

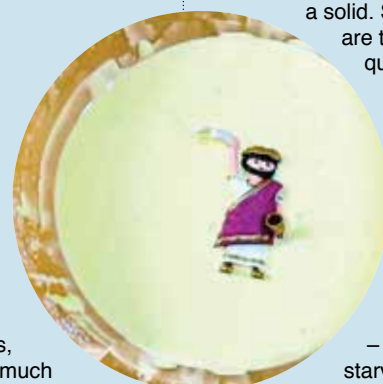
Poking it quickly has the same effect, making the substance very hard. If you poke it slowly your finger can enter your quicksand easily. It works the same way as real quicksand.

Much can be learned from this. Many people who unknowingly walk right into quicksand

panic, and make harsh movements in order to get out, this will cause the substance to act as a solid. Slow and steady movements are the best way of manoeuvring in quicksand, as it allows water to mix more easily with the sand or dirt particles.

Removing excess weight will stop you sinking faster. Although it is unlikely you’ll sink all the way, as the human body is generally not as dense as quicksand, becoming trapped can lead to hypothermia or sunstroke – depending on the climate – or starvation.

Back float your way out, don’t back stroke your way out. Keep your arm movements controlled, small, and close to your core to avoid further liquefying the quicksand. And whatever you do, don’t try to float out on your stomach! This increases the danger of getting your head stuck below quicksand.



TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Discussion abound on Boris' believe in God

One of last week's biggest news stories was the election of Boris Johnson as leader of the UK Conservative Party and therefore Prime Minister. It has made for some fascinating political discussions in the media.

Last weekend, **Sunday** (BBC Radio 4) asked the question 'Does Boris do God?' It was an interesting discussion but rather light on detail – lots of speculation without much evidence. One of the many resignations that happened on Boris' elevation was that of Mohammed Amin, Chair of the Conservative Muslim Forum. He said he had a problem with the new PM's 'moral approach to life' and his comments about Muslim women wearing Burkas – likely to lead to these women being abused in the street. Johnson was baptised Catholic but confirmed Anglican, though we didn't find out why there was a switch. Apparently he has said that his faith 'comes and goes' like poor radio reception!

Theologian Theo Hobson reckoned that 'religion exposes his shortcomings' and that he finds religion useful for social order and for the country's traditions. Philip Blond of the Res Publica think tank thought Johnson didn't seem to uphold 'the idea of objective truth'. He thought the key question was whether Johnson would



Prime Minister Boris Johnson is a topic of conversation.

pursue 'the general good', the interests of everybody, or whether he would pursue 'partisan good'. He wondered whether Johnson might grow into his role as PM.

On last Thursday's **The Pledge** (Sky News) his sister Rachel, a remainder on the Brexit issue, was in an awkward position, but she urged other panellists to concentrate on her brother's policies rather than making personal attacks. On last Sunday's **Marian** (RTE Radio 1) journalist Sam Smyth and artist Annabel Eyres, who knew Boris personally, gave some

useful insights into his character and, unlike most Irish media coverage, it was mostly positive on a personal level, though they didn't agree with his politics.

Back in the UK, last week's **Panorama** (BBC One, Monday, BBC Two Friday) covered the abortion issue in the USA, in the light of recent state restrictions. One pro-choice contributor suggested that the motivation behind these moves is to force a challenge to *Roe v Wade* (the Supreme Court decision that struck down anti-abortion laws), especially now that the

Supreme Court has potentially a conservative majority.

In one clinic we saw a doctor performing an abortion, which rattled the presenter Hilary Andersson. Unsurprisingly it was tough to watch the taking of an innocent life, though the programme wasn't portraying it in those terms. However it was sanitised – when the same doctor did a live delivery later there was celebration and we saw the new-born baby, but with the abortion, no sign of the dead baby. At this clinic the presenter said volunteers were shielding the clients from 'vitriol'. We heard one of the protestors calling out 'We want to hug you!'

Later we had a chilling interview with a doctor who does late terminations. He calls them 'babies' and when asked if he had problems with 'killing a baby' said he didn't as long as the baby was in the uterus (where, one might have thought, the baby should be safest of all). He frankly described the administering of a fatal injection and the crushing of the dead baby's



Panorama presenter Hilary Andersson

PICK OF THE WEEK

SONGS OF PRAISE

BBC One Sun 4 Aug 1.15 pm

Katherine Jenkins visits St Mary's Twickenham, the oldest Catholic University in the UK.

FÍORSCEÁL

TG4 Thurs 8 Aug 10.30pm

This is Palestine: John McColgan visits the West Bank and Gaza with Trócaire showing the urgent need for a renewed effort to bring a lasting peace to all the people of this region.

AMISH GRACE

TG4 Thurs 8 Aug 11.30 pm

(2010) Starring Kimberly Williams-Paisley and Tammy Blanchard. This movie explores the Amish's astonishing reaction to a horrific school shooting - forgiveness and compassion

skull. He wouldn't even say what gestational limit he'd apply. The interviewer didn't ask about partial birth abortions, but it was still repulsive in the extreme.

Pro-lifers are often accused, judgementally and without evidence, of not caring about babies after they're born, but one lady, Kandi, who had an abortion herself, looks after babies that have been saved from abortion, even when, as in one sad case, the baby in question has a severe skin disease. For her 'there's great hope in adoption'.

