

# The Irish Catholic



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## Children's minister accused of failing homeless teenagers

### 18-year-olds leave care with nowhere to go

**Chai Brady and Hannah Harn**

A group that supports vulnerable teenagers has accused Children's Minister Katherine Zappone of ignoring the plight of young people who fall into homelessness after leaving State care.

Neil Forsyth of the Irish Aftercare Network told *The Irish Catholic* that he believes Ms Zappone is "blinker" on the reality of the plight of young people who end up on the streets when they are forced to leave State care when they turn 18.

He claimed that the minister has refused to meet the group to discuss the concerns they have and to hear suggestions that could alleviate the

crisis.

"I don't know why she's so blinkered. It is very complex and I've been wondering, is she afraid that she won't have a proper handle? And if she comes in and talks to people like us that she'll somehow be shown up?" Mr Forsyth asked.

#### Jurisdictions

The group is advocating for several policy changes to better assist young people leaving State care, including allowing young people to remain in care after the turn. The group says this is the norm in other jurisdictions and is pleading with the Government not to "expect any young person to leave [care] until secure accommodation

has been sourced.

"Young people are still leaving care on their 18th birthday with nowhere to go except homeless services," he warned.

According to official figures in 2014, 418 people aged 18-24 were homeless in Ireland, but by February of this year that had risen to 910 – a 118% increase.

Founder of Focus Ireland Sr Stanislaus Kennedy said that "too many of these come from the Irish care system. It is fundamentally wrong that so many vulnerable young people become homeless when they have been in care of the State."

Focus Ireland figures from last year show that 15% of just

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The late Sally O'Neill speaks at the World Meeting of Families in Dublin. Photo: Stedman Photography

## Tributes paid to 'missionary of mercy' Sally O'Neill

#### Staff reporter

President Michael D. Higgins has led tributes to Trócaire aid worker Sally O'Neill who died following a road accident in Guatemala.

Mrs O'Neill, a native of Co. Tyrone, worked for the Church's overseas aid agency for some 37 years in developing countries.

Reacting to the news of her death along with three colleagues, Archbishop Eamon Martin described her as "a true missionary of mercy and justice".

Trócaire CEO Caoimhe de Barra said: "We are heartbroken by this news. Sally was the heartbeat of Trócaire for almost 40 years. She was a truly remarkable person."

"Trócaire was only five years old when Sally joined. Sally built the foundations of the organisation. She embodied our values and through her

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# An Irish cardinal could be a powerful symbol in a chaotic world

Shortly after his election to the papacy six years ago last month, Irish newspapers predicted with rare confidence that Pope Francis was set to appoint two Irishwomen to the College of Cardinals. The would-be Princesses of the Church were said to be former president Mary McAleese and Trinity College-based theologian Linda Hogan. At the time, I was interviewed on radio and I expressed the view that if Pope Francis was minded to appoint female members of the College of Cardinals, I didn't think two middle-class women from the first world would be top of his list. In any case, I said I highly doubted that Francis was so minded.

I haven't been proven wrong...yet.

## Interest

Pope Francis has shown a keen interest in appointment members of the body that will elect his successor. He has held five consistories in just six years and is likely to hold another later this year.

Of the 123 cardinals now eligible to vote in a conclave just under half – 59 – have been appointed by the Argentine Pontiff. By mid-October, another nine cardinals – including Seán Brady – will have turned 80 and thus lost the right to vote. It seems a sure bet that Francis will create a fresh batch of cardinals before year end.

Assuming that neither Mrs McAleese or Mrs Hogan make the cut, the \$64,000 question is whether or not Ireland will get a red hat. And, if so, who?



## Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

It is not at all a given that we will get a new cardinal. Pope Francis has shown a penchant for the existential peripheries when choosing new cardinals rather than respecting conventions. Several prominent dioceses once synonymous with the cardinalate do not now have a red hat while places like Papua New Guinea and Laos have cardinals.

**“A red hat for Armagh might appeal to Francis in the same way as he chose Ireland to host the World Meeting of Families”**

Just 11 Irish bishops have served in the Pope's Senate since Paul Cullen became the first in 1866. Of these, three have been archbishops of Dublin while the remaining eight were Primate of All-Ireland serving in Armagh.

After Leo XIII made Archbishop Michael Logue cardinal in 1893, every Archbishop of Armagh up to

and including Dr Brady was a cardinal.

The appointment of Dublin's Desmond Connell as a cardinal in 2001 surprised many observers who assumed that the precedent had been set that the red hat now belonged in Armagh. Many interpreted the elevation of Dr Connell as a sign of his personal friendship with Benedict XVI. This seemed to be confirmed with Dr Brady's elevation in 2007.

## Tenure

Diarmuid Martin is due to retire just over a year from now. He has hinted that he might go earlier. Unless he is called to the Vatican for an appointment in the Roman Curia – a rumour which has persisted during his tenure in Dublin – his elevation to the College of Cardinals seems unlikely.

That would mean that Eamon Martin would be the obvious candidate if there is to be an Irish cardinal. At a time when the Church in Ireland is – in many ways – in

decline, a red hat for Armagh might appeal to Francis in the same way as he chose Ireland to host the World Meeting of Families. In terms of the 'new evangelisation', it would be hard to think of somewhere more on the existential peripheries than Ireland.

There's also the fact that in a year where – whatever way it falls – Brexit will deeply affect relations within the North, on this island and within these islands, a cardinal from a diocese which stretches across the border would be a powerful symbol of unity in a world that appears more and more divided and chaotic.

But one thing is for certain about this papacy, nothing is certain.

**Michael Kelly is co-author of a new book with Austen Ivereigh How to Defend the Faith – Without Raising Your Voice – it is available from Columba Books www.columbabooks.com**



# Minister accused of failing homeless teenagers

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over 100 care leavers the charity worked with in Dublin were homeless. “This is totally unacceptable. It's even more shocking when you learn this can be prevented,” Sr Stan said.

“We do a lot of really positive work in partnership with the State and it protects many people but many others are still at risk.”

According to the Peter McVerry Trust across their

adult services about 20% of people have a history of State care. However, this increases to 50% in specialist services the group runs for 18-24 year olds.

Fr McVerry told *The Irish Catholic* that “it's one of the most important homelessness issues because young people leaving care, if they're thrown into the adult homelessness services, many of them will descend into criminal behaviour, drugs and prison. And the money spent on them

while they were in care has been largely wasted.”

Mr Forsyth added that the Irish Aftercare Network has written to Minister Zappone on numerous occasions over the past few years. “We've sent, at her request, detailed submissions of all the issues we have and all the concerns we have about the problems with the policy and the legislation.

“And on each occasion, she's turned us down, and she's said she won't meet us.”

**See Page 6.**

## What do you think?



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# Sinn Féin call for takeover of Catholic schools rejected

Colm Fitzpatrick

A call from Sinn Féin for a State takeover of Catholic schools would trample on the rights of parents, theologian Dr John Murray has warned.

Speaking in the Seanad last week, the party's education spokesman Paul Gavan said "we must work towards ending the patronage system completely".

It is the patronage system that underpins the running of schools across the State to ensure the constitutional right of parents not to be forced to send their children to schools that conflict with their values.

Dr John Murray of Dublin City University told *The Irish Catholic* that "entirely secular" State-run schools would ignore the needs and faith of parents. He added that there is an anti-Church mentality in today's society which has contributed to the "overall pattern" of denominational schools being attacked.

## Roles

"The State is not the primary educator of young people, of children, parents are. The State has a role to play but it's a subsidiary role rather than a dominating role. That would be a part of Catholic social teaching but it's also common sense that the State shouldn't run everything," Dr Murray said.

Mr Gavan also told the Seanad that he believed that the State should take responsibility for "running and delivering an education system for all of its citizens through a

secular medium", rather than outsourcing its responsibility to private patronage bodies. He said it is wrong to separate children on the basis of religion.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* about the issue, the politician said that "parents have the right to determine their children's religious education". He later appeared to row back on his original comment, saying "the patronage system is not going to end

completely", adding that he was simply calling for more Government action to provide more options for parents.

Dr Murray said that in a country with a large number of Catholics, schools should be available to reflect that ethos, noting that such institutions are welcoming of pupils with other beliefs. "It's part and parcel of Irish society that people do have different worldviews, and religion is part of that," he said.

## New beginning for Cork as Dublin priest takes the reins

Greg Daly

Ireland's longest-serving diocesan bishop has hailed the appointment of his successor as "a new beginning" for the Diocese of Cork and Ross.

Bishop John Buckley, who has headed the Diocese of Cork and Ross since 1998, welcomed the announcement that Dublin archdiocesan chancellor Fr Fintan Gavin [pictured] will succeed him as Bishop of Cork, saying that "it is a great honour for a Dublin man to be promoted to the real capital of Cork!"

Speaking in Cork's Cathedral of St Mary and St Anne, Bishop-elect Gavin said it was difficult to express the "shock and surprise" he felt when Papal Nuncio Archbishop Jude Okolo told him of Pope Francis' wish that he should succeed Dr Buckley.

## Challenge

The bishop-elect, who has served in a range of Dublin parishes since his ordination in 1991, said he had been "very happily serving the Church as an ordinary priest" but that he was "very excited" by the challenge.

"I look forward to supporting and being enriched by the community spirit here and together in collaborative ministry, getting to know you as I visit and meet and engage with you in the parishes across the diocese," he said, adding: "I am conscious of those who have felt let down by the Church and are just 'hanging in there'. I encourage you not to give up."



● Disability advocate Georgia Knoll (25) of Queensland was given a chance to live out her dream job as a flight attendant for a day when a viral video of her practicing on-plane safety demonstrations caught the eye of Jetstar Australia. They gave her an official uniform and she made her debut on a 950-kilometre flight from Brisbane to Mackay.

## Resounding opposition to female deacons IC poll reveals

The majority of people would reject the introduction of female deacons to their parish according to a survey conducted by this paper.

Over 1,300 people responded to a social media survey with two-thirds saying they would not support their diocese if this was considered.

Overall 979 people voted against the idea, while 361 approved.

This comes as Phyllis Zagano, who was appointed to the Papal Commission for the Study of the Diaconate of Women in 2016, said that if the Church decides to restore women to the diaconate it would be up to individual bishops to decide what to do in their diocese. The commission sent their report to the Pope several months ago.

It is not known what

Pope Francis will do with the report, the contents of which have not been disclosed. He may publish it, send the question out for more consideration or simply allow each episcopal conference to decide if female deacons are needed in each territory.

This continues to be a growing discussion in Ireland as the amount of vocations to the priesthood decline.

## Tributes paid to Sally O'Neill

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courage and commitment to human rights touched the lives of so many people," she said.

Describing Mrs O'Neill as "my friend" President Higgins said he was "greatly saddened" by the news.

He said Mrs O'Neill "distinguished herself for four decades through her commitment and unstinting belief in the dignity and inherent equality of all human beings."

"Her work placed her at the front line during some of the most significant global humanitarian crises," he said, adding that her "early work in Central America was groundbreaking."

"Having translated for Oscar Romero just six weeks

before his murder she would go on to engage with all those suffering in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala," the President said.

Mrs O'Neill "understood the importance of combining tangible assistance and practical compassion with the pursuit of long-term solutions to the root causes of poverty, marginalisation and oppression", he said, adding that "she empowered countless people" and was "relentless in calling on those with power to bring their influence to bear on the policies and politics that affected those most vulnerable".

Mrs de Barra said: "I was with Sally last week in Guatemala. Despite having officially retired, she remained a driving force for human rights in

Central America.

"Her drive, passion and commitment was as strong as ever. Sally was much beloved by communities and human rights activists throughout Central America. She dedicated her life to improving the lives of others."

"Her legacy will live on through the thousands of people whose lives she helped to improve," he said.

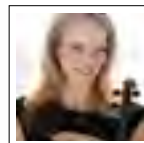
Mrs O'Neill joined Trócaire in 1978 and worked primarily on Trócaire projects in Latin America, as well as providing famine relief in mid-1980s Ethiopia and Somalia in the early 1990s.

After her retirement in 2015, she worked in a voluntary capacity as a facilitator with prisoners and migrants in Honduras, where she lived.

# The 7 Last Words of Our Saviour on the Cross

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Scripture passages in Syriac & English

performed by  
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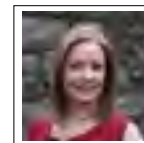
Mia Cooper, Violin



Lynda O'Connor, Violin



Karen Dervan, Viola



Ailbhe McDonagh, Cello

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# Irish Orange lodge trailing behind over 'lingering sectarianism', Protestant minister warns

Colm Fitzpatrick

The Orange Order must drop its "out-of-date", sectarian regulations and embrace more tolerant attitudes towards Catholics, a prominent Protestant minister has urged.

Dr Ken Newell, a former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, said there are "lingering elements" of sectarianism in the loyalist organisation, and that the Irish lodge should be more tolerant of other religious perspectives.

"There are elements of lingering sectarianism that need to be dropped and the best way to drop them is to develop very positive social and religious attitudes, while still being able to bear witness to your own Protestant faith," the minister, who played a significant role in the peace process, told *The Irish Catholic*.

"To do so, without looking over your shoulder to a past that is now well and truly gone and needs to be translated into modern and I would say more tolerant attitudes."

## Ban

Dr Newell's comments come after news that the Orange Order in Scotland has lifted

its longstanding ban on members entering Catholic churches. The archaic rule states that members of the order "should not countenance by your presence" any act of ceremony of Catholic worship, but this practice is widely disregarded by members today.

Describing sectarianism as on the "fringes", Dr Newell said that the decision by the centre of the Scottish lodges to remove the sectarian regulation is a "move in the right direction", and that Ireland should follow suit.

## Lodges

"The Scottish lodges are now marching ahead, and it looks as if the Irish lodge is being left behind. It's seen as more connected to the past than the Scottish lodges would be," Dr Newell said.

"The Scottish lodges continue to be loyal in their orangism but don't feel that that needs to be done with out-of-date regulations and what would be seen as negative aspects that are not necessary to the core of orangism."

When this newspaper contacted the Irish branch about the new move, a Grand Lodge spokesman said: "This is a matter for the Grand Lodge of Scotland. We have no further comment to make."

## Ennis school gets seal of approval



School staff celebrate the official opening of Scoil Chríost Rí in Cloughleigh, Ennis which saw Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Killaloe's Bishop Fintan Monahan in attendance. Photo: Paschal Brooks

## 'Fascist elements' shrouded in Republican protest – priest

### Staff reporter

Dissident republican groups bent on creating friction and curtailing free speech is a "form of fascism", a Derry-based priest has said.

Fr Joe Gormley of Creggan parish told this newspaper that attempts to stop the police from talking to young people about critical issues shows the "fascist element" of dissident republicanism.

His comments after the cancellation of a policing event at a Derry youth club last week due to Republican protests. Officers had

planned to discuss the topic of stop and search powers at the city's Guildhall, but the talk was cancelled after fringe group Saoradh promised to demonstrate because of the PSNI's involvement.

### Opinions

"People have opinions about stop and search and they're entitled to have those opinions but nobody should be prevented from having dialogue with the police if they want to have dialogue with the police," Fr Gormley said, pointing out that the group wants to create division.

"All of these groups have

their own agenda. Their agenda is not about peace. Their agenda is their agenda – and they want to tell everybody else who they can talk to, who they can't, how to think, everybody has to think the same way they think," Fr Gormley said.

"So, young people aren't allowed to speak to police officers. Young people aren't allowed to have thoughts of their own. We all must think the same way they think, and if we don't there's something wrong with it – and that's just basically the attitude."

## Orders 'test waters' through coffee shop cooperation

A coffee shop set up with the support of over a dozen different Catholic groups offers a model of outreach and co-operation which could be vital for the Church going forward, organisers say.

Brew132 on Cork's Washington Street aims to provide a place where students on their way to and from college might be exposed to the Faith.

Among the orders backing the project are the Franciscans, Bon Secours Sisters, Presentation Sisters, and Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, while younger Catholics from

such groups as NET Ministries and the UCC Catholic Chaplaincy will run the café.

According to Fr Maurice Colgan OP, the orders immediately realised the potential of the idea, and that similar ideas could be tried elsewhere.

"It's a matter of let us do this, let us test the waters, and see what is the best way of doing it and what works, and then let's bring it to elsewhere, because when you have all these groups involved, it makes it so much easier."

See Pages 12-13.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Mass gathering of Christians pray for nation

Nearly 1,000 Christians gathered in Belfast to pray for society and protect the vulnerable. The April 5 event was organised by the Christian Action Research and Education (Care) in Northern Ireland, a social policy charity.

"It's so amazing to see the appetite among people here to come and pray for the nation and hear about our ongoing work to see a society that has a greater respect for the value of life," said NI Care Director Tim Martin.

Care has been heavily involved in campaigning for stronger protections for problem gamblers and in promoting the landmark laws on human trafficking.

### Over €100,000 to be raised for homelessness

It is expected that over €100,000 will be raised at the Cork Simon Annual Fundraising Ball, which will help support men and women affected by homelessness.

Tomorrow's event (April 12) at Fota Island Resort will be attended by over 300 corporate guests, with broadcaster and journalist Jonathan Healy as Master of Ceremonies and Après Match's Barry Murphy providing the entertainment.

Director of Cork Simon, Dermot Kavanagh, said: "Last year we provided emergency accommodation to more people than ever before, over 400 men and women were pushed into homelessness because they couldn't find a place that they could afford to call home."

### NI 'Vote Pro-Life' billboard campaign launched

A prominent pro-life group has launched a new billboard campaign in Northern Ireland using mobile trucks conveying a 'Vote Pro-Life' message. The trucks will travel across the length and breadth of the province up until the local council elections on May 2.

"We are encouraging the citizens of Northern Ireland, on May 2, to vote only for pro-life candidates to send out a clear message," Bernadette Smyth, Director of Precious Life said.

"These mobile billboards and our upcoming information meetings across Northern Ireland are essential to save our pro-life laws by imploring the people of Northern Ireland to elect only pro-life candidates."

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# Bienvenue à la Francophonie!

Ireland joined the French Commonwealth – the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie – at the end of last year and its presence is now being more widely noted. The OIF gathers together the 88 countries in the world (including 27 'observer' nations) which are French-speaking and Ireland has been welcomed as one of the observer nations.

And I hope that Helen McEntee, who seems to be in charge of this office at the Department of Foreign Affairs, will not restrict Irish 'Francophonie' participants to the political class, when sending delegations to meetings of this 'French Commonwealth'.

Joe Carroll, who contributes reviews to our book pages, is an experienced French speaker who has written a book about daily life in France and has served the European Commission in Brussels and Strasbourg, holding press conferences in confident French.

His wife Kathy Carroll conducts French visitors around Ireland with wit and élan. I should declare an interest and say they are friends of mine – Joe was a journalist in the *Irish Press* and *Irish Times* – but they are exactly the kind of people who should be illuminating the links between Ireland and la francophonie – cultivated French-speakers who also have their feet on the ground.

## Archives

Interestingly, when giving a reason why Ireland should be linked to the French-speaking Commonwealth, it was pointed out that Oscar



Mary Kenny

Wilde and Sam Beckett had written some of their works in French. This is true, although Oscar's French language output was fragmentary.

**“Beckett identified rather more as a Foxrock Protestant than as an Irish Republican”**

And although Beckett did write some of his plays first in French, he wasn't really a very whole-hearted Irishman: the DFA's own archives show that Beckett identified rather more as a Foxrock Protestant than as an Irish Republican. He joined the French Resistance partly because he disapproved of Ireland's neutrality during World War II.

There are many more persuasive links between Ireland and France, if we cast an eye across the history of Christian and Catholic, from the Irish monks who evangelised Alsace in the 8th Century

to the Flight of the Earls – some of their descendants still resident in Bordeaux – and the St Omer education of Daniel O'Connell in penal times.

And then there is Wolfe Tone, who derived the very idea of a Republic, from France. Surely of some historical significance too?

*De toute façon, j'espère que la liaison entre l'Irlande et la France dans l'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie amenera aux plus grandes ententes culturelles entre nous!*



Minister Helen McEntee.

● More women than ever are standing for political office in May's local elections: there's been a 25% increase in female political candidates since 2014. That's excellent in itself.

It is claimed that the campaign to 'Repeal the Eighth' has prompted more women to enter politics: Lourda Scott of the Green Party, in Greystones, says that this is what "empowered" her to enter the political field, and Rita Harold of the Solidarity Party in Cabra-Glasnevin is running on a ticket to advance abortion services. But I hope the winners will also reflect the diversity of women's voices on life questions.

Sarah O'Reilly of Aontu in Baillieborough, Co. Cavan and Monica Barnwell for Renua in Birr, Co. Offaly may bring different viewpoints. And it's good to see Julia O'Reilly, a Traveller and an Independent, standing in Longford.

## Lourdes getting a sense of balance

In France itself, it's reported this week that the fortunes of the shrine of Lourdes have taken a turn for the better in financial terms.

Lourdes had been seriously in the red over the last 10 years – in 2014-15, it was overdrawn by €3 millions. But a new CEO was appointed three years ago – Guillaume de Vulpain, a layman who had been an executive of the car company Renault (which has had its own financial embarrassments).

But Mr de Vulpain has reversed the financial decline, and Lourdes has been declared once more in the black.

He imposed more fiscal discipline, and there have been reductions in staff –

mainly by not replacing some retirees. By the simple measure of increasing candles from €2 apiece to €2.50, more revenue has been restored: the sale of candles remains a key aspect of Lourdes's economy. (There are people – *feutiers* – engaged solely in the management of candles, and the disposal of melted wax.)

Linking Lourdes with 'revenue' and 'fiscal discipline' seems an uncomfortably close association of God and Mammon, but the French are notoriously practical in these matters. Lourdes is the second most-visited tourist location in France – attracting increasing numbers from Asia – and thus its economic buoyancy is considered important.

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# Housing and aftercare scarcity, defunct policy failing 'at risk' children

**Y**oung people leaving care face a mountain of obstacles, with homelessness being one of the most acute. Although it is true there are challenges for any child in becoming independent, the life experience of many exiting the State's charge lead to highly complex cases.

In the context of Ireland's housing crisis there are now over 900 young people aged 18-24 who are homeless. Many of these cases are hidden from official figures as friends or family, who may be ill-equipped to help for an extended period of stay, offer their homes.

It is undeniable that care leavers are at a high risk of falling into homelessness when they leave foster or residential care. Foster carers have been known to continue to offer the child – whom many see as their own – a home long after they turn 18, but this is not always possible.

Rebuilding Ireland, the Government's plan for housing and homelessness, was launched in July 2016 by then Housing Minister Simon Coveney. Since then homelessness figures have almost doubled and housing prices and renting has continued to rise.

Care leavers were not forgotten in the struggling plan-



**Chai Brady**

however, under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) there is funding in place for Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) to provide residential units to accommodate these young people.

Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, is coordinating the overall response and has told housing agencies its protocols regarding young people leaving care. According to the Department of Housing, a report published in June 2018 contains a number of recommendations regarding the treatment of care leavers.

## Initiative

The department says the initiative is "achieving momentum" and as of June 2018, 40 properties were being delivered via this scheme across the country.

"Tusla has also established a national forum for AHBs to ensure effective implementation in all areas with an emphasis on forward plan-

ning to anticipate and plan for demand in 2019 and 2020," the department said in a statement to this paper.

Despite this, charities have said the issue of care leavers facing immediate homelessness is still rampant. For Focus Ireland 15% of over 100 care leavers they work with are homeless while the Peter McVerry Trust say across their adult services 20% have a history of State care; in their specialist 18-24 year old services this figure rises to 50%.

According to Merchants Quay Ireland figures from January to September of 2017, 55 of 136 (40%) of the 18-25 year olds their Young Person Support Worker has helped came from State care.

Speaking about the challenges faced by young people, and particularly care leavers, to secure independent accommodation, Fr Peter McVerry said: "The problem for them, at 18 or 19 or 20, it's very difficult to get your own independent accommodation, for one because you're only on the local authority waiting list for a few months or a year or two, so you're way down at the bottom of the local authority waiting list.

"And landlords don't want you because they see young people as people who might potentially be having parties."

**“Even those who have managed to find accommodation in the private rented sector, often they struggle with managing their tenancy”**

He added: "Most 18-year-olds growing up in a good home could not just move out, just leave the family home and survive. So asking an 18-year-old who has grown up in care to leave the family home and go into adult homelessness, that's just asking too much."

