

The Irish Catholic

BEATING SCAMMERS

Keeping safe online
Pages 31 & 33

SAINT PATRICK

Understanding our religious heritage
Pages 12-13

PIUS XII

Unearthing the war-time Pope
Page 23

Thursday, March 14, 2019

€2.00 (Stg £1.70)

The Irish Catholic Newspaper

@IrishCathNews

www.irishcatholic.com

Irish nun hopes award will help highlight 'heroic' work of religious

Chai Brady

An Irish nun who won a prestigious humanitarian award said she hopes it will encourage other missionaries to continue their dangerous work, as well as spread a broader appreciation of the work of religious in Ireland.

Wicklow-born Loreto Sr Orla Treacy, received the 'International Women of Courage Award' for her outreach work and educational mission in South Sudan. It was presented by US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, while First Lady Melania Trump spoke at the ceremony.

"It's heartening to think that people would see South Sudan and see the work of the missionaries and would acknowledge that. Definitely it's a boost for all of us," Sr Treacy told *The Irish Catholic* this week.

"The conversation in South Sudan was: will this award help our mission in South Sudan? I think if anything else comes from that that's an extra bonus, if people see religious in a positive way," she said.

Stressing that she had been out of Ireland for many years, Sr Orla said "if the award gives some positive publicity to the Church in Ireland, then great, if it doesn't then that's okay."

"I think our agenda was very much was about trying to promote our missionary work among the poorest of the poor in South Sudan, to those who are struggling most," Sr Orla said.

Highlights

Matt Moran, author of *The Legacy of Irish Missionaries Lives On*, who has documented the work of many Irish priests and religious, described the award as "hugely significant".

"This is an important award for Ireland, but also globally because it highlights the diversity of the work that religious engage in and the risky territories where they work".

He said that "courage is an understatement" when it comes to the work of missionaries like Sr Orla.

"This award is hugely important in highlighting the

» Continued on Page 2

Limavady girls have Lift Off initiative licked



After the success of Termoncanice Primary School's reading initiative, Lift Off, the pupils celebrated with a party and a visit from the ice cream van on World Book Day. Khloe and Beth are loving their treat.

MARY KENNY

A revolutionary movement indeed

PAGE 5



DAVID QUINN

Facing the reality of evil

PAGE 9



BREDA O'BRIEN

When Faith bears unpredictable fruit

PAGE 7



FATIMA PILGRIMAGES 2019

Fully packaged group Pilgrimages to Fatima

Special Easter Pilgrimage - 5 nights - 18 April - €599
with departures throughout May, June & September

WE INCLUDE

Fully Escorted Packaged Pilgrimage - Return Flights - Spiritual Director
Return transfers - Services of Marian Pilgrimages Rep. on the Ground
Guided Tours of Fatima & Aljustrel - Hotel Accommodation - All Airport and local Taxes

4 Nights

from € 549

5 Nights

from € 599



MARIAN PILGRIMAGES

Fully Licensed Tour Operator T0142

WWW.MARIAN.IE | DUBLIN - (01) 878 8159 BELFAST - (028) 956 80005

Inside this week

Questions of Faith

Why is God so silent?

Page 26



Everyday philosophy

When doing good seems so hard

Page 32



Fr Vincent Sherlock

Lent – a great opportunity to download

Page 40



Managing Editor: Michael Kelly, editor@irishcatholic.ie

Assistant Editor: Greg Daly, greg@irishcatholic.ie

Northern Correspondent: Martin O'Brien, martin@irishcatholic.ie

Multimedia Journalists: Chai Brady, chai@irishcatholic.ie

Colm Fitzpatrick, colm@irishcatholic.ie

Newsroom: news@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874026

Books Editor: Peter Costello, books@irishcatholic.ie

Layout: Declan Moroney

Advertising: advertising@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874094

Accounts: accounts@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874020

Magnificat: magnificat@irishcatholic.ie

Office hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
9.30am–5.30pm

Shop: shop@irishcatholic.ie

Managing Director: Garry O'Sullivan

Annual Subscription Rates: Ireland €145. Airmail €198. Six months – €75.
ISSN 1393 - 6832 - Published by The Irish Catholic,
23 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.
Printed by Webprint, Cork

Place an Advert

Phone 01 687 4094 or advertising@irishcatholic.ie

Time to tell the real story of Ireland's heroic missionaries

The first time I ever visited the United States it was to the state of Louisiana in the deep south. Unusually for the south of the US, Louisiana has a relatively healthy Catholic population with some 26% of residents identifying as members of the Church. Other states in the 'Bible Belt' like South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Alabama, Tennessee and West Virginia all have Catholic populations of fewer than 10%. In Mississippi just 4% of people are Catholics. You get the point.

So, here I was, an impressionable teenager in a swamp. Imagine my surprise, then, as I was walking through the city of Lake Charles on a blistering hot day when I saw two nuns waiting to cross the road. As I approached, I was even more surprised to hear that they were speaking with Irish accents.

It turns out that they were elderly Irish sisters working in a local hospital. They had gone to the US in the 1950s to work in providing healthcare in vulnerable African American communities in an era of savage racial discrimination.

Vocation

One sister told me that she had never seen a black person before, but she saw in each and every person she ministered to the face of Christ. What struck me was the ease with which the sisters told stories about how they got so much more out of their vocation than they feel they put in. It was clear to me that they saw the

people they worked with not as subjects of charity to be pitied, but cherished sons and daughters of God endowed with dignity by their Creator.

They were but one small example of the reach of Irish missionaries who have gone to every corner of the globe. I have been blessed to travel over the years to some troubled parts of the world where the daily achievement of the people is survival. From Latin America to West Africa, there is one thing in common: I have encountered men and women religious living their lives alongside some of the most vulnerable people in the world. What is remarkable is the fact that these priests, brothers and sisters are not passing through, they have incarnated their ministry with the people that the rest of the world has chosen to forget.

They are often on the frontline in the fight against extreme poverty and exclusion. They bring the light of the Gospel and fresh

inspiration to communities who had long since given up hoping for a better life. In short, they are the hands and face of Christ.

One such example honoured for her work last week is Loreto Sr Orla Treacy. Like most of the religious I have met, she is not keen to bask in the limelight, preferring to continue her ministry and accepting the award on behalf of those girls she works with.

“I have encountered men and women religious living their lives alongside some of the most vulnerable people in the world”

Priests and religious have gotten a bad press in Ireland in recent decades. God knows, some of it has been justified. The story of religious life and ministry in Ireland hasn't always

been covered in glory, but it hasn't been all bad either. We need to reclaim and proclaim the positive legacy of what the Church has done – and is doing – for people all over the globe. Sr Orla is but one part of a vast network of priests, religious and lay pastoral workers. They deserve our prayers, support and our appreciation.

● Every week *The Irish Catholic* features people (lay, religious or clerical) who are making a difference in their local community in the 'personal profile' section of the paper. If you would like to nominate someone for inclusion please email Chai Brady: chai@irishcatholic.ie

① 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



Award can help highlight fearless work of religious

» Continued from Page 1

heroic work of Irish missionaries, particularly at a time when there is a belief that Irish missionaries are history,” he said.

Mr Moran estimates that there are currently around 800 Irish missionaries working abroad.

He said he hopes the story of Sr Orla will help overcome “forgetfulness in Ireland about the huge contribution of priests and religious.

“Very often in the Irish context the caricature is of bad nuns. No one wants to minimise the bad things that happened, but this was very much a minority, so it's really important that the stories of missionaries are told and that Irish people learn to recognise and appreciate this,” Mr Moran told *The Irish Catholic*.

Highlighting the dangers faced by many missionaries,

Sr Orla says that in recent years two missionaries have been murdered in the country, but as religious “our business is not the war, our business is the people”.

As principal of Loreto Secondary School in Rumbek in Lake States, considered the premier girls' school in the impoverished country, Sr Orla has spent well over a decade empowering thousands of pupils through education, despite ongoing civil conflict and discrimination against young women, such as forced marriage.

Now in its 13th year, the US State Department's award recognises women around the globe who have demonstrated exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for peace, justice, human rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment, often at great personal risk and sacrifice.

Chaplains key to boosting student uni experience – claim

Chaplaincy services continue to play a vital role in the experience of third level students in Ireland and abroad, the chair of the Third Level Chaplains Association of Ireland has said.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* following a gathering of third level chaplains in Rome organised by the European Episcopal Conference, Fr Ger Dunne OP said chaplaincy continues to be “really important”.

“Apart from the day to day stuff of providing students with opportunities to enrich or enhance their spiritual values, there's so much more to it than that,” the UCC chaplain said. Singling out mental health issues as an area where chaplaincy can be especially beneficial, he said: “We're a service within the student experience where we offer something the University can't give, which is Faith-based, in particular at times of bereavement.”

YOUR LEGACY CAN CHANGE THE CHURCH IN IRELAND

PLEASE REMEMBER US IN YOUR WILL

ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE TO LOVE JESUS AND EMBRACE THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

NETMINISTRIES.IE +353 74 919 0606

What do you think?



Let us know by writing to:

Letters to the Editor,
The Irish Catholic,
23 Merrion Square,
Dublin 2,
or email:
letters@irishcatholic.ie

Help Church blossom by 'pruning' parishes, Ossory bishop urges

Greg Daly

Priests and people in the Diocese of Ossory need to take ownership of local pastoral needs to ensure parishes face the future in a healthy and dynamic way, Bishop Dermot Farrell has said.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* about his pastoral letter 'A Pathway for our Parishes', Bishop Farrell said change is

already afoot and the question facing parishes is how to engage with that change.

Although the pastoral letter says Ossory expects to have just 20 priests aged under 75 in 10 years time, Dr Farrell said the pathway's emphasis is on parishes as a whole.

"First of all the focus is not on clergy; it's on changing parishes, it's on sharing resources, and it's about lay

involvement for better parish life to serve the spiritual needs of people today," he said, adding that meetings with parishioners around the diocese have made it clear that there is an appetite for such an emphasis.

"One thing we see from doing that is that people are happy to work with a real situation. People can see the issues on the ground, they see the aging profile of the

clergy, they see that they're going to have work – I think what makes people nervous is unreality. They can't really work with that," he said.

Suppression

Neither the suppression nor amalgamation of existing parishes is envisaged by the diocese, although Dr Farrell said if some parishes were eventually to seek to be formally united this could be facili-

tated as long as any changes were sought at a grassroots level.

"We'll probably put some guidelines in place in terms of Masses, but each local area will have to work that out, rather than having it imposed," he said. "There is a process where we have engaged with people, but part of that process is not the institutional Church taking over and imposing its solu-

tions – it's giving ownership to people, saying this is your pastoral area: how are you going to provide for the sacramental life of this parish or these three parishes?"

"There's a certain pruning in this, which we might initially see as a loss, but there're also gains, and we have to see God's hand in it," Dr Farrell said. "God is working through this and I think good will come out of it."

Tipperary county council retracts support for 'blasphemous' videos

Staff reporter

A county council has asked the creator of a religiously offensive animation to remove its name from the series' credits, after having funded part of the show's production.

Tipperary County Council confirmed to *The Irish Catholic* last month that it gave a "small grant" for the development of a project entitled 'Bootleg Jesus', which depicts the title character coming to terms with his role as the so-called less successful son of God.