Though the pro-life position was well represented, the programme makers characterised the opposition to abortion as solely a religious thing, coming primarily from evangelicals. They ignored the human rights opposition

to abortion, and likewise the Catholic Church's 'seamless garment' advocacy on all life issues. I didn't like the presenter's use of terms like 'rapist's child', with mentions of 'backstreet abortions' and association of rights based approach with pro-choice side primarily. Even the framing of the initial question was telling: 'We ask, could women here lose the right to abortion?' Why not suggest also that babies might be regaining rights?

At least it showed that this issue isn't going away as our local pro-choice activists would like to think.

✉ boregan@hotmail.com,
boreganmedia



Pat O'Kelly

Music

Classic performed with youthful NYOI exuberance

No doubt the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland (NYOI) is already planning its courses and programmes for its golden jubilee next year. Founded in 1970 by the intrepid Olive Smith (often mischievously but endearingly referred to as 'Granny' Smith by the teenage players) and the Dublin-born, London-based violinist Hugh Maguire, who was also NYOI's conductor for a lengthy period.

Over the years, too, the orchestra has grown not only in numbers but also in musical stature and hearing NYOI again last month I can vouch for the professional standard that has brought with it a positive richness of orchestral musicianship.

Strangely I almost avoided



Christian Vázquez.

the NCH concert on July 17, which had been previewed in Waterford's WIT Arena the previous evening, as I felt the programme had too many 'bits and pieces'. Happily, I cast my prejudices aside and delightedly found the orchestral playing, under dynamic Venezuelan

conductor Christian Vázquez, achieving admirable quality.

The concert's first part was devoted to Tchaikovsky's *2nd (Little Russian) Symphony* while Part II had a collage of Hispanic colour with music from Spain, Mexico and South America.

It was good to hear Tchaikovsky again as nowadays the agreeable work only gets an occasional airing. Like its surrounding siblings – *Winter Daydreams* and the *Polish – the Little Russian*, so called because of its use of Ukrainian folk tunes, has been overshadowed by the three masterpieces of the composer's maturity.

Written in 1872, the *2nd Symphony* had a successful *première* in Moscow

the following year. However, somewhat dissatisfied, Tchaikovsky made extensive revisions. In its new form the *Symphony* had its first performance in St Petersburg in 1882 and it remained one of the composer's favourites.

Zest

NYOI's spirited attack brought the work to life from the opening bars with playing of remarkable zest in both the strength of its strings and the sturdiness of its brass. Clarinets and timpani led the Andantino marziale second movement – the only section left untouched in Tchaikovsky's modifications – but the woodwind really came into its own in the scampering Scherzo.

The rumbustious finale, with touches of Mussorgsky and hints of what would follow in Tchaikovsky's later symphonies, had the young musicians rising powerfully to both the occasion and Maestro Vázquez' vibrant interpretation.

The second half of the evening, with NYOI's percussion having a field day, bristled with energy. It began with Manuel de Falla's *Three Cornered Hat* suite. The mercurial ballet, commissioned by Sergei Diaghilev and with Leonid Massine's choreography, was first seen in London in 1919. It remains one of Falla's most exuberant and colourful scores. Under Señor Vázquez' imaginative direction, NYOI caught the Andalusian atmosphere superbly and had expressive solos from principal horn and *cor anglais*.

Excursions to Mexico came through José Pablo Moncayo and Arturo Márquez while Alberto Ginastera took us to Argentina before Zequinha de Abreu's catchy Tico-Tico landed us finally in Brazil.

Whatever about the 'bits and pieces', this was a splendid concert with the intensity of the performances showing 'also rans' simply do not exist in the solid ranks of NYOI's ensemble.

● A recent biography, *Olive Smith – A Musical Visionary*, affectionately written by her daughter Gillian Smith, is currently available in bookshops nationwide.



BookReviews

Peter Costello



Recent books in brief

The Bible Tells Me So...Why defending Scripture has made us unable to read it

by Peter Ennis
(Hodder & Stoughton, €14.99)

This book, by an American academic and evangelical, is one which will interest a wide audience. Through many years of both teaching and preaching, he came to face a problem. The further he studies the Bible, the more he found himself confronted by questions that could neither be answered within the rigid framework of his religious instruction or accepted among the conservative evangelical community.

He speaks of the "intellectual games" that many use to "protect" the Bible. This will awake echoes in many memories: all these specious controversies over creationism, all those claims that God will make the devout especially rich – "because the Bible tells me so..."

He writes in a style and manner that will be accessible to everyone from the least informed person to the engaged biblical scholar with a sceptical mind, he tries to remind people to understand how the texts of the Bible came into existence, how and why they were written, and to try and find what God is saying rather than what the writers and the interpreters are making him appear to say, and how the figure of Jesus has been overloaded with attitudes that have little basis in what he actually says in the Scriptures.

The Dark Interval: Letters for the Grieving Heart

by Rainer Maria Rilke
(Bloomsbury, £12.99)

The Bohemian-German poet Rilke – he was born in Prague in 1875 – has proved to be one of the most widely read German language lyric poets of the last century, attracting the interest and attention of readers around the world.