Although hopes for the housing scheme for care leavers are high there are still policies that need to be revamped to really assist them adequately after they exit care according to Neil Forsyth of the Irish Aftercare Network.

In preventing homelessness among care leavers he mentions three points saying: ● Let young people remain in care longer. This is hap-

pening in other jurisdictions – Australia, Britain (Staying Put), Canada and various State in the US. Or, at the very least, don't expect any young person to leave until secure accommodation has been sourced. Young people are still leaving care on their 18th birthday with nowhere to go except homeless services.

● Tusla could acquire properties in other ways apart from CAS. They could lease properties, the same way Approved Housing Bodies do all the time.

● Government could insist that local authorities ring-fence a small number of properties in each area for young people leaving care in their area each year.

Mr Forsyth told *The Irish Catholic*: "At any given time, of those young people who are actually receiving an after-care service, about a third are either homeless or very much at-risk of homelessness due to insecure accommodation (extended family and friends) or they were forced to return to their family of origin (from which they were taken into care) and relationships are breaking down.

"Moreover, even those who have managed to find accommodation in the private rented sector, often they struggle with managing their tenancy and cannot be given the level of support they need."

## Question mark

Speaking of the Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures national policy framework 2014-2020 which makes specific mention of children in care, published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Policy Manager of EPIC (Empowering People in Care) Karla Charles says there's a question mark over how much accountability it has actually secured.

"One of the things that that document drew a lot of attention to was the working relationships between all the various departments and I think that's across the board. Education, disability...and then on the other side, Tusla," she said.

"They should have extremely good working relationships, and we're not always sure that they are as good as they could be.

"I'm not sure where the problems originate or whether it's just that everybody's overstretched or



whether it's that Tusla, even though they claim they're not firefighting, it often seems to be the case that they are dealing with issues."

She said that regarding aftercare itself there is a lack of social workers but also the consistency of how the service is delivered across the country in terms of policy interpretation and guidelines.

**“There are 2,366 young people in receipt of aftercare services nationally as of the third quarter of 2018”**

The fact that young people might be accessing hostel services and have to vacate them during the day and then come back in the evenings, that's not acceptable.

Of course, they're going to fall prey to all sorts of things," she added.

"And even if you think of provision of aftercare service: it's up until 21 if you're not in full-time education. Well, probably those that

have been let down by the services and been the most vulnerable, been the most abused and neglected are the ones that will not be able to continue on to education because they won't have done well in school and they won't have had good experiences in school, so shouldn't we be supporting them longer instead of supporting them less?"

According to Tusla's most recent figures they employ 100 aftercare staff, this is supplemented by about two dozen aftercare staff provided by NGOs. There are 2,366 young people in receipt of aftercare services nationally as of the third quarter of 2018 according to the Government body, but there are still "massive waiting lists" for those that need the service according to the Irish Aftercare Network.

While policy is not updated, aftercare staff continue to be in short supply and while housing is often impossible to acquire, there's much to be desired in the Government's response for those working to promote better outcomes for children leaving care.



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# Sunday dinners offer Dublin's homeless a chance to connect



"The hot meal is the foundation of building trust with people. It is a chance to connect with people and work towards helping them." – Paula Byrne, CEO, Merchants Quay.

Every Sunday, just before midday, the doors are opened at Merchants Quay Ireland's Riverbank building. Men and women, mostly homeless, begin to file in. This is Merchant Quay's Sunday dinner service. It's the only free hot meal available on a Sunday in Dublin, and it's a lifeline for many of the city's most vulnerable people. It's also a chance to connect.

"Everyone is together, having dinner," says Maura, who is homeless and a regular at the Sunday dinners, "You get to meet new people and socialise a bit. That kind of atmosphere means more on a Sunday."

## Hot meal

Maura has been coming to Merchants Quay Ireland since January 2018. Having had to leave her mother's house, she found herself on the streets, not knowing where to turn. As well as a hot meal and a bit of chat, the service offer her the chance to link in with Merchants Quay staff, who can offer her and people like her support like healthcare, case work, and crisis intervention support.

"I use a lot of the different services at Merchants Quay," says Maura, "I've suffered from anxiety for a long time. I stopped talking and kept all my feelings inside, it wasn't good for me. I bottled everything up and I didn't even realise that was a problem."

"I speak to the doctor here about it now, and it sounds strange, but the Sunday dinners have helped me. People

come to talk to me. It's making me socialise. I know it sounds weird, but it's true."

The service is open every Sunday. Staff and volunteers work to hand out the plates of food, cleaning tables as people come and go. Despite the hustle and bustle, staff still find time to sit down and chat with clients.

For Merchants Quay Ireland, the hope is that the dinners will be more than a meal. It's a chance at normality for clients who are leading otherwise difficult and chaotic lives.

"We provide a full Sunday dinner, with meat, potatoes and gravy," says Merchants Quay CEO Paula Byrne. "We turn off the television and encourage people to socialise. It's important to us that there is a 'family dinner' feeling."

"We provide around 200-300 dinners every Sunday. It's a busier service than during the week. The profile of clients coming through would be different on a Sunday. We are now seeing people who have a home, but who can't afford the electricity or the food to cook."

Paula emphasizes that a hot meal is often the first step to something bigger.

"The Franciscans have worked on the Quays for centuries, providing food to people who are hungry and homeless. It's a tradition we have always sought to continue. The hot meal is the foundation of building trust with people. It is a chance to connect with people and work towards helping them."

What that hot meal can

lead to is made clear by Gavin, a 32-year-old client at Merchants Quay. Gavin spent several decades in England and while there he developed a drug addiction and became homeless. With support from a UK-based Irish charity he returned to Ireland.

"I arrived back in Dublin and had nowhere to go. I weighed six stone when I arrived at Merchants Quay and could barely eat. The only thing I knew about Merchants Quay then is that you could get a hot meal here. I was at death's door."

**"The big thing for me about the Sunday dinners is the impact that service has. Clients are very appreciative of the services"**

With the support of Merchants Quay, Gavin looks healthy and is no longer using drugs.

"What changed between now and then," he says, "is that I ate plenty of food. Three times a day I had a meal here, every day of the week."

The dinners have been running for decades and have their roots in an act of simple generosity. A long-term Merchants Quay donor with links to the poultry industry left a legacy of funding for a roast dinner each Sunday. It was from this that the Sunday dinner service was born.

As well as Merchants Quay's staff, there are volunteers who help support the service. Will has been volunteering at Merchants Quay for two years. He says that volunteering has given him a greater understanding of homelessness, and what a



"It's nice to have somewhere to go and someone to chat to. The staff here will go out of their way for you." – Mark, MQI Client.

hot meal can mean to someone forced to live outside in the cold.

"Working at Merchants Quay has changed my perception of homelessness and addiction," he says, "You often hear a simplistic view of people who are suffering through those, but it's very complex. It's the cumulative effect of experiences that has led people there. Clients are often a victim of their circumstance."

"The big thing for me about the Sunday dinners is the impact that service has. Clients are very appreciative of the services. You get a lot of 'thank you's' from clients as they leave. The meal, the cup of tea and the opportu-

nity to sit down for an hour. That's huge. That's the biggest thing."

**"It's tragic that this service is so badly needed," says Paula Byrne, "but that's the reality"**

This view is echoed by those who use the service. People who are homeless are often on their feet all day long, with nowhere to rest. With most other services closed on a Sunday, Merchants Quay is vital.

"Merchants Quay would be a bit of a lifeline for peo-

ple," says Mark, who has been attending the service for just over a year. "Just to get in out of the cold. You're out on the street and it's freezing, it's nice to have somewhere to go and someone to chat to. The staff will go out of their way for you. That's why the Sunday service is so important. The days are long on a Sunday. There's nothing else open."

With the homeless crisis continuing to hit hard, demand is now increasing for the service, which receives no state funding.

"It's tragic that this service is so badly needed," says Paula Byrne, "but that's the reality. Without the Sunday dinner service, people would go hungry."

## Need for funding

As a result of the need for funding, Merchants Quay have launched a Lenten campaign, asking for the public help supporting the service. The hope is that by raising €100,000, Merchants Quay can secure its future.

"Responding to need is at the core of what we do. It's our Franciscan ethos, and everything else comes from that. People are homeless and hungry. We won't give up on them."



"The only thing I knew about Merchants Quay before coming here is that you could get a hot meal." – Gavin, MQI client.

**"The dinners have been running for decades and have their roots in an act of simple generosity"**

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## Breda O'Brien

The View



# Rethinking our relationship with the animal kingdom

**I**n recent times, there has been a media frenzy about Tiger Roll, the brave little horse that won the Aintree Grand National for the second time.

But the fact that a horse died at the Grand National, the Willie Mullins-trained Up For Review, has received far less coverage. The horse was seen writhing in pain before being put down. He was the third horse to die at Aintree this year. Two other Mullins-trained horses, Ballyward and Invitation Only, also died at Cheltenham in March.

The Grand National website says that on average, one horse dies every 250 races, although the death toll for the Grand National is far higher.

Even if a horse does not die, there can be serious injuries. Not to mention the number of injuries sustained by jockeys. Concussions and broken bones are common for jockeys although our rates seem to be lower than in Britain. Between 1950 and 2000, there were 100 fatalities among jockeys in Britain and Ireland.

A friend whom I respect recently recommended that I chat with Chris Fegan, general secretary for the UK organisation, Catholic Concern for Animals (CCA). In a polite but challenging way, CCA asks all of us to re-examine our assumptions about our relationship with the animal kingdom.

It advocates for vegetarianism and veganism and if that is a step too far, at the very least that we all consider reducing our consumption of animal products. It also raises questions about horse-racing. Chris Fegan visits Ireland this April for a number of meetings, including one about equine welfare.

### Disturbing

I found the Grand National disturbing last week after talking with him. While these animals have been bred to race and such breeding has been going on for 300 years, the risks involved in a race like the Grand National seem unacceptable.



Pope Francis pets a lamb during the blessing of two lambs to mark the feast of St Agnes at the Vatican.

And yet horse-racing is a quintessentially Irish sport. It is an important industry and the people who work in it eat, sleep and breathe horses and seem to form genuine bonds of affection with their charges. I have even heard of young people whose lives seemed to be heading towards criminality but whose love of horses and working with the industry led them in a much more positive direction.

However, the gambling industry is also a huge industry. Before the Grand National, it was estimated that £250 million would be spent on bets. In fact, it could be argued that the racing industry would not exist without gambling. We all know the misery brought to families by compulsive gambling.

Balancing the genuine care for animals shown by many in the horse-racing industry with the danger of death or harm to animals is a hard thing to do. But while it is relatively easy for most of us to avoid entanglement in the horse-racing industry, consumption of animal products is something that many of us do every day.

Last week, my colleague whom I admire greatly, Mary Kenny, accused Leo Varadkar of being unpatriotic when he

endorsed veganism.

I understand her viewpoint because I grew up on a farm and I understand the strains that are on farmers and the uncertainty that Brexit brings.

I also know the way that cattle which have been inside during the winter react when finally let out on grass. Their buck-leppin', as it is called, reflects the pure joy of being set free.

**“Care for animals has always been part of the Catholic tradition and has been embraced by great saints like Francis”**

There is no doubt that animals like cattle and horses are sentient. For example, horses suffer severely from loneliness unless they have an equine companion, even a donkey.

Yet currently, I could never imagine embracing veganism. My prejudice has been reinforced by the smug superiority of some vegans who have no problem endorsing abortion but bewail the deaths of animals. But if it can be argued that a consistent ethic for vegans would

avoid all unnecessary deaths of animals, including human animals, that also presents a challenge for pro-life non-vegetarians and non-vegans.

Care for animals has always been part of the Catholic tradition and has been embraced by great saints like Francis. Even though it endorses using animals for food or clothing, the Catechism states that “it is contrary to human dignity to cause animals to suffer or die needlessly”.

Animal rights activists have interpreted this to mean that there is no longer any need for animals to die for food because a plant-based diet is both healthier for humans and better for the environment. Pope Francis has made concern for animals part of his ground-breaking encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

Even if becoming vegan is a step too far, there are many things we could all agree on that are part of the CCA agenda, for example, keeping animals in ethical conditions, reducing our overall consumption and having meatless Fridays all year round.

As Chris Fegan pointed out to me very reasonably, the first step is to begin thinking about the issue.

**“Between 1950 and 2000, there were 100 fatalities among jockeys in Britain and Ireland”**





## A former Government minister's take on *Humanae Vitae* is too simple, writes David Quinn

**P**ope Benedict XVI once memorably spoke of a "dictatorship of relativism". Just prior to becoming Pope in 2005 he said: "Today, having a clear Faith based on the Creed of the Church is often labelled as fundamentalism. Whereas relativism, that is, letting oneself be 'tossed here and there, carried about by every wind of doctrine', seems the only attitude that can cope with modern times. We are building a dictatorship of relativism that does not recognise anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires."

I doubt if our former Justice Minister, Michael McDowell is a relativist *per se*, but his complaints against the Church are certainly the standard ones listed by its liberal critics, both secular and Catholic.

He doesn't like its teachings across pretty much the whole gamut of human sexuality, for example, starting with *Humanae Vitae*.

### Documentary

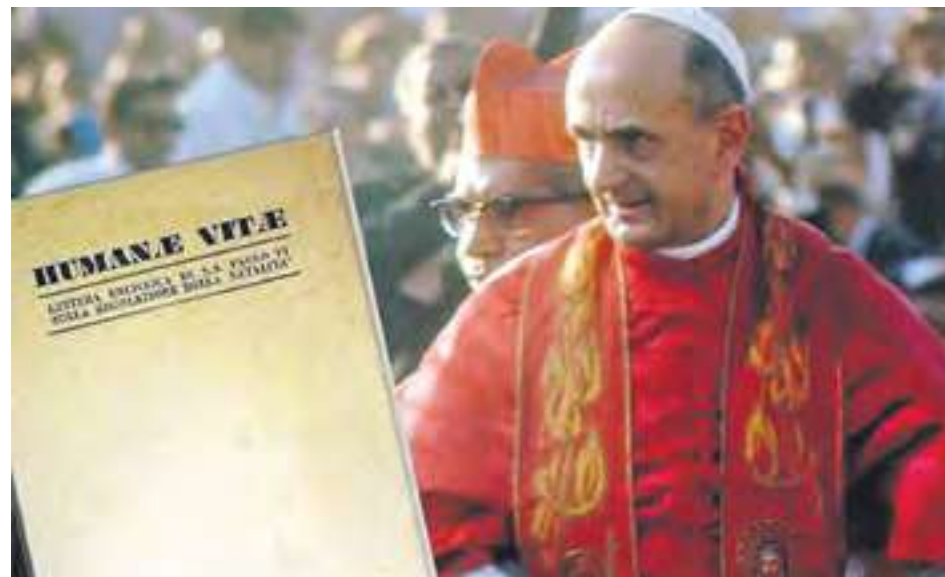
In an RTÉ documentary he is presenting tonight (Thursday) called *Rome v Republic* he tells us of the moment he lost faith in the Church. It was the moment when Pope Paul VI issued *Humanae Vitae* which reaffirmed the age-old Christian teaching against artificial forms of contraception.

McDowell says he was "queuing at a chipper, on a transistor radio. That day in my mind the whole authority of the Catholic Church disappeared in an instant."

That is a very big statement to make. It wasn't just that his confidence in the authority of the Church was undermined. No, its "whole authority... disappeared in an instant".

Well, this being so,

# Wishing for a Church built on sand...



what is left to say? If the Catholic Church has no teaching authority, then it cannot be the one founded by Jesus Christ. Very well, what did Jesus found then? This has been a question since the very earliest days of Christianity, and it is largely responsible for the Protestant Reformation. It, too, rejected the authority of the 'Roman Catholic Church' (as some Protestants put it).

Nonetheless, Protestants still believe Jesus founded a community of followers, that quickly became known as the Church. What does Michael McDowell believe the authority of this Church, or Churches, rests on? The Bible? I doubt if he has too much faith in that. The consensus of the members of the Church in any given moment? But that is precisely the relativism of which Joseph Ratzinger spoke when he warned against being "tossed here and there, carried about by every wind of doctrine".

**“Perhaps he means his own authority. But in that case, he is the Pope of himself”**

So, in rejecting the authority of the Catholic Church, it is not immediately obvious what could be put in its place that would be satisfying to Michael McDowell. Perhaps he means his own authority. But in that case, he is the Pope of himself. Maybe that is as he would want it, but this is radical individualism and it is hard for this philosophy not to fall straight into relativism again.

*Humanae Vitae* is a hard teaching. There is no

question about that. Modern contraception is an excellent (although by no means fail-safe) way of avoiding an unwanted pregnancy.

That said, natural methods of birth control receive an unfairly bad press. They are a lot more effective than is commonly supposed. For example, a new study in the European Journal of Contraception and Reproductive Healthcare examines the effectiveness of a family planning app (called 'Dot') that tracks a woman's menstrual cycle over time. It tells her when she can and cannot become pregnant.

Researchers found that the app "had a typical-use failure rate of 5% and a perfect-use failure rate of 1%, which makes Dot comparable to family planning methods such as the pill, vaginal ring and other fertility awareness-based methods."

Remember, the Church is not opposed to family planning *per se*. What it opposes are methods of family planning that work against the body's natural cycles.

Someone Michael McDowell ought to read on this topic is one of the greatest English philosophers of the 20th Century, Elizabeth Anscombe, the centenary of whose birth falls this year. She wrote in defence of *Humanae Vitae*: "All artificial methods of birth control [are] taught to be gravely wrong if, before, after or during intercourse you do something intended to turn that intercourse into an infertile act if it would otherwise have been fertile."

You can still reject this idea, of course, but let's at least reject what the Church

that every Christian Church up until 1930 rejected artificial forms of family planning for the reasons Anscombe outlines. They also knew, as Pope Paul VI strongly emphasised in his encyclical, that artificial contraception would make it far easier for us to separate sex not only from marriage, but from any kind of relationship.

### Far-sighted

Critics of *Humanae Vitae* need to contemplate and explain why the number of abortions surged across the Western world at almost exactly the same time that modern forms of artificial contraception became widely available, and especially when they became available to unmarried people. The opposite was supposed to happen. Pope Paul VI was far-sighted enough to see otherwise.

Those same critics also need to explain

why Churches that did authorise the use of artificial contraception by married couples, for example, the Anglican Church in 1930, are not flourishing. By Michael McDowell's reckoning, what they did ought to have buttressed their authority and maintained the confidence of their members. That clearly did not happen.

On the contrary, many people would maintain that Churches which went down that route actually undermined their authority, which is what Michael McDowell maintains the Catholic Church did, but for the opposite reason.

At a minimum, critics of *Humanae Vitae* should accept that the situation with regard both to the question of authority, and that of the moral licitness and consequences of artificial contraception are far more complex than they allow.

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## Responses to the Pope's *Christus Vivit* exhortation

### Ger Gallagher

Pastoral Co-ordinator, Archdiocese of Dublin

There are a few things that resonated. The whole thing that the Church needs the momentum of young people – the line, “And when you arrive where we have not yet reached, have the patience to wait for us” – that was fairly melancholic in saying that we know where the young people are, we’re just not there. There is change to be had within the Church.

I thought overall it was very practical and possible, and had solid potential...I felt if you were reading this as a priest, or a youth minister, or as a bishop you would take some hope away from it overall – it’s a very hopeful document.

I think what it was saying was we don’t have to give the doctrine first, you have to kind of give the enthusiasm of faith first. You don’t begin with the young person saying there are the Ten Commandments and this is the *Catechism*, if they’re there that’s different.

The exercise of listening has been

huge in this process, not just for the young people and the document but also for family, so that is something that the Pope really has brought down to the grassroots.

The ability to change the way that we listen. How we respond is next question – you can kind of target the Church and say you don’t listen on this question, but there is an openness to listening now rather than just to preach or teach and I think that is a subtle shift under Francis, that there is a new listening.

It’s a long time since I heard a long plea from the official Church that we need vocation.

A contrast with that, is I think they’ve badly handled some of those who have stepped forward for vocation in recent years, and I mean young priests and religious as well. I think some of them have been damaged by senior people in Church.



“Take risks, even if it means making mistakes.”

Pope Francis, “Christus Vivit”

### Tony Foy

NET Ministries

First of all we’ve had a synod on youth, and it’s been terrific for our own Archbishop Eamon who has come back really on fire. Something happened within that man during that process, and it’s just been beautiful to see. He has caught a vision for the youth, Archbishop Eamon Martin. There is fruit right there, I would say!

I think that in a nutshell is what the Pope is asking us, he’s asking us to treat each person’s heart as ‘holy ground’.

This is something that NET does, it treats the young person as an individual, as holy ground, and this is the language of the Pope, and each young person is worthy of driving from here to Cork for. For one young person it’s worth holding a youth group if one young person comes to Faith, because that is holy ground right there. It’s not about bums on seats, it’s about each young person’s soul, each young person’s life which is enriched by knowing Jesus.

I feel like Archbishop Eamon gets it – it’s not about numbers, it’s about the individual, it’s about unleashing young people to evangelise their peers, but first the young people you evangelise must be evangelised. This takes time and it takes effort and it takes intentionality.

### Hope

I have great hope for the future of the Church in Ireland and the fact that we have an exhortation, the fact that we’ve had a synod is massive.

Absolutely, anything goes and if it works, and if it’s dynamically orthodox... you can’t just hit people over the head with the *Catechism*, but what we can do is speak to people and tell them what Jesus has done for us.

We’re not going to have priests unless they know Jesus, we’re not going to have religious sisters unless they know the person of Jesus. So who’s going to teach them about Jesus, who’s going to introduce them? Young people are the most effective evangelisers of the Youth...and Pope Francis knows this.

### Pauline Dowd

Living Youth, Diocese of Down & Connor

Christ lives in the energy, enthusiasm and dedication of the young people of our Church. How we harness that for the good of the Church now and not just in the future, has been laid out for us by Pope Francis’ letter *Christus Vivit*. It is addressed to all the young people of the world and the entire people of God. It is Pope Francis’ practice to provide us with a solid foundation for this work and then suggest a framework for its practical application around the world.

This apostolic exhortation is the final result of the Synod in Rome in October on Young People, Faith and Vocations. The Church listened to the voice of the young and this is the plan.

It is our job as leaders of Youth Ministry in Ireland and everyone in the Church to advocate for our young people and help

them belong.

Pope Francis encourages young people to seek holiness like many young people before them through the belief that they are loved by God, that Jesus died for them and that Christ lives in the Church in their willingness to root themselves in Him. This requires outreach and encounter particularly with those on the margins of society and the Church.

### Critical need

Those of us working in youth ministry have long recognised and flagged up the critical need for energy in the field of Youth Ministry in Ireland. This energy requires strategic planning and the necessary funding to bring it to reality. Pope Francis maintains that this process is critical to the renewal of the whole

Church and that is why his call for young people to be looked at as the ‘now’ of the Church is our starting point, our reference point and final goal of this challenge. It requires a new way of thinking, a new fire and a new methodology.

Some good news – this process has begun in Ireland, in October a number of Youth Directors joined our Irish Bishops in Rome to make a connection with the synod and to ensure that the messages from the synod were brought home.

With the support of our bishops we have set up Catholic Youth Ministry Ireland (CYMI) and we are now working to network and collaborate across the country to provide training, share resources and celebrate our faith together. Please keep us on your prayers.

### Maura Garrihy-Murphy

Holy Family Mission

The reality is that young people are asking those questions that we need to have some response for. And there needs to be room – as Pope Francis obviously alluded to quite strongly – that it can’t be a museum, there has to be a dialogue, but I even think the fact that he called the document *Christus Vivit* – Christ is Alive – that is what we’re trying to witness.

That’s what the whole process of the synod was about: what message do we want young people to hear? It’s that we listen, that we walk with you, that we want to show you

that Christ is alive, and I think even to see that he actually called it Christ is alive, that’s what we’re trying to witness to for young people.

He spoke about abortion, drugs and homelessness and said some realities of this world can only be seen with eyes cleansed by tears. That really struck me because I think that helps us to be more

pastoral with young people who have experienced these things. Abortion, drugs and homelessness are only three things of many.

The key thing on accompaniment for all of us is that it’s a challenge and an invitation all at one.

He says with regards to vocation that we have to learn to hear God’s call, and that we need to build a friendship

with Christ.

For priesthood and religious, we need to constantly be reminded that God will be calling us to this way of life. Ultimately God wants what our hearts desire. I think it’s really important that when it comes to vocations, that he did put an emphasis on religious life and priesthood, because young people constantly need to be reminded that God calls us to be extraordinary, and he may very well be calling you to be a priest or a religious sister.