The ten-episode show depicted dialogue between two foul-mouthed characters and contained references to scenes from the Bible including walking on water.

While a spokesperson for the

council originally defended the appropriateness of paying a €400 grant towards the production of the potentially offensive material, the local authority has now retracted its support for the video series, this newspaper understands.

Tipperary County Council asked the creator of the series, Kenneth Noble known as Ntoonz, to drop its name from the credits which originally appeared at the end of the first video. The credits no longer appear on any of the videos.

The arts officer for the council had initially said the material wasn't offensive, before the video was taken down for a brief period of time.

"I don't really see anything in it. I think it's a light entertainment piece. I don't see anything that should cause offense in it," she said.

Top marks for Mark



Mark Wahlberg with his wife, Rhea Durham, after receiving ashes.

Colm Fitzpatrick

Famous Hollywood actor Mark Wahlberg has offered his love, prayers and blessings to people across the world, in observance of Ash Wednesday.

The popular celebrity, well-known from movies like *Ted* and *Transformers*, posted a special message to his 12 million Instagram followers at the beginning of the Lenten season.

"It's here – one of my favourite times of the year! Happy Ash Wednesday to everybody! Make sure if you're Catholic, you go get your ashes," he said in the video.

"God bless everybody – all religions, all walks of life. Lots of prayers going out for everybody. Looking forward to Easter coming up soon."

The actor also made the sign of the Cross, adding: "God bless you all in this Lenten season. God bless you always. And if you don't hear from me, I'm trying to spend some extra quiet time. God bless you."

The icon is known for being vocal about his faith after a transformative experience in his youth after being imprisoned.

CAMINO DE SANTIAGO IN THE SPIRIT OF ST JAMES

Escorted Walking Pilgrimage

SARRIA TO SANTIAGO
The Last 100km

7 NIGHTS FROM DUBLIN

27 MAY - 3 JUNE

PRICE:

€895 PER PERSON
SHARING



WHAT IS INCLUDED

- Aer Lingus flights Dublin to Santiago de Compostela
- Airport and Hotel Transfers with guide assistance
- 4 nights in the Grand Hotel Lugo with breakfast and evening meal
- 3 nights in Hotel Hesperia Peregrino in Santiago with breakfast and evening meal
- Services of Marian Pilgrimages Tours representative throughout with back-up car & bag transfer
- Luxury air-conditioned coach throughout the itinerary
- Official Cathedral de Santiago Passport
- 5 Walking days approx. 20km - 5hrs each
- All taxes and charges



To reserve your place: Call Dublin (01) 878 8159 | or Belfast (028) 95680005 | or email info@marian.ie

MARIAN PILGRIMAGES

The Irish Catholic

Marian Pilgrimages is a fully licensed and bonded tour operator TOL42 - ATOL 10206

AVAILABLE NOW

EVERYTHING YOU THINK YOU KNOW ABOUT THE IRISH LANGUAGE IS WRONG.



PRICE:
€14.99
+€3.00 P&P
(ROI)

As a historian of languages and someone who learned Irish as an adult, Caoimhín De Barra offers both academic and personal insights into Ireland's complex relationship with its national language. This book explains why most people don't learn Irish at school, where the deep hatred some have for the language comes from, and how people who want to learn Irish can do so successfully. Drawing upon the history of other minority languages around the world, De Barra demonstrates why current efforts to promote Irish are doomed to fail and proposes a radical solution for how to revive An Ghaeilge so it can again become the first language of the Irish people.

TO ORDER PHONE
01 687 4096

OR EMAIL
SALES@COLUMBA.IE

OR SHOP ONLINE
WWW.CURRACHBOOKS.COM



**CURRACH
BOOKS**

Neglected national mission would 'match Pope's vision'

Greg Daly

The failure of the Irish Church to hold a nationwide mission as requested by Pope Benedict is "disappointing", a Rome-based priest has said.

In his March 2010 Pastoral Letter to the Catholics of Ireland, the then Pope had listed concrete actions the Church in Ireland could take to renew itself, among which, he said, should be a nationwide mission for all bishops, priests and religious.

Such a mission, he hoped, would allow Ireland's clergy and religious to reach "a more profound appreciation of your respective vocations, so as to rediscover the roots of your

faith in Jesus Christ and to drink deeply from the springs of living water that he offers you through his Church".

Writing to *The Irish Catholic* this week, however, Kerry priest Fr Bernard Healy, says that while the Irish Church has made "huge strides in the area of safeguarding and some progress in confronting the sad history of abuse", it has perhaps not responded as well as it could have to the Pope's request for rejuvenating mission.

Action

"That no apparent action has yet been taken with respect to that request is disappointing. Surely the spiritual renewal of priests and religious must be

part and parcel of any broader renewal in the Church as a whole," he writes, adding: "Given the importance that Pope Francis places on spiritual discernment, such a mission would surely be in line with his thinking as well."

Papal biographer Dr Austen Ivereigh told *The Irish Catholic* that a focus on serious retreats has been one of the Pope's key reforms of the Vatican curia, with the American bishops' similar retreat this January being experienced by many as a transformative experience.

"Really what Francis is seeking in both situations, for the curia and the American bishops, is really a retreat on the Ignatian model," he said.

"You go away, you separate yourself from your environment, it's in silence, there's an austerity about it, and the whole idea is that you're listening for the Holy Spirit. These retreats are all about allowing space for the Holy Spirit to renew you.

"When you do it as a body, the idea is that you're renewed as a body, so the unity of apostolic body isn't the result of an intellectual consensus, but is the fruit of the Holy Spirit acting in you as a body.

i See Page 24.

Reaching out to Nepal



St Mary's Primary School in Mullaghbawn, Co. Armagh is linking up with a school in Nepal, in the hope of encouraging more girls into coding. The school is taking part in the new Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning (CCGL) initiative, a DFID (Department for International Development) and British Council programme.

Ancient church 'spectacular' backdrop for St Patrick

Colm Fitzpatrick

Strandhill, one of the most stunning seaside villages in Ireland, will be front and centre for this year's St Patrick's festival celebrations, as Mass for St Patrick's day comes live from the Sligo location on RTÉ1 at 11am.

The village at the western edge of Sligo Bay has a close association with St Patrick, who is believed to have estab-

lished a now-ruined church in the area.

The broadcasting team, led by Kairos Communications, have been hard at work with the unique challenge of the church building leading to the decision to use specialised film industry balloons to light the interior. The church, which is dedicated to St Patrick, has been renovated over the years and the influence of the ancient site at Killaspug-

brone is evident throughout the church in its decoration and in the words of Patrick sculpted into the walls.

"Strandhill church is a beautiful setting for the Mass and we really want to do justice to it," said producer Fr Finbarr Tracey. "Working along the Wild Atlantic Way for St Patrick's day is a treat for all the crew as Strandhill is such a spectacular backdrop for the day."

MQI to protect Sunday dinners with Lenten appeal

Chai Brady

A Dublin homeless charity has issued an "urgent" Lenten appeal to protect the future of a Sunday dinner service they provide every week for over 300 vulnerable people.

Increasing numbers of service users and insufficient funding from the State has put pressure on Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI), who are keen to protect the Sunday dinner's future. The free hot meal is invaluable to many.

The service, which costs over €200,000 a year to run, also provides an opportunity for MQI staff to engage with marginalised individuals and support them with crisis help and referrals. People who come to MQI on a Sunday can also avail of a hot shower, dry clothes and companionship.

Launching the appeal, MQI CEO Paula Byrne said: "MQI has been providing hot meals to Dublin's homeless for decades. Meeting these basic needs is at the core of what we do. But the demand for our Sunday services is now unprecedented.

"We are now seeing people who have a home, but they can't afford the heating or the food to cook. We provide a full meal, and our team work to create a family atmosphere. It's something our clients really appreciate."

Maura, who avails of the Sunday services, said she has no gas or electricity where she lives. "I come here on Sundays for a hot meal and to have a shower with hot water. I can fill my flask with hot water as well to take home with me," she said.

A revolutionary movement indeed

Revolutions don't always happen with riots in the streets, or even ordered declarations of a new national order. Revolutions sometimes take place quietly, when nobody is paying attention, or by slow, gradual, incremental change.

Back in 1989, a revolution began which none of us even knew about. Sir Tim Berners-Lee, a British engineer and computer analyst, submitted an academic paper to CERN, the European nuclear research agency, which would prove to be the launch of the World-WideWeb: the invention of the internet as we know it.

Now, 30 years on, Tim Berners-Lee is alarmed at the impact of his own creation. He is warning about the dangers of the "dysfunctional" web, its potential to deliver false information, hatred and malice – and its role in destroying privacy. We have lost control of personal data, he says.

Many an inventor has come to lament the impact of his invention. Dr John Rock, who contributed to the development of the contraceptive pill, believed it should be used to help distressed mothers to space their children, not as an agency of moral irresponsibility. Some of the nuclear scientists who worked on splitting the atom were appalled when



Mary Kenny

their knowledge was used to create the atom bomb.

All developments have the potential for evil as well as good. The motor car revolutionised personal freedom, but caused many tragic road deaths and made a significant contribute to air pollution and the degradation of the environment.

The internet has certainly revolutionised all our lives over the last decade – social media didn't get going until about 2008. It's full of bad things as well as good things, and it is certainly hugely intrusive on private life.

“It's up to us to develop a sense of discrimination, judgement and savvy attitudes”

Over the last three weeks I have been in Brussels, Maastricht, Aachen, London, Dublin and Ennis, and what do all these locations have in common? Most of the habitants seem to be staring at a hand-held screen. This includes policemen on duty, railway guards at hub train stations, mums pushing buggies,

diners facing each other over a restaurant table and even a cyclist whizzing down a street.

Maybe some people are accessing important professional information. But surely not all the time?

Who am I to judge? I can be just as addicted to screen communications, although not on a mobile phone. I open up Twitter every day, receive and transmit information and commentary. Yes, as Berners-Lee says, there is dysfunctional material and fake news. But it's up to us to develop a sense of discrimination, judgement and savvy attitudes.

It is certainly up to us, and our governments, to protect the young and vulnerable from the darker side of the internet.

Yet not everything turns out as predicted, even in revolutions. It was said that the internet would mean the death of the printed word. But the printed word is fighting back – and successfully too: the Publishers' Association in London announced this week that book sales have risen by 5% in the past year. Contrary to appearances, communication is not exclusively by screen!



European Chief Negotiator Michel Barnier welcomes British prime minister Theresa May to Strasbourg this week.

Not patronising but gallantry

● Michel Barnier did a very elegant 'hand-kiss' when greeting Theresa May in Strasbourg last Monday.

The hand-kiss is a gallant Continental practice, and a historic speciality in Austria and Poland. It's done very lightly and quickly, and accompanied by a slight bow of the head by the man.

Traditionally, the hand-kiss is for a married lady only.

In Poland, the hand-kiss was sometimes performed during the Communist period quite deliberately because the Communists didn't

approve of it: the courtesy was associated with the old nobility and thus not in alignment with Marxism. I was delighted, when visiting Poland during the 1980s, to be accorded the Handkiss.

As gallantry is regarded by establishment feminism as 'patronising' it does not meet with contemporary 'woke' approval either.

Perhaps all the more reasons to applaud Monsieur Barnier for adhering to a charming traditional gesture of respect to a woman.



How would you like to be remembered?