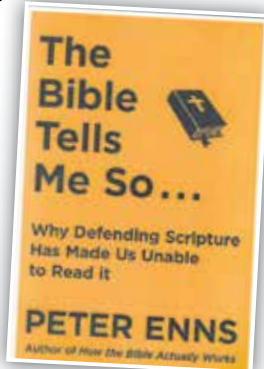
This little book is a collection of letters of condolences to 23 friends on their losses.

Though raised a Catholic, Rilke came to dislike "modern religion". He saw religions as "providing their believers with consolations and embellishments of death instead of giving their soul the means to reconcile and communicate with it".

There are so many books these days about loss and mourning, one might say that death had become an obsession rather than life. These pages will provide many, however, with ways to resolve the issues they feel.

The translator Ulrich Baer shares his own experiences of the reconciliation he found through these messages from a dead poet.

These pages of can be seen as one of literature's gifts to humanity.



Myth, mystery and the depths of religion

Living the Mystery: What lies between Science and Religion

by Mark Patrick Hederman
(Columba Books, €19.99)

Christopher Moriarty

This book is a heartfelt plea from its erudite author who has spent more than 50 years of his life as a Benedictine monk. As a devoted man of religion, he celebrates the value of faith and, as a person who enjoys the physical wellbeing that the achievements of science have brought to humanity, he rejoices in the success of its discipline.

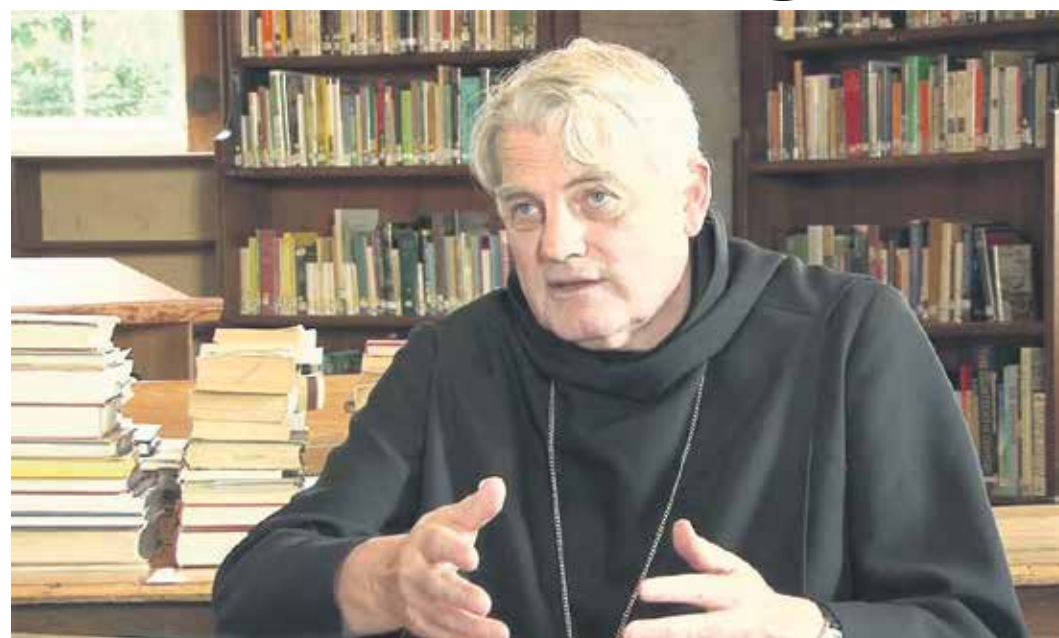
But he is keenly aware of a void in human understanding – and especially in our system of education which permits it. What has been omitted from our culture in recent centuries is the ancient knowledge embodied in the mythical. Mark Patrick Hederman argues forcefully that myths play an essential part in our understanding of the universe and of ourselves as a significant sector of it.

Theme

In addressing his theme the author wanders far and wide to illustrate a multiplicity of significant points. This makes for a most delightful book which introduces – or re-introduces – the reader to a panoply of poets, philosophers, artists and divines with extensive quotations from many.

Amongst Irish writers he brings in Yeats, Joyce, Seamus Heaney and John Moriarty. The film director David Lean comes in for honourable mention as does the philosophy of poet Rainer Maria Rilke and there are many others.

Besides extracts of the works



of so many luminaries, there are many very memorable and inspiring statements by the author himself. Here is one example: "We alone of all the inhabitants of the Earth are capable of praise. Our task as human beings is to achieve the balance between the gravity of the Earth and the openness to the Spirit: the space between the within and the without. To live the 'outside', to allow its breath to seep through us so that we become its sound-box – this is what the Earth is asking of us."

“Our task as human beings is to achieve the balance between the gravity of the Earth and the openness to the Spirit

Religion in a narrow sense is based on doctrine and science, equally narrowly, uses observation and experiment of the physical world. But myth is the culmination of the human imagination.

Nobody is free from its influence and, even in this day of media-saturation, children and adults consciously or unconsciously absorb myths. They abound both in science and in religion in spite of the efforts of the exponents of both to deny the mythical existence.

The absence, from our formal education systems of teaching of myths, especially those relating to physical localities and to folk memory, leads to a tragic lack of shared experience throughout society.

For a long time the author has taken a leading part in developing consciousness of the importance of the myth. Among other achievements was his foundation,

with Richard Kearney, of the journal *The Crane Bag* in which many seminal articles on mythology were published.