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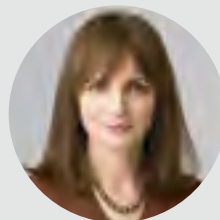
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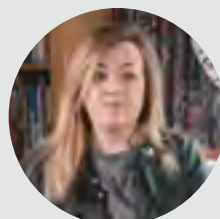
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# Brewing fraternity



A Cork coffee shop will be on the coalface of Catholic evangelism in the city, writes **Greg Daly**

**H**ow good, how delightful it is for all to live together like brothers,” begins Psalm 132 in the traditional Vulgate numbering, while for those committed to Catholic hospitality, Hebrews 13:2 might seem even more to the point. “Remember always to welcome strangers,” it urges, “for by doing this, some people have entertained angels without knowing it.”

The two Biblical references serve as suitable inspirations for Cork’s newest coffee shop. Brew132, which opened last Saturday, is a perhaps unlikely example of how a host of different religious orders and a batch of organisations for young Catholics can work together to shine Christ’s light in urban landscapes that can at times feel deeply hostile to Faith.

## Their story

The idea comes in part from Galway’s Christian coffee shop An Tobar Nua, according to Brew132 manager Courtney Holbrook.

“It’s a Christian cafe, basically what they do is run as a cafe, and as they get to know people they try to share their Faith story, they try to bring people to help them understand. It’s ecumenical, so not necessarily just the Catholic Church, but Christianity more generally,” she says.

Necessity has in an important way been the mother of invention where the Catholic coffee shop on Cork’s Washington Street is involved, she adds.

“It was also just the idea that there’s plenty of people who would never go inside a church, who would prob-



“We invented this”: Capuchin Fr Dermot Lynch being handed a cappuccino by volunteer Amanda Wolf.

ably never go into a prayer meeting, who would feel very uncomfortable in that area, but who might come to a café,” she says. “They might start talking to the staff, and they might start being a little bit more open to hearing about the Gospel.”

Originally from Dallas, Texas, Courtney has been in Ireland on-and-off for about three years, having spent her first two years in the country working with NET ministries. When training alongside fellow staffers Caoimhín and Siobhan at An Tobar Nua for her new role at Brew132, she was struck by how the Galway café’s emphasis on relational ministry chimed with her previous experience at

NET.

“With NET we’re also a relational ministry – we would never start off with ‘Hi have you heard of Jesus?’, but we would start by getting to know someone, getting to know their story, and seeing what their questions are – and that’s something that I definitely noticed at An Tobar Nua,” she says.

\* \* \* \* \*

Starting with how the Galway café makes sure that people are greeted at the door, she says this is about more than simple business. “I guess for any coffee shop that’s smart from a business perspective, but for them it’s also no, this person is a child of God and they are treated

with dignity and respect from the moment they come in the door,” she says.

Fr Maurice Colgan, prior of the Dominican community at St Mary’s on the city’s Pope’s Quay, says the approach adopted from An Tobar Nua is best described as ‘pre-evangelisation’, which is about laying groundwork for people to be open to evangelisation.

“It’s very much pre-evangelisation – ‘evangelisation lite,’” he says. “The main thing is that when you’re serving a coffee people notice something different about this coffee shop, and what they should notice is a sense of Christian joy in the place.”

“I don’t want to sound too

pious, because I’m sure in Starbucks and Costa and all these other places the staff are very nice,” he continues, “but there has to be something different about the service and the atmosphere. There has to be something different about the atmosphere in the shop that gets people questioning.”

**“Most of the religious orders in town have contributed to the rent”**

Just looking around the shop should make this pretty obvious, he says, explaining that one feature of the shop will be a small but distinctly Christian library.

“There’s going to be a library in it, probably about 100 books,” he says. “It’ll be mainly Catholic authors – there’ll be Dostoevsky, even though he’s Orthodox, and Lewis, and there’ll be Chesterton, Tolkien, maybe Graham Greene, people like that. That’s important, because when I say pre-evangelisation, it is still openly a Christian venue and that would be part of creating that Christian atmosphere.”

Art by Catholic artists would be another feature of the shop, Courtney explains.

“We’ve been in contact with different young Catholic artists around, so we’ve had a friend up in Donegal donate a few pieces, there’s a girl from Texas who has made a print we’re going to use for the wall – it’s very simple

at the moment, but we’re hoping to have people keep donating and giving pieces to give young Catholic artists a chance to shine,” she says.

Stressing that the relational aspect of An Tobar Nua is the biggest thing about the Galway café Brew132 is hoping to emulate, Courtney hopes that the decidedly Catholic atmosphere will help pique the curiosity of young customers on their way between the city centre and University College Cork.

“It’s just down below from UCC and we’re hoping that we might get some of the university students in on their way to school, and get to know them a little bit – what they’re studying, learn their names,” she says. “And as they come in and walk around the place they might notice there’s a St Brigid’s cross on the wall, there’s a lot of Catholic books in here on the bookshelf, and hopefully they would ask us ‘hey, what’s the deal with this place?’ And then we can start a conversation that way.”

For Fr Maurice, the other key purpose of the coffee shop would be to be a kind of social hub for Cork’s young Catholics.

“I’d say the main reason is for a hub for those who are involved in Catholic groups in Cork,” he says, “but also for those who feel isolated, that they can find out about this place and feel they can come along and meet their peers, and also for people who are new to the city or indeed new to the country, that they know there’s a place that they can find out about anything from accommodation to whatever, in a Catholic sort of sense, you know.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Given Brew132 aims to be a hub for Cork’s various Catholic groups, it’s striking that over a dozen groups have come together to support it, with younger Catholics from the city’s newer organisations running the shop and playing their part on Cork’s evangelical coalface, while orders backing the project include Augustinians, Franciscans, Capuchins, Presentation Sisters, Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of Charity, Bon Secours Sisters, Dominicans and Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

“Most of the religious orders in town have contributed to the rent for the place, but then a lot of decisions are being made by the different peer-to-peer ministries in town,” Courtney says. “Jack Ryan has been involved on behalf of the UCC Chaplaincy,



Brew132 committee members Courtney Holbrook, Patrick Williams, Jack Ryan and Rebecca Comerford. Photos: Cillian Kelly





we have the Dominican prayer meeting called Ignite, we have a Juventutem group in town, there's the Youth 2000 group as well, there's Jesus Youth, and then the lads with Night Fever have also been. All of us together are trying to make this place something that we want for our peers."

The Church is far better understood as a family of families or even a loose network of networks than it is the carefully regimented pyramid of popular lore, and for Courtney it's genuinely impressive to see so many of Cork's many Catholic families coming together to create this new Catholic hub.

"I know they've been trying to be united for a while," she continues. "I can't speak too much more because this is my first year in the city, but I know that they've been

doing different things to try to come together and I think that's really good because we are one body, we are the Church together, and these are our friends, our co-workers, and though a lot of our ministries look pretty different in the end we're all Catholic together. I think it's been a good way for us even so far just to get to know one another."

One remarkable feature of the project, Fr Maurice says, is that the various groups involved in the project all immediately saw its potential.

"Bringing the groups together has been hugely important," he says. "First of all, there's no doubt about it, it's been blessed: once the idea was mentioned to either one of the religious orders or one of the youth groups, everybody got it. There was

no need for PowerPoint presentations, there was no need for any further explanation. Everybody got it, and everybody saw the need. Indeed, among the religious orders in particular there was a level of excitement around the idea."

**“It's going to be people coming in and out, and getting to know their names”**

The whole project feels blessed, he continues. "It's taken time to find a premises, but in seeking a premises and in getting the premises, and the people who have come on board to get involved, it's been definitely blessed and I can see it having a very fruitful future," he says, explaining that at the moment it will be a coffee shop rather than



a sit-down café, but that getting planning permission for the latter is on the agenda.

This obviously has implications for the kind of welcome and pre-evangelisation that takes place at Brew132, but Courtney thinks the important thing is to start laying the groundwork.

"For now it's going to be very counter-based relational, it's going to be people coming in and out, and getting to know their names," she says. "That's something we're going to really be working on. Then by the time we get seating, hopefully they'll feel comfortable enough and will feel excited about the idea that we can get a relationship started."

One way or another, she says, there's a lot to be said for how such a diverse range of Catholic groups in Cork have come together to build Brew132.

"I would hope that people would be inspired by this,"

she says. "I know I've been mentioning different contributions from people from all over the country, but one thing I have enjoyed about it is that it's almost a home-grown effort: we've been working together for our city, for our town."

\* \* \* \* \*

With Ireland full of towns and cities where Catholic groups could similarly work together, Fr Maurice thinks there is a lot of scope for similar joint projects throughout Ireland, and that cooperation between orders and groups is vital for the Church going forward.

"I think there's no doubt. Let's see how this goes, and let's see the fruit of it and the mistakes that will be made, I'm sure, along the way," he says. Pointing out that the religious orders involved in backing this Cork project have presences in many of Ireland's towns and cities,

he says many of them would have some awareness of the project. "So it's a matter of let us do this, let us test the waters, and see what is the best way of doing it and what works, and then let's bring it to elsewhere, because when you have all these groups involved, it makes it so much easier."

One way or another, says Courtney, the lessons of Brew132 could be invaluable for Catholics elsewhere in Ireland.

"I'm hoping people will be inspired by the method and be able to start something on their own in their own town," she says. "I don't know if we would try to expand and make a chain per se, but I suppose from an evangelisation viewpoint I'd love for people to try different things like this to reach out to people who essentially don't know what the Catholic Faith is anymore."

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If we enter fully into Holy Week our observance of Lent and our celebration of Easter will be deepened beyond measure, writes **Fr Martin Browne OSB**



# Getting the most from the Easter *Triduum*



I got a promotional email from a hotel during the week, trying to interest me in some of their seasonal special offers. It loudly proclaimed that “Easter is for eating and sleeping-in”. I hope they didn’t pay a copywriter much money for this headline because it’s a pretty poor advertising tagline. It’s crass. They might as well have announced that “Easter is for stuffing your face and slobbering around in sweatpants!”

Of course, for many people, this image may be a very accurate description of Easter – little more than a long weekend with good social and sporting events... and chocolate. But for Christians, Easter isn’t just any holiday or festival. It is the festival. Christians are an Easter people – and Alleluia is our song.

For some, even people who take their faith very seriously, Easter can seem like the party at the end of the much more important season of Lent. That is to get things backwards. It isn’t that Easter is the feast that concludes the sacrifices of Lent. Rather, Lent is the fast that prepares us to celebrate Easter. Marking Lent without having Easter in view, while it may have many positive aspects, doesn’t ultimately make sense. And of course, Easter isn’t just Easter Sunday or Easter Monday. It’s a season of 50 days. In between the 40 days of Lent and the 50 days of Easter come the days of the Sacred Paschal *Triduum*. If we enter fully into these days, our observance of Lent and our celebration of Easter will be deepened beyond measure.

## Paschal mystery

So, what do we mean when we speak of the *Triduum*? The word means three days. But which three days? Many people think that the three days are Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, and that the *Triduum* is a sort of three-day preparation for Easter. They are incorrect! The *Triduum* isn’t a preparation for the celebration of Easter. It is the celebration of Easter – the liturgical celebration of the paschal mystery of the Lord Jesus, recalling his passion and death, his rest and his glorious resurrection.

In Jewish tradition, the day began at sundown on the evening before. The Church has preserved this understanding when it comes to liturgical feasts. And so, the *Triduum* begins on Thursday

of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper. The first day continues right through to Friday evening. Thus, both the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord’s Supper and the Good Friday Celebration of the Passion of the Lord belong to the first ‘day’ of the *Triduum*. The second ‘day’ begins at sundown on Good Friday evening and lasts until Saturday evening. You might say that this is odd, because there isn’t any major ceremony between Friday evening and Saturday evening. But that’s the point. The Church keeps still because we are recalling the Lord’s rest in the tomb. The third ‘day’ of the *Triduum* begins at sundown on Saturday night and the celebration of the most important liturgy of the year, the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night. It continues right through to Sunday evening.

The first day of the *Triduum* is the Day of the Lord’s Passion and death; the second day is the day of rest; and the third day is the day of resurrection. It is a single celebration of the saving work of the Lord Jesus – what the Church calls the paschal mystery. None of these days makes sense without the other two. While each person’s circumstances, schedules and commitments are different, the *Triduum* will make most sense if we experience something of each of the three days. If you can at all, do try to participate in the three main liturgies.

## “The washing of feet on Holy Thursday night is not a historical re-enactment or a mime”

The Mass of the Lord’s Supper recalls the Last Supper, at which Jesus instituted the mystery of the Eucharist. But this ceremony isn’t about the Eucharist as such. Above all, the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday night is the beginning of the *Triduum*. It is the beginning of our celebration of the paschal mystery of the Lord Jesus.

The official entrance antiphon in the Missal for Holy Thursday sets the tone: it doesn’t refer to Holy Communion, priesthood, foot-washing or other such things. It says: “We should glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom is our salvation, life and resurrection, through whom we are saved and delivered.”

ments, rituals and symbols of the next three days are about. The *Triduum* is, in a real way, a single celebration with a single ‘theme’.

In 2016, though many places had been doing it for years, Rome finally permitted the washing of both women’s and men’s feet on Holy Thursday. The argument that only men’s feet should be washed at this liturgy because Jesus only washed men’s feet at the Last Supper is very weak one, on several levels.

The liturgy isn’t play-acting. The washing of feet on Holy Thursday night is not a historical re-enactment or a mime. In fact, the Missal no longer even specifies that the number of people involved should be twelve. It’s not the sex or number of the people involved that matters. It’s what is done to them. The ritual is a response to the Gospel reading and its commandment: ‘I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you’

Some people don’t like the washing of feet on Holy Thursday, because they find feet a bit gross and icky. But surely that’s the point! It was an unpleasant task normally done by servants which Jesus chose to use as an example to his friends. I have read about and experienced many variations on the foot-washing and most of them leave me cold. It is hard not to be moved when the priest simply washes the feet of a group of people, with care, reverence and humility.

Whereas the Holy Thursday Mass begins with festivity and the ringing of bells, it ends much more soberly. The ciborium containing the consecrated hosts for Friday’s liturgy is carried to the Altar of Repose. But there’s a lot more to this than being prepared for tomorrow. The procession also commemorates the journey of the Lord and his disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane. If done with care, and the place of repose is set up

well, the procession is particularly beautiful and evocative. It draws us into the reality of the Passion and the lonely agony of the Suffering Servant. There is no blessing or dismissal. Just silent watching and waiting, prolonging the prayer of the liturgy.

\*\*\*\*\*

Just as there is no blessing or dismissal on Thursday night, there is no greeting at the start on Friday afternoon. Instead, the celebration begins with the priest lying face down before the altar. The gesture itself speaks more powerfully than any commentary ever could. The Good Friday liturgy isn’t hugely long. But it is demanding. There’s a lot of standing and a lot of kneeling down and getting back up again. I find that this bodily effort helps focus my mind and heart. (Just like the fasting I didn’t do enough of in Lent was supposed to do....)

It’s a stark ceremony. There are no flowers, cloths, candles or





decorations. But the liturgy brims with dignity and majesty. Listening to the readings, one simply knows that this is truly about the Son of God.

Whatever the biblical scholars may say, I never fail to be moved by the line in St John's Passion that "this is the evidence of one who saw it – trustworthy evidence, and he knows he speaks the truth – and he gives it so that you may believe as well".

The sense of dignity and majesty and of cosmic victory is underlined in the Adoration of the Holy Cross. Three times we are invited to behold the wood of the Cross – "on which hung the salvation of the world". Three times we respond with adoration. And then, in turn, we come forward to kiss the Cross.

This wordless communion with the Crucified One is such a beautiful moment. Each person brings his or her own story, thoughts and sorrows and in the simple and short encounter at the Cross can experi-

human condition that was made visible at Calvary. Our Irish tradition has many beautiful laments and airs for Good Friday, but I really love the official song texts in the Missal too, because they speak of the wonderful paradox, so clear in St John's Gospel, that the Cross was not just the place of Christ's death, but the place of his victory.

For all its starkness, Christ's victory is present in the Good Friday liturgy too. "Holy is God. Holy and Mighty. Holy and Immortal One, have mercy on us."

### Focus

Even though the focus is on the Cross, the 'theme' of the Good Friday liturgy is the same as all the other *Triduum* liturgies – the paschal mystery of the Lord Jesus.

"Behold the blessed Sabbath, the holy day of rest, on which the Son of God has rested from his works."

Just as the Good Friday liturgy ended in silence, so does the Easter Vigil begin in silence. Again, the

the single *Triduum* liturgy that we began on Thursday evening. The full name of this ceremony in the current Missal is a helpful one – The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night. The word 'night' is important. It should be dark outside. The practice in many places of having the Vigil at the same time that weekly Saturday evening Masses take place is not a good one.

The Easter fire and the ceremonies with the Paschal Candle make no sense unless it is dark. Over and over again, the *Exsultet*, the Easter Proclamation, rings out: "This is the night..." So, we shouldn't be singing it in the early evening!

The Easter Vigil is long. It should be. That's what a vigil is – a time of keeping watch. We should be tired after it. If we trim all the optional bits, and skip all but the obligatory readings and end up with a liturgy that's only a few minutes longer than our usual Saturday evening Mass, then I'm not sure it qualifies to be called a vigil. Vigils take time...

**“Paying due regard to health and safety, everyone should have a real candle. Who cares if it's messy?”**

Like the other *Triduum* celebrations, the Easter Vigil is not a play. Jesus died once for all and lives for all eternity. He doesn't die every Good Friday and rise every Easter. He is always alive, gloriously. And so there isn't a single "moment of resurrection" in the liturgy. It is mysterious. No-one saw Jesus rise from the dead. As we hear in the *Exsultet*, only the night itself knows: "O truly blessed night, worthy alone to know the time and hour when Christ rose from the underworld!"

### Darkness

Jesus was in the tomb throughout that Sabbath day, but somehow, when the women arrived on Sunday morning, the stone had been rolled away and his body was gone. Likewise, we begin our Vigil in darkness, but by the end of the Vigil, as the seventh day gives way to the first day of the week, it has become Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord. "He is not here; he has risen!"

When celebrated with care and energy, the Easter Vigil is a magnificently powerful proclamation of the saving love of the Father revealed in the rising of Jesus from the dead. The fire should be big. The Paschal Candle should be beautiful. Paying due regard to health and safety, everyone should have a real candle. Who cares if it's messy? There are 50 days on which the church can be cleaned!

The *Exsultet* should be sung. The readings should be many and well-prepared. In parish churches, there should be baptisms. There should be water everywhere! The air should be heavy with the scent of chrism and incense. Communion should be distributed under both kinds. And there should be



some more!

\* \* \* \* \*

Easter joy isn't about faking a happy face or pretending that I don't have worries or problems. It is about believing, trusting and knowing that despite my worries and problems, Christ has conquered death and sin and is alive.

As the instruction at the opening of the Vigil reminds us: "If we keep the memorial of the Lord's paschal solemnity in this way, listening to his word and celebrating

his mysteries, then we shall have the sure hope of sharing his triumph over death and living with him in God." And that is cause for joy indeed.

We are an Easter people and Alleluia is our song!

**i** Martin Browne OSB is a monk of Glenstal Abbey and along with Luke Macnamara OSB is author of *The Glenstal Companion to the Easter Vigil* which has just been published by Dominican Publications.





# Limerick laughter in Domi



The first team to successfully find the hidden pigs pose for a victory photo.



At the end of the meeting on February 24, the youth club gathered at the Sacred Heart shrine to pray the litany of trust and place all their intentions before Christ's Sacred Heart.



Teammates look on during the aardvark relay race, part of the opening 'Olympic Games'. This year's theme for youth club is 'The Olympics'.



## Dominican sisters tell Chai Brady about their new youth group

**Y**oung people are longing to be "known and loved" says a Dominican sister based in Limerick, and that's exactly what her order intend to let them know.

Coming from Nashville, Tennessee, Sr Mara Grace and her three fellow sisters have been organising events and making a splash in the community. Their most recent venture aims to be more consistent; creating a community of young faithful.

Their new youth club runs every second and fourth Sunday of the month from 7-9pm and began on January 27.

"It's kind of a dual thing, first we're all trained as teachers, that's where our charisma lies but also we just saw this need - you know there's different events for youth, they'll have a retreat or a pilgrimage or whatever - but we wanted to do something especially for the youth in Limerick to have consistency," Sr Mara Grace told *The Irish Catholic*.

"We'll meet twice a month so they learn to support each other in living the faith and having fun together. It's building community outside of just the normal school, or sport community, they build a community around the faith really."

### Virtue

She says they'll be teaching about "virtue and treating each other kindly", but the heart of what they hope to achieve is to provide a place of encounter with Jesus, "so that they can go to the one who can really heal them".

"We have all these different services for young people, but it's really Jesus Christ alone who can heal us as we need, so I think that's the main goal, is bringing these young people to a place where they can encounter him."

"So we do it through different things, we do talk about the Faith obviously but we have a lot of fun too. It's also showing them that Faith is



After receiving Blessed Chiara Badano as their patron saint, this team makes a poster with the quote: "For you Jesus, if you want it, I want it too."

not just a Sunday morning in Mass, we can have a Christian community and have real fun and real friendship and how Christ can be the centre of that too."

Usually beginning with an icebreaker so everyone can get to know each other, the theme of the youth club's activities is the Olympics.

**“From our beginning prayer to our ending prayer we don't take out the mobile phones”**

The theme acts as a "springboard" to talk about faith. "So the lesson might be 'God has plan for my life', but we'll get the message across using sport and then the bulk of the night is just the young people assimilating that message to their own lives," says Sr Mara.

They'd go on to do exercises, some would be team building orientated, and then discuss what was difficult and what was helpful. "When we use our gifts that God's given us, how does that help the community? What's difficult about not having a gift that someone else has?" she says.

They begin with a prayer and end with a "different flavour" of worship, perhaps Eucharistic Adoration.

Battling isolation among

young people is also one of the core components of the youth club, as it's all about building community.

Sr Mara says that although social media can be beneficial for reaching young people, it also has its downsides.

Sr Mara says: "Young people, that's where they are, they're on social media, so part of it will be: How do we use that appropriately because it is a good tool? It's a great evangelistic tool but then how do we use it for the good because it can also be used for evil - like any tool that we have."

On the first night, Sr Mara remarks that they were discussing guidelines for the group, and the young people expressed a desire not to use mobile phones during the evening.

"So from our beginning prayer to our ending prayer we don't take out the mobile phones, I think this creates a great freedom really," she says.

"If I'm feeling insecure what do I do? I go right to my mobile phone and it looks like I have all these friends but on these nights it actually pulls you out of yourself. Like okay, I'm not going to just go hide on that screen I have to go out of myself to encounter the person next to me and that's hard to do."

"I think it does build that community of being present



# nican Youth Club



Attendees at the third youth club meeting at the end of February.



Sr Beatrice, Aine Kirby, Roisin Blackwell and Lisa Blackwell.

to one another, that theology of encounter. Encountering the other that's right there with me and that in turn will help us to be open to encountering the Lord who is there with me always."

## Locality

For those thinking about starting a youth group in their locality Sr Mara says it's not "rocket science", and young people are yearning for these sorts of community building initiatives.

Aine Kirby (16) has attended a few of the meetings and told *The Irish Catholic* a lot of organisation and

planning has gone into it.

She said: "They didn't want to bring us in and sit us down and make us pray the Rosary and all this and make it a very strict thing."

"I think the form they do it in is really beneficial for young people. Whatever group discussion we'll end up having they'll always do a game before it, the game will have that hidden message in it so then at the end of the game everyone would get into their groups and talk about what you got from the game."

It was after Mass the Dominicans sisters approached

Aine and her Mom and told them about the initiative which she enthusiastically responded to. "The first night I went to it I loved it so I kept going back," she said.

"I think what's brilliant is when we start the youth group we do the games, we eat the food, we have the discussions, we have a laugh and then at the end we'll maybe gather around and we learn a song together or we pray. Everyone has had their fun and everything and it just calms down at the end so I think it's great for new people as well," she added.

Each youth club meeting ends with a time for prayer.



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# Out&About



**ARMAGH:** Year 12 pupils of St Catherine's College receive their Pope John Paul II and Muiredach Cross Awards, with Archbishop Eamon Martin and Msgr Colum Curry in Armagh Cathedral.