Leave a lasting legacy with Sightsavers

One small action now, could change people's lives forever

www.sightsavers.ie/beremembered

Call Declan or Megan on **01 663 7666**

 **Sightsavers**

© Sightsavers/Jason J Mulikita. Registered charity number CHY 15437.

Chai Brady

[illegible]

Breda O'Brien

The View



When Faith bears unpredictable fruit

There are billboards for Hozier's new album, *Wasteland, Baby!*, all over the place. In a *Guardian* Question and Answer session the singer (Andrew Hozier-Byrne) revealed that he has Seamus Heaney's last words tattooed on his arm. Seamus Heaney had texted '*noli timere*' which means, "do not be afraid", to his wife, Marie, shortly before he died.

Hozier's love of the words comes from the poignancy of when they were written and the fact that Heaney conversed in Latin with his beloved wife.

The resonance of '*noli timere*' obviously differs depending on how a person receives them. For Christians, they are words found in dozens of places in the Bible.

However, his wife Marie, the woman who knew and loved him best, has said they were simply words of comfort to her and had no deeper significance.

It would be wrong to try to paint Heaney as some kind of Christian believer given that he identified as agnostic. As his friend Msgr Brendan Devlin said so eloquently at Heaney's funeral, we cannot try "to harness him in the ranks of the soldiers of Christ. How insufferably patronising that would be!"

Given his agnosticism, many were surprised at Heaney's choice to have a requiem Mass but his wife Marie said that "for him, it gave to people a sense of transcendence, a sense of something beyond us even though you may not believe in it".

Interview

Heaney himself, with typical wryness, described his own spiritual standing in a 2007 Open University interview.

"I grew up in a very religious household and I've a religious disposition but I also have done my best to secularise myself. And I find myself halfway between them. I mean, I don't believe in the dogmas but I have an impulse towards the transcendent."

Heaney has also said that he was suffused in religious imagery which fed his imagination, including the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which contains

such evocative words as 'tower of ivory', 'Ark of the Covenant', 'gate of heaven' and 'morning star'.

So his agnosticism might be described as not Catholic but not opposed.

In contrast, Hozier grew up in the Quaker tradition and has said that he finds faith absurd, but describing himself as an atheist is too final. In his most famous song, 'Take Me to Church', Hozier uses religious imagery to describe a relationship with a woman who demands to be worshipped. He says that he wrote it after a bad break-up.

"We now live in an Ireland where baby birds have far more protection than baby humans"

In subsequent commentary, he says that the song represents everything life-denying about the Church, which stigmatises sexual relationships except in marriage. The music video made for the song depicts two Russian men who are tortured and abused by their community for their love.

So religious imagery is used first for an unhealthy relationship, then for what is seen as the awfulness of religious dogmas and finally, to condemn homophobia in Russia and elsewhere by laying it at the feet of churches.

Without suggesting Hozier is an artist of Heaney's stature, the difference between the generations is stark. Heaney is willing to acknowledge his debt to Catholicism. For example, if it were not for the scholarship he received to St Columb's in Derry, he would not have learned his beloved Latin.

However, Hozier also says that his favourite poem of Heaney's is 'St Kevin and the Blackbird', a poem which describes the legend of how once when St Kevin was in prayer, a blackbird nested in his outstretched hand, and such was his reverence for life that he remained kneeling in prayer until the baby birds were fledged.

We now live in an Ireland where baby birds have far more protection than baby humans. A bird in the nest may not be disturbed on pain of legal sanction but a baby in the womb may be removed with the approval of the State. Hozier, of course, campaigned vociferously for Repeal of the Eighth.

Some great rupture has taken place between art and Faith. There are notable exceptions, such as Dony MacManus and his School of Sacred Art in Florence but for the most part, artists, writers and musicians are today often actively antagonistic towards the Christian moral code.

What are we to do? Borrow the older significance of Heaney's

last words and do not be afraid. Agnostics can be moved by an ancient legend about compassion and even young and successful singers rejecting Christian morality can still be moved by simplicity and beauty.

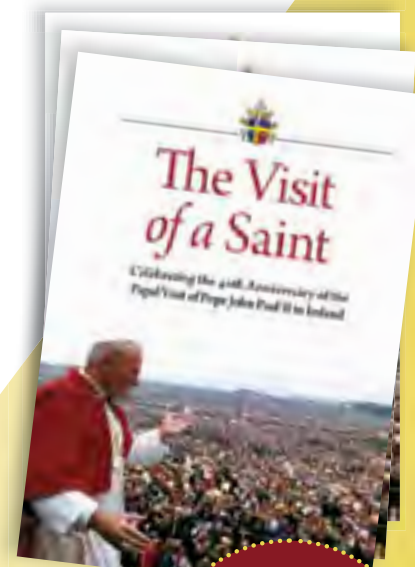
Sometimes it feels that like St Kevin, as Christians we are stretched between heaven and earth, condemned to try to do the impossible. But like St Kevin, if we are people of compassion, our faith tells us that will eventually bear fruit that we cannot predict and indeed, for which we can take little credit.



Hozier.

New from Veritas

Celebrating the 40th anniversary of the papal visit of Saint John Paul II to Ireland



This publication brings Saint John Paul II's heartfelt words to the Irish people together in one place, alongside photographs of that momentous visit.

€9.99/£9.20

VERITAS
www.veritas.ie

Abbey Street & Blanchardstown Centre, Dublin
Cork • Derry • Ennis • Letterkenny • Newry



Seamus Heaney.

Aontú leader is optimistic about his new party's chances

Colm Fitzpatrick

The leader of Ireland's newest and fastest-growing political party has said he is convinced there is an appetite for a new movement that is both republican and pro-life. Peadar Tóibín – founder of Aontú – told *The Irish Catholic* that his party envisions a united Ireland which also includes constitutional provisions that protect the unborn.

His comments come after founder and director of Precious Life Bernadette Smyth, told this newspaper last week that support for a united Ireland is at odds with a pro-life vision, given that the North protects rights of the unborn, compared to its southern counterpart.

While concerns like these



Peadar Tóibín.

have been raised at his public meetings ahead of the movement's first major challenge with local elections north of the border on May 2 and in the south on May 24, Mr Tóibín said that the process of

creating a united Ireland does not naively involve the North absorbing all laws and institutions of the Republic, but having cross-border dialogue to discuss in concrete terms what a new Ireland would look like.

"I believe that we should actually be looking at developing some kind of all-Ireland convention to discuss what exactly Irish unity would look like, and what structures would be in place.

"It would be very possible that you could have a united Ireland with some level of Stormont regime functioning in place for a period of time, and the laws of the North remain under Stormont for that period of time," the former Sinn Féin member said, adding that laws pertaining to abortion could fit under this paradigm.

Indeed, given that a number of former Sinn Féin representatives such as councillors Fergal Lennon and Oliver O'Brien have defected to Aontú partly over abortion issues, the appetite for a pro-life, united Ireland is certainly present and thriving.

"I also think that it is possible it could remain different on the issue of abortion in the North and South in a Stormont federalist type of united Ireland if that was a choice.

"But there is absolutely no way that you would just add in 1.8million people into a united Ireland and not allow them to have some say in regards to the abortion laws that currently exist," the Meath TD said, stressing that Aontú is still working to stop the availability of abortion in Ireland and make our current laws "more humane".

No direction

The united Ireland Mr Tóibín speaks about – one where the North is not just a mere appendage of the South – requires that constitutional issues be discussed and worked out on an all-Ireland basis. It's important to remember, of course, that while the Good Friday Agreement is fully open to the establishment of a united Ireland if willed by a majority of voters, there's no direction to what this new-Ireland will look like politically and functionally.

Mr Tóibín's emphasis on concrete action, through an

Irish convention which sees dialogue between politicians and lawmakers, seems to be a clear answer to this current absence of guidance.

At the moment, he says, the main parties north and south of the border have their "heads in the sand" about the looming reality of a united Ireland, which has become even more likely given the reinvigorated desire for the 32 counties to remain in the European Union, after the potentially calamitous effects of Brexit.

Mission

In his mission to make some real progress across the border about a united Ireland and the role of Stormont in this process, Mr Tóibín has called on SDLP's Colum Eastwood, MLA, and Northern Sinn Féin Leader Michelle O'Neill to participate in a debate with regards to the future of the North of Ireland, in particular, making sure that sustainable "structural institutions" are built – he is yet to receive a response.

"There's a lot of interim steps that need to be taken. I believe that the all-Ireland economy isn't developed far enough whatsoever, the all-Ireland economy needs to be further progressed, I don't see any of the political parties talking about that.

"Both the SDLP and Sinn Féin are only talking about resurrecting Stormont, as it previously existed and if you ask me, Stormont as it previously existed wasn't functional. It was actually by its very nature, dysfunctional," Mr Tóibín told this newspaper, adding that at its worse, the government was reduced to the two largest parties seeking to block each other at every single turn.

Devolution

"I believe it's actually time to move beyond those institutions in that previous state, that we need to build institutions that actually are far more robust and can't be programmed by any dysfunctional party in the process, and ones that have a far deeper level of devolution from London, as well as greater integration with the North/South ministerial bodies, so that they have more power and there's more parliamentary oversight in those. So, I think there's quite a bit further we can go.

Cats' van blessed



Kilkenny-based Capuchin friar Fr Benignus Buckley blesses the Kilkenny GAA team kit van, with Denis 'Rackard' Coady.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Warm tributes paid to Monaghan priest

Clogher's Bishop Larry Duffy has paid tribute to Fr Brendan McCague after it was announced last weekend the Carrickmacross priest is to retire from active ministry after almost 46 years of service in different parts of the diocese and in various roles.

"Until my ordination as bishop I worked with Fr Brendan in Carrickmacross parish and I know how much his ministry meant to the people of Corduff and Raferagh. I witnessed the great personal sacrifices he made and the inspiration he gave in generously serving the people of that part of the parish," Dr Duffy said.

No charge for man arrested over church crypt vandalism

A man (20) arrested last week in connection with the vandalism of an historic church crypt in Dublin has been released without charge.

He was arrested on March 7 over the break-in at St Michan's Church of Ireland Church on February 25. The head of an 800-year-old mummy known as 'the

Crusader' was stolen while the head of a mummified nun had been turned 180 degrees to face the wrong direction. A steel internal gate had been removed and another mummy damaged.

The head of 'the Crusader' was recovered last week before the arrest. A file is being prepared for the DPP.

Dublin parish homes papal altar

The altar used by Pope Francis when he celebrated Mass in the Phoenix Park has found a permanent home in the north Dublin parish of Bonnybrook.

Parishioners were able to worship at the WMOF altar when their newly refurbished parish church reopened following five months of renovations.

On March 9, the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Diarmuid Martin, joined the parish for a celebration marking the re-opening of the church, St Joseph the Artisan, entitled 'New Beginnings'.

"New beginnings' in parish life is about mirroring that loving care of Jesus and witnessing it in our community," said Archbishop Martin in his homily.

DANIEL O'LEARY Two bestsellers back in stock



Price: €14.99
+ €4.50 P&P

Price: €12.99
+ €3.00 P&P

Two very different Daniel O'Leary books give us a glimpse into his life's worth of contemplation about God, life and meaning.