“Mark Patrick Hederman argues forcefully that myths play an essential part in our understanding of the universe”

In the current phase of enthusiasm by educational planners for teaching ways of enhancing material gain, the ideal of bringing back an awareness of myth and mystery seems more aspirational than achievable.

Hopefully this book will induce something of a change of heart. In the meantime it stands as a feast of exciting ideas and a signpost to a wealth of reading.

‘Walled around with God’

The Joy of God: Collected Writings

by Sr Mary David
with a foreword by Fr Erik Vardan (Bloomsbury, £12.99)

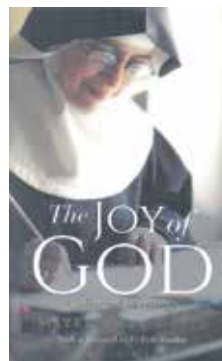
Peter Costello

This collection of essays, or rather talks, reveals a very interesting character. The author Sr Mary David had a late vocation. American born she was educated there, attending Loyola University and the University of Virginia, before crossing the Atlantic to attend Christ Church College in Oxford. She then pursued an intense academic career, becoming an associate profes-

sor at the College of William and Mary in Virginia.

But then she had a change of course and became a Benedictine nun. She joined the community at Ryde in the ever-lovely Isle of Wight. There for some two decades she was in charge of preparing the novices for their vocations.

This posthumous book consist of the allocutions she gave them. They will have a great interest for many readers, for though there are countless



books these days about developing one's spiritual sensibilities, this one focuses on the preparation for a dedicated life in a most immediate way.

Spirituality

Lay people cannot live quite the same dedicated life, but nevertheless the preparation for a vocation will find many applications among those who would like to more effectively combine their spirituality with the actual

everyday work. That after all was the key element in the rule of St Benedict.

Though she happily embraced the life of the convent, finding there as her title suggests 'the joy of God', she was also deeply aware of the world and its way beyond.

In talking to her students there she had always in mind the relevance of what she was telling them to the world beyond the cloister.

As a nun she was, as she expressed it in the title of one of her other books, not walled off from the world, but 'Walled around with God'.

Readers should note that *The Irish Catholic* circulates throughout the island of Ireland and the book prices listed are the retail price recommended by the Irish or British publishers, in either euros or sterling, as a general indication of what purchasers may expect to pay.

Can this fine book really be Gabriel Fitzmaurice's swansong?

A Farewell to Poetry: selected Poems and Translations

by Gabriel Fitzmaurice
(Currach Press, €19.99)

Seamus Cashman

The title of this collection invites echoes of its author's friend and fellow poet Michael Hartnett's Farewell to English – and who knows, perhaps Gabriel's mind is quietly nurturing a similar outcome? Though it is a challenging title, it does give the poet freedom to issue this 'selected poems' equivalent, and to then live with whatever the muse will insist upon in future years.

When it comes to poets at their trade, every word becomes a micro-verse of tension, wrapt in politics, social history, language origins, contemporary and previous usages and more.

So when the word 'Farewell' feeds the title, it merits attention. Here is the ambiguity of 'me' and 'you', or perhaps more accurately of 'I' and 'Thou'. It holds speaker and listener in the moment; offers goodwill into present and future time; carries its perfumed sense of separation or departure tinged with a sadness otherwise un-signalled; it blossoms between the 'now' and 'forever'.

There is also the hint that separation will be long-term. In his poetry too, Gabriel uses language, not in 'Bastilles of the word', to use a Thomas Paine phrase, but as landscapes of both personal and communal ground:

From 'Out of the Abyss':
The years I wasted lost in hurt and doubt!
I trusted none, to none I gave my all,
Dwelt upon myself, with flesh and stout
I drugged my demons and ignored Your call.

From the Irish of Michael Hartnett (1941-1999) 'The Purge':
This is Ireland, and I'm myself.
I preach the gospel of non-



Gabriel Fitzmaurice.

assent,
Love and art is the work I want
As empty as a dipper's nest,
Whiter than a goose's breast –
The poet's road with no
wayside stop upon it,
A road of insignificant herbs
Welling quietly from every
hedge.

“The Fitzmaurice children's poems are superb, and again, never short of a telling title for poem or book

As Fintan O'Toole (*Irish Times*) says on the back cover, “Fitzmaurice is one of the last of the tribal bards, a poet in and of his own kind” – a significant tribute; and he adds: “This is the golden collection and a true testimony of his mastery of the craft.”

And I would add, that his translations from the Irish, well represented here, are really exquisite English language versions (his anthology in 1991 co-edited with Declan Kiberd, *An Crannfaoi-bhláth* is a major work).

So *Farewell to Poetry* distils 35 years of collections, anthologies, translations from Irish language poetry, plus books of poems for children garnishing his adult worklike necklaces of gems.

Here is a writer who, before the arrival of rap and stand-up 'spoken-word' gigs, brought entertainment, joy and community to his many poetry readers.

The Fitzmaurice children's poems are superb, and again, never short of a telling title for poem or book, e.g. do teachers go to the toilet; and Teanan Muinteoirí go dTigh an Asail – and are imbued with a transparent ethos, social sense and respect for the young listeners and readers. Indeed all his poetry carries a social integrity, an ego finely tuned to the importance of community, of environment, be it for a bluebottle or the possibilities in a fireplace

Whether or not you already have a Fitzmaurice collection on your shelves, *Farewell to Poetry* never disappoints, is accessible, energetic, true and pleasure-giving, and is a 'must have' of contemporary Irish poetry.