**ARMAGH:** Francis Hagan, parish sacristan, is presented with the Benemerenti Medal from Archbishop Eamon Martin with Canon Michael Toner at St Patrick's Church, Portadown. Photo: Kieran Hagan



**CORK:** Fr Michael Regan of Clontead, Mary Lowther, Fair Hill, Cork City, and Bishop John Buckley attending the launch at Cork City Hall of former Lord Mayor, Cllr. Tony Fitzgerald's pictorial record of his year in office. Photo: Mike English



**DERRY:** Parents, past pupils, students and religious gather at Sacred Heart Primary School to celebrate its 40th anniversary, which included plenty of reminiscing and laughter.

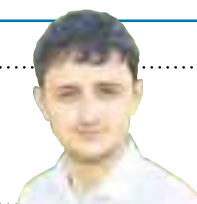


**GALWAY:** Priests gather at the 50th Jubilee Mass for Rev. Canon Michael Mulkerrins in Renmore Church, Galway.



Edited by Colm Fitzpatrick  
colm@irishcatholic.ie

Events deadline is a week in  
advance of publication



**DUBLIN:** Bishop Eamon Walsh presents certificates to the ten priests and one Spiritan seminarian, from seven different countries, who completed Spiritan Mission Ireland's two-week long Orientation Course for Incoming Pastoral Ministry Workers.



▲ **SLIGO:** Annie Mai Flynn with Bishop Kevin Doran after the bishop had presented her with the Benemerenti Medal and Scroll awarded by Pope Francis in recognition of a lifetime of dedicated service to the Church in the Sooley area of Riverstown parish.

► **DERRY:** Recent graduates in the Masters in Catholic School Leadership, Saint Mary's University, Twickenham, who are based at the Derry Saturday School, with Bishop Donal McKeown and Dr John Lydon, Programme Director.



**WICKLOW:** James Byrne, parishioner of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Enniskerry, pictured with (l-r) Fr John Wall, Fr Richard Byrne and Fr Bernard Kennedy PP, receiving the Benemerenti Medal at St Patrick's Church for his ongoing volunteer work in the parish.



## IN SHORT

### Modelling Ministry on Christ

It was a special day for the first cohort of students, based at the Derry Saturday School, who received their Masters in Catholic School Leadership from Vice-Chancellor, Francis Campbell, at St Mary's University, Twickenham on March 29. In his opening address, Prof. John Charmley, Pro Vice-Chancellor, warmly welcomed Derry's Bishop Donal McKeown and graduates to the ceremony.

Acknowledging the development of the Derry based Saturday School as significant, Prof. Charmley said: "We are delighted at the first fruits of our collaboration with the Diocese of Derry and look forward to deepening our cooperation."

Of the 34 students who graduated in the Masters in Catholic School Leadership this year, 11 completed their studies through the Derry Centre, facilitated

by Programme Director, Dr John Lydon and Senior Lecturers, Dr David Fincham and Dr Caroline Healy.

The programme content included modules in Catholic Education, Leadership and Management, Spiritual and Theological Foundations and Research Methods and Dissertation. Bishop McKeown believes the wealth of local research carried out by students will be of great benefit to Catholic education, because, as he told those gathered for the graduation in the Chapel of St Mary's University: "Leadership - in school or elsewhere - is challenging. Understandably many shy away from it. But there is a crying need for those who will take on leadership positions, not because it brings them glory or power but because leadership is a service that can focus a range of creative energies in an often-fragmenting world.

"It needs a heart that knows how to build teams and bridges. It means having convictions and being able to bring people with you."

Speaking of his experience of the programme, graduate Stephen Keown, Vice-Principal of St Mary's College, Derry, where the Saturday School is based, said that he undertook the course because he wanted to explore school leadership from a faith-led perspective.

Describing the Masters' Programme as, "personally enriching and professionally enlightening", Stephen believes that, as a school leader, the course provided a confidence, knowledge and understanding upon how faith-based leadership decisions are made.

There are currently 32 students from five Irish dioceses undertaking the Masters' Programme at the Derry Centre.

The next intake will be Autumn 2019. Those invested can contact the Derry Diocesan Catechetical Centre on 004428 71264087 or email tferry@derrydiocese.org.

A short video exploring the course can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMAzq8XWBAU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMAzq8XWBAU)

## ARMAGH

Lenten talks to take place in St Malachy's Church each Monday of Lent at 7.30pm.

Chrism Mass to be celebrated by Archbishop Eamon Martin in St Patrick's Cathedral on April 17 at 7pm, which includes a special blessing of the Holy Oils of Catechumens, Chrism and the Oil of the Sick.

## 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.

## 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.

## DERRY

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

## 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.

Holy hour of Adoration for Healing at St Laurence O'Toole Church, Seville Place, every Tuesday evening during Lent at 8pm.

Divine Mercy Sunday on April 28 at the Church of St Vincent de Paul, Marino. Holy hour and Confession at 3-4pm and Mass at 4-5pm. The celebrant is Fr Conor McDonough.

Mass of Chrism at 10.30am in the Pro Cathedral. Distribution of the Holy Oils in the Pro Cathedral immediately afterwards and up until 1pm.

Fifth anniversary healing service in St Patrick's Church, Strand Street, Skerries, on May 6 at 7.30pm for cancer patients, families and friends. The service will consist of Mass, anointing of the sick, blessing of the relic, and the launching of the new prayer card to Our Lady of the Tumours.

The Young Church Dublin are gathering a Young Adult group to walk Darkness into Light 2019 on May 11. If you are interested register at [www.darknessintolight.ie](http://www.darknessintolight.ie) and email [st.pauls@dublindiocese.ie](mailto:st.pauls@dublindiocese.ie).

## FERMANAGH

A Mass to St Peregrine for all the sick is prayed each Tuesday evening in St Patrick's Church, Derrygonnelly at 7.30pm: [www.churchservices.tv/derrygonnelly](http://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/linaskea](http://www.churchservices.tv/linaskea)

Mass in the Extraordinary Form in St Patrick's Church (opposite St Kieran's College) every Sunday at 5pm.

## KILDARE

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

May Masses and devotions at the Shrine at Our Lady of Clonfert Church. Daily Mass (Monday to Saturday) at 8pm with guest preacher and Mass at 12pm each Friday. Sunday Mass at 10am and 7pm each week of May. Full programme available at [Clonfert-diocese.ie](http://Clonfert-diocese.ie)

## KILKENNY

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

## LIMERICK

Eucharistic Adoration takes place each Friday in Raheen church following 10am Mass until 10pm, Crecora 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.

## MAYO

Passion in Drama (Stations of the Cross) on April 19 at 8pm in Crossmolina Town Centre, which will be presented by local drama and pantomime groups.

The 37th annual Mercy Sunday pilgrimage takes place on April 28 in Knock Shrine. Ceremonies commence at 12.45pm. Chief celebrant for the Mass will be Archbishop Michael Neary, Archbishop of Tuam. Divine Mercy devotions will be led by Fr Mark Byrne, SOLT. The soloist for the Mass will be James Kilbane and he will be joined by St Peter's Choir, Co. Donegal.

Latin Mass in the Old Rite (Tridentine) will be celebrated on Easter Sunday, April 21, in the Parish Church Knock at 5.30pm.

## MEATH

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

## ROSCOMMON

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

### Church slams Indonesian court for underage marriage laws

● Church and rights activists have slammed Indonesia's religious court for "abusively" granting permission for thousands of underage children to marry.

Indonesian law sets the minimum age of 19 for man and 16 for a girl to marry. However, the religious court – for Muslims to resolve matters concerning religion such as marriage – has the authority to give dispensation to people below the minimum age.

According to an annual Supreme Court report released this week, the religious court issued 13,251 marriage dispensations in 2018, which was roundly condemned by activists.

Mr Susanto, chairman of the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), accused the religious court of approving child marriages wantonly just because it has the authority to do so.

"It should halt or at the very least curb permission," he said.

### Chinese bishop left in dark over Mass celebration

● A Chinese bishop, asked to step aside by the Vatican for an illicitly ordained bishop, cannot celebrate Chrism Mass unless he agrees to state policy on the Catholic Church in China.

Bishop Guo Xijin – the former bishop of Mindong – said that it is currently uncertain if he could join the Chrism Mass because the government refuses to acknowledge him.

"The government officials said in clarity that they do not recognise me as a bishop," Bishop Guo said.

The bishop said he has been told that recognition would only come upon his applying to join the Bishops' Conference of the Catholic Church in China (BCCCC) and its church affairs committee at the provincial level.

### Pastor and activist victims of 'enforced disappearances'

● A Malaysian human rights body has concluded that police were involved in the disappearances of a pastor and a social activist.

The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (Suhakam) claimed on April 3 that at least two missing persons – activist Amri Che Mat and Pastor Raymond Koh – were victims of enforced disappearances.

Mah Weng Kwai, chairman of a panel that has

investigated disappearances in the Muslim-majority country, said that based on lengthy discussions and deliberations in both cases, they could only conclude that individuals or groups operating with the support of state agents had been involved in the abductions.

"The panel is of the considered view that the enforced disappearance of Amri was carried out by agents of the state," he said.

### Vietnam priest urges public to support suffering family

● An activist priest in northern Vietnam has called on the public to provide financial support for the relatives of a jailed environmental activist, including his ailing teenage daughter.

Francis Nguyen Nam Phong is serving a two-year term and is unable to take care of his eldest daughter, Nguyen Hai Giang, who was recently diagnosed with a malignant tumor in her right leg.

Fr John Baptist Nguyen Dinh Thuc, the pastor of Song Ngoc parish in Nghe An province, said doctors from the Medical University Hospital in Hanoi recommend amputating the 10th grader's leg.

### Respect Lenten celebrations, priest tells Filipino politicians

● A Catholic priest in the Philippine capital has called on politicians running in this year's national elections to respect the solemnity of liturgical celebrations during the Lenten season. Fr Jerome Secillano, executive secretary of the public affairs committee of the Catholic bishops' conference, made the appeal ahead of the campaign period for the elections, which started last week. "This is a reminder to them to instruct their supporters to keep from making noise near churches, especially if Mass is being celebrated," said the priest.

## Band together against Philippine president's dictatorship – clergy

Members of the Philippine clergy and human rights groups responded to President Rodrigo Duterte after he threatened to arrest all of his critics.

At a gathering of prosecutors last week, the president threatened to declare a "revolutionary war" if his critics "push me to my limit".

"I will arrest all of you. I will put you together with the criminals, rebels and drug lords," he told the annual conference of the country's prosecutors.

"If you make it hard for me, I will declare a revolutionary war until the end of my term," said Duterte, adding that he was willing to be hanged. "I'm willing to die."

Bishop Gerardo Alminaza of San Carlos said even without this threat, "killings are rampant".

"Poor people already live in fear," said the bishop of the diocese where 14 farmers, accused by the police of being communist rebels, were gunned down on March 30.

"We pray (Duterte) won't do it," said Bishop Alminaza, adding that a crackdown will only fuel more unrest.

Fr Wilfredo Dulay of the Missionary Disciples of Jesus said the "noose is tightening"



President Rodrigo Duterte.

around Duterte, referring to a series of videos alleging that drug money has been funnelled into bank accounts owned by Duterte's children.

The Duterte's have denied the allegations. Paolo Duterte, the president's son and a former vice mayor of Davao City, indicated he knew the identity of the accuser.

Redemptorist Bro. Ciriaco Santiago Jr, who has been documenting the drug-related killings, said that with the many human rights abuses of the current administration, "what other rights are there left?"

"The Church flourishes in every chaos. In times when it is persecuted, more take up the challenge to put on the robes of prophets."

"Today's challenge is for all of us to band together to oppose this threat of dictatorship," he said.

### Illogical

Fr Danilo Pilario, a theology school dean, said the president's comments sounded "illogical".

"He is feeling the pressure. Endless criticism about Chinese incursions, the killing of drug addicts and farmers,

and more recently, the alleged involvement of his family in drug syndicates can push him to the edge," said the priest.

"They have used up their credible excuses. This is an expression of a desperate man," he added.

Antonio La Vina, former dean of colleges of law and governance and founder of a coalition of human rights lawyers said, "Duterte is testing the waters again".

"He is flexing his muscles," he said, adding that, people will have to hold firm, "otherwise he would feel he could do anything he wants".

## New Archbishop promises to serve with love and truth

Archbishop Wilton Gregory, set to become the new head of the Archdiocese of Washington, promised to serve with truth, love and tenderness in a region where he acknowledged "unrest and anger", after the downfall of former Washington Cardinal Theodore McCarrick and the Church's current sex abuse scandal.

"I want to offer you hope. I will rebuild your trust," Archbishop Gregory said during an April 4 news conference. "I cannot undo the past, but I sincerely believe that together we will not merely address

the moments we've fallen short or failed outright, but we will model for all the life and teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and we will reclaim the future for our families, for those who will follow us. That is my greatest, indeed, it is my only aspiration."

### Resignation

Archbishop Gregory was introduced to media gathered for the announcement at the Archdiocese of Washington's pastoral centre in Hyattsville by Cardinal Donald Wuerl. Pope Francis accepted Cardinal

Wuerl's resignation as Washington's archbishop in October and named him apostolic administrator.

"It's difficult to come into a situation where there is unrest and anger," Archbishop Gregory said. "I've known Donald Wuerl for over 40 years. He is a gentleman. He works very hard for the Church. He's acknowledged that he's made mistakes. That's a sign of the integrity of a man. If I can shed light on what I think we need to do in response to some of the mistakes that he's acknowledged and asked forgiveness for, I'll do that."

## Texas bans prison chaplains from execution chambers

The state of Texas has banned all prison chaplains from its execution chamber, following a Supreme Court decision that halted the execution of a Buddhist man who was denied the presence of his chaplain.

Patrick Murphy had been scheduled to die last Thursday. Mr Murphy requested

access to a Buddhist minister a month before his scheduled execution, and his request was denied because the minister was not a state employee. The prison system only allowed clerics employed by the state to enter the execution chamber. Currently, the state only employs Christian and Mus-

lim clerics.

Seven Supreme Court justices agreed that Murphy's rights had been violated and that his execution should be stayed. Justices Clarence Thomas and Neil Gorsuch did not join the majority opinion.

Justice Brett Kavanaugh said that that allowing only

Christian and Muslim ministers to be present with death row inmates in the execution chamber was discriminatory, suggesting that a more just resolution would be that no chaplains be permitted in the execution chamber and instead they be allowed to sit in the viewing area.





Edited by Colm Fitzpatrick  
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## In God we trust



A street vendor in Tijuana, Mexico, holds a crucifix as cars line up waiting to be inspected last week by US Border Patrol officers to enter the US from Mexico at the San Ysidro, California, port of entry. An estimated 100,000 apprehensions of immigrants by US Customs and Border Patrol agents at the US-Mexico border is the highest figure in a decade. Photo: CNS

# New Brunei laws punish sodomy and blasphemy with death penalty

Brunei has implemented a sharia penal code that punishes such crimes as adultery, sodomy, rape and blasphemy of Muhammad with the death penalty.

"Brunei Darussalam has always been practising a dual legal system, one that is based on the Syariah Law and the other on Common Law," Brunei's prime minister's office said at the end of last month.

"In fully implementing the Syariah Penal Code Order (SPCO) 2013 from April 3, both systems will continue to run in parallel to maintain peace and order and preserve religion, life, family and individuals regardless of gender, nationality, race and faith."

It noted that its sharia law, "apart from criminalising and deterring acts that are against the teachings of Islam...also aims

to educate, respect and protect the legitimate rights of all individuals, society or nationality of any faiths and race".

Brunei is a country of 2,200 square miles located entirely on the island of Borneo. It is an absolute monarchy led by Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, and about two-thirds of the population is Muslim.

### Whipping

Under the newly-implemented code, lesbian sex will be penalised with a fine up to \$40,000 (€35,615), whipping up to 40 strokes or up to 10 years imprisonment; and theft with amputation.

Those who encourage Muslims to apostasise will be subject to a fine and imprisonment, as will those who persuade someone having no religion to

become a believer of a religion other than Islam.

As the code was put into force, Hassanal Bolkiah said that "I want to see Islamic teachings in this country grow stronger".

The Catholic Church has consistently taught that the state has the authority to use the death penalty, in cases of "absolute necessity", though with the qualification that the Church considered such situations to be extremely rare.

St John Paul II said that "the dignity of human life must never be taken away, even in the case of someone who has done great evil". He also spoke of his desire for a consensus to end the death penalty, which he called "cruel and unnecessary".

## Sharp decline in Australian Catholic population

Australia's Catholic population fell by 2.7% between 2011 and 2016, but Catholics are more likely to have a higher education, according to an analysis of census data by the National Centre for Pastoral Research.

Analysing statistics from the country's 2016 census, the centre reported on April 4 in its 'Social Profile of the Catholic Community in Australia' that members of the Church

also were more likely to have been born overseas than five years earlier.

The Catholic population stood at nearly 5.3 million in 2016 compared with more than 5.4 million in 2011. Catholics comprised 22.6% of the country's total population in 2016, down from 25.3% five years earlier.

"The drop in the number of Catholics is concerning and the bishops are keen to

understand what's behind it and respond as positively as possible," Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane, president of the Australian bishops' conference, said in a media release.

He also pointed to recent data on falling Mass attendance, surmising that government inquiries and "related revelations about child sexual abuse as well as a general drift away from religious practice

and a broader trend of disaffiliation" have contributed to reducing the Australia's Catholic population.

The report also shows that Catholics are more than twice as likely to have a university degree than two decades ago. The trend, the archbishop said, "may show how Catholic schools have better equipped people" for advanced study.

## Vatican roundup

### Pope Francis to celebrate Holy Thursday with prisoners

Pope Francis will celebrate the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper with prisoners in Velletri, about 36 miles south of Rome. The Pope will celebrate the Mass and the foot-washing ritual at the Velletri Correctional Facility on April 18, the Vatican announced last week.

The late-afternoon visit will include a meeting with prisoners, prison staff, police and local leaders, as well as an exchange of gifts with the head of the facility.

The Pope is to wash the feet of 12 prisoners, the Vatican said.

Pope Francis has made it a tradition to celebrate the Holy Thursday Mass with people who could not come to the Vatican or the Basilica of St John Lateran for the celebrations.

In his first year as Pope in 2013, he chose a juvenile detention facility to celebrate Holy Thursday. The next year he washed the feet of people with severe physical handicaps at a rehabilitation center. That was followed by men and women detainees at Rome's Rebibbia prison in 2015, refugees in 2016, inmates at a jail in the Italian town of Paliano in 2017, and prisoners at Rome's 'Regina Coeli' jail in 2018.

### Vatican upholds verdict after archbishop appeals abuse allegations

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith have announced that, following an appeal, the Vatican's court has upheld last year's verdict finding an archbishop in Guam guilty of abuse of minors.

A release from the CDF on April 4 said that Archbishop Anthony Apuron (73), was found "guilty of delicts against the Sixth Commandment with minors". The decision, made February 7, is considered final.

Archbishop Apuron was sentenced to deprivation of the office of Archbishop of Agaña and forbidden from using the insignia attached

to the rank of bishop, such as the mitre and ring. He is also forbidden from living within the jurisdiction of the archdiocese. He was not removed from ministry or from the clerical state, nor has he been assigned to live in prayer and penance.

Archbishop Apuron was in March 2018 found guilty of "certain" unspecified charges and he immediately filed an appeal.

Having been found guilty of sexual abuse of minors, the penalty levelled against him is unusual – often a cleric found guilty of such crimes would be removed from the clerical state.

### Religions join together in promoting dignity and peace, Pontiff says

Reflecting upon his recent apostolic journey to Morocco, Pope Francis said that God desires a greater sense of fraternity among Catholics and Muslims as "brother children of Abraham".

"Some may ask, 'But why does the Pope visit the Muslims and not only the Catholics?'" Pope Francis said in St Peter's Square. "With Muslims, we are descendants of the same father, Abraham," he said. "What God wants is fraternity between us in a special way," he added, noting that this was the motive behind his travels.

Pope Francis offered thanks to God that his trip to the Moroccan capital of Rabat March 30-31 was "another step on the path of dialogue and encounter with our Muslim brothers and sisters".

On his first day in Morocco, Pope Francis signed an 'Appeal for Jerusalem' with the Moroccan King Mohammed VI. The joint-declaration called for Jerusalem to be preserved as a "peaceful place of meeting for the three monotheistic religions", the Pope explained.

Religions have the essential role of "defending human dignity and promoting peace, justice and care for creation, that is our home common", Francis said.



# Letter from Rome



John L. Allen Jr

Last Tuesday made official a transition that's been quietly underway for a while in terms of the Vatican's response to the clerical sexual abuse scandals: Pope Francis and his aides are rethinking, if not the substance of a 'zero tolerance' policy, at least the rhetoric of it, becoming increasingly unwilling to use that phrase.

Confirmation came with release of a document from the Pontiff drawing conclusions from last fall's Synod of bishops on young people, where tensions over 'zero tolerance' formed one of the major pieces of drama. In the end, Francis's 35,000-word, 63-page text discusses the abuse crisis at some length, devoting almost 1,000 words to the subject, but makes no mention of 'zero tolerance'.

Here's the thing: there may be compelling reasons for caution about the phrase, beginning with the point that it seems to have come to mean wildly different things depending on who's using it.

However, if the Pope is now planning to avoid a term, he himself helped to cement as a pillar of the Church's commitment to reform, somebody will need to explain why – otherwise, people may be tempted to think this reconsideration is actually a retreat.

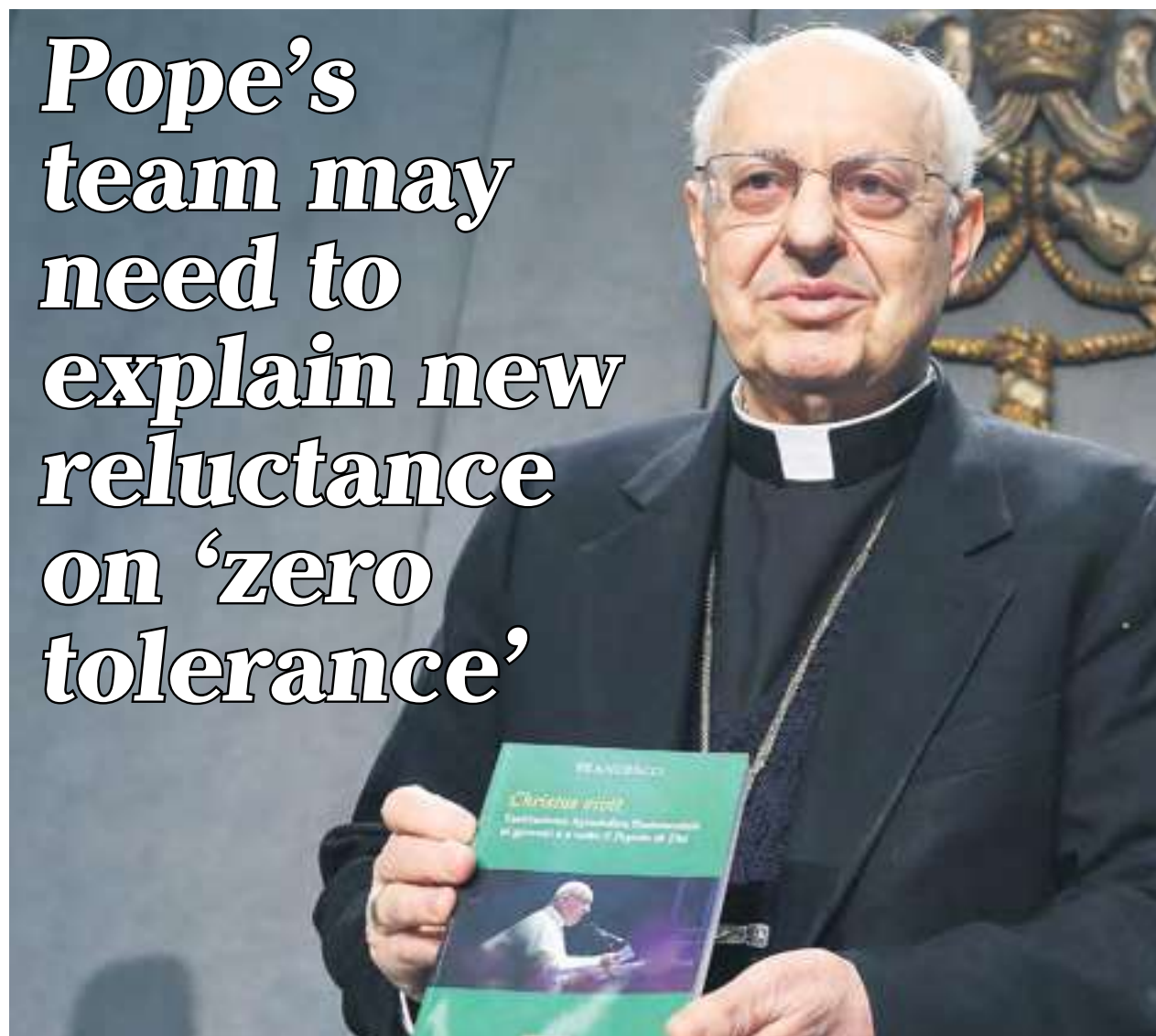
When Francis convened a synod on young people last October, questions surrounded how the bishops would handle an avalanche of fresh twists in the clerical abuse scandals.