23 Merrion Sq. N., Dublin 2

To order call 01 687 4096
or email sales@columba.ie
www.columbabooks.com

Facing the reality of Evil



Good and evil are things we actively choose, writes **David Quinn**

Fr Pat Collins wants us to confront a very uncomfortable thought: evil is real. In the West, we often like to pretend that evil does not exist, or if it does, can be reduced to psychological categories.

In his new book, *Freedom from Evil Spirits*, Fr Collins wants us to consider evil in all its force and not to shy away from thinking about it.

And Fr Collins is not asking us to think of evil 'only' as the bad things we choose to do, but evil in the sense of something that can be an actual demonic force. We are even slower to think about evil in this way, but it is exactly what Fr Collins wants us to do because he believes such evil exists, that he has seen it and that it is more common than we think, so it is no good pretending it does not exist.

We are still willing to believe that certain things really are evil and cannot be explained in any other way. The Holocaust falls into this category for most people, and so does child sex abuse. These exceptions aside, however, we do our best to minimise the existence of evil and to try and explain it away. We are very reluctant to think that people might actually freely choose to do evil things.

Attack

A horrible and fascinating case came before the courts recently. It involved a woman named Laura Kenna who attacked and stabbed in the neck another woman, Fionnuala Burke, while Ms Burke was on her way to work.

Ms Kenna was sitting on a wall in Drumcondra, not far from the offices of the Archbishop of Dublin, when she jumped off to assault and attempt to kill her victim.

During the trial, divergent testimony was heard about her mental health at that moment.



Inset, Fr Pat Collins and Laura Kenna.

Ms Kenna and her legal team said she was suffering from delusions about death, vampires and cannibalism.

As reported in the *Irish Independent*, Dr Stephen Monks of the Central Mental Hospital (CMH) told the jury that Ms Kenna was suffering from schizoaffective disorder, a chronic mental illness related to schizophrenia.

But Prof. Harry Kennedy, also of the CMH, testified that she was not delusional at the time, but carried out the attack in anger and out of a "sense of entitlement"; she told gardai she'd needed money.

Prof. Kennedy said her attack would not come under the definition of insanity. He said that she possessed "callous" and "unemotional" personality traits and had the ability to "fabricate for her own interests".

In the end, the jury found Ms Kenna guilty of attempted murder and she is awaiting sentencing.

The jury in this case had to decide whether Ms Kenna had consciously and freely chosen to do an evil thing or whether she was mentally ill

at the time of the attack.

When my friend and work colleague Tom O'Gorman was brutally killed in his home in Castleknock five years ago, it was subsequently decided that his killer was mentally ill at the time of the attack and was not freely choosing to carry out a very terrible deed.

“We can choose good and we can choose evil, and often we are fully morally responsible for what we do”

When Alan Hawe killed his wife Clodagh and children, and then himself, in 2016, he was initially buried with them because it was judged at the time that he could not have really chosen to do such an awful thing. He must have been mentally ill, and in a sense he was a victim as well.

But the family of those he killed felt otherwise, and so in time his body was exhumed and buried elsewhere. We recently saw Clodagh Hawe's sister and

mother being interviewed on RTÉ.

In the above three cases, and there are many more, we can see the way people wrestled with the thought that evil had been freely chosen each time an act of great violence had taken place.

But if people rarely choose to do evil, then the flipside of that coin could be that they also rarely choose to do real good, as in genuine, un-self-interested, self-sacrificial good of the truly heroic kind. It is naïve to think we are free to do good and not to think we are also free to do evil.

Also, we have to consider what 'good' and 'evil' actually are. Are they things that have a real existence, like say, you and me, or are they merely concepts we have invented? If you're an atheist, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that they are simply fancy words we give to the things we like and the things we dislike. A blank, meaningless universe that comes from nothing and is going nowhere cannot produce real, existential good or evil.

But Christians do believe in Good and Evil as real categories. We believe we can do things that are good in themselves, even holy. And we can do things that are evil in themselves, even unholy things. We can choose the path of sanctity, or we can choose to follow a path of real spiritual evil and immerse ourselves in

that, consciously wishing to be unholy. We choose the darkness over the light.

Ultimately, this is what it means to have free will, to have moral agency. We can choose good and we can choose evil, and often we are fully morally responsible for what we do. I think this what Fr Pat Collins is trying to remind us of.

A powerful addition to *Magnificat*,
PRAYERS for the **MOMENT**

offers rare spiritual gems unearthed

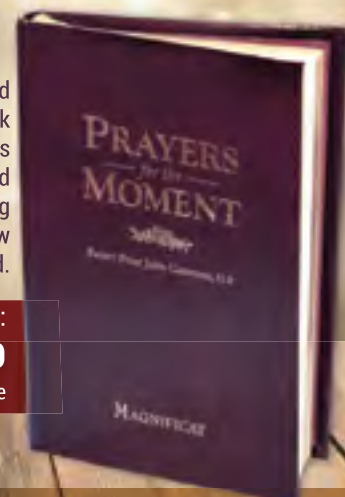
by **Father Peter John Cameron, O.P.**

Leather-bound and pocket-sized, the book contains fifty prayers chosen for their insight and spiritual depth, expressing the heart's desire to draw closer to God.

Price:

€19.99

+ €1.80 postage



Visit our website shop at:
www.irishcatholic.com/shop or call us on 01-6874024

“Christians do believe in Good and Evil as real categories. We believe we can do things that are good in themselves, even holy. And we can do things that are evil in themselves”

Following in Faithful footsteps



Greg Daly

Irish people setting out from Sarria to walk to Santiago de Compostela will find the scenery through which they make their way oddly familiar. Lush and green, it could hardly be more different from the parched plains so emblematic for many of the modern Camino, and will strike many as being almost Irish.

They'll not be the first to have had such a thought: Irish pilgrims in the medieval period often experienced Spain's north-western province as Galicia as a kind of homeland, long reputed as it was to have been the place from where the Milesians, ancient ancestors of the Irish, had once come.

Not, of course, that that was why such pilgrims set out for Spain. On the contrary, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims would travel to Galicia every year to pray at what they believed to be the bones of St James the Great, onetime leader of the Church in Jerusalem and the first apostle to be martyred – Santiago is simply Spanish for 'St James'.

Legend

The nascent Church had been tasked with bringing the Gospel to the ends of the earth, and in early medieval Spain it was believed that after the Resurrection, St James had travelled to Spain, the most



westerly part of the Roman Empire. Succeeding only in winning a few dozen believers to Christ, he returned to the Holy Land where he was beheaded by King Herod.

According to Spanish legend, his remains were gathered together and placed in a boat which miraculously brought them to Finisterre – the 'end of the world' – on the Galician coast, with his remains being buried inland and forgotten until the early 9th Century, when strange lights in the night sky led a hermit named Pelayo to the grave. The local bishop wrote to the Pope, and soon the site was declared an official pilgrimage site.

In 1122 Pope Calixtus II gave

“With the so-called ‘French Way’ or Camino Frances being the most popular pilgrim road to Santiago, huge numbers of pilgrims join the route at Sarria to walk the last 100km to the shrine”

Compostela the privilege of granting a plenary indulgence to those who visited the shrine of the Apostle in jubilee years, ensuring that Santiago became Europe's leading pilgrimage site of the Middle Ages. Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from across Christendom would follow the Camino de Santiago – St James's way – in jubilee years, and by the 13th Century, when St Francis of Assisi was one of those who travelled to pray by the relics, the Camino was at its height.

The Reformation, and a new spirit of scepticism that scorned the value of prayer and pilgrimage, sent the Camino into a long decline, however, and by the 20th Century



it was almost dead, with just a few hundred pilgrims walking the ancient roads each year.

Since the 1980s, however, the Camino has been restored to life, and now over 300,000 pilgrims make their way to Santiago each year and receive a certificate – a Compostela – confirming that they are true pilgrims who have walked at least 100km – or cycled at least 200km – to visit the shrine of St James.

Peak

With the so-called 'French Way' or Camino Frances being the most popular pilgrim road to Santiago, huge numbers of pilgrims join the route at Sarria to walk the last 100km to the shrine. The last section of the way can be famously busy, but in that it surely just reflects the reality of the Camino at its medieval peak, when pilgrimage could be a lively and bustling experience.

Chaucer would not have written his *Canterbury Tales*, after all, if groups of pilgrims travelling together had not enjoyed the trip!

CAMINO DE SANTIAGO IN THE SPIRIT OF ST JAMES

Escorted Walking Pilgrimage

SARRIA TO SANTIAGO
The Last 100km

7 NIGHTS FROM DUBLIN

27 MAY - 3 JUNE

PRICE:

€895 PER PERSON
SHARING



WHAT IS INCLUDED

- Aer Lingus flights Dublin to Santiago de Compostela
- Airport and Hotel Transfers with guide assistance
- 4 nights in the Grand Hotel Lugo with breakfast and evening meal
- 3 nights in Hotel Hesperia Peregrino in Santiago with breakfast and evening meal
- Services of Marian Pilgrimages Tours representative throughout with back-up car & bag transfer
- Luxury air-conditioned coach throughout the itinerary
- Official Cathedral de Santiago Passport
- 5 Walking days approx. 20km - 5hrs each
- All taxes and charges



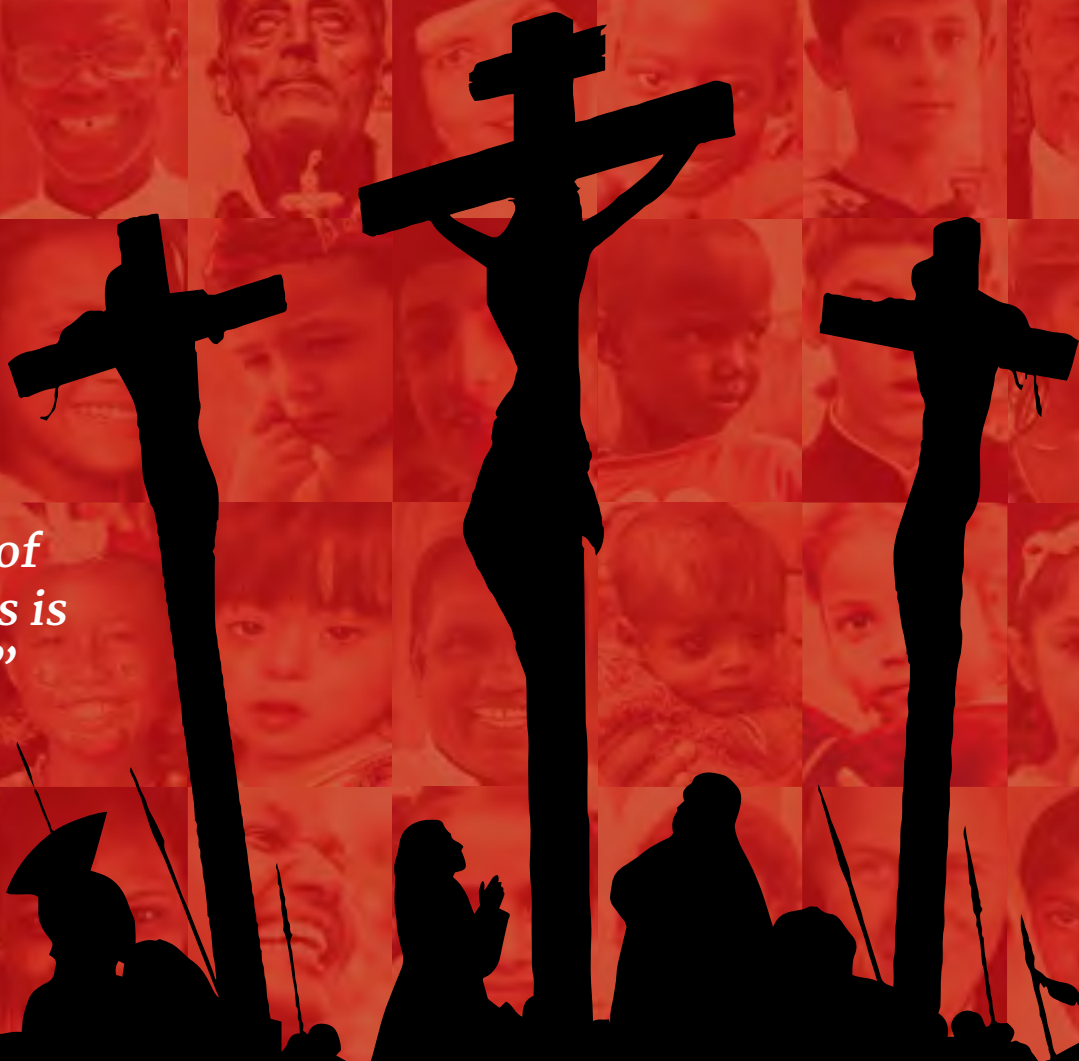


Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN IRELAND

*“Blessed are those who
are persecuted because of
righteousness, for theirs is
the kingdom of heaven.”*