Mainly About Books

By the books editor

The 'lost city' of Eblana



St Patrick's Well.

The publication in late 2016 of Pat Wallace's *Viking Dublin* (Irish Academic Press, €60.00), was a summation of decades of work by two generations of archaeologists from the National Museum and others, to define the city's beginnings.

However, the book has nothing really to say about pre-Viking Dublin. That was not Wallace's remit.

The idea that Dublin was 'founded by the Vikings' in the 9th Century – around 841 – is now so well established that it is almost never questioned. The truth is that there certainly was a settlement at Dublin from far earlier times, and it was not a mere village at a river crossing.

This place might be called 'the lost city' of Eblana.

“Many ancient cities were unwalled. They grew up around a market place outside the citadel”

That name, the oldest known for Dublin, comes down to us from the Greek geographer Claudius Ptolemy who lived in Alexandria. His geography was a major record of the known world at the beginning of the Christian era, written before 150 AD.

Though 'Eblana' echoes the name Dublin, we are now told this was not a real city, and may refer to a different place altogether. Actually what Ptolemy referred to, as he wrote in Greek, was a place he calls Εβλανά πολις [*Eblana*

civitas in Later Latin].

For the Greek world the idea of a polis meant something exact, for Greek is a very definitive language. A polis was a place with an organised community, a ruling elite, and a central citadel. A village would have been called a χωριό [*choriō*]. The words polis and civitas imply both an organised town and a large body of people – they would not be applied to a mere village. Ptolemy tells us as directly as possible that there was a city at the mouth of the Liffey.

Information

Much of his information derived from Marinus of Tyre (fl. 110c), who had access to Phoenician sources, though Roman sources must have also been utilised by Ptolemy. But as the trade in copper, tin and gold brought Mediterranean traders to the coasts of these islands for thousands of years before that, going back to the Bronze Age.

The evidence of that trade is there in the archaeology; hence the knowledge of the traders has to be factored in. That date 150 AD is the end of a period, not the beginning of one.

Many ancient cities were unwalled. They grew up around a market place outside the citadel, that is to say in Dublin's case, west of Dublin Castle along High Street and Thomas Street. Here the ancient system of roads covering Ireland converged – and made connection across the sea with Chester and other parts of England.

But what gave this settlement its real substance were the ecclesiastical

establishments. This place was an early Christian site. Palladius we are told was sent to Ireland in 429 by Pope Celestine to the Irish “believing in Christ”. The legendary date, 448, of 'St Patrick's' visit to Dublin when he is said to have baptised the local ruler to Christianity may actually be derived from an act of Palladius, later attributed by Jocelyn to Patrick.

“We are now told that 'Eblana' was not a real city...”

Between 450-600 development of the original settlement into a Christian centre continued, with numerous establishments, and a local population dependent on them.

Some eight local churches were early in existence mostly in the area between Cook Street and Dame Street; and other institutions stood in the surrounding district.

Irish monasteries attracted many students and refugees from Britain and Europe, and many would have passed through Dublin to take advantage of the road system.

To ignore the pre-Viking settlement is to quite ignore the Christian roots of the city. It means passing over in silence some 800 years or more of Dublin's earlier history.

No; I think the search for this “lost city of Eblana” should be pursued with serious intent, if only because it represents an important aspect of the very early history of our capital.

Classifieds

The deadline for advertising in the classifieds is 10.30am, the Friday before publication. Contact the Classified Team on 01 687 4094 or email advertising@irishcatholic.ie



A beacon of hope to shine, because of you...

For Ireland's homeless and hungry, Merchants Quay Ireland's Riverbank Centre is first to open in the morning and among the last to close at night. Those with nowhere to turn can find a good meal, medical care, a helping hand, and a fresh start, thanks to donations and legacies.

Come for Tea and a Tour, in private while Riverbank is closed for a couple of hours. See confidentially how Merchants Quay Ireland uses donations and legacies to bring relief and hope. All welcome, bring a guest if you wish.

Ring Emma Murphy at 01-5240965 to be included on the guest list for the August 8th Tour.

LITTLE FLOWER PENNY DINNERS



Little Flower Penny Dinners have been providing meals and services to the homeless and the elderly for over 100 years.

Please help us continue and donate what you can on our website www.LFPD.ie or by phoning us with your credit/debit card details or by post to Little Flower Penny Dinners, 11 Meath St, D8

Phone 01 4536621 or 01 4546795
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HOUSEKEEPER WANTED

Housekeeper required in County Mayo for a retired person. Private accommodation provided. Duties: housekeeping and cooking. Good salary. Suits mature person.

Email: autumnleaf0201@gmail.com

Please pray for the beatification of

Little Nellie of Holy God

"May God enrich with every blessing all those who recommend frequent Communion to little boys and girls proposing Nellie as their model"

— Pope St Pius X, June 4, 1912

By remembering World Missions Ireland in your Will, you will leave a gift of hope for all God's children

Make room in your Will, for the struggling communities we support, and you will help our Church to survive & flourish

To learn how, call Fiona on 01 497 2035 or email fiona@wmi.ie



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CAN YOU EXPLAIN your Catholic Faith? Catechism Study is a path to holiness through understanding. Courses start 1st September in Prosperous Parish Centre. Contact Brid 045 86170.