## Report

Those developments included a damning Pennsylvania grand jury report; the resignation of ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick; a controversy in Australia over eroding the seal of the confessional; defrocking, bishops' resignations and fresh revelations in Chile; and an infamous letter from Italian Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò accusing Pope Francis of knowing about McCarrick and covering it up.

Two weeks before the synod opened, the Vatican

## Pope's team may need to explain new reluctance on 'zero tolerance'



Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, secretary-general of the Synod of Bishops, holds Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation, *Christus Vivit* (Christ Lives), during a news conference for its presentation at the Vatican on April 2. The document contains the Pope's reflections on the 2018 Synod of Bishops on young people, the faith and vocational discernment. Photo: CNS

announced Francis would summon presidents of all the bishops' conferences in the world to Rome to discuss child protection on February 21-24. Nonetheless, several bishops at the synod representing areas hardest hit by the crisis pushed ahead, tackling it head-on.

**“In the end, the synod's final document contained only three paragraphs on abuse”**

One such moment came when Archbishop Anthony Fisher of Australia directly addressed the 36 young people who joined the bishops, apologising for the failures of Church leadership. He drew sustained applause, and he was joined by several other prelates who engaged the issue both in floor speeches and in small group discussions. It seemed there was momentum towards a strong statement.

On Tuesday, October 23, synod participants were

presented with a draft version of the final document they would vote on Saturday, October 27. It included a clear affirmation of 'zero tolerance'.

Over the next several days that language was peeled back, mostly due to reservations among bishops from the developing world and even some from the West, such as leading Italian prelates. Some felt the attention to the abuse crisis in the draft was disproportionate, while others objected that addressing any specific policy ahead of the Pope's February summit would be premature.

In the end, the synod's final document contained only three paragraphs on abuse, with no reference to 'zero tolerance'.

## Omission

Pope Francis could have addressed that omission in his concluding document, but he chose not to. He included a section on "ending every form of abuse" and insisted "there can be no turning back", but shrank from the argot of 'zero tolerance'.

To be sure, there are anti-abuse experts and reformers

with doubts about what the phrase 'zero tolerance' has come to mean over the last couple of decades, which often seems to be in the eye of the beholder.

Originally, it was a reference to the standard adopted by the US bishops in Dallas in 2002, which is that a single substantiated act of sexual abuse of a minor is enough to justify permanent removal from the priesthood.

At that level, it's a mixed bag in terms of what's going on right now. The defrocking of McCarrick just before the February summit could be seen as demonstrating that this form of 'zero tolerance' now applies to Catholic clergy at all levels.

Yet in a set of points of reflection Francis distributed to bishops at the February summit, he included one calling on the Church to "observe the traditional principle of proportionality of punishment with respect to the crime committed", adding "that priests and bishops guilty of sexual abuse of minors leave the public ministry".

While there was no con-

crete outcome on this point, some wondered if the Vatican is now moving back to permanent removal from ministry, as opposed to defrocking, as the benchmark in abuse cases.

**“Perhaps it's unrealistic to expect the Pope himself to deal with all this”**

In any event, depending on context, the phrase 'zero tolerance' can also be used to mean the entire American and/or Western response to the abuse crisis, including mandatory reporting to local police and civil authorities, public disclosure of the names of accused clergy, financial payouts to settle litigation, press conferences, etc.

At that level, prelates from Africa, Asia and elsewhere may have legitimate doubts about whether all those measures apply neatly to their own situations, and they can be understandably reluctant to employ a vocabulary that could imply that they do. Naturally, history's first Pope from the developing world

will be sympathetic.

Global ambivalence on zero tolerance was underlined a couple of weeks ago in remarks to the media by Archbishop Marek Judaszewski of Krakow, Poland.

"The Church must be impeccably resolute in the fight against evil," Judaszewski said, "but she must also call for conversion, penance and show mercy to the perpetrators, if they show sincere regret", adding that a 'zero tolerance' principle is totalitarian and originates from Nazi traditions.

Some bishops from other parts of the world wonder if 'zero tolerance' in the sense of automatic defrocking can really be a global standard, given that statutes of limitations in civil law often won't lead to a priest-offender going to jail. Do you really want to release him to society unsupervised, they ask, in a situation in which he might abuse even more children?

**“The Church must also call for conversion, penance and show mercy to the perpetrators...”**

Facing such a complex landscape, any Pope might be a bit skittish. The challenge for Francis, however, is that he's publicly committed himself to 'zero tolerance' several times, most recently last August in a letter to the people of God following the Pennsylvania grand jury report and other developments.

## Commitment

He and other Church leaders by now have trained people to expect to hear the term 'zero tolerance' as a litmus test of a serious commitment to reform, so when it drops out of use, it can sow doubt as to what's going on.

Perhaps it's unrealistic to expect the Pope himself to deal with all this, but somebody on his team might want to find an opportunity soon to explain that a shift in vocabulary doesn't necessarily imply a shift in content, at least when it comes to the crime of child sexual abuse.

Otherwise, the phrase 'zero tolerance' could become the dog that doesn't bark in papal rhetoric – leading the world to wonder, perhaps, if the Church's response is losing its teeth.

John L. Allen Jr is Editor of [cruznnow.com](http://cruznnow.com)





Inés San Martín

**W**hen she first heard that Pope Francis wanted her to write the meditations for the world's most followed Way of the Cross ceremony, Italian Sr Eugenia Bonetti said she was "embarrassed" but soon realised that it could be a "great opportunity".

An opportunity "not for me, but for the many people who through the years we've met, we've helped, we're helping", the 80-year-old said. "People with whom we've shared a Calvary."

Sr Bonetti, a member of the Consolata sisters, has spent most of her long career working with victims of modern-day slavery, and today serves as the president of the association 'Slaves no More'.

She's been tapped to write the reflections for the Way of the Cross that Francis will lead in Rome's Colosseum on Good Friday, usually attended by tens of thousands and followed on TV by millions.

Each year, the Pope asks a different person to write the commentary and prayers, and Sr Bonetti is not expected to go "soft" as she's not one to mince words.

Speaking in 2017 about helping women forced into prostitution on the streets of Italy, she said: "To be there and to suffer with and for them, even if nothing changes, gives witness."

"We are responsible. We are criminals. We should really be sentenced for life! For these are the crimes against humanity, which cry for vengeance before God. We must do all that is possible to give women back their dignity," she said, pointing her finger at all those who exploit women for profit and all those complicit in the system.

### Initiatives

Sr Bonetti is a leader among religious women working against human trafficking. She started and led anti-trafficking initiatives for the Italian Union of Major Superiors and helped educate officials in Italy and the United States about the problem.

Human trafficking is often described as a hidden crime, making it hard to quantify. However, it's considered to be the third most profitable illegal industry, behind arms dealing and drug trafficking. It affects between 20 to 40 million people around the world forced to work in slave-like conditions in prostitution and child labour, or who become victims of organ trafficking. It's estimated to generate \$150 bn (€133.5 bn) in annual profits.

Numbers aside, Francis has seen the fight against this illegal industry, a "crime against humanity", as a core social concern of his pontificate. Prior to that, it was a priority for then-Cardinal



Pope Francis greets Consolata Missionary Sr Eugenia Bonetti on December 2, 2014. The Pontiff has asked Sr Bonetti, a long-time activist in the fight against human trafficking, to write the meditations for his celebration of the Good Friday Way of the Cross prayer service at Rome's Colosseum on April 19. Photo: CNS

# Italian nun, anti-trafficking leader to pen Pope's Lenten meditations

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, who fought modern-day slavery in Buenos Aires. On his way back from Morocco on March 31, Francis told journalists he'd once worked with the city's mayor to produce a non-binding resolution forcing hotels to have signs in the lobby saying prostitution with minors was banned, but "not a single one would put it up".

**“We're called to commit,” he said, even if it means risking one's life”**

An upcoming conference on "Pastoral orientations on Human Trafficking", organised by the Migrants and Refugee section of the Vatican's Dicastery for Integral Human Development, which answers directly to the Pope, gives a wide meaning to modern-day slavery and shows just how widespread the problem is.

Topics at the April 8-11 conference include the situation of construction workers, domestic workers, the maritime

industry, modern technology industries, agriculture, supply chains, the business connection, special vulnerability of women, children and adolescents. But the conference will also look into forced marriage, servitude, forced begging and organ-harvesting, and the connection between slavery and the ongoing migrant crisis.

Today (April 11), Francis is scheduled to speak to participants, who include cardinals, religious sisters (among them Sr Bonetti), medical doctors, and officials from various governments and the United Nations.

Among other signs of Francis's commitment, in 2014 he summoned Anglican, Orthodox, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, and Muslim leaders to sign a joint declaration against modern slavery in the sense of human trafficking, forced labour, prostitution and organ trafficking, declaring it a crime against humanity.

During a youth symposium against modern slavery organised at the Vatican that same year, the Pope called for a hands-on approach.

"Collaborating with this cause is not enough for a Christian," the Pope said. "We're called to commit," he said, even if it means risking one's life.

The theme of Francis' Message for the 48th World Day of Peace, held on January 1, 2015, was 'Slaves no more, but brothers and sisters'.

"We ought to recognise," Francis wrote, "we are facing a global phenomenon which exceeds the competence of any community or country. In order to eliminate it, we need a mobilisation comparable in size to the phenomenon itself."

**“Francis has seen the fight against this illegal industry, a ‘crime against humanity’”**

In 2015, Francis instituted the World Day of Prayer and Reflection against Human Trafficking, marked on February 8. The date is the feast of St Josephine Bakhita, considered a patron for trafficking victims. Born in 1868 in Darfur, Sudan, she was kidnapped at the age of nine and sold into slavery, first in her

country and later in Italy. She died in 1947 and was declared a saint by Pope St John Paul II in 2000.

It's also on John Paul's watch that the Santa Marta Group was born, a coalition between nuns and the police launched in the UK with the support of Cardinal Vincent Nichols, which has since become a global brand.

As archbishop of Buenos Aires, Bergoglio sponsored an NGO called 'La Alameda' that fed him information about slave labour in Argentina's clandestine sewing shops and also human trafficking for prostitution. The future Pope would find work and asylum for survivors.

During a Mass in a Buenos Aires train station in 2012, he compared the city to a "butcher shop" that takes away the dignity of people trapped by these networks. He also denounced local police and the legal system for accepting bribes from traffickers, saying that "without them, these mafias wouldn't exist".

**i** Inés San Martín is Rome Bureau Chief of Cruxnow.com



# Letters

## Letter of the week

### Diaconate shows times have changed

**Dear Editor,** Dr Phyllis Zagano's article on the female diaconate (IC 4/4/2019) invites some very serious questions, not just about the prospect of ordaining women as deacons but about the purpose of male deacons.

If we are honest about this, it seems indisputable that there were indeed women deacons in the early Church, with confusion mainly being around the nature and role of their ministry. So far there seems to be no consensus on these issues, with opponents of the women deacons tending to focus less on the question of whether women were ever ordained as deacons than on the question of whether the Church needs women deacons.

According to this argument, women were deacons because

women Christians needed women to tend to them in their seriously segregated world, and because people then were baptised naked, so female catechumens needed women deacons to protect their modesty. Baptismal practice has changed, so the line goes, and so women and girls do not specifically need other women to tend to them.

Women deacons would have had other charitable roles, but there's no particular reason why any woman nowadays would need to be ordained to serve the Church in this way. Times have changed, in other words, and if there was a female diaconate in the past, it is no longer necessary and should be left in the past.

Well, maybe. But couldn't similar

arguments be rolled out against the male deacons that we have nowadays? After all, when the male permanent diaconate was revived, there was no need for such a position, since there was nothing deacons could do ordinary laymen couldn't have been empowered to do. It would have been easy to say the ministry should be left in the past.

That's not to say that there aren't arguments against women deacons, but let's be honest: we shouldn't dismiss this idea on the basis that "times have changed".

*Yours etc.,  
Brigid Kavanagh,  
Rathmines,  
Dublin 6.*

### Seminarians need professional knowledge too

**Dear Editor,** Your correspondent Greg Daly (IC 21 and 28/3/2019) reports on the suggestion that the formation of priests should be based in the parish rather than the seminary. Most people would agree that real experience of where students will be working when they have completed their training is vital. However, there is a body of professional knowledge which seminarians need to acquire if they are going to be effective as priests.

In Ireland in the coming

years the role of the priest as teacher of the faith is going to become increasingly important, especially in the area of parish-based adult education. So, as well as practical experience, there is also a need for study and for this to be done properly, there needs to be time and space to concentrate on it. Experience shows that this is best done in a college setting, which for students for the priesthood is a seminary.

Since Vatican II all seminaries, including St

Patrick's College, Maynooth, have developed pastoral programmes as part of an integrated formation process which includes spiritual, intellectual and human formation as well as pastoral formation. The task is to balance these elements in the best way possible. There is no perfect system and all programmes of formation need to be reviewed and improved on an ongoing basis.

Maynooth has served the Irish Church well for over 200 years. My impression,

going on what I know of its recent *alumni*, is that it is still doing a good job. Seminarians are not cut off from the reality of modern life as they study alongside their contemporaries.

They also have parish experience in their own dioceses.

*Yours etc.,  
V. Rev. Dr Edmond Cullinan, Adm.,  
Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity,  
Waterford, Co. Waterford.*

### Archbishop must be clear

**Dear Editor,** The present Catholic Archbishop of Dublin has a tendency to use ambiguous language in his speeches. His latest gem is to label – "cultural warriors of certainty" – those who do not meet his exacting standards.

But the archbishop needs to 'man up' (he might consider that offensive; maybe better to 'person up'), stop hiding behind his ambiguities, and tell us

exactly the individuals or groups he has in mind.

Only then can they mend their ways and behave as nice compliant Catholics, in the archbishop's mould. Failing clarification, it's obvious that the archbishop's preferred type are "cultural warriors of ambiguity".

*Yours etc.,  
Eric Conway,  
Navan, Co. Meath.*



### Refer to *Ratio Fundamentalis* for priests' training

**Dear Editor,** Recent discussion of the possibility of a more parish-based formation for the priesthood seems to be missing an important key. The Congregation for the Clergy, acting on Pope Francis' behalf, issued a new *Ratio Fundamentalis*, the guiding document for priestly formation, in 2016. The drawing up of the new programme for the formation of priests in Ireland is meant to be based on this document which represents distilled wisdom from around the world, while applying it to the Irish context.

The *Ratio Fundamentalis* envisions an integral formation of which the seminary is still a part. Its thought echoes the words of Pope Francis at a gathering for seminarians in July 2013: "I always think of this: the worst

seminary is better than no seminary! Why? Because this community life is essential."

Pope Francis is pushing for good seminaries, but his colourful phrase leaves no doubt that he wants seminaries to have a role in priestly formation. In any case, surely there is a necessity in formation for a period like the Apostles time with Jesus before being sent out. (e.g. Mk 3:13-15) As priests live at the heart of parish communities, seminarians still need a time of being stretched and tested in community life.

The *Ratio Fundamentalis* charts various stages of formation. It sees a role for parish-based formation in what it calls the pastoral stage, between ordination to diaconate and

ordination to priesthood (74-79), and also envisages an essential pastoral dimension to seminary formation (119-124) and pastoral placements during the other seminary years (124).

The *Ratio Fundamentalis* should be at the centre of discussion about the future of priestly formation. If the national programme will do a good job of implementing and contextualising the *Ratio*, then it will have the potential to make our seminaries high-quality places of formation, cooperating with the other agents of formation in forming priests in the pastoral charity of Jesus Christ.

*Yours etc.,  
Fr Hugh Clifford,  
Kinvara,  
Co. Galway.*

## facebook community

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

### If the Church reintroduces female deacons, would you support your diocese having them?

I totally get the all-male priesthood, that is a theological correct fact. But, deacons? If the Pope and the Vatican says it is okay, then, well, it's okay. Of course I'll support it. It's not my place to approve or disapprove. It's Christ's Church. It's not going to happen, though. – **Steve Reasbeck**

Bizarre appropriation of women in men's roles. Women are the heart of the Church and always have been. Making them deacons in an attempt to reaffirm this truth is a stupid step in the wrong direction. – **Róisín Grimm**

I think we should be spending more time on spreading God's love and not worrying about 'titles' or what a women can or cannot do. What did Jesus have women 'do'? What does the Bible tell us a woman's role is? This is to me just another way of Satan creating division in the Church and we are falling for it. No more time wasted on do's or don'ts or 'equality', just feed the hungry, house the homeless, love love, love. – **Kate Murphy**

In a heartbeat. – **Ann O' Loughlin**

If Rome says 'yes' that is good enough for me. If Rome says 'no' that is good enough for me. – **Gertrude Morrissey**

Great article – no theological obstacle as in the case of priesthood. Female permanent deacons would be a positive addition to our Church along with their male colleagues – all sharing ministry together in pastoral teams. – **Frank Browne**

### Reach out to your lonely neighbour, bishop pleads

The way to tackle loneliness is to ask all the senior citizens to go to church every day and pray the Rosary together at the church and after the Rosary get together, do some Bible study and have a cup of tea. The church should provide a private room or house for senior citizens to meet and also watch a religious film, do some chatting and get to know their neighbours. – **John Barton**

I'm sure many would like that but you would need someone to bring them and for other activities as well, i.e. bingo, knitting, dancing, art, mix with other age groups, have people call them each day to see how they are, and perhaps need a home visit. – **Angela Quinn**

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:** Bishop David Talley is greeted by members of the Missionaries of Charity following his installation Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Memphis, Tennessee on April 2. Bishop Talley became the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Memphis.

◀ **USA:** Students from Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic School in Richwood, Texas, pray the Rosary March at the end of last month, with Fr Victor Perez, pastor of Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church of Angleton, Texas, in the Rotunda of the Texas Capitol in Austin. Photos: CNS



**EL SALVADOR:** Cesar Hernandez, William Mendez, Maryknoll lay missionary Larry Parr and Yaira Quilzapa wait outside the community library in Las Delicias.



**MOZAMBIQUE:** Women rest at a camp for displaced people in the aftermath of Cyclone Idai in Beira, on March 30. Cholera cases in Mozambique have risen above 1,400, government officials said, as hundreds of thousands of vaccine doses arrived in an attempt to limit the rapid spread of the disease.



**VATICAN:** Marc Zvi Brettler, a professor of Jewish studies at Duke University, and Amy-Jill Levine, a professor of New Testament studies at Vanderbilt University, present Pope Francis with *The Jewish Annotated New Testament* during his weekly general audience at the end of March. Prof. Levine is helping to organise a conference in Rome in May looking at 'Jesus and the Pharisees'.



**CHILE:** Chilean Cardinal Ricardo Ezzati meets the press in Santiago after the Vatican announced Pope Francis had accepted his resignation. The archbishop, 77, has been involved in the ongoing investigation of clerical sexual abuse and its cover-up by Church authorities.





# Our own Good Friday

**W**hen the Romans designed crucifixion as their means of capital punishment, they had more in mind than simply putting someone to death. They wanted to accomplish something else too, namely, to make this death a spectacle to serve as the ultimate deterrent so that anyone seeing it would think twice about committing the offense for which the person was being crucified.

So crucifixion was designed to do a couple of other things beyond simply putting someone to death. It was designed to inflict the optimal amount of pain that a human body could absorb. Hence, they sometimes gave morphine to the person they were executing, not to lessen his pain, but to keep him conscious to feel more pain.

Perhaps most cruel of all, crucifixion was designed to utterly humiliate the body of the person being executed. So the person was stripped naked, his private parts unprotected, and when his body went into spasms, as surely it eventually would, his bowels would release, all in public view. Is there a humiliation worse than this?

## Violence

Well, there are, I believe, human sufferings that approximate or equal that; and sadly these are common. There are daily instances of violence in our world (domestic violence, sexual violence, torture, heartless bullying and the like) which mirror the humiliation of the Cross.

As well, you sometimes see this kind of humiliation of the body in death by cancer and other such



**Fr Rolheiser**

[www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com)

debilitating diseases. The person here doesn't just die; she dies in pain, her body humiliated, its dignity compromised, that immodesty exposed, as it was for Jesus when dying on the Cross.

I suspect that this is why God allowed (though not intended) for Jesus to suffer the pain and humiliation he suffered in his death. Looking at how Jesus died, it's hard for anyone to say: "Easy for him, he didn't have to suffer the way I did!" The humiliation of the Cross puts Jesus in real solidarity with everyone who has ever known the pain and shame of humiliation.

**“Will this humiliation make us deep in compassion and understanding or will it make us deep in anger and bitterness”**

But the fruit of Jesus' solidarity with us is not just having the consolation of knowing that Jesus felt our suffering first-hand, it's also that we get to share in what follows after crucifixion, namely, as Scripture says, a share in his consolation. Curious words, really. What consolation is there in being humiliated? What's gained through this shameful kind of pain? In a word, what's gained is depth of soul.

Nothing, absolutely

nothing, pushes us to depth of heart and soul as does humiliation. Just ask yourself this question: What has given me character? What has given me depth as a person? What has given me deeper understanding? The answer in every case, I suspect, will be something that you'd be ashamed to talk about, some stinging humiliation whose pain and shame pushed you to a deeper place.

The Gospels, I believe, teach that. For example, when the apostles James and John came to Jesus and asked him whether he could arrange that when he came into his glory they would be given the seats at his right and left hand, Jesus didn't, first of all, take the opportunity to lecture them on humility. He instructed them instead as to their lack of understanding both of what constitutes glory and what constitutes the road to glory.

They, of course, had confused the notion of glory with everything that's antithetical to humiliation, vulnerability and solidarity. Glory, for them, and I suspect for us too, was understood instead as being set apart from the crowd, above it, the most valuable player, the winner of the Nobel Prize, the movie star with the body everyone envies, the attractive one who is invulnerable to humiliation, the one above the rest. And so Jesus asks James and John

whether they can “drink the cup”, and that cup, as we see from Jesus' own struggle in the Garden of Gethsemane, is the cup of humiliation.

Drinking the cup of humiliation, accepting the Cross, is, according to Jesus and according to what's most honest in our own experience, what can bring us genuine glory, namely, depth of heart, depth of soul and depth of understanding and compassion.

**“The apostles, of course, had confused the notion of glory with everything that's antithetical to humiliation, vulnerability and solidarity”**

However, as Jesus warns, drinking the cup of humiliation, while automatically assuring us of depth, doesn't automatically assure us of glory (“that glory is not mine to give”). Humiliation will make us deep, but it might not make us deep in the right way. It can also have the opposite effect.

This is the algebra then: like Jesus, we will all suffer humiliation in life, we will all drink the cup, and it will make us deep; but then we have a critical choice: will this humiliation make us deep in compassion and understanding or will it make us deep in anger and bitterness. That is in fact the ultimate moral choice we face in life – not just at the hour of death but countless times in our lives.

Good Friday, and what it asks of us, confronts us daily.



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

## Are all religions true?

A common attitude or approach towards different religions is to treat them as all equally true – we can't prove which one is actually correct, and given that they all try to achieve the same thing, describing one particular religion as having more truth value than another just doesn't make sense.

This view is known as religious pluralism, and proponents of this belief hold that all religions are true, and equally capable of revealing truths about God and ourselves. This perspective has certainly grown more popular in recent decades given our culture's emphasis on tolerance and the notion that all beliefs need to be embraced.

However, does it really make sense to say that all religions are true?

If all religions claimed the same message, then this idea seems non-controversial, but in reality, most religions radically contradict one another in substantive ways.

For example, Christians believe that Jesus was the Son of God who died for humanity's sin, whereas Buddhists believe that there is no personal God, and that sin is a mere illusion. This is just one of the endless examples which illustrate that religious truth claims are logically incongruous with one another. This, of course, means that no religions are true, or one is true.