Matthew 5:10



Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) Ireland: We live, support and defend Catholic teaching. We will always defend the interests of the Church and Her Faithful. We will never support any institution, agency or ideology which undermines the life or health of the Church or the Faithful.

ACN Ireland relies entirely on the generosity and prayers of our benefactors to help us in our vital work for the suffering and persecuted Church.

ACN Ireland doesn't just believe in helping save lives through our humanitarian work – we also believe in helping save souls through our pastoral work.

This Easter help us create... a world in which Christianity can thrive everywhere.



Help ACN support
the work of Religious
Sisters worldwide
through:

Mass stipends

Mass cards

Daily prayer



DONATE TO ACN

I would like to make a **donation to the ongoing** £/€
projects of Aid to the Church in Need.

I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to **Aid to the Church in Need** **OR** please debit my Card.

Card Number: (Laser only)

/

Valid From:

Maestro Issue No.

Expiry Date:

Signature strip code (last 3 digits)

Signature

Also donate at **www.acnireland.org/donate**,
call **+353 (0)1 837 7516** or donate by bank transfer at
IBAN IE32 BOFI 9005 7890 6993 28 BIC BOFI IE2D

Registered
Charity Numbers:
(Rol) 9492
(NI) XR96620

acnireland.org/donate or call us on 01 837 7516

Aid to the Church in Need, 151 St. Mobhi Road, Glasnevin, Dublin 9

PONTIFICAL
FOUNDATION



The legacy of St Patrick



Understanding religion is vital for understanding Ireland, writes **Greg Daly**

One would think that the obvious theme of Prof. Kevin Whelan's *Religion, Landscape & Settlement in Ireland* would be that it's impossible to make sense of the Irish landscape without considering the role of religion, but this isn't even the half of it, he says.

"Never mind the landscape, though it's dear to my own interests, but equally Irish society, Irish culture, Irish history," retorts the north Wexford-born historian, who earned his doctorate in UCD in the 1970s on the geography of religion and society in Ireland since 1800, subsequently teaching in the USA and Canada and running the University of Notre Dame's Irish Centre since 1998.

"Try and explain it without understanding the role of religion or the role of spirituality: you can't do it," he continues. "I suppose nowadays people tend to get very short-sighted but you need a long-term perspective to understand a culture. In a sense that's what I'm trying to do."

Anomaly

Wary of terms like 'Pagan' and 'Celtic' when discussing the coming of Christianity to Ireland, he's sceptical too of traditional interpretations of early Irish Catholicism as a kind of Christian anomaly.

"I don't think that's a useful way of thinking about it, because if you look at the spread of Christianity, there was no one standard version of Christianity at that time. What you had was a variation – everywhere it went it formed accommodations with the local cultures," he says.

"The Irish experience was actually normal: there was no standard version of Christianity from which it could deviate. The negotiation between Christianity and what was there already was a fruitful one and it actually helped



rather than hindered Christianity. That's maybe one of the longer-term messages that I talk about in the book: that Christianity flourished in Ireland when there was a close relationship with the culture," he says.

Later versions of Christianity in Ireland tended to be more standardised and even bureaucratic, he says, arguing that this actually damaged Christianity in Ireland.

"If you look at the earlier periods Christianity was richer precisely because, as Pope Francis would say, the shepherds did smell of the sheep," he says, adding that the early Irish Christians were remarkable for their confidence about the Faith.

"The Irish Christians were extraordinarily confident. They had no problem whatsoever arguing with the Pope or with the existing system of intellectual power at that time. They maintained a different date of Easter because they said the lads weren't calculating it correctly. They were incredibly arrogant, and one of the Popes wrote them a letter and said 'who do you think you are? You're a pimple on the face of Christianity!'"

Ireland's position at the edge of the known world was central to this sense of confidence, Prof. Whelan maintains.

"But if you look at it,

and ask why the Irish were so imbued with that, it's because they felt that in the Bible it says go and preach the Christian message to the ends of the Earth, and they saw themselves as being the end of earth," he says. "They saw themselves as equally important in closing the Christian message as the Romans and Eastern Mediterranean had been in beginning it. That imbued them with an incredible degree of self-confidence."

It also gave them a great sense of urgency, he adds, with there being a common belief that the Second Coming might happen once Christianity reached the ends of the earth, and with this perhaps influencing the tendency for monks to settle at remote locations on Ireland's western coast, facing the void in the known world.

"They had a very sophisticated understanding of their own position and a very strong sense of confidence that what they were doing was not something peripheral but actually central to the Christian message. I think the early Irish Church is remark-

ably confident and remarkably creative," he says.

At the same time, he says, talk about the speed of Ireland's conversion needs a measure of caution.

“Patrick and the people he trained were all very good at finding ways to explain the Christian message in ways that made sense for local Irish people”

"It's not necessarily that it caught on all that quickly. If there's a few hundred people, and there's kind of incremental change, 2 or 3% a year, it takes about 150 years, so it's not as if Christianity came and suddenly the light went on and it went everywhere really quickly," he says.

In fairness, though, it is genuinely remarkable that the spread of Christianity in Ireland was not met with violence.

"A key part of the story, and it's a cliché, is that the Irish produced no martyrs.

Usually when Christianity spread it met intense opposition," he says.

"It didn't in Ireland and part of that was to do with the fact that Patrick, who was a slave and was really people-trafficked into Ireland in his period, understood the language and understood the culture to some respect, having been there as a teenager. He had a very strong regard for Irish people. He didn't kind of come in with the arrogance of 'I know everything and you know nothing'. I think that from the get-go, Patrick understood that the way to make this happen was to negotiate rather than to be arrogant and dictatorial."

The result, he says, was a rich hybrid fusion of Irish culture and Christianity.

"Patrick and the people he trained were all very good at finding ways to explain the Christian message in ways that made sense for local Irish people," he says. "It absorbed things from earlier culture – where they might have said there were multiple gods, they'd say you were on the right track there lads, but this is all the manifestation of

a single God, just manifested in different ways. Christianity has that at its core as well, with the idea of the Trinity: the Celts, if you want to call them that, had no problem absorbing that idea either."

The Christian message Patrick and others brought resonated with existing views and attached itself to the local landscape in a way that gave it tremendous resilience, he says, such that claims that the Faith is on the way out in Ireland are premature.

"Sometimes people think that nowadays what has happened is the collapse of Catholicism, but my argument is that if you look at it in a longer term this is just one more in a very long series of changes – often very quick and seen as revolutionary changes and catastrophic changes – in the way that Christianity developed in Ireland. At the moment we're in the in-between period, but I think there'll be another resurgence of Christianity in Ireland. It will be a different version of it – still delivering the same message, but it'll take on different forms."

Early Christianity in Ireland has been associated with strong ascetic tendencies, with Christianity priding itself on being a religion of the outcasts and marginal-

“Sometimes people think that nowadays what has happened is the collapse of Catholicism, but my argument is that if you look at it in a longer term this is just one more in a very long series of changes”



Prof. Kevin Whelan.

ised, but it is difficult to tell how it was experienced by people who weren't clergy or religious.

"We just don't know, because the documents were produced by the people at the very centre of the Church. You can't tell. You can maybe make some informed guesses, but it very quickly can veer into 'Celtic Christianity' and things like that which I don't think are very helpful ways of thinking about it at all. I prefer to say this is something we need to think about – a comparative approach is probably the best one in it."

It's worth bearing in mind how small Ireland's population was at the time, he adds, pointing out that it was probably about half a million, with the major centres of Christian intellectual life at the time tending to be at such Mid-lands sites as Clonmacnois, Durrow and Kells.

Irish identity is clear in the sources of the time, with Patrick writing of being summoned by "the voice of the Irish", Columbanus writing to the Pope about "we Irish", and Columbanus's hagiographer Jonas even writing a poem about Ireland, and there's no denying the extent to which Ireland was a clear and distinct culture at the time, says Prof. Whelan.

"It was a very self-sufficient culture, and a very unusual one too, because it was a very pronounced segregation or micro-partition of the country into these small kingdoms, the tuatha, but the culture itself was very unified, the same language and whatever," he says, adding that the Church played an important role in binding the

culture together.

Unity

"Christianity brought literacy and brought literacy in the Irish language, and that was island-wide, so even though there was political fragmentation there was cultural unity.

"The Church was a major part of that, because unusually the Churchmen had immunity and had safe passage through the different systems, and I think that was one of the key reasons why Irish culture was homogenous while being politically very fragmented," he says.

The social and political fragmentation of early medieval Ireland is attested to by the numerous tiny churches that dot the landscape, he explains.

“There was an expectation that Church and State... would sing from the same hymn sheet”

"We know there are something like 5,900 sites from the early medieval period, say from 432 up to the arrival of the Normans, if that's the breakpoint we want to use, in the 12th Century," he says, noting that many of these still survive to this day and that there would also have been many wooden churches.

"We know something else as well, which is that these churches were often kin-based: they were for groups of families, probably farming together, who had these little churches and usually kin groups could produce a clergyman," he says. "Irish society was very kin-based at the time – the political system was very kin-based, the

church was very kin-based, so it was relatively straightforward to produce a priest from within that community, and if you look at the burials, the number of burials were quite small in some of the early Christian churches."

The country's oldest church testifies to this in an interesting way, he says.

"The earliest dated church in Ireland is one that people should probably know more about and most people would probably never have visited or even heard of, at Caherlehillan in Iveagh in Kerry. There are only 17 burials there, which suggests to the archaeologists who've looked at it that it functioned almost as a family church, what they call elsewhere in Europe a proprietary church. It wasn't a parish church in the same way."

Irish Catholicism may change, but Prof. Whelan can't see it disappearing altogether. "When people say Catholicism is going to disappear or fade off the Irish landscape, I don't agree with that. I think this is very deeply embedded and the long-run history shows us that there were these moments of redefinition, but the Church re-emerged in different forms and different ways. There's been many different manifestations of what it meant to be a Christian and a Catholic in this country, and every few centuries there's been these upheavals."