CATHOLIC CONNECTIONS

BUSY AT work but lonely at home? It does not have to be this way. Let 'Heavenly Partners' introduce you to all our lovely members also looking for someone special. Call 01 531 4997 today.

LOUGH DERG 3 DAY

LOUGH DERG 3 Day Pilgrimage, Final Date August 9 – 11. [Season Ends August 15]. Direct from Dublin €115 / OAP and Students €105. St Oliver Plunkett Pilgrimage. Please phone 086 3853027 or 01 4941171.

WANTED: AU PAIR, GERMANY

RELIABLE and mature person sought to look after two boys (10 & 12 years). Experience necessary looking after children. Living with bilingual Irish family living in Alpine village located midway between Munich and Salzburg. Opportunity to attend German language course. Own apartment and access to car. Contact 087 9051592.

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Archdiocese of Dublin

TEEN FAITH OUTREACH WORKER

If you have a desire to share the teachings of the Gospel to the next generation, the role of Teen Faith Outreach worker might be right for you.

For a fixed term of two years, the Archdiocese of Dublin is seeking to add two enthusiastic and imaginative individuals to the Youth Evangelisation Team. The purpose of this role is to enable parish teams to reach out to teenagers and develop their relationship with God within the parish community.

The successful candidates will work as part of a team supporting parishes to engage teens in parish life in a way that is relevant to them. The Teen Faith Outreach Workers will create and animate local youth events and develop the recruitment of local leaders in conjunction with the local parish leadership teams.

Candidate Requirements

- B.A. Degree in Pastoral Theology;
- Experience of youth ministry and knowledge of relevant youth ministry resources/Social Justice Outreach and Knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching and Laudato Si;
- Have a solid praxis in the Roman Catholic theological tradition;
- Specialisation in music ministry and leading others in music
- Up-to-date IT skills with proficiency in the use of social media;
- Full clean driving licence and the use of a car;
- Strong team player skills and has a demonstrated history of designing imaginative programmes

If you think this role is for you, submit your application by emailing your CV and covering letter to Ashling.keane@dublindiocese.ie by 5pm on Friday 16th August 2019.

Recruitment Process

Candidates successful at the short listing stage will be required to submit two references and be asked to prepare a presentation on a given topic in advance of attending for interview which will take place in the first week of September 2019. Successful candidates at this stage will be asked to undergo a medical assessment and be Garda Vetted.

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Leisure time

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in your will for people
who are homeless**

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FOCUS
Ireland



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www.familyandlife.org
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When you remember
Trócaire in your
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to people living in
the world's
poorest places

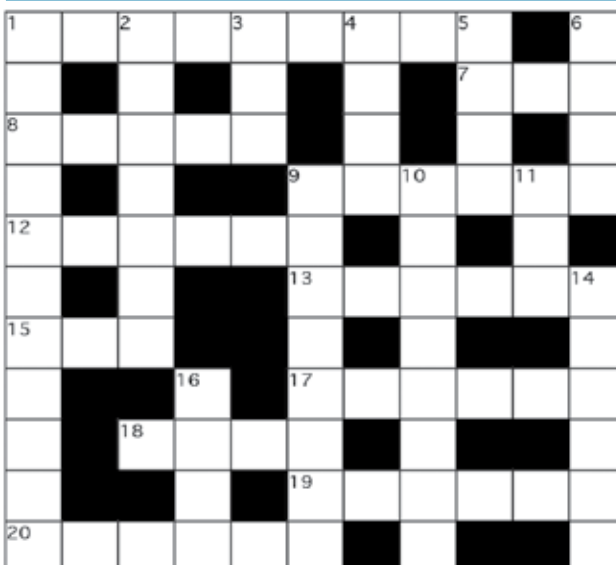
Trócaire

It's easy to get started, and we'll help you every step of the way. Call **Grace Kelly** on 01 629 3333, email grace.kelly@trocaire.org or write to me at Trócaire, Maynooth, Co Kildare.

One day, parents and their children will tell the story of how your legacy of love changed their lives. Thank you for considering a gift to Trócaire in your Will.

Crossword Junior

Gordius 293



ACROSS

- 1 Delicious pie with a fruit filling (5,4)
- 7 Harry Potter's pet, Hedwig, is this kind of bird (3)
- 8 Shut (5)
- 9 Jesus was born in this farm building (6)
- 12 The capital of the UK (6)
- 13 Did as one was told (6)
- 15 This popular name for a dog is the Latin word for 'king' (3)
- 17 Lay these blocks to build a wall (6)
- 18 This pours out of a volcano (4)
- 19 'We're the champions - we finished top of the _____' (6)
- 20 Show something that was hidden (6)

DOWN

- 1 A driver presses this pedal to go faster (11)
- 2 'Harry Potter and the Order of the _____' (7)
- 3 The first woman in the Bible (3)
- 4 The sister of your mother or father (4)
- 5 Place where someone is buried (4)
- 6 A hint in a crossword, like this one! (4)
- 9 It's white and cold, and we throw it for fun (8)
- 10 Person from the USA (8)
- 11 Falsehood, fib (3)
- 14 Sprinted (6)
- 16 Make bread (4)