## Veracity

Answering this dilemma means evaluating different religions by exploring their historical veracity, philosophical assumptions, probability, and a whole host of other factors which will allow us to hone in on their plausibility.

Christians believe that Jesus truly was the Son of God and walked on earth, which is recorded in historical documents known as the

Gospels, and reinforced by the early church communities that gathered in his name. As a result, other religions which don't endorse this belief or reject it, are not fully true. There's no wiggle room with the law of non-contradiction!

This perspective doesn't, however, mean that there is no the truth to any religion except Catholicism. Catholics believe that the fullness of truth is found within the Church, but there are rays of God's message in other religions.

**“The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions”**

The *Catechism* states: “The Catholic Church recognises in other religions that search, among shadows and images, for the God who is unknown yet near since he gives life and breath and all things and wants all men to be saved.”

“Thus, the Church considers all goodness and truth found in these religions as “a preparation for the Gospel and given by him who enlightens all men that they may at length have life” (843).

This teaching doesn't dilute Catholicism to one religion among many, but emphasises that while it's fully true, elements of this truth are hidden or found in other beliefs. The Second Vatican Council's *Nostra aetate* best sums this up when it reads: “The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions. She regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men.”

**Got a question or comment?  
Email [colm@irishcatholic.ie](mailto:colm@irishcatholic.ie)**



# Cornerstone

Building tomorrow's parish today



**My perspective:**  
The experience of  
a 15-year-old active  
in her parish

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## Leading our schools into the future

Jonathan Tiernan

**P**rin cip als in Catholic schools have a much more challenging job than those in most schools. Most principals strive to lead schools that aim to be excellent educational institutions by accepted standards of the profession. Catholic school principals do this too, with great success in most cases. However, they must also nourish and celebrate a distinctive mission to be a Catholic school, inspired and guided by a great spiritual tradition.

The ability of our Catholic school leaders to continue to achieve both sides of this leadership equation will be a key determinant in the long-term ability of our schools to remain intentionally and authentically Catholic. This is one of the biggest challenges that Catholic schools will face over the coming decades in continuing to be, as US academic John Dilulio

has referred to them, sacred places serving a civic purpose.

This dual role that we expect of our Catholic school leaders, to be both the pastoral leader as well as the leader of teaching and learning, raises deeply important questions for all those who are invested in strengthening and sustaining Catholic schools. If we take a moment to reflect honestly, how would we answer the following two questions. 1. Are we working hard enough to ensure that there is a sustainable pipeline of Catholic school leaders for our schools? 2. Are we preparing our current and aspiring school principals adequately to lead intentional Catholic schools? If the answer is 'No' to one of these questions we should be concerned. If the answer is 'No' to both of them then we should be ringing the alarm bell.

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This week's reading is  
Philippians 2:6-11

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### Evangelisation:

Details of the new post-synodal  
Apostolic Exhortation

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Please spread the word and join us on the journey of the building tomorrow's parish today – a familial community of faith, fostering authentic, intentional discipleship. If your parish is engaged in something exciting or innovative, contact us and let us know! Email me on [eoin@irishcatholic.ie](mailto:eoin@irishcatholic.ie)



# Leading our schools into the future

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**Jonathan Tiernan** posits that school leadership is central to the future of Catholic schools.

Succession planning is a vital component in any organisation, and failure to identify the next generation of committed and competent leaders can often have a detrimental effect on the overall mission and direction of an organisation. It could be argued that we have come through the first significant 'succession' phase in Catholic schools pretty well. This first phase can be identified as the transition from a long history of vowed religious leading our schools to the first generation of lay leadership. As demographics change, and the growth of secularism continues, we must ensure that we continue to recruit leaders who are as committed to the spiritual character of their schools as they are to the school's academic reputation. To enable this we must provide channels and experiences for this next generation of school leaders to be strong academic, administrative and spiritual leaders.

## Leading Catholic schools

Preparing Catholic school principals to lead should be as intentional as the school culture we expect them to foster and promote. It should not be left to chance and it must be holistic. Holistic in the sense that it focuses not only on the

management capacities that school principals require, but also on the unique gifts required to lead a school grounded in a specific faith tradition. Archbishop Eamon Martin reminded us in a 2016 address entitled *Intentional Catholic Schools – Hubs of God's Mercy* "how easy it is to pay lip-service to our Catholic ethos and to simply put on a good show when necessary". If our schools are to avoid this trap, and instead be vibrant centres of faith and reason the calibre and commitment of the next generation of school leaders will be the fulcrum on which the future of Catholic schools hinges.

**“It is sometimes difficult in Ireland to be an intentional Catholic school. In recent years it has not been politically correct to speak too loudly about the Catholic ethos - some have labelled us exclusive, sectarian even”**

Leading Catholic schools in modern Ireland is not an easy task. Archbishop Martin also recognises that “it is some-



times difficult in Ireland to be an intentional Catholic school. In recent years it has not been politically correct to speak too loudly about the Catholic ethos - some have labelled us exclusive, sectarian even". Writing in the book *Why Send Your Child to a Catholic School?* (2014) Bishop Donal McKeown alluded to one of the challenges of leading a contemporary Catholic school while also pointing to where school leaders might draw encouragement, "In a rapidly changing world, Catholic education is faced with the need to reinvent itself for new environments. However, the many strengths of the Catholic school will continue to give encouragement to those who must lead that development." This changing world will require school leaders who are confident and competent in articulating the many strengths of a Catholic education and advocating on its behalf.

For the past twenty years the University of Notre Dame's Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) Ireland has, in partnership with partners across the island, sought to identify, motivate, and develop leaders that are committed to revitalizing the Catholic character of Irish primary and secondary schools in the 21st century. We believe that nothing is more important for the future of our Church than the quality of our schools, and nothing is more important for the quality of our schools than the formation of the next generation of school leaders. To address the need of schools for transformational school leaders ACE's leadership programmes focus on three main domains; Instructional Leadership, Executive Management and School Culture. By focusing on these three areas school leaders develop the skills and knowledge necessary to increase academic achieve-

ment through data-informed, mission-driven instructional leadership, apply executive management skills to direct school operations, and cultivate a strong, positive, intentional Catholic school culture.

## The missing element

Many leadership programmes focus heavily on the management tools needed to run a modern school, in which policies, procedures and directives occupy so much of a principal's time. Some also seek to build the capacity of participants to more effectively lead teaching and learning in their schools. However a focus on strengthening and sustaining Catholic school culture is often the missing element in how we prepare school leaders. For those leading Catholic schools understanding how and why school culture contributes to forming an inten-

tional Catholic school cannot be overlooked. School culture can often be seen as a woolly concept, and thus not open to rigorous attention. Contrary to this notion, our experience in ACE both in the United States and in Ireland is that if you provide school leaders with the concepts and skills required they, along with their staff, are capable of creating and sustaining a strong, positive, intentional school culture aligned with the mission, vision, beliefs, and values of their schools.

**“Jesus captured his disciples by teaching and living in a challenging and deeply compelling way.”**

Our Catholic schools need people with energy, enthusiasm and tenacity to lead them. Jesus captured his disciples by teaching and living in a challenging and deeply compelling way. Our school leaders must be capable of forming schools inspired by this model, in which students encounter a learning community that is at once challenging and deeply compelling in its efforts to foster both faith and reason. Are we doing enough to cultivate the next generation of Catholic school leaders? Are we doing enough to support principals to lead intentional Catholic schools? We must ensure the answer to both questions is always yes!

*Jonathan Tiernan is the Director of the University of Notre Dame's Alliance for Catholic Education – Ireland based in Notre Dame's Global Gateway in Dublin*

[This article first appeared in the December 2018 issue of 'Le Chéile - A Catholic School Ethos Journal].

## Scripture

Reflecting on Scripture is an important part of the Christian faith. Often, however, we Catholics do not allow ourselves the time to really reflect on the Word of God. This weekly series will explore the Second Reading from the coming Sunday's Mass. While originally written to the early Church communities, Scripture is the living Word of God, so each week we can read what was being said to encourage and challenge early Christian communities in order to hear what is being said to us today.

### Philippians 2:6-11

His state was divine,  
yet Christ Jesus did not cling  
to his equality with God  
but emptied himself  
to assume the condition of a slave  
and became as men are;  
and being as all men are,  
he was humbler yet,  
even to accepting death,  
death on a cross.

But God raised him high  
and gave him the name  
which is above all other names  
so that all beings  
in the heavens, on earth and in the  
underworld,  
should bend the knee at the name of  
Jesus  
and that every tongue should  
acclaim  
Jesus Christ as Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

## Spend some time in prayer with the reading.

1. Find a quiet place, and give yourself 15 minutes without distractions. Read the section once, and then pause for reflection. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your thoughts and response to the passage.
2. Read the passage a second time. Ask yourself: What do I find challenging about this reading? Is there anything that I can try to do differently in my life as a response to it? What is the message in this reading for our parish? Write down anything that comes to your head.
3. Pause in silent reflection, and then read the passage a third time.





# A 15-year-old's perspective



Gillian Garcia

**M**y name is Gillian. I'm 15 years old and I go to the Church of St Luke's the Evangelist, Mulhuddart. I go every Sunday with my family and I sing in the church choir. But I wasn't always a regular attender of Mass. When I was younger, we used to go to a church in the city, which was pretty far away so we didn't go every Sunday. And when we were at church, I wouldn't pay attention whatsoever. Maybe it was because it was a big church and I couldn't hear most of the time, or maybe it was the fact that I was a young child. But I would sit in the pews and daydream until church was over.

Sometime after my First Communion, we moved to St Luke's and I stuck with my daydreaming habit, despite it being a smaller church with a more tight-knit community.

**“In a way, being involved with my church choir made me feel like I was that little bit more religious and that my bond with God was that little bit stronger.”**

However, that changed after my mother forced our family to join the choir. At first, I thought it was a hassle. I didn't think I would enjoy it very much but we made friends with everyone in the choir. They were all really nice to us and it was fun singing with them. We started sitting with the choir during Mass and soon enough, I was paying attention to what the priest was saying and I knew all my prayers off by heart.

In a way, being involved with my church choir made me feel like I was that little bit more religious and that my bond with God was that little bit stronger. Because of them and my family's commitment, my sister and I go to church every Sunday to sing in Mass, even when my parents are working.

**“The community in my church is a warm and welcoming one. A lot of the congregation are regulars and I've gotten used to seeing certain faces around.”**

The community in my church is a warm and welcoming one. A lot of the congregation are regulars and I've gotten used to seeing certain faces around. There are many children too, and I used to wonder if they daydreamed like I did. But my church must've thought about this too. In the years that have gone by, many changes have taken place. For one, 10 o'clock Mass was renamed to “Family Mass” or “Children's Mass.” The parish pastoral workers here would get kids involved in different ways, such as reading the prayers of the faithful and bringing up the gifts during the offertory. Originally, there was just a few kids who were involved. Now, there are so many kids doing so many jobs — like introducing the Mass and praying after communion. We even have our own altar servers now! It makes me happy to see all the children in Mass get involved and actually enjoy Mass.

In fact, I think my church tries to make Mass as interactive as possible. On the last Sunday of every month, everyone is invited for tea and biscuits — there's a separate table for all children's treats too.

There are screens on the walls that show lyrics for the songs the choir is singing. And honestly, the best feeling in the world is hearing people joining in and singing along.

**“My church tries to make Mass as interactive as possible. [...] There are screens on the walls that show lyrics for the songs the choir is singing. And honestly, the best feeling in the world is hearing people joining in and singing along.”**

All this might be trivial in the eyes of some. But I think that it's important to make Mass interactive and engaging for people of all ages. Mass, and Christianity generally, is not a spectator sport but rather a participant sport. Engaging different people in different roles encourages people to go to Mass more, especially when they see ‘people like them’ up there in roles. Maybe even giving them a chance to strengthen their relationship with God like I had. And it's good to make Mass fun for kids — they don't want to go to something every week if it's “boring.” The link between my parish and my school has always been great. I won't lie and say my parish is perfect. Of course, there can always be improvements. But I definitely enjoy going to church more now than I did a few years ago. And I want to be part of the church community and help to make improvement as we build our parish. Anyway, what's the harm in having a little fun while giving thanks to God?

## Fish & Tips

### Daily Ideas for Disciples

**The Lenten Calendar For Children**

This calendar has a little activity for you to do each day of Lent. Besides what you see in the calendar it's good to do one or two things all through Lent. Some people give up things - sweets, chips, Xbox or Playstation for example... Some people take up something - a good work or a small act of kindness - helping more at home, making your bed each morning, giving some of your pocket money to a good cause for example...

Remember to try and say an extra prayer each day!!

As you'll see, the Sundays of Lent don't really count. There are 40 days without Sundays. Each Sunday is like a mini Easter - So you can have a special treat those days!!

## Holy Week

**Palm Sunday**  
The people of Jerusalem welcomed King Jesus to their city with palm branches.

- Put the blessed palm you got at Mass today in a place of honour in your house.

**Monday**  
When they got to the top of the hill the soldiers roughly tore off Jesus' clothes.

- Thank God for your clothes and put them away neatly when you go to bed.

**Tuesday**  
They laid Jesus on the cross and nailed his hands and feet to it.

- Visit, call or write a card to someone who is sick or in hospital today letting them know you are thinking of them.

**Wednesday**  
The soldiers tilted the cross so that Jesus was hanging from the nails in his hands and feet.

- Think today of all the things you have to be grateful for in your life.

**Holy Thursday**  
Jesus told the disciples at the Last Supper: “Love one another as I have loved you.”

- Think of someone who hurt or offended you. Forgive that person.

**Good Friday**  
Jesus died on the cross.

- Look at a crucifix for two minutes and think of how much Jesus loves you.

**Holy Saturday**  
Our Lord's day.

- Mary cared for her son Jesus. Say a prayer or thank you for all the people who care, love and look after you!

This resource is generously shared by Frank Brown of the Combined Parishes of Clondalkin.

## Cornerstone digital Edition

Did you know that every edition of *Cornerstone: Building Tomorrow's Parish Today* is available as a PDF download from the Irish Catholic online shop at [www.irishcatholic.com/shop](http://www.irishcatholic.com/shop).

The focus of *Cornerstone* is building tomorrow's parish today; inspired by the Great Commission, each week there are features relating to Scripture, sacraments and service as well as shining a spotlight on vibrant pastoral ideas being realised in parishes around the country and beyond. Our aim is to help every parish best answer the call to ‘saying, doing and being’ Christ in their context; sharing the good news! Whether actively involved in parish ministry, feeling disconnected from your parish or both; *Cornerstone* is for you.

Each parish faces many challenges, but for every challenge, there's a parish that has an answer. Let's avoid reinventing the wheel and share our ideas, resources and insights. Every week there is a mix of input from



well-known experts and those involved in hands-on ministry, providing a new, weekly one-stop-shop for parishes looking to actively engage in mission and ministry. Catch up on previous editions and send the link to friends and family — whether you're on a PPC, in the choir, a minister of the Word or Eucharist, or just want to read the latest ideas and advice for building



## EVANGELISATION

# To young people and to the entire people of God

Pope Francis begins the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christus vivit* (Christ is alive), which is addressed primarily to young people, with the following words:

**“Christ is alive! He is our hope, and in a wonderful way he brings youth to our world. The very first words, then, that I would like to say to every young Christian are these: Christ is alive and he wants you to be alive!”**

The document, which Pope Francis signed on March 25 and published in April 2 of this year, comprises of nine chapters divided into 299 paragraphs. Often when one stands in a bookshop or the library, a handy and quick tool to get the flavour of a book is to read the contents page to see the chapter titles. Therefore, to give an initial insight, below are the chapter titles of the Pope's latest publication along with the subheadings contained within each of the nine chapters. The Pope wrote *Christus vivit* having been “inspired by the wealth of reflections and conversations of the Synod” on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment which took place in the Vatican in October 2018.

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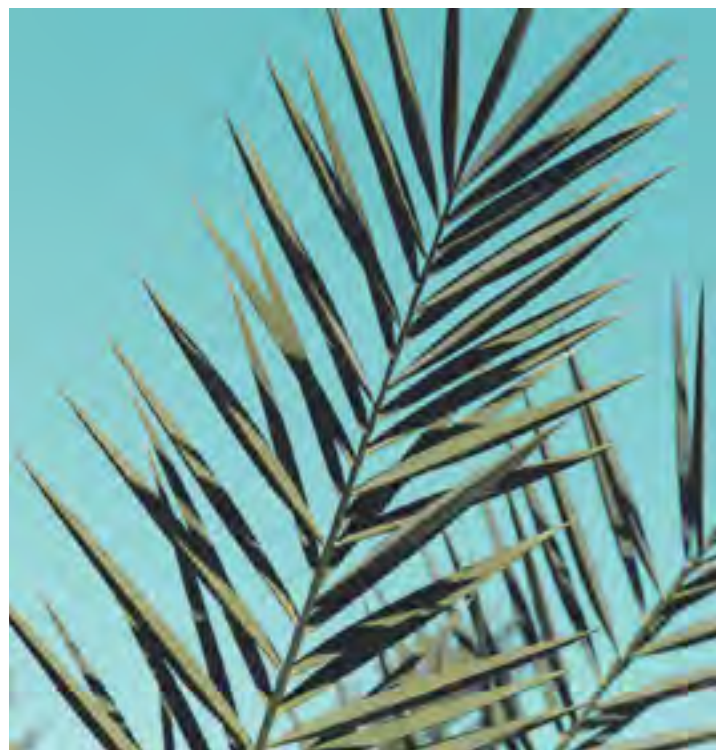


Pope Francis concludes with the following words:

**“Dear young people, my joyful hope is to see you keep running the race before you, outstripping all those who are slow or fearful. Keep running, “attracted by the face of Christ, whom we love so much, whom we adore in the Holy Eucharist and acknowledge in the flesh of our suffering brothers and sisters. May the Holy Spirit urge you on as you run this race. The Church needs your momentum, your intuitions, your faith. We need them! And when you arrive where we have not yet reached, have the patience to wait for us”.**”

[The full document is available via [www.CatholicBishops.ie](http://www.CatholicBishops.ie) or directly at [www.Vatican.va](http://www.Vatican.va).]

## Prayer



# Palm Sunday

Fr Joe McDonald

**A**s we celebrate Palm Sunday we remember the sacred days, that remind us of God's love for us. We remember that he loved us so much that he became one of us, sending us Jesus, his only Son. If we are open, we are caught up in the sacred story. The ongoing drama that sees this world interface with God's Kingdom.

I love this time of year. We still have the ache, whether deep in our heart, or our wobbly knee or even our big toe, but it's a time of new life. This beautiful season bursts with hope. Yes, it is so important to walk these days together, with Jesus, from the moment he goes down on

his knees to wash our feet, (what a profound gesture of love!), through the horror of his brutal, undeserved torture and death.

Of course, it is essential we do not get stuck on Good Friday. The paralysis that can come with fear, doubt, sickness and suffering does not win out. This is the high point of the Good News, that Jesus wrestles death and beats it, once and for all. Sadly, some of us allow our faith to be divorced from the daily reality of our lives. We tend to leave it in the Church. Jesus left in the tabernacle, and forgotten about, makes no sense. Jesus in the Eucharist, when brought to the street, the office, the kitchen and the pub makes perfect sense, and this is precisely what Jesus wants. He wants to be part of our lives. He does not

want to be reduced to being little more than an ornament.

**“We put our trust in the one Light that no darkness can put out, Jesus, our Saviour and our Brother, the Light of the World.**

So, my friends I hope you will join us for that most moving moment, the Washing of the Feet, or perhaps you will with us on Good Friday, be remembering in a special way all those we love, and miss so deeply, who have gone from us too early. Perhaps you will join us in the darkness of the Easter Vigil and shout out with us when we take our light from the Easter Fire, “The Light of Christ, Thanks be to God”. This is when we shout from the midst of our broken hearts, that we put our trust in the one Light that no darkness can put out, Jesus, our Saviour and our Brother, the Light of the World.



# Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, April 11, 2019

## Personal Profile

From Ballymun  
to Chile in search  
of social justice

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## Do e-cigarettes save tobacco addicts?



**C**igarette smoking, which causes nearly 6,000 deaths in Ireland each year, is on the decline. The annual Healthy Ireland Survey found that the prevalence of smoking dropped from 23% in 2015 to 20% in 2018, and nearly 44% of respondents who smoked in the last 12 months had attempted quitting. More and more people are seeking alternatives to smoking or quitting altogether.

The shift, however, is less of a decreased desire to smoke than it is a desire to smoke differently. One of the largest factors pulling people away from traditional cigarettes is the rise in e-cigarettes, or vapes. Rather than relying on burning tobacco,



**Vaping acts as a replacement nicotine source which may precipitate a new public health crisis, writes Hannah Harn**

e-cigarettes use a heated fluid in a cartridge that can be refilled by users.

Anyone who has waited on a bus beside anyone vaping can't fail to notice it comes in a variety of fragrances.

A global study by Ernst and Young in 2016 found the most popular reason for using e-cigarettes was that it is "less harmful than regular cigarettes", and Euromonitor International

found Ireland to have the third largest population of e-cigarette users on the planet, behind Japan and Britain.

While one of the main reasons given for using e-cigarettes is the decreased health risk from traditional cigarettes, e-cigarettes act as a replacement nicotine source for many of their users, which may well precipitate a new public health problem.

The Irish Health Information

Authority published a study arguing that the most cost-effective form of NRT (nicotine replacement therapy) in Ireland is using e-cigarettes in combination with certain prescription medicines.

But, most medical groups still feel that the long-term effects of e-cigarettes are unclear, leaving people in the dark about whether they are truly the right option to replace nicotine over, for example, nicotine patches or other similar products.

### Risks

Dr Patrick Doorley, Chairperson of ASH Ireland, Council of the Irish Heart Foundation, tends to see the information around e-cigarettes and their risks and

benefits to be less than helpful.

"There is a growing consensus that they help people to quit, and they are almost certainly safer than tobacco," Dr Doorley told *The Irish Catholic*, "and in fairness, I suppose, they are almost certainly safer than tobacco. But then, tobacco is the most lethal consumer market product ever."

"They're cheaper, and they're an aid to quitting traditional cigarettes," Dr Doorley said. "They are an option for people who have tried other methods and been unable to quit, so they are an option, but in our view, and we feel strongly about this, they should not be the go-to option."

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## Family News

### AND EVENTS

#### Who let the dogs out?

A pet-friendly family fun day will take place on Sunday April 21 in Corkagh Park, Clondalkin in Dublin from 12-3pm.

With invitations open to the whole family, including your four-legged friends, there will be a dog friendly walk and free Easter egg hunt on the day.

Husky Rescue Ireland (HRI) are hosting the event. While it is free, HRI have said they would greatly appreciate any donations on the day.

It will kick-off with a relaxing walk perfect for canine companions, but you don't need to own a dog to participate. The walk will be followed by a family fun Easter egg hunt.

Even organisers say they have limited space available and not to "forget to keep an eye on the event page [https://www.facebook.com/events/1077929152411423/?active\\_tab=discussion](https://www.facebook.com/events/1077929152411423/?active_tab=discussion) as we will update more details of the event closer to the date. We hope to see as many of you there as possible".

Those interested can also register at <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/hri-easter-fun-day-registration-59084380974?aff=ebdssbdestse>

#### OBESITY AND PREGNANCY PLANNING:

If you're planning a pregnancy and talking to your doctor, he'll probably ask about your lifestyle and habits, including your weight. This is critical due to the fact that a healthy weight has been linked to a higher chance of pregnancy and having a healthy baby. It has been shown that weight loss, losing even a few kilos, can help boost fertility in obese men and women.

India holds the title of the world's second most populated country but in the shadows of this booming population lies a heart-breaking tale of rising infertility. Latest findings from the National Family Health Survey data suggest that around 18 million couples in India grapple with infertility, the majority of them living in urban areas.

While the reasons for infertility can be manifold affecting either partner, obesity in women is considered as one of the highest risks for infertility. This is because obese women have a higher incidence of menstrual disturbance and ovulation disorders.

#### Acclimatise and spiralise your veg

We all could probably save time and money in the kitchen without sacrificing the nutrition and taste of home-cooked meals. Studies report the multitude of benefits of cooking at home as opposed to eating out, such as having a more balanced diet, consuming fewer calories, and spending less money on food.

Carbs are essential for body fuel, but maybe you don't want that heaping bowl of pasta before a run. That's where veggie spiralisers come in!