The late medieval model of Church in Ireland was strikingly different to the earlier model, he points out, being far more parish-based and episcopally-driven, and later again the country's Church

proved especially ingenious in adapting to persecution and oppression.

"What is really interesting is the defence mechanisms that the Irish Church develops because they become a porcupine to stop themselves being swallowed whole, and they also sacramentalised the landscape – that's when you get all the holy wells and stuff like that," he says.

"It's really clear once you look at it – a lot of things which people tend to think are carryovers from the earlier period are actually a very sophisticated response to how you evangelise and how you keep people Catholic in an external environment which is hostile to your Church?"

Rejecting the idea that the wells were semi-pagan superstitions, he says the sacralising of the landscape was "a very sophisticated alliance between Catholic theology and a vernacular culture in a situation where they can't have a public expression". It was around this time, he says, that the calendar was sacralised too with days like St Brigid's Day and St Patrick's Day becoming especially important.

"These were not unintelligent people," he says. "They knew that they faced a major catastrophe and they had to find a way to function in the wreckage. This also served to create a community where the priests and the people were very close together and you didn't have the option for the priests and the hierarchy to separate themselves from the trials and tribulations of ordinary people."

When Catholicism became officially respectable from the late 18th Century onwards,

he says, it did so in a context where "the Church was the only national institution that was sympathetic to the bulk of Irish people. The British state was in ways hostile or antagonistic to it, and a lot of British state institutions were not sympathetic to Catholics, so the Catholic Church was forced into becoming a welfare agency, forced into education, and did a tremendous job."

"The creativity of people like Edmund Ignatius Rice and Nano Nagle was amazing. They were meeting a social need at the time, and were hugely important in strengthening the backbone of Catholicism in the 19th Century because they created an education for poorer people which would have been denied them in other circumstances," he says.

Antagonism

Problems set in, he said, when the new State was established in which that antagonism – that tension as Pope Francis might put it – wasn't there, and there was an expectation that Church and State, as expressions of the same overwhelmingly Catholic people,

would sing from the same hymn sheet, with Church leaders expecting the people as whole simply to be obedient.

"You could say the Irish Church was immensely powerful in the period after independence, but I think it wasn't. I think it was weakening itself all the time, because it became a pious Church rather than a spiritual Church and a Church which was aligned with anti-intellectualism such that when the challenge came in the 1960s it just collapsed with incredible rapidity," Prof. Whelan says.

"I don't weep any tears for the end of that model of Church, but if you look at it long term, this was a collapse of a particular model of Catholicism, and out of that will emerge something different," he continues. "Because there's no cultures in the world yet which have found a way to be entirely secular because the questions that religion answers and the questions that spirituality addresses don't go away."

➊ Religion, Landscape & Settlement in Ireland is published by Four Courts Press.

Celebrating 140th Anniversary of the Knock Apparition

To pay homage and to invoke
Almighty God's Infinite gift to Mankind

HIS **MERCY**

KNOCK

Mercy Sunday

April 28th 2019

37th Year

Ceremonies

12.45p.m. - 5.00p.m.

DIVINE MERCY

DEVOTIONS

Fr. Mark Byrne, SOLT

ENQUIRIES ABOUT COACHES:

Dublin Shrine Office Tel.: 01-8733356

Dublin (before 8p.m.) Tel.: 01-2898549

Limerick Shrine Office Tel.: 061-419458

Knock Shrine Office Tel.: 094-9388100

Organised by the Director of the Eucharistic Apostolate of Atonement for Mercy

CHIEF CELEBRANT & HOMILIST
Most Rev. Archbishop Michael Neary, D.D.,
Archbishop of Tuam
CONCELEBRATED MASS AT 3PM



JESUS I TRUST IN YOU



There's a rich vein of Catholic writing in the modern Irish canon, **Greg Daly** is told

It is a curious thing, do you know," observes a friend of Stephen Dedalus, James Joyce's alter ego in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "how your mind is super-saturated in the religion in which you say you disbelieve."

For Notre Dame's Prof. Declan Kiberd, Ireland's major writers have tended to be much more deeply engaged with religion than might be commonly assumed, with Joyce being a textbook example of this.

"I wrote a book a few years ago called *Ulysses and Us* which basically argued that Joyce was a religious writer – extra-institutional of course – and that he was very critical of the Irish Catholic Church as an institution, mainly because of the way in which he felt that the priests in it didn't really believe what they said they believed," he says.

"He believed it as a child and took it seriously, and then discovered they didn't really. There's that scene in *Portrait* where the Dean of Studies and his father have a laugh behind his back about an unjust punishment he complains about – it's almost like a metaphor for his relations with Catholicism itself."

Deathbed

Noting how one of Joyce's sisters had described her brother as more deeply involved with Jesus than anyone she'd ever met, Prof. Kiberd says that in his book he tries to show how over *Portrait* and *Ulysses*, the young Stephen Dedalus, having refused his mother's wish that he kneel at her deathbed, or that he make his Easter duty, ends up actually confronting her in the brothel scene in *Ulysses*, and is then brought home by Leopold Bloom who gives him coffee and a bun.

"It's almost as if this



Prof. Declan Kiberd.



James Joyce.

young fellow who refused to make his Communion as an act of defiance against his mother and Catholicism, ends up receiving it in this unlikely form of Eucharist from a half-Jewish man," he says, adding that a great deal of modernism works that way with many modernist writers seeking to achieve a religious effect by other means.

Joyce "went to all the Easter ceremonies in Notre

Dame in Paris when he lived there as a hero to the hyper-modernists", Prof. Kiberd says. "He went the whole week, and he knew the whole Latin by heart, but he stood by the edge in the doorway, quietly uttering the words, but would not go up into the main part of the church."

Religion had played a key part in the Irish Revival of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, Prof. Kiberd points

out, with Protestant writers especially expressing a form of Protestant Christianity very different from the form which was ascendant in the North.

"O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars*, which would be his generic play, in which Bessie Burgess, in a play filled with men talking about sacrifice, actually does sacrifice her life at the window for a neighbour, while using all this Protestant rhetoric in her speechifying," he says as an example. "Or you've got Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*, whose main character is Christy – as in Christ – who is brought gifts by three people, who rides in triumph on an ass, and then becomes sacrificed so that the community can be bound together again."

Acknowledging that this is a very simple way of looking at these things, he says it's all clearly there, and points to Shaw's *St Joan* as a story

of a religious figure who bypasses the priests and bishops to communicate directly with God, helping to invent modern mysticism and also nationalism.

Employment

"They're all deeply religious texts when you start scratching beneath the surface, and some of them are very Protestant in their textuality," he says. "For instance, my old friend Vivian Mercier used to joke that the Irish Revival was held in order to provide employment for the idle children of Protestant rectors, and if you think about it, Yeats, Douglas Hyde, Synge all come from Protestant ecclesiastical families, so it's not surprising in a way that they might in their texts be trying to get a kind of another version of their religion."

This is very conscious on their part, he says, as tends to be the way with the great

writers.

"My reading of that would be that they're all south Irish Protestants, very aware that a different form of Protestantism is emerging in the north, which is much more rudimentary, much more evangelical, much more in one way simplifying of the code they'd been brought up in, and they are basically involved in a kind-of life-and-death debate with northern co-religionists about who is going to inherit Ireland," he says.

"They are putting in a strong bid for a kind of liberal southern Protestant – almost Bohemian – code, so obviously opposed to the business code which dominates the more Puritan forms of northern Protestantism."

With the Protestant characters of major writers of the Revival being so clear, he says, it's easy to miss a parallel Catholic strand.

"And I began to think that the Catholic strand had major roots in Newman because Joyce said Newman was the great prose stylist of the English language," he says. "His prose is slightly silken, if I can use that word about it, which is what I think appealed to

“They’re all deeply religious texts when you start scratching beneath the surface, and some of them are very Protestant in their textuality”



John Henry Newman by Sir John Everett Millais.

Joyce. It's sort of shiny and insinuating in a way that could almost be described and probably was by Kingsley and some of his enemies as slippery, but I think Joyce liked that element of it."

Observing that as a conversion narrative, Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* lies behind Joyce's *Portrait*, and that Joyce's incremental and accreted method of writing *Ulysses* echoed the *Apologia*, Prof. Kiberd notes how it's striking that when Joyce quotes Newman in the 'Oxen of the Sun' chapter of *Ulysses* he does so without parody.

"When he's doing Pepys or Dickens or any of the others, it's parodistic and over the top, but when he does Newman he does him level, just as he is. And I think for that reason it's kind of homage as a form of imitation," he says.

Joyce had been struck by Newman's idea in his lectures on the University that English has developed through a series of stylistic mutations, and that great writers in the early phases of a language had to be geniuses to achieve anything.

"Joyce probably was thinking most Irish people were using English for the first time in their lives around the time of Newman's lectures in the 1850s," Prof. Kiberd says. "Their use of English had the excitement of surprise and intense discovery – it would

be like African-Americans taking up the banjo or piano or violin and making jazz, this strange new sound, and Irish people were doing that with English as a new instrument of communication, the way Newman said Shakespeare, Chaucer, and the early users of English were geniuses because they were strong enough to use this new medium."

“When Wilde was locked up the first thing he asked for was the writings of Newman for prison reading”

Where Joyce differed strongly from Newman was in the Englishman's conviction that the English literary tradition was inherently Protestant and had stabilised as such.

"That's his real point of dissent: even though he's hugely a fan and follower of Cardinal Newman he doesn't agree with that," observes Prof. Kiberd. "Joyce argues that Chaucer is a rewrite of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, that Milton is a puritan transcript of the *Divine Comedy*, and that Shakespeare is an Italianate Englishman. In other words, Joyce believes that the three really great texts of English literature are Catholic, and rooted in the medieval Catholicism which Joyce

himself was so fascinated by, following his studies in UCD and Aquinas and so on."

Whether or not Joyce was right, one irony about Newman's conviction, Prof. Kiberd observes, was that "the university he founded and gave those founding lectures for in the 1850s would itself produce a whole string of Catholic writers".

Not that Newman's influence on Irish Catholic writing was limited to UCD, it should be added, with the Trinity College- and Oxford-educated Oscar Wilde being an important follower of Newman, something that's been effectively shown by Trinity's Dr Jarlath Killeen, author of *The Faiths of Oscar Wilde and The Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde*.

Experience

"He argues for instance something Joyce actually said about Wilde, that the sense of loss inherent in sin is the key to his art. 'Experience is the name a man gives to his mistakes' – *The Importance of Being Earnest* is about how you learn more from your errors than from your right moments. That's the *felix culpa*, the happy fault which can be happy if you're educated by your sin," Prof. Kiberd says.

"In fact when Wilde was locked up the first thing he asked for was the writings of Newman for prison reading, when the governor told him he could read, when he dis-

covered he had an intellectual prisoner on his hands," he adds.

Newman and Wilde were both accused of justifying lying in the service of a deeper point, he continues, with both men – like, later, Flann O'Brien – allowing false rumours to circulate uncorrected about themselves.