SOLUTIONS, JULY 25

GORDIUS No.413

Across – 1 Coal cellar 6 Thou 10 Wince 11 Neglected 12 Bus stop 15 Rider 17 Axle 18 Itch 18 Ascot 21 Minaret 23 Hedge fund 25 Else 26 Infer 28 Tragedy 33 Hierarchy 34 Until 35 Suds 36 Abundantly

Down – 1 Cowl 2 Announced 3 Chess 4 Lento 5 Argo 7 Hated 8 Understudy 9 Retreat 13 Thai 14 Parapet 16 Highlights 20 Coup d'état 21 Meerkat 22 Elba 27 Freud 29 Rayon 30 Gouda 31 Scab 32 Play

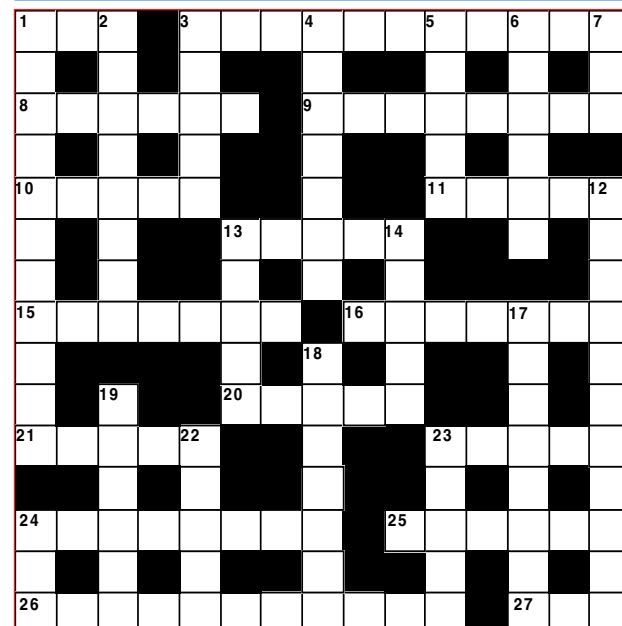
CHILDREN'S No.292

Across – 1 Florida 7 Pull 8 Collect 10 Kettle 11 Sewed 12 Artist 14 Asks 15 Knife 16 Idea 17 Can 18 Time 19 Nose 20 Darts

Down – 2 Lioness 3 Roller-skate 4 Duck 5 Curtain 6 Glue 9 Terrified 13 Tennis 14 Alien 17 Car

Crossword

Gordius 414



ACROSS

- 1 Toothed wheel (3)
- 3 One who achieves great heights in his or her athletic career! (4-7)
- 8 Traditional Arctic dwellings (6)
- 9 'Three-wheeler' (8)
- 10 Bit of a picnic in Galway? Topping! (5)
- 11 Occurrence involving the First Lady (before the New Testament) (5)
- 13 It is used to immobilise an illegally parked car (5)
- 15 The Siren of the Rhine (7)
- 16 The Flower of Cardiff ate back some material (7)
- 20 The 'two' in a deck of cards (5)
- 21 Abated, as the moon does (5)
- 23 Agents for Southern tarts? (5)
- 24 You'll find many are legless here! (5,3)
- 25 Force into a course of action (6)
- 26 Will this tell you how long the cassette is? (4,7)
- 27 A sailor's 'six-pack' (3)

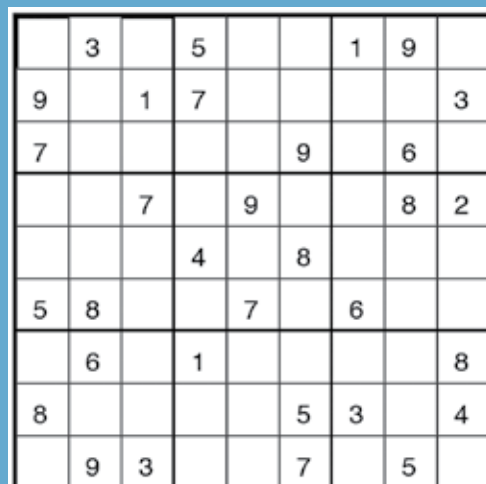
DOWN

- 2 Swift traveller! (8)
- 3 One of the spikes of a fork (5)
- 4 Hold spellbound during the tenth rally (7)
- 5 Male relative (5)
- 6 Voucher, proof of payment (6)
- 7 Regret some cruelty (3)
- 12 & 13 Prayer found in a respected hostel, perhaps (3,8,5)
- 14 Jet (5)
- 17 Country formerly known as Abyssinia (8)
- 18 The copper judges these to be priests (7)
- 19 Bivouac, using cane broken by a British politician (6)
- 22 Reverie (5)
- 23 Teacake provided by the Southern ice-cream holder (5)
- 24 Take a seat (3)