OXO's Tabletop Spiraliser can transform vegetables and fruits into fun noodles with three different blades: 1/8-inch spaghetti, 1/4-inch fettuccine and ribbon blades. You can get creative with it too, it not only works with zucchini, but also with other produce such as sweet potatoes, apples, and even butternut squash. Just keep in mind that spiralisers tend not to work on thin, small veggies like carrots.



# Healing harmonies

**M**usic has been used for millennia to raise our spirits. The ancient Greeks recognised that physical and mental wellbeing could be enhanced by music. Indeed, music was used to improve performance in athletes at the ancient Olympic games. Pythagorus believed that it could soothe ailments of the spirit, body and soul and used the term "musical medicine" while Aristotle argued that music had cathartic effects. Even further back, about 5,000 years ago the ancient *Chinese Book of Changes* noted that "music has the power to ease tension within the heart and to lessen and loosen emotions".

While we can all appreciate the relaxing effects of music, what if any, real and beneficial effects may it have on health?

There are numerous studies investigating the effect of music and music therapy in a variety of clinical settings including dementia, brain injury, neurosurgery, cardiac surgery and in pain management, and palliative care. Some are small, lack a control group or have limited outcome measures though others are well designed and have provided valuable insights.

#### Pathways

As we listen to music, multiple neural pathways are activated all over both sides of our brain. Modern neuroimaging identifies these as areas associated with emotional, cognitive and memory processing and different types of music also result in activation of different brain regions. Some small studies have found improved cellular immune response and lower cortisol levels after listening to music.

A review of 23 studies

## Medical Matters

Dr Kevin McCarroll



with 1,461 subjects where music listening was the main intervention found that it may have a beneficial effect on blood pressure, breathing, heart rate and pain. Other analyses of pooled studies have found a reduction in pain intensity and requirement for opioid analgesia.

**“As we listen to music, multiple neural pathways are activated all over both sides of our brain”**

There has also been increasing research into the effect of music or music therapy in those with dementia. The most recent, comprehensive and independent review in 2018 of over 22 studies involving 1,000 patients with dementia in nursing homes concluded that five sessions of music probably reduced depression and behavioural problems and may improve emotional well being, quality of life and reduce anxiety.

The well renowned neurosurgeon Dr Oliver Sacks describes in his popular book *Musophilia* the powerful and sometimes transformative effect of music on older people with dementia or brain injuries

in longterm care. Music can evoke emotion and with that memories.

In fact, research suggests that music evoked autobiographical memories are often more vivid. Of interest too, is that the ability to play a musical instrument is often maintained until much later into the course of Alzheimer's as it appears brain areas important for motor and musical memories are spared.

Music therapy is now recognised as an evidenced based profession allied to medicine and encompasses not just listening to music but playing, composing, singing and moving to music. It involves a therapist working individually with a person and can promote



better levels of engagement, communication and wellbeing.

So what type of music is most beneficial? There is no clear answer but some studies point to particular genres of music as well as other factors but ultimately music that one perceives as pleasant and likes is important.

In 1993, the 'Mozart effect' was described – and enhancement of reasoning skills solving spatial problems in normal subjects after listening to Mozarts Piano Sonata

K448. The effect was small though and may be explained by a heightened arousal.

Interestingly, in a small study of middle aged adults, music by Mozart and Strauss but not ABBA resulted in a significant reduction in blood pressure and cortisol levels.

A musical key that is pleasant, a catchy melody, few changes in volume and rhythm and the absence of sung words are factors that are associated with a more favourable response to music. In fact, cheerful music appears to have a greater impact without words whereas vocals may enhance the impact of sad music.

**“In one study of identical twins those who played an instrument were about a third less likely to develop dementia”**

Some studies suggest that music is a strong stimulus to neuroplasticity and playing a musical instrument might promote increased connectivity between the left and right sides of our brain.

Indeed, developing cognitive skills might protect against dementia. For example, in one study of identical twins those who played an instrument were about a third less likely to develop dementia.

In summary, music can evoke positive responses which may have an underlying physiological basis and appears to be beneficial as an adjunct to other therapies in a variety of clinical settings.

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



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"Some people argue that it helps them to cut down on cigarettes," he said, "but the problem there is that four cigarettes still does a lot of damage to hearts and lungs."

Dr Doorley also pointed out that the main source of division among health authorities about e-cigarettes is the conflicting approaches used by researchers around the world. While it is necessary to have many experts studying the issue, this multitude of voices appears to make discord rather than progress.

"American academics tend to adopt a moralistic approach [to their e-cigarette research], but we really should be taking a scientific approach," he said. "The public should be made aware of the advantages and disadvantages of all forms of quitting."

"We need more studies to come to a real scientific conclusion," he insisted.

### Trend

Young people in particular seem to turn to e-cigarette use, but it is far from an isolated trend. "It seems to be more popular among young people, but you see people of all ages vaping," said Dr Doorley. The difficulty of quitting, combined with the "specific features" that make vaping attractive, have made e-cigarette use the popular choice among all ages.

"Young people are a bit more likely but we don't have any set data on that. It mimics the pattern and behaviour of smoking, so it probably offers some sort of comfort for people seeking to quit," according to Dr Doorley. "And it is difficult to quit. Many people make around six attempts to quit."

**There has been an increase in the development of new tobacco products that would seem to cut risk"**

However, people who take up e-cigarettes while still smoking traditionally also run the risk of developing a new long-term dependency.

"If you're going to use them try not to develop a dual dependency. People also may continue to vape

long-term after quitting [traditional cigarettes]," Dr Doorley explained. "We [ASH Ireland] would advise people to use e-cigarettes with the intention of quitting eventually."

Another mistake Dr Doorley said he has seen is attempting to quit with no outside support, be it a nicotine replacement product or counselling. "Psychological support is very important," he said. "The HSE has support available for all methods of quitting, but one of the mistakes smokers make is trying to quit without any support. You're less likely to succeed."

"There's a drug called Varenicline, which is medication," Dr Doorley said. "It's effective, especially when combined with other traditional methods for quitting."

### Unknown

With much still unknown about the long-term effects, the e-cigarette industry has existed since long before its present widespread popularity. "E-cigarettes have been around longer than people think," according to Dr Doorley, "but they saw a major increase in 2010."

The first successful e-cigarette was introduced in 2003, and while there is still little information about their health impacts, there has been an increase in the development of new tobacco products that would seem to cut risk.

"There are other novel products coming out on the main market that are not yet available widespread," Dr Doorley said. He attributes the tobacco industry's involvement in newer "heat-not-burn" products to falling sales of cigarettes, especially in western countries.

"They've developed a technique for heating tobacco up with no combustion. And in classical cigarettes, it's the products of combustion that do the harm," he



insists.

Their relative novelty and the lack of information about them make "heat-not-burn" products a sort of wild card. "We don't know how effective they are because the tobacco industry doesn't operate with as much transparency."

**There comes a point when there just isn't anybody else who wants to smoke"**

Looking forward, there is a lot of uncertainty about whether or not e-cigarette use will continue to rise in popularity. One factor is the varying rates of use across countries. "We don't know for sure [whether rates will go up or down]. The rate of increase of their use varies in different countries, but it may be slowing down," said Dr Doorley. "There comes a point when there just isn't anybody else who wants to smoke."

According to Dr Doorley, the new products that tobacco companies are developing may push the number of e-cigarette users down as smokers and e-cigarette users alike move to new forms of tobacco.

"Heat-not-burn in some countries is not replacing some of the sales of e-cigarettes, so that may influence the number of people who are using e-cigarettes," he said. "Some people may choose those instead of e-cigarettes. But certainly, in Ireland, e-cigarettes are very popular and they continue to be."

Until more research becomes available to better understand the long-term risks and benefits of e-cigarette use, Dr Doorley and ASH Ireland advise looking into all the possible positives and negatives of different methods for quitting.

"The long-term consequences of e-cigarette use are not definite," he warns. "Other alternatives for nicotine replacement therapy are proven safe and have virtually no major side effects, but we are not as sure about e-cigarettes."

"It's not a simple issue, but it would be nice to give people a definitive answer," he said. "Rather than tell people what they should be doing, we want to try to help people to make informed decisions."

# Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



My wife came in to my office with a sheepish look on her face. She said that my son's friend had just called to the door, and had asked if he could go to the park to play. She confessed that she had said "yes" and that he was now gone – out into the world alone.

She was not sheepish because I minded. On the contrary, I had been campaigning for over a year to let our now nine-year-old have greater freedom to venture out unsupervised in our safe, rural village. Now, in a fit of absent-mindedness, she had let it happen.

Until then, my wife had always found a good reason to object to sending the older kids on solo runs to the park or to school. Being a medic, she often found a scientific article on the brain development of eight-year-olds which proved that cars are, in fact, completely invisible to them – or something to that effect.

Our boy came back unscathed from his adventure. He was grinning from ear to ear, bright and buoyant with the energy of freedom. I remembered from his ruddy face my own joy, as a lad, at being outdoors and free for hours on end, calling over to friends, playing football, climbing trees or engaging in tribal warfare.

With his excited words tripping over themselves, he recounted his adventure to the park. He told me brightly of a new friend he had met, and of how first nobody believed he could, but then he had actually done 16 keepy-uppies with a football, and how it seemed normal to be out alone – almost normal, anyway – and, above all, that it was brilliant fun. It soon became clear that floodgates had opened. The questions came tumbling out as to the extent of his new-found freedom.

### Next day

The next day, his friend called over again. I answered the door this time. Unbeknownst to my better half, I had actually given some significant thought to mitigating the risks of sending

our child out unsupervised. In addition to the usual stranger-danger talks, and training in crossing the road, I had thought to use technology.

One of my primary excuses – sorry, reasons – for buying myself an Apple Watch last year was that it would enable us to contact the kids when out and about. Not only that, but we could track them by GPS, and see where they were.

**I duly strapped the watch to my boy's wrist, and left him off, with my heart in my mouth"**

I had already trained up my trustworthy boy in its use on local runs near our house. He knew how to use the watch to call home if there was an emergency. He knew to come straight home if I binged it.



Critically, he also knew that we could see where he was – which helped ensure he would be where he was supposed to be. I duly strapped the watch to my boy's wrist, and left him off, with my heart in my mouth. Yet I also felt a share of his joy as he disappeared out the garden gate with his pal.

Despite my enthusiasm for childhood freedom, it was me who spent the following hour regularly checking my boy's location and counting down the time to his promised return. He arrived home, bang on time – proud and happy.

The following Sunday morning was Mother's Day. I was busy with the baby while my wife enjoyed her Mothers' Day lie-in. So I duly sent the older kids off to the shop to buy the necessary croissants and coffee for her special breakfast. For just as their freedom has expanded, so has the range of their chores.



# From Ballymun to Chile in search of social justice

## Personal Profile



Hannah Harn

**F**rom growing up in Limerick to leading the conversation in applied spirituality, the path of one Jesuit priest carried him through the Chilean military regime and guided him through his ongoing commitment to social justice service in the modern world.

Dr Michael O'Sullivan, Director of the Spirituality Institute for Research and Education (SpIRE), was ordained to the priesthood in 1981, worked for many years in Chile as a Jesuit missionary priest in Chile during the dictatorship of General Pinochet in the 1980s, and worked for 13 years in Ballymun to support economically disadvantaged people.

"I see my ordained priesthood very much in the context of my vocation to be a Jesuit with its spirituality, tradition, and community life," Dr O'Sullivan said, "And so my training, studies, and formation followed a Jesuit path."

"I was raised in the Jesuit faith, and I joined the Church in 1969." Educated by the Jesuits from the age of seven, Dr O'Sullivan became part of the Jesuit Church just after the Second Vatican Council, whose ideas focused on the idea of solidarity between the Church, the communities, and the world at large.

### Commitments

It was the Jesuit order's strong commitments to intellectual endeavours, diversity in its approaches, and broad outlook on



Dr Michael O'Sullivan with members of a Chilean folk group on the day of his ordination in 1981. The Chileans were exiled to Ireland as refugees.

world engagement that drew Dr O'Sullivan to become a Jesuit priest.

This progressive approach would be crucial in Dr O'Sullivan's experiences in missionary work abroad. In the early 1970s, Ireland welcomed Chilean refugees as the military government under General Pinochet took root. Dr O'Sullivan began getting to know them, soon becoming close with many of the Chileans he met.

**“Spirituality can be a source for transformation...it takes people outside themselves to look at the world”**

"I wanted to do what I could in Chile to enable these people to be able to return home, and also to help for the cause of social justice in a time when it was under repressive military rule," he said. "In 1974, we had our congregation and it was decided that the mission of Jesuits into the future was to be a mission of the service and promotion of social justice.

In Chile, Dr O'Sullivan found

himself working right on the front lines with disadvantaged and persecuted groups in the town of Arica. "It was a very sort of practical pastoral work engaging with the people and their issues," he said.

While there was a Catholic government in place at the time, there were conflicting views of how to be Catholic or Christian. Dr O'Sullivan even found himself accused of being a communist and a threat to national security. "I saw it as my duty as a Christian with the background I was bringing, in a faith that does justice, to commit myself to these people and see how they could bring forward social justice and end the military oppression that was in the country."

After he left the country in 1984, he was unable to go back until after the government had shifted. His experiences in Chile have since become the subject of a documentary film, *A Jesuit with the People*.

"There was a return to democracy and people were able to live without fear. But there was a long legacy of hurt and unresolved loss." Over 30,000 people were direct victims of human rights

violations during the regime of General Pinochet, many of whom were never found. "Many people in Chile suffered a great deal to bring about change and didn't necessarily gain a great deal when change did come, whereas those who did not work so much for change gained more than their effort justified."

The biggest drive for Dr O'Sullivan in pursuing social justice work through his priesthood was the study of liberation theology. "It was a theology and a spirituality that was guiding people in how to be engaged with the concerns of economically poor and persecuted people and offering a faith-understanding as to why and how this engagement was required of Christians," he said.

**“Dr O'Sullivan even found himself accused of being a communist and a threat to national security”**

"It is consistent with the idea that the Christian faith should be serving the modern world." Dr O'Sullivan also chaired and co-organised the first conference in Ireland on Liberation Theory in 1976. He also began studying feminist theology after seeing the suffering of women in Chile, who had lost their husbands and sons to the regime. "I came to see what women were suffering because of their gender."

"I worked for 13 years in the flats at Ballymun, and one of the initiatives I undertook was to start a Bible study, mainly with women, about reading the Christian story in ways that could be empowering for women," he said, "Because sometimes it had actually been disempowering for them."

"Spirituality can be a source for transformation," Dr O'Sullivan said. "It takes people outside themselves to look at the world." In 2010, he published his book *How Roman Catholic Theology Can Transform*

*Male Violence against Women*, pulling from his own experiences and learning from women themselves about what suffering they were experiencing in their lives.

"I felt a responsibility as a man, as a priest, as a Jesuit to address it," he said. "As I studied feminist thinkers, I could see there was a lot to be learned from them on how to read the Christian story, and I was keen that people would realise that violence against women is not just something to be left to social workers and healthcare workers and lawyers and women's refuges and so on but that also the theological community and the community of spirituality and theology scholars needed, too, to take up these issues."

Dr O'Sullivan's main focus now is the study of applied spirituality, an academic discipline aimed toward creating a positive resource out of Christianity without forcing it on people. "It's about engaging with people while recognising their struggles," Dr O'Sullivan explained. "God tries to accompany and serve in their journeys, and the programme has proven to be life-transforming."

He has also later entered the arena of pilgrimage and spiritual tourism. Last year, he and SpIRE put on an international conference on the growing interest today in pilgrimage. "We want to see that guides are trained properly with an appreciation of the sites," he said. "It's taking people where they are, finding what is speaking people today, and this is one of the things that's speaking to people today. They go to these sites, they experience a sense of spirituality there, and it helps to sustain them."

Dr O'Sullivan, is now on the organising committee for a major international spirituality studies conference in May. "The conference is further evidence of the growing influence of spirituality in the academy, the professions, and the wider society."

## An 'all-in' approach to money will help marriage

**My fiancé and I are getting married in a few months, and while I had assumed we would have a joint bank account once we got married but he has an issue with this, where do we go from here?**

How we feel about money is decided by a lot of factors, like how we were raised, if our family talked openly about money and how we manage money personally. Money is one of those important issues in a relationship that manages to show gaping differences in our attitudes. It is no surprise that it is one of the primary issues that couples argue over. So now is a good time to decide on how you will financially plan for your future together.

You need to understand one another's approach to money so you can spot potential problems, compromise and move forward together. If your attitude is more business-like, viewing money more like a quid pro quo rather than a marriage, it's not getting off to the best of starts. Marriage means being totally transparent and open in all areas,

including finances; if you get into a 'mine and yours' mentality it will only lead to lots of petty squabbles and down the line and bigger issues.

For example, what happens if your spouse loses their job or is working in the home caring for children and not earning any money? Do they suddenly have to use 'your' money, feeling a lack of independence and beholding to you? What happens to the share of the bills that spouse was paying?

If you enter into this mentality under the guise of 'fairness' it will create automatic tension because one spouse will always value their own efforts more.

### Overtime

Does it mean you only contribute an equal amount and you keep the rest, if one is working overtime should your partner have to do the same? If you focus on what is 'fair' you will tend to do what is right for you rather than for your family. Getting married means you now have to have the other person's back through thick and thin, through rich and poor.

If you change your attitude and you are working together on your household budget and financial goals, this builds on the new reality that you are a team, you are partners and you are in this together. It also fosters good joint habits, compared to say just dividing up the bills and keeping what's left, it means saving and keeping a lid on spending is much easier.

Accountability when it comes to spending is important, most marriages will live on a tight budget, which means working together to try and not rack up debt, regardless of who earns more. This way you can see the big picture together and will encourage you to spend your money wisely.

There are many elements of our lives and attitudes that have to adapt when we get married and decide to share our life with the one we love; in many areas we can't simply go on the way we did when we were single.

It's not always an easy transition but through communication and praying for a heart that wants that selfless 'all-in' approach it will only strengthen your marriage and help your love (and in this case hopefully your finances!) to flourish.



## Love Notes

Wendy Grace



# TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



## 'B' list celebs take their turn on long road

One of the least endearing aspects of modern media culture is the cult of celebrities. Make 'em dance, drop them on remote islands, pop them into quiz shows. It's not the worst idea to send them on a pilgrimage.

And so it was with **Pilgrimage: Road to Rome** (BBC 2) a new series that started last Friday night. Like its predecessor, *Road to Santiago*, it features a mixed bag of celebs, with varying attitudes to faith. Les Dennis is an actor and comedian whose mother was Catholic until she gave up the faith when the local church refused to baptise her baby born out of wedlock. Now Les doesn't know what to believe in but seems to be open to inspiration.

While some of the participants can be irritating, he's pretty low key, which is welcome.

Dana flies the flag for Catholicism, and was introduced as a Eurovision winner, with no mention of her roles as MEP. There was a touching moment as she explained how Catholics honour Our Lady, which had an emotional effect on Les as he remembered that his mother had sung 'Ave Maria' in Liverpool Cathedral.

Mehreen Baig (of *Walks of Life*, reviewed last week), is a practicing Muslim, and while she realises she mightn't match up to the strictest



The participants in BBC TV's *Pilgrimage: Road to Rome*.

standards (e.g. not wearing head covering) she does pray, fast and abstain from things like alcohol and sex before marriage.

Lesley Joseph is a non-practicing Jew, says she's not sure what God is, doesn't know what she's supposed to believe, but finds it emotional to be walking in the path followed by so many others.

Greg Rutherford is an Olympian, a lapsed Jehovah's Witness and is probably the fittest of the group, with a cheery and helpful disposition.

Katy Brand is a comedian, who was very much into evangelical Christianity until she went to university. Now she doesn't know what to think about God, doesn't not believe, is not an atheist, is not sneery towards religious

belief and finds it easier to define what she's not than what she is.

Stephen K. Amos is yet another comedian (why so many?), is wondering and questioning and sees the potential for this journey to be a light for future chapters in his life.

Finally, Brendan Cole is a dancer and self-avowed atheist who likes noise – he said "silence kills me".

The pilgrimage route itself is impressive – beautiful scenery in the Alps and some intriguing historical background. It dates back to the 10th Century, and features characters like St Bernard (of the mountain pass and the famous rescue dogs), Archbishop Sigeric ('The Serious') whose pilgrimage to Rome seems to have been the origi-

nal inspiration for the route, and 14th-Century St Rocco who gave up all his wealth to go on pilgrimage and tend to those with the plague.

Maybe these were the celebs of their day, though I suspect their impact and legacy will last longer than the eclectic crew now walking in their footsteps.

### Impact

I'm unsure about the impact of last week's controversy on school divestment – a knotty issue with a conflict of rights. Tuesday of last week **Today With Seán O'Rourke** (RTÉ Radio 1) featured a use-



Seán O'Rourke, presenter on RTÉ Radio 1.

### PICK OF THE WEEK

#### MASS FOR PALM SUNDAY

RTÉ1, Sunday, April 14, 11am

With a gathered congregation from Lucan parish in Co. Dublin, in collaboration with Trócaire.

#### MOVING STATUES – THE SUMMER OF 1985

RTÉ1, Monday, April 15, 9.35pm

In 1985, thousands of people gathered at grottos in the belief that they would witness statues physically move before their eyes.

#### SOLEMN LITURGY FOR GOOD FRIDAY

RTÉ1, Good Friday, 3pm

From the Chapel of St Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, the celebrant is Rev. Fr Tomás Surlis, with the Maynooth College Chapel Choir.

ful discussion between theology lecturer Dr Tom Finnegan and Paddy Monaghan of Educate Equality. Monaghan didn't help his case by using loaded terms like "indoctrination" and "segregation" to describe what went on currently in Catholic schools. He favoured teaching about religion rather than faith formation within normal class time. Dr Finnegan supported a plurality in models of school patronage, defended the primary rights of parents and even spoke of some schools having a 'duty' to divest.

Wednesday's **Drivetime** (RTÉ Radio 1) returned to the issue, with David Quinn of the Iona Institute in discussion with Paul Rowe of Educate together – a less fractious discussion. Quinn was in favour of a certain amount of divestment but also wanted

parent choice to be primary. He thought the controversy in the North Dublin area was due to poor communication on all sides. Rowe didn't want to take choice away from any Catholic parents but thought communications from the Catholic schools to parents was irresponsible, inaccurate and misleading. Yet he showed what differences there would be in Educate Together schools, where Christmas would be marked as part of various 'winter festivals'.

I felt the discussion showed that there could be reasonable solutions that most involved could live with, while respecting diversity and choice.

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Pat O'Kelly

# Music

## Mouth-watering treats line up with the stars of music

'Treat', meaning something that gives great pleasure, seems to be out of fashion but I am reminded of it recently in three programmes at the National Concert Hall, which I consider merit the accolade.

The first comes from the period-instrument Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (OAE) conducted by Budapest-born pianist András Schiff; the second through the RTÉ NSO directed by Novosibirsk-born violinist Maxim Vengerov and finally the visit of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) under Tel Aviv-born violinist Pinchas Zukerman.

London-domiciled Schiff's romantic programme is devoted to Schumann and Brahms with the latter's mas-



Patrick Rafter.

sive *1st Pano Concerto* standing alone after the interval. Schumann's *4th Symphony* and the novelty of his *Konzertstück* for four horns are heard earlier. This brings most of OAE's horn section

out front and reveals the quartet's sonorous balance to particular effect.

The *Concerto* finds Schiff in wonderful form. Travelling with his own Blüthner piano, the ornate instrument is lovely to see but even more appealing to hear, once its autumnal tenor settles on the ear. It gives Brahms's mellowness extra depth but also provides the necessary brightness for his glistening and commanding treble. Schiff's directions to the orchestra are minimal but the cohesion between him and the OAE mean riveting music making.

The first half of Vengerov's event is devoted to Bach – the *Double Violin Concerto*, with the maestro joining our own Patrick Rafter; the solo

*A minor Concerto* spotlighting Vengerov alone while the *Oboe and Violin Concerto* has NSO's Matthew Manning too-tling superbly as the Russian's harmonious partner.

Directing the NSO with a judicious nod now and then, there is homogeneous rapport between the two violinists with Vengerov never trying to outshine his younger companion. One feels from the outset here is genuine musical camaraderie.