It's possible to map a kind of 'ludic' or playful tradition around these authors which suggests that the truth value of art is less important than the extent to which it nourishes the imagination and the spirit, Prof. Kiberd says. "This is what Newman says about the making of a gentleman in the arts degree: that it is literally not useful, that's its beauty. It's not utilitarian."

“They were all lay people, all from Catholic families, and they all had this idea that if you'd a strong belief in God you could afford to be playful about Faith and belief”

"This is Newman against the kind of efficiency and Gradgrindery of the Victorian period, and I'm saying that he opposed the spirit of that age, and that all people who opposed the spirit of the age capture it more fully than those who reflect it."

That opposition to use value passes on to Wilde who says that all art is useless, perfectly useless, and glories in this fact. It goes then to people like Flann O'Brien, the idea of a multiple self, which Newman cultivated and which Wilde believed in and Joyce too, that the self is not singular but multiple and playful."

This tradition was especially prominent among Catholic writers linked with UCD, it seems.

"It's in Hopkins as well, who of course worked in the university and could be arguably seen along with Joyce as the most playful punster in the English language and who had that same sense of art as fun, but then you go through those people who are called Catholic modernists who came out of UCD in the 1930s, people like Denis Devlin and Brian Coffey. Flann O'Brien most famously, I suppose, but even going back someone like Thomas MacDonagh was a bit like that," he says.

"I suppose what I'm saying is there's a kind of aesthetic philosophy whose most famous example in the world is Joyce, but whose source is

Newman, and there's lots of other figures around Joyce before and after, including Hopkins and Flann O'Brien who seem to fit this particular aesthetic."

It's a very different tradition of Catholic writing than has been distinctive of modern Britain, a literature of conversion similarly drawing from Newman but exemplified by such writers as G.K. Chesterton, Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene and Muriel Sparke, but it nonetheless points to Ireland having had a lay intelligentsia of Catholic writers.

"They were all lay people, all from Catholic families, and they all had this idea that if you'd a strong belief in God you could afford to be playful about Faith and belief," he says.

"You could hold it with a degree of not mockery, but playfulness, like medieval monks did making doodles in the margins of their poems or even medieval theology students who could be quite blasphemous because the belief itself was so strong it could survive the blasphemy, that sort of thing."

This tradition harks back to older Gaelic texts which are playful to the point of sacrilegious in their treatment of saints and the Church, he says, with this being possible because the faith itself was rock-solid.

"I think in a way that's how I see Joyce and those writers, as part of that inbuilt critique, rather than thinking he's gone agnostic or anti-Catholic. I really see him as part of a loyal internal opposition," he says.

Joyce's internal opposition seems to have in large part come from a suspicion that too many Irish priests were functionaries – even good-hearted ones – without a real belief in the Faith they purported to uphold, Prof. Kiberd explains.

"It does strike me that the Catholic Church, in the absence of economic justice in the 19th Century or even from the time of the Penal Laws had to function as a kind of welfare state for the community, and had to provide hospitals, education, etc., and while that was compassionate and necessary, by the time of the actual State being set up, it got them caught up in a series of unfortunate relationships from which they're still not recovering," he says.

Centuries from now, he speculates, historians might wonder not why did De Valera kiss Archbishop McQuaid's ring, but rather why did the priests allow the State to hijack the Church for

a secular project.

"This is what I mean by saying that Joyce believed in it more than they did," he says. "I think in the end he regarded a lot of the priests as kind of bureaucrats, you know, that priest who gives a retreat for businessmen in a story in *Dubliners* called 'Grace' and tells them to regard him as their spiritual accountant, and I think that what Joyce is saying is that these were almost like Kafka bureaucrats, decent men trying to do their best, but utterly in most cases devoid of spirit or vision or a sense of the otherworld, which I think Joyce did have."

"In other words, he's probably aware that they're powerful institutionally and that some of their power is a result of certain ideals they have, but they're deficient in terms of vision, most of them. Now, that wouldn't be true of all of them – you wouldn't want to generalise – but there's a sense in which they settled for power rather than authority, maybe, and for social compassion rather than vision."

Sacred objects

While Irish literature has been too often marked in recent decades by writers "posing as a persecuted minority, when often in fact they hold the reins of discursive power", he thinks that things may be changing, pointing to how the poetry of the Cardiff-based Ailbhe Darcy "fills her poems with what you might almost call lost objects of previous Catholicism, sacred objects which have been evacuated of meaning for this generation, but which meant something to your grandmother".

"She will reinvigorate these as a poet, as part of her poetry-writing act," he continues. "It's a kind of Catholicism which is unmoored from all the old repressive ethical denunciation of sexual licence etc., but is connected to something more visionary to do with the power of these images."

The ultimate exhibit of this, he says, is the playwright Conor McPherson, who he describes as both playful and extraordinarily visionary.

"He has a sacred heart lamp in that play *The Seafarer*, which actually ends with four slightly drunk, slightly hopeless middle-aged machomen, Nick Hornby readers, going off to an early Mass. I never thought," he says, "an award-winning, switched-on Irish play by maybe the main current playwright would end with the main characters on the stage going off to Mass."

Out&About

Castleblayney students know their pancakes!



◀ **MONAGHAN:** Pupils of Our Lady's Secondary School, Castleblayney, show off their pancake-making skills on Shrove Tuesday.

▼ **DOWN:** Pictured at the traditional Ash Wednesday Mass at St Mary's in Belfast to launch the Trocaire Lenten campaign are (l-r): Fr Gerald Doyle (St Mary's), Siobhan Hanley (Head of Region Trocaire NI), Bishop Noel Treanor (Bishop of Down and Connor), Martina O'Donoghue (Programme Manager Trocaire Uganda), Martin Ramsey (St Mary's). Photo: David O'Hare



DUBLIN: Second class pupils from Naomh Pádraig, Ballyroan, listening to the story of the Prodigal Son in preparation for their First Reconciliation.



DUBLIN: Over 2,500 secondary school students take part in the live Emmanuel concert series at Dublin's Helix Theatre, with 66 schools taking part.



ENGLAND: Olivia (Ollie) Bennett Windsor, Berkshire, is presented with the Gold Pope John Paul II Award by Derry's Fr Paul Farren, Director of the Pope John Paul II Award. Also pictured are Ollie's parents Tania and Peter.

Edited by Colm Fitzpatrick
colm@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



▲ **CLARE:** Bishop Fintan Monahan congratulates students of Scoil Chríost Rí National School, Cloughleigh, for celebrating their Confirmation day.

◀ **ENGLAND:** Archbishop Eamon Martin stands with youth volunteers of the Armagh Diocesan Youth Commission at Flame, the biggest Catholic youth event in England and Wales.



KILDARE: Pupils of St Conleth's Infant School, Newbridge, try their hand at making pancakes in celebration of Shrove Tuesday.

LAOIS: Bishop Denis Nulty meets Confirmation candidates from Emo National School, Portlaoise, as they take part in the 'You Shall Be My Witness' Preparation Programme.



KERRY: Tralee's Fr Padraig Walsh stands with parishioners on Ash Wednesday.

ARMAGH

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

The Prayer and Spirituality Commission to hold a day of prayer for all on Saturday, March 23, in the Franciscan Missionary Community Mount Oliver, Ballymascanlon and repeated on Saturday, April 6 in Kilmore Parish Pastoral Centre, Stonebridge, beginning at 10am.

Armagh Parish Holy Spirit Prayer Group are hosting the Life in the Spirit Seminars in The St Vincent de Paul Centre, Chapel Lane, Armagh. March 19: Fr Peter McAnenly on 'Receiving Gods gifts'; March 26: Fr Gerry Campbell on 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit'; April 2: Patricia Kelly on 'Growth in the Spirit'; April 9: Archbishop Eamon Martin will speak on 'Transformation in Christ'.

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 9.30 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, 8am-12pm.

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 8pm-9pm.

Sunday afternoon Lenten services, beginning on March 10, at St John Vianney Parish, Ardlea Road.

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

Holy Hour to be held in St John the Baptist, Clontarf, on March 17, from 7.30-8.30pm, led by Fr Martin Hogan.

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. There is also a St Peregrine Novena Mass in Holy Cross Church, Lisnaskea on Tuesday nights at 7pm. www.churchservices.tv/lisnaskea

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

GALWAY

Day of Prayer, Reflection and Healing Service at Emmanuel House, Clonfert led by Eddie Stones. Saturday, April 6 at 10.30am.

Bring lunch.

KILKENNY

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

LIMERICK

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

St Saviour's Dominican Church will be offering Bishop Barron's *Catholicism* Series at the Church on Thursday at 1.30pm and Fridays at 7.30pm weekly.

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 RoI.

MAYO

The 24th annual Eucharistic Loretto Vigil in honour of the Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord takes place in the parish church at Knock Shrine on Monday, March 25, from 8.30pm to 12.30am. Chief celebrant will be Fr Brendan Walsh SAC.

MEATH

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

Evening of Prayer, Reflection and Healing Service led by Eddie Stones at Parish Church of St Patrick and St Seachnall, Dunshaughlin. Tuesday, March 19 at 7pm.

Franciscan Sisters of Renewal invite Catholics to pray together for Ireland at St Patrick's Parish Church, Slane, on March 18, beginning at 5pm. Mass to be celebrated by Bishop Tom Deenihan followed by adoration.

OFFALY

Clonmacnois Prayer Vigil in Cluain Chiarain Prayer Centre every third Friday. Mass at 9pm. Adoration and prayers follow until 2.10am. Enquiries Dave: 085 7746763.

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

Abstain from using phone during Lent, bishop tells youth

● In a Lenten message to young Catholics in Bangladesh, Cardinal Patrick D'Rozario of Dhaka called on them to get closer to Jesus Christ and to refrain from using their mobile phones on every Friday leading to Easter Sunday.

"My dear young people, during this Lent I appeal to you for a unique sacrifice. I request you to abstain from using mobile phones from 6am to 6pm every Friday starting from Ash Wednesday. During this time, you can try to strengthen your relationship with each other and with Jesus Christ," Cardinal D'Rozario said.

"I know, my dear young friends, you love your mobile phone, but it should not be more than your love for each other and for Jesus Christ who saved mankind from sins," he told more than 3,000 faithful.

Catholic conference supports death penalty repeal

● As a measure to repeal Colorado's death penalty passed at a Senate committee last week, the Colorado Catholic Conference has expressed support for the bill.

The bill passed the Senate Judiciary Committee 3-2 along party lines. Before the bill is sent to the Senate for a full debate, the Colorado Catholic Conference encouraged the people to call or email their elected officials.

"We have always been staunch supporters of repealing the death penalty here in Colorado, and all of the bishops have spoken very publicly about the need to repeal and abolish the death penalty," Jenny Kraska, executive director for the Colorado Catholic Conference said.

Church leaders back Filipino anti-coal demonstration

● A Catholic bishop in the central Philippines has expressed support for a campaign against the building of a coal-fired power plant in Negros Occidental province.

Bishop Gerry Alminaza of San Carlos said local church leaders are giving their full backing for the move, initiated by a youth group.

"As our youth said, we will stand against this because this is about our future," said the prelate on Ash Wednesday.

The group Youth for Climate Hope staged an anti-coal demonstration outside the provincial capitol building on March 6 as part of activities to observe the Church's Year of the Youth.

The provincial government has also expressed its commitment to fight global warming by pursuing "clean and renewable energy projects" by opposing the establishment of coal-fired power plants.