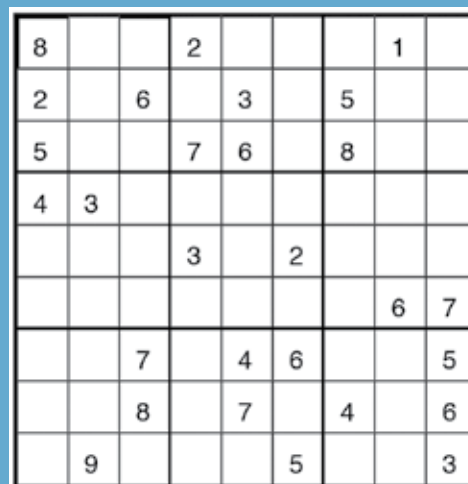
Sudoku Corner

293

Easy



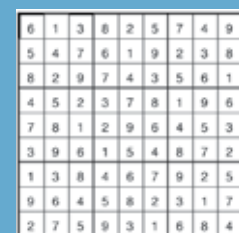
Hard



Last week's Easy 292



Last week's Hard 292



Notebook

Fr Bernard Cotter



Lessons on liturgy from both sides of the Atlantic

I HAVE HAD an interesting summer so far: bookended by two strong liturgies, but with a fairly weak one in between. The American bishops' statement on liturgy always comes to mind as I reflect on celebrations in which I participate: "Good liturgy builds up faith, bad liturgy tears it down and destroys it". I know that's a strong claim, but I appreciate the truth of it from my own experiences.

First the positive: we had a great day in Cork on the last day of June, when Fintan Gavin was ordained as our bishop. The liturgy was meticulously planned at local level here in Cork, which made a great event spectacular. In particular the music greatly enhanced the day: entering the cathedral as all sang Fintan O'Carroll's 'Praise the Lord, all you nations' set a tone that reverberated throughout the event. I congratulate all who prepared the liturgy of that glorious new day!

Just over three weeks later, we priests and people of Cork gathered to bury the retired parish priest of Ballinora, Canon Donal Linehan. Every strand of his life was reflected in a beautiful liturgy, held in a small parish just



west of Cork city. The liturgy was strengthened greatly by the superb parish choir, who motivated everyone to join in the singing. "The Banks of My Own Lovely Lee" after the *Salve Regina* at the graveside completed the liturgy in a suitably inculturated fashion. May this great man rest in peace.

Between those two events, I

spent a few days on holidays in Canada, driving through rural Quebec. Finding myself in a town just before 4pm on a Saturday, the standard time for the anticipatory vigil Mass in both the USA and Canada, I sought a church and duly heard the bells summoning the faithful to prayer.

About 50 of us gathered in

● Giving creative names to the units that take the place of parishes is a challenging task. The four-parish cluster in west Clare (set up to comprise Tubber, Corofin, Crusheen and Ruan in 2004) is cleverly called 'Imeall Bóirne' (edge of the Burren). In my locality, two parishes which share a pastor on the Lee estuary have taken to themselves the title 'The Harbour Parishes'.

My drive through rural Quebec revealed a creative approach: a gathering of churches sharing altitude. Titled *Paroisse Notre-Dame-des-Monts*, (Our Lady of the Mountains), the churches were listed on the newsletter — with their height above sea level (390, 213 and 155 metres respectively).

the big church of Warwick, for a rambling liturgy in French, that hinged on the personality of the priest. Before Mass began, he was out in the church, welcoming us individually and encouraging us to talk to each other. At 4pm, he moved into Mass, with an Opening prayer bringing us to the First Reading and Gospel. It would nearly be easier to list what was missing: penitential rite, psalm, second reading, creed: even the collection!

As a priest, I always find it interesting to sit in the pews for Sunday Mass, but on this occasion, I did not have much to bring away with me, apart from a word of thanks to God for the many shapes our Church takes in all the places in which it is rooted.

Coming back to Ireland, I bring with me a renewed resolution to pray the Mass, to be attentive to its parts, to preach well but not to overwhelm the Mass with my personality. I must be conscious that some are happy, others heartbroken, others impatient, more hungry for an encouraging word. I hope to encourage those who come, building up their faith and not undermining it.

Liturgical keys

A previous journey took me to Marbella, to officiate at the wedding of the son of a neighbour and friend. There I picked up another interesting idea (travel does broaden the mind — as well, unfortunately, as the gut!). The rehearsal church had a notice on the wall in many languages, obviously geared at visitors, but applicable to local parishioners too:

"Before the Mass, we talk to God;

During Mass, God talks to us; After Mass, we talk to each other."

It struck me as an apt dictum, combining prayer, listening and community, surely the keys to a true Catholic liturgy.



Many health centres in mission lands are humble buildings like this one in the indigenous territory of Raposa Serra do Sol, Brazil.



PLEASE HELP BUILD AND MAINTAIN HEALTH CENTRES FOR NEEDY PEOPLE IN MISSION LANDS

The Consolata Missionaries in Raposa Serra do Sol, Brazil, wrote to The Little Way Association: "The lack of a medical centre [here] has led to the high death rate of pregnant women. The only existing medical centre is 60km away. Many people are dying of snake bites because they cannot access assistance. The region is suffering from epidemic diseases, diarrhoea etc." Local leaders offered to provide builders and stonemasons, as well as food for the workers. Thanks to Little Way funding, a new health centre is now open.

Pregnant women must walk many kilometres in scorching heat for medical help

Fr Mugerwa Joseph imc wrote to us: "Your act of charity has changed ordinary opportunities into God's blessings to the indigenous communities here. We continue praying for all friends of Little Way Association."

Your contribution to our Hungry, Sick and Deprived fund will help construct and equip more places where the needy can receive basic health care. Donations go direct to the missions without deduction.



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