### Brilliance

Kilkenny-born Rafter, by the way, is on the threshold of a brilliant international career, if he has not crossed the bar already. Hailed as "belonging among the greatest violinists", he followed his time at

the RIAO by moving to London's Royal Academy and then, at Vengerov's invitation, coming under his tutelage. Rafter plays an 1840 Parisian Vuillaume while Vengerov's Stradivarius dates back to 1727.

Listening to the mellifluous Matthew Manning in the other double concerto I think again, "how lucky we are to have an artist of this calibre in our own orchestra". His excellently controlled phrasing is a joy while seamless interaction between him and Vengerov is equally refined. The NSO, reduced to baroque forces, offers unfailingly buoyant support in each concerto.

The RPO's principal guest conductor Pinchas Zuker-

man opens his programme with Vaughan Williams's moving *Tallis Fantasia* where the orchestra's antiphonal string choirs are plaintive and elegiac. But there is, too, full-bodied richness in their burnished climaxes.

Playing his 1742 Guarnerius del Gesù in Mozart's *5th Violin Concerto*, New York-based Zukerman's smoothly unforced tone is matched by the RPO's effortless responses. The central 'operatic aria' movement is positively graceful while the concluding Rondeau has its own elegance even when ruffled by the throbby rhythms of the Turkish section that gives the concerto its nickname. Memorable 'treats' all round.



# BookReviews

Peter Costello



## A philosopher's quest in the wilderness of life

**John Moriarty: Not the Whole Story**

by Mary McGillicuddy  
(Lilliput Press, €20.00)

**J. Anthony Gaughan**

John Moriarty has published some fascinating books. Written in a baroque style, they are dotted with quotations from the classics of world literature. They also include numerous allusions and references to a wide variety of civilisations, cultures, mythologies, philosophies, religions and the great minds of science. As a result, Moriarty is a difficult read. But this excellent biography is an admirable key to fully appreciating John Moriarty's wisdom and profound thought.

There is a curious analogy between John and John O'Donoghue of *Anam Cara* fame. Both tended to 'think outside the box', both weaved their life-experiences into their lecturing and writings, both were more at one with spirituality than with religion, both emphasised the inadequacy of religion and science to explain reality and both were charismatic speakers. Also, in their philosophising they never strayed far from ruminating on their respective Irish Catholic rural backgrounds.

John was born in Moyvane, a village near Listowel, in Co Kerry, on February 2, 1938. He was educated at the local national school and St Michael's College. Subsequently he qualified as a primary school teacher at St Patrick's Teacher Training College in Dublin.

### Generous gift

After a year teaching he was enabled by a remarkably generous gift from his father to attend and graduate from UCD. He secured a post in an English Catholic boarding-school. Finding the extremely formal atmosphere of the school stultifying, he left within a year. He decamped to Greece and spent a year visiting the monuments and other vestiges of the country's ancient classical civilisation.

Owing to a chance meeting, he secured an appointment as a lecturer in the philosophy department in Leed's

University. A few years later in curiously similar circumstances he was invited to join the English department in the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg in Canada. He was fascinated by the pre-history and civilisation of the native tribes of North America and after a long summer holiday in Mexico he immersed himself in the culture and pre-history of the Aztecs.

After six years in Canada, John realised that the only life in which he would be comfortable was a life of contemplation – the intellectual life. He settled in Inisboffin, an island off the coast of Connemara. A year later he transferred to a cottage situated in an idyllic setting on the mainland. He worked in a local hotel and was employed as a gardener.

A popular figure, he was a valued member of the local community, although some of his neighbours considered that there was 'a bit of a want in him'. Within a few years, however, he suffered the 'Night of the Soul', so eloquently described in the writings of Sts John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila. He sought and received solace in the Carmelite monastery in Oxford.

In 1984 back in Connemara the trajectory of his life changed utterly. He met Fr John O'Donoghue, director of adult education in the diocese of Galway, who invited him to give a talk. So successful was the talk and others that followed that he became a feature on the local lecture circuit.

O'Donoghue also introduced him to Andy O'Mahony of RTÉ who interviewed him. The interview gave him entry to the national radio and TV studios and he gained widespread recognition. In turn this facilitated the publication of his writings which was always to be something of a challenge. In the event, while his books received critical acclaim, they tended to mystify the average reader.

From the time, when aged 17, he read Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, John was on a metaphysical quest. Mary McGillicuddy's description of his last days and hours makes it clear that John was successful in his quest at the very end on June 1, 2007.



## Chinese Catholics – images of a fervent faith

**The Poor in Spirit**  
by Yang Yankand  
(Unicorn Publishing, £30.00)

**Peter Costello**

This is an impressive album of reportage on the Catholics of the Patriotic Catholic Church in China, running to 168 pages with 70 images.

The artist's work bears comparison with the great masters of this genre, Walker Evans, Cartier-Bresson, Werner Bischof, George Rodger, and Marc Riboud. The images were made between 1992 and 2001 in a remote area of Shaanxi.

The images are often haunting, expressing certainly a life of poverty, but a life that is very far from lacking in spirit. The Gospel passage alluded to says the humble are the heirs of heaven. The images here are also heirs to a great tradition.

Admirable as the images are some comment has to be made on the accompanying essays. In this the artist is said to be a "baptised Catholic", interested also in the religious life of Tibet. But being a cradle Catholic is far from being one now.

### Sensitive issues

Both the Church and Tibet are, for the Chinese government, sensitive issues. One of the writers admits that the history of the Catholic faith has been "up and down" since 1948. Despite reservations on the presentation of the artist, the images themselves are of exceptional quality.

A critic observed of his

Tibetan images that the artist does not concern himself with the transcendental aspect of religion. He simply observes real life, "showing simple truths through photography".

But is this possible for an artist? The images recall religious life in Catholic Europe, but in the 1940s. This is inevitable, as the revolution has served in a way to cut them off. But yet here we can see that some of their practises that emerged from Vatican II were adopted by these Catholics.

The author of the captions (who I take is not the artist) does not always seem clear in his own mind what the images are showing. But these can be read by the readers in the light of his own insights into art and religion.

**“The images recall religious life in Catholic Europe, but in the 1940s”**

So pay no attention to the essays or the captions, which are brief. But read the images themselves. They truly reflect the soul of Catholic China. Images say more than words, as is only to be expected for an artist of this standing.

Most of the Bibles printed in the world today are printed in China. Yet the government has been dismayed by the growth of evangelical Protestant groups in recent years. The expansion of Christianity in the country has mainly been seen in Protestant evangelical churches.

In a population rising to

almost 1.5 billion, Catholicism is a minor religion, with an estimated 10-12 million adherents. This book reveals some of those people, albeit under state control – accepted by the recent accords between China and the Vatican.

President Xi Jinping has introduced a programme to "Sinicise" all faiths, insisting that religion must be "Chinese in orientation". It is the duty of the government authorities to "provide active guidance to religions so that they can adapt themselves to socialist society", he insists.

There are no government officials in these images (that I can see), but the calm devout people shown are facing a future as complicated as their past was.



## Late have we loved the beautiful great house...

**White Elephants: The Country House and the State in Independent Ireland**

by Emer Crooke  
(UCD Press, €40.00)

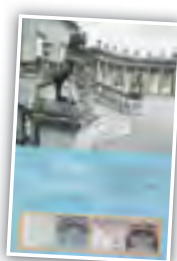
**Peter Costello**

These days, when no couple ever seems to get married in their native parish anymore, a country house hotel often plays a more important role in any case than the church. With wedding celebrations now lasting three or four days party space is clearly needed. And from the advertisements one comes to believe that there is hardly a great

house of any kind, still standing that is not a country house hotel.

What a change this is from the days of the Land War when such great houses were seen as the stronghold of rapacious landlords, or from the 1920s and 30 where they were seen as bastions of lingering British influence in Ireland better burnt down or unroofed to save the payment of rates.

In her new book Dr Emer Crooke explores the shifting Irish attitudes to the great house, focusing largely



on the period from 1922 to 1973. Based on extensive research in records of all kinds, but especially State papers, she outlines the moods and attitudes as they changed. The focus is perhaps rightly on the question of cost of care and their value to the overall economy. Even now the developing heritage industry has to pay its way.

She notes at the very beginning of the book that Castletown House, which was one of the first houses which raised a volume of demands

for its preservation, that in 2017 some 666,541 persons visited Castletown's parklands, only 32,866 visited the house. But these figures may be deceptive, given the nature of the wedding and recreational use alluded to above.

### Developments

In any case the developments of the last half century are outside the scope of this book. She wishes to explore how the State itself responded to the problem of preservation and reuse.

Her book will be found of great value to many kinds of readers.

However because of its wide range the detail on individual cases is often limited: as on Elizabeth Bowen, whose book *Bowen's Court* is essential reading, or on Derrynane House, or on Kenmare House, both of which caused scandals in their day.

She writes in a careful and judicious style, dealing with what were difficult matters for the State. It is hard for the Free State to put money into Big Houses while cutting the state pensions – a scandal of another kind. It is likely that this book will have a permanent place in collections dealing with Irish



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.



heritage as whole, not just architectural matters.

For the local historian it will provide instances from other places that may well illuminate the conditions in their own townlands. But this is an academic book; it is not light reading.

(She says the situation in Northern Ireland was different for there the landlord class maintained, through the Orange Order, their political clout down to the 1960s, when Unionism began to take on a more aggressive working class and lower middle class aspect. The current leader of the DUP is far from

being "a belted earl".)

As recently as 2011 Crooke says it was argued that "traditionally the audience for the historic house has been narrow, and recent research demonstrates that this is still the case". But such a claim contrasts with the situation, not just in Britain next door, but across Europe. Where heritage has been preserved and respected it generates value for the house itself and the local economy. If in Victorian times a great house employed as many people as a small factory, these days it can employ an entire town in some places.



The east wing of Castletown House.

## Mainly about books

By the books editor

# Fasting and fish eating in Lent

It is a truism to say that Lent these days is nothing like it was several centuries ago, indeed just several decades ago. In our era of immediate self-satisfaction the idea of going without is unpopular, unless one is on a fashionable diet.

In the middle ages it was different, of course. Gerald de Barri, the Norman-Welsh scholar and cleric, in his account of Ireland at the time of the Norman invasion, writes very crossly about some Irish bishops. Their lordships were he said countenancing the eating of the barnacle goose during Lent.

This was (it seems) because the barnacle goose, along the coasts of Ireland where it was found, mainly in the north, was thought not come from an egg, but to be from of a shell-fish, the long neck barnacle. For in eating these birds, de Barri adds "they are led into sin. For if anyone were to eat of the leg of our first parent although he were not born of flesh, that person would not be adjudged innocent of eating meat."

He wrote about this in his *Topography of Ireland* (adroitly translated by J. J. O'Meara and available in Penguin Classics). He also lectured about it at Oxford in 1186. Over the next few centuries this Irish legend spread across Europe and indeed across Asia, allowing those who were so inclined an excuse to have a Lenten bird.

The custom was formerly condemned by the Pope at the Lateran Council in 1215. But this seems not to have had much effect – like so many papal injunctions. Down to very recently the Aran islanders would eat guillemots in Lent, just as people in the north of England ate puffins, because they were sea birds and tasted strongly of the fish that they generally ate.

## Medical men

Customs regarding fast days, such as "fish on Fridays" are now a thing of the past. Indeed there is nothing really penitential about eating fish at all. Medical men urge us to do so to obtain the essential Omega3 oil which is so beneficial to our bodies.

Yet back in earlier times it was perhaps more onerous. Fresh fish could hardly be bought anywhere more than ten miles or so from the sea.

With fresh fish people would have to make do with eggs, or with salt fish, the rather

unappealing *bacalao* eaten along the sea board of Western Europe, which originated in the salted cod which the Basques brought back from Newfoundland decades before Columbus – indeed that part of the North American coast was called 'Stockfish Land'.

In Ireland in any case Irish country people would not eat fish – there is a reports of a curragh of starving people hauling up beside a British naval vessel in Killary inlet during the famine pleading for food while floating over waters rich in fish. They would not eat them.

True to their Celtic notions of proper fare they would only eat salmon and brown trout.

**“In the middle ages the one class of people who had no trouble with the relegations about eating were the monks”**

So the obligation to eat fish was in fact a real penance in ages past. Now it is not, as our shops are filled with fresh fish every day. So if eating fish is not a penance, what people need



Barnacle goose grazing.

to think about is simply in Lent eating more meagre meals, simply to eat less. Given the huge helpings that everyone now seems to eat – very much in the American style with steaks – we could do with eating less as a nation, given the obesity problems that beset Irish society.

Of course, in the middle ages the one class of people who had no trouble with the relegations about eating were the monks in monasteries with fishponds. These I always understood were jealously guarded by the monks for their own dinners. But discussing this the other day with someone, she suggested to me that of course they would have shared them with the poor.

So they might, but would the poor in Ireland have eaten them. I doubt it.



# 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](mailto:advertising@irishcatholic.ie)

**MQI**

Merchants Quay Ireland  
Homeless & Drugs Services

## 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 May 9th Tour.

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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](http://www.LFPD.ie) or by phoning us with your credit/debit card details or by post to Little Flower Penny Dinners, 11 Meath St, DB. Phone 01 4536621 or 01 4546795 e-mail: [solbrigid@littleflower.ie](mailto:solbrigid@littleflower.ie)

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[anna.sadlier@hospicefoundation.ie](mailto:anna.sadlier@hospicefoundation.ie)  
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**The Irish Hospice Foundation**

## The Miracle Prayer

Dear Heart of Jesus,  
In the past I have asked for  
many favours.

This time I ask for a  
special one. (mention here)

Take it, dear Heart of Jesus, and  
place it within your own broken  
Heart where your  
Father sees it.

Then, in his merciful eyes,  
it will become your favour,  
not mine. Amen.

Say this prayer for three days.

J.C.

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not mine. Amen.

Say this prayer for three days.

M.D.

Please pray for the beatification of

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"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

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### PILGRIMAGE

**PILGRIMAGE BASED IN FATIMA** 9th – 14th June 2019 will be in Lisbon for Feast Day of St Anthony. Mass in Santarem where the bleeding host took place and Prayers, Mass and Hungarian Stations of the Cross in Fatima. Contact James Treacy 086-0572216.

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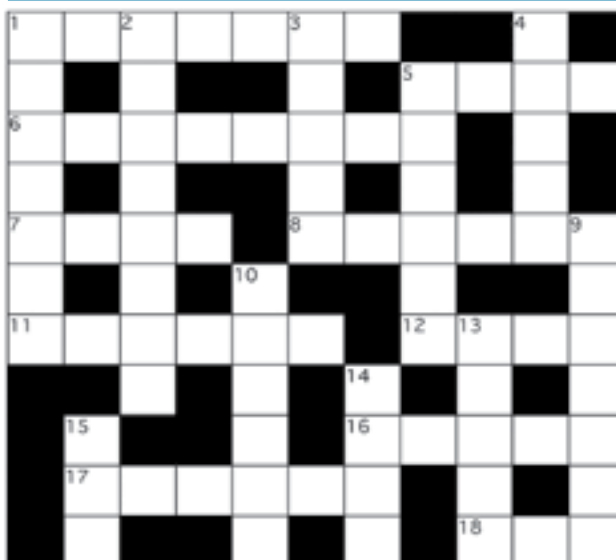
**NOTICE THIS?** **GET YOUR MESSAGE OUT TO 90,000 READERS!** **The Irish Catholic**



# Leisure time

## Crossword Junior

Gordius 277



### ACROSS

- 1 The patron saint of Ireland (7)  
5 You wash yourself with this and water (4)  
6 Delicious cold treat (3-5)  
7 An elephant's huge tooth (4)  
8 Signalled 'yes' with your head (6)  
11 Brave, courageous (6)  
12 Hens lay them (4)  
16 The lovely smell of some foods (5)  
17 Huge river in South America (6)  
18 It is worn around the neck (3)

- 2 Money and jewels that have been buried or hidden away (8)  
3 Not dirty (5)  
4 You might pin this on (5)  
5 Dirty mark (6)  
9 Sickness (7)  
10 You might say "God Bless You" after someone has one (6)  
13 This spirit might haunt a house (5)  
14 Magician's stick (4)  
15 You may wipe your shoes on this when you come in the door (3)

### DOWN

- 1 Used brushes to make a picture (7)

## SOLUTIONS, APRIL 4

### GORDIUS No.397

**Across** – 1 Old English sheepdog 3 Case History 8 Biceps 9 Galician 10 Troon 11 Throb 13 Gusto 15 Referee 16 Peridot 20 Tried 21. Doubt 23 Brill 25 Atrium 26 Whooper swan 27 Yew

**Down** – 1 Orbital road 2 Doctor of Divinity 3 Capon 5 Saint Bartholomew 6 Osiers 7 Yen 13 Greet 14 Oread 18 Limoges 19 Tuxedo 22 Top up 23 Baton 24 Sew

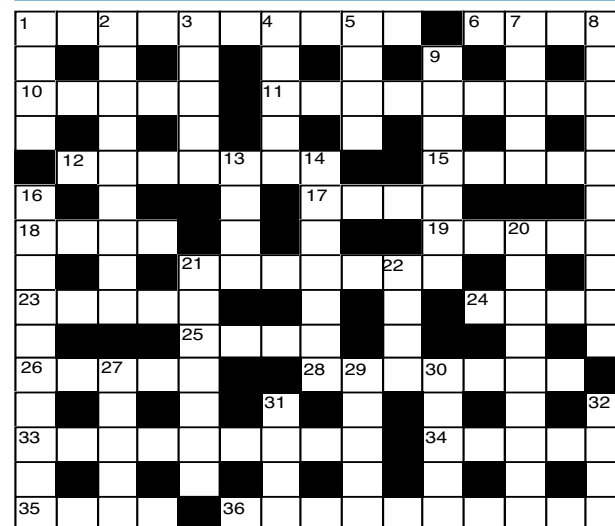
### CHILDREN'S No.276

**Across** – 1 Smoothie 6 Boy 7 Racing car 8 Own 9 Ideas 11 Cent 13 Entrance 14 Rock 15 Pancake 17 Adam 18 Hospital

**Down** – 1 Sardines 2 Orchestra 3 Tanks 4 Inch 5 Cygnet 6 Broke 10 Infant 11 Cereal 12 Nectar 15 Pro 16 Nap

## Crossword

Gordius 398



### ACROSS

- 1 This bird might 'dig' a burger, literally (10)  
6 Hems get entangled in the net (4)  
10 Southern claret is for pigs! (5)  
11 Botanical garden of trees (9)  
12 It's energetic candy I'm distributing (7)  
15 & 25a How chic Mr Baldwin is! Clever and conceited too (5-4)  
17 At which one stands when throwing darts (4)  
18 I'm a grand religious leader (4)  
19 Dog seen in Quebec or Gijon (5)  
21 One with no illusions about an inventory (7)  
23 Such a piece of jewellery might have arrived with love (5)  
24 Male deer (4)  
25 See 15 across  
26 Relented (5)  
28 Oh dirty kind of gland! (7)  
33 & 35a Some ghouls relented regarding Jesus' second commandment (3,6,4)  
34 Quilt (5)  
35 See 33 across  
36 Dawn has the best snooker scoring sequence of the twenty-four hours (5,2,3)  
**DOWN**  
1 The bachelor's hot to strike (4)

- 2 Agricultural establishment arising from the redevelopment of a mad friary (5,4)  
3 Some serene matrons use it to give you that empty feeling! (5)  
4 Asian beginnings to independent research are quite interesting (5)  
5 Mamma Mia creators (4)  
7 Get more from the minor actor (5)  
8 It's the actor the saint telephones for some tendons (9)  
9 Surgically cut in three (7)  
13 Rodents are grand - on the rocks! (4)  
14 One may gather that it is said before the Epistle (7)  
16 Rifle a cathedral in Hampshire (10)  
20 Having fetched this, might one be tired, ever? (9)  
21 Inconsiderate or dangerous driver (4-3)  
22 Murder the southern ballad (4)  
27 Commit a crime to make the cardinal duck (5)  
29 It makes one red to see Anne H turn up (5)  
30 Cowboy competition (5)  
31 This European river is turbulent for most of the 30 down (4)  
32 Remain (4)

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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.

## Sudoku Corner

277

Easy



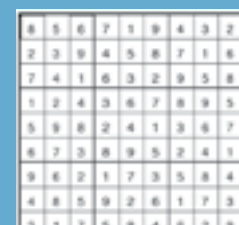
Hard



Last week's Easy 276



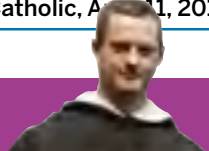
Last week's Hard 276





## Notebook

Fr Conor McDonough



# Step away from the fickleness of the modern mob

**THERE'S A STRANGE PARADOX** at the heart of modern celebrity culture. On the one hand, thanks to Instagram, celebrities are the object of unprecedented interest, love, envy and devotion. Pop stars and influencers all have their 'fandoms', hordes of utterly devoted fans who spend large parts of their free time posting, tweeting, and dreaming about their celebrity of choice. The language and emotions involved often approach those of religious worship: "You inspire me", "Your music is life", "I've loved you from the beginning".

On the other hand, the very celebrities we lift up in worship almost invariably end up miserable. Recent weeks have seen a spate of reports of suicide and depression among reality TV stars and musicians, and it's curious that we often follow celebrities' breakdowns with as much interest, and even glee, as when we charted their rise. Likewise, if a musician or actor commits a major *faux pas* the public reaction on social media is often swift, damning, and violent.

To borrow an analogy from the Roman world, we make celebrities into gods and gladiators all at



once. The very men and women who are raised up in an apotheosis of public acclaim find themselves very quickly in the arena, suffering for the entertainment of the crowd. The up-and-down trajectory of so many in the public eye reveals the awful fickleness of the modern mob. And as we see these scenes played out so often before our eyes our own anxiety and insecurity is increased: "It happened to her, it could happen

to me. But I'm safe if I stay in the heart of the mob."

## Acclamation

None of this is new. We see the very same phenomenon in the readings on Palm Sunday. At first, we see the crowd acclaim Jesus. They know there's something special about him, and they're happy to do what contemporary fans do. They raise him up, lay their clothes in his path for him,

and chant his superiority: "Blessed be the king who comes in the name of the Lord!"

We know how right they were to worship Jesus, but given how quickly their devotion fades, it seems that the acclamation of the crowd in Jerusalem is every bit as shallow as a fickle fandom. Days later, the same crowd is shouting very different words: "Crucify him, crucify him!" The one who was adored is now tortured, spat on, beaten and nailed to a tree: the same up-and-down trajectory so familiar to us.

## "This down-and-up journey of the Word of God changes everything"

Well, not quite the same. Not the same at all, in fact. There's something utterly unique about Jesus. Unlike mere humans, he's not carried along by the acclamation of the crowd, and he's not crushed by their rejection. Throughout the Holy Week events he is calm, determined, his face set like flint. He knows exactly what he's doing.

He submits to the up-and-down trajectory imposed on him by our volatile hearts, but this trajectory

does not define him. He's on a larger journey: down and up. Down: he is true God, the glorious Creator, who took flesh, was born in a dirty stable, laboured, hungered, thirsted, wept, felt sorrow, was killed, and descended to the dead. Up: with invincible love he conquered death, he rose from the dead, and he ascended into the glory of heaven.

This down-and-up journey of the Word of God changes everything. When Jesus met his anxious, insecure disciples after the Resurrection the first words he spoke to them were, 'Peace be with you'. Peace: an end to anxiety, an end to scapegoating, an end to violence. To all those brought low by the violence of mobs of any kind, to you, to me, the risen Jesus was saying: "You belong somewhere higher. Come up. Come home."



## THIS LENT, PLEASE HELP THE LITTLE WAY ASSOCIATION TO HELP THE POOREST OF THE POOR

**In Lent, we can serve Christ and help the destitute with our almsgiving.**

The three pillars of Lent are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. The Catechism says: "Giving alms to the poor is a witness to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God." The Little Way Association receives many requests for financial support from devoted missionary priests, Sisters and Brothers, working in some of the world's poorest areas and in political trouble-spots, to help those in the direst need.

**Can you help us to help those who have nothing?**

**Our policy is never to deduct anything from the donations we receive for the relief of poverty or for missionary work. Every penny you send us will be forwarded intact, to enable a missionary priest or sister to carry the love, care and compassion of Christ to a deprived, abandoned or needy person.**



In 1893, St Therese of Lisieux wrote to her sister Celine:

"Jesus wills that we give alms to Him as to one poor and needy. He puts Himself, as it were, at our mercy. He will take nothing but what we give Him from our heart. The very least trifle is precious in His sight."

- St Therese

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