European bishops to meet head of parliament elections

● Delegates of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union will gather in Brussels on 13-15 March to participate in the 2019 COMECE Spring Plenary Assembly, with the announced participation of Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission.

From May 23-26, all EU citizens across the continent will have to elect the new members of the European Parliament. The results will condition the political decisions impacting our day to day lives for the next five years.

In view of this crucial democratic appointment, COMECE Bishops will exchange on how to better promote dialogue as the main tool to face the challenges, uncertainties and transformations impacting on the EU institutions and on its future.

Catholic charity to implement Mexican kidney dialysis clinic

● In response to the growing number of patients with kidney conditions in Guadalajara, Mexico, the Catholic charitable agency Caritas is implementing plans to set up a kidney dialysis clinic in the region. Caritas of Guadalajara currently has the donated office for the clinic, but around €365,580 is still needed to remodel the facility and purchase dialysis machines.

Once set up, the kidney dialysis clinic is expected to serve 180 patients a week.

Papal prayers for victims of Ethiopian plane crash

Pope Francis has offered prayers for the 157 people killed in an Ethiopian Airlines plane crash on Sunday last, which included a priest, a religious sister and four staff members with Catholic Relief Services.

A telegram from Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin said that "His Holiness Pope Francis offers prayers for the deceased from various countries and comments their souls to the mercy of Almighty God".

"Pope Francis sends heartfelt condolences to their families, and upon all who mourn this tragic loss he invokes the divine blessings of consolation and strength," said Cardinal Parolin.

Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 crashed just minutes after taking off from Addis Ababa on March 10. Everyone aboard the plane, which was headed to Nairobi, Kenya, was killed.

The 157 victims included seven crew members and one security officials, as well as 19 UN staff members. Those killed came from 35 countries, with the largest number from Kenya. The cause of the crash is still under investigation.

Catholic Relief Services



A tyre of the Ethiopian Airlines flight ET 302 is seen near Bishoftu, Ethiopia. The crash killed 157 people from 35 countries. Photo: CNS

released a statement on Monday, March 11, saying, "It is with heavy hearts that we share the news that four members of our staff were killed" in the crash.

"All four individuals were Ethiopian nationals travelling to Nairobi to attend a training on our behalf," CRS said.

Sintayehu Aymeku had worked for CRS/Ethiopia since January 2017. He was first employed as a senior procurement officer in the administration department, and recently began a new position as procurement manager in the supplies chain department. He was a husband and a father of three daughters.

Sara Chalachew worked for CRS/Ethiopia since January of 2010, first as a commodity accountant and then as

senior commodity accounts officer in the logistics department. Since December, she was the senior project officer for grants.

Mulusew Alemu worked for CRS/Ethiopia since May of 2018, as a finance officer, project grant accountant, and senior finance officer.

New position

Getnet Alemayehu had worked for CRS/Ethiopia since August of 2009, first as a procurement officer and then as senior procurement officer in the administration department. In December, he began a new position as senior project officer in the department of procurement and compliance. He was married with one daughter.

Catholic Relief Services

said that while mourning, they intend to "celebrate the lives of these colleagues and the selfless contributions they made to our mission", in spite of the risks associated with humanitarian work and offered prayers for all who had lost loved ones in the crash.

Fr George Kageche Mukua CMM, a member of the Congregation of Mariannhill Missionaries, was a passenger on the flight. The 40-year-old missionary had been ordained a priest in 2017.

Sr Florence Wangari, a Notre Dame de Angers Sister in her early 30s, was also on board, on her way to Nairobi to renew her passport. She was a missionary nurse in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Church must 'repent and renew' in wake of scandal, Pope says

The clerical abuse scandals have caused everyone in the Catholic Church "pain and unbearable suffering", Pope Francis said, but it also is a call to repentance and the renewal of the Church.

"Our humble repentance, which remains silent between our tears for the monstrosity of sin and the unfathomable greatness of God's forgiveness, this, this humble repentance is the beginning of our holiness," the Pope told priests from the Diocese of Rome.

Pope Francis' annual Lenten meeting with the priests on March 7 began with

a penitential prayer service and individual Confessions at the Basilica of St John Lateran, the cathedral of the Diocese of Rome.

In a long, impromptu talk on priesthood and forgiveness, the Pope acknowledged the clerical sexual abuse crisis and the particular way it had impacted priests.

"Sin disfigures us," he said, and it is "humiliating" when "we or one of our brother priests or bishops falls into the bottomless abyss of vice, corruption or, worse still, of a crime that destroys the

lives of others", like the sexual abuse of minors does.

Pope Francis said he is convinced the abuse scandal is ultimately the work of the devil.

"Still, do not be discouraged," he told the priests. "The Lord is purifying his bride (the Church) and is converting us all to himself. He is putting us to the test so that we would understand that, without him, we are dust."

God is working "to restore the beauty of his bride, surprised in flagrant adultery", the Pope said.

Education of female refugees vital, says new report

A new report released just two days before International Women's Day has stressed the urgency of making sure refugee girls and young women receive an education.

The report, "Her Future: Challenges and Recommendations to Increase Education for Refugee Girls" by

Jesuit Refugee Service/USA is based on the observations of JRS workers around the world and especially in refugee communities where they provide educational services.

It points out that although girls' access to education worldwide has received more attention in recent years, ref-

ugee girls are still only half as likely to be enrolled in secondary school as boys.

"In countries affected by conflict, girls are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than boys," the report notes, adding that girls make up half of the 7.4 million school-age refugees but face "dispropor-

tionate challenges in accessing and sustaining their education".

In the primary grades, the student mix of boys and girls is about equal, but this shifts as the students get older when girls drop out at a higher rate than boys.



Edited by Colm Fitzpatrick
colm@irishcatholic.ie

This is how to do it



Basamat Alnoor Jakolo Aldabi teaches school in the Kaya Refugee Camp in Maban County, South Sudan. Photo: CNS

Catholic prelates aghast at 'unspeakable' suffering in Syria

Catholic prelates in Syria, accompanied by Philippine Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, president of Caritas Internationalis, visited the eastern Ghouta region outside of Damascus and saw "unspeakable suffering".

"In every face, mostly the children" was a "very confused" expression, Syriac Catholic Patriarch Ignace Joseph III Younan said. The visit was part of the annual session of the Council of Heads of Catholic Churches in Syria.

Patriarch Younan said the overall reaction of the prelates while visiting Douma, the major city of eastern Ghouta, "was deep sadness and repulsion" in seeing "the horrible destruction of that region, held hostage for such a long time by radical Muslims".

Patriarch Younan noted that "evi-

dently, this visit had an impact on Cardinal Tagle, who expressed his deep grief in front of so much suffering", adding that the cardinal compared the scenes to an earthquake or typhoon.

"Besides the humanitarian assistance so much needed and the urgent help to rebuild their city, it is mostly and, first of all, hope and dignity that this courageous community was looking for," the patriarch added.

Outreach

In addition to Patriarch Younan and Cardinal Tagle, participants in the meeting and the Ghouta outreach included Cardinal Mario Zenari, apostolic nuncio to Syria; Melkite Catholic Patriarch Joseph Absi, who hosted the council session at the patriarchate in Damascus; and Cath-

olic bishops of Syria.

Ghouta, the last rebel bastion east of the capital city of Damascus, was secured by the Syrian government in April 2018. At one point, some 400,000 people were under siege in Ghouta, according to the UN. It was the site of alleged chemical attacks.

Patriarch Younan characterised the suffering in the city as "unspeakable".

"It is shameful that the so-called free world was accomplice to that disaster for no reason than satisfying the greed and opportunism of its politicians. All fake news of the agglomerate media, like the show play of chemical attacks attributed to the Syrian soldiers, were based on lies, in order to keep the fighting going on," Patriarch Younan said.

Doctors to be 'silenced' over assisted suicide survey

Four British doctors are attempting to take their professional body to the High Court over an assisted suicide survey they believe is illegal.

The doctors, two of whom are Catholic, say they believe the Royal College of Physicians has acted "unfairly and unlawfully" by setting a supermajority of 60% of votes to retain the college's existing opposition to assisted suicide.

The college has said it will adopt a policy of neutrality if the 60% threshold is not met. But the four doctors said in a statement – sent by email – that the threshold would be impossible to meet because there were three questions in the survey instead of two.

The last survey on assisted suicide that was conducted by the college – carried out in 2014 using two questions

– found that 58% of members opposed the practice. The four doctors applied for a judicial review last week on the grounds of "irrationality" and a "breach of legitimate expectation" in the way the poll had been conducted.

One of the four, Dr David Randall, a London-based renal medicine specialist, said: "The public has a right to know what doctors think

about this important issue.

"Going neutral would silence the voice of the majority of doctors who oppose the legalisation of assisted suicide," he said, adding that neutrality would provide tacit support to a campaign to change the law, which fewer than a third of RCP members supported in the most recent poll on this issue.

Vatican roundup

Ash Wednesday reminds us of the world to come, Francis says

Marked with ashes, Christians set off on a Lenten journey where they strive to leave behind everything that will turn to dust and instead focus on drawing closer to God and the promise of eternal life, Pope Francis has said.

In his homily at the Dominican-run Basilica of Santa Sabina last week, the Pope said the Old Testament fast was announced with a trumpet blast: "It is a loud sound that seeks to slow down our life, which is so fast-paced, yet often directionless. It is a summons to stop, to focus on what is essential, to fast from the unnecessary things that distract us. It is a wake-up call for the soul."

Moving back toward the Lord requires moving past things that often distract or derail a person's journey, he said, listing: "thinking only of feeling good, solving some problems and having fun", or the search for wealth, the thirst for power or the accumulation of things.

"The small mark of ash, which we will receive, is a subtle yet real reminder that of the many things occupying our thoughts, that we chase after and worry about every day, nothing will remain," he said. "Earthly realities fade away like dust in the wind."

Vatican prays for victims of tornado

Pope Francis sent his prayers and condolences to Alabama last week after devastating tornadoes over the weekend killed 23 people and left dozens of survivors without homes.

"Deeply saddened to learn of the tragic loss of life and the injuries caused by the tornado which struck Alabama in recent days, His Holiness Pope Francis expresses heartfelt solidarity with all affected by this natural disaster," a telegram sent on behalf of the Pope stated.

Pope Francis prays for "healing and consolation" for the injured and those

who grieve, and that "Almighty God may grant eternal rest to the dead, especially the children," the cable continued.

Victims of the storm include four children aged six to 10. Between three and five tornadoes with winds measuring as high as 170mph touched down in eastern Alabama, and travelled 70 miles.

"Upon all who are suffering the effects of this calamity, the Holy Father invokes the Lord's blessings of peace and strength," Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin wrote on behalf of Pope Francis.

Global number of priests on decline for first time in almost a decade

The percentage of Catholics in the world has remained steady, while the number of priests has decreased for the first time in almost a decade, according to Vatican statistics.

Meanwhile, the numbers of bishops, permanent deacons, lay missionaries and catechists have all increased, it said.

At the end of 2017, the worldwide Catholic population exceeded 1.3 billion, which continued to be about 17.7% of the world's population, said a statement by the Vatican press office.

The statement reported a handful of the statistics in the Statistical Yearbook of the Church, which reported worldwide Church figures as of December 31, 2017.

According to the statistical yearbook, the number of Catholics increased in every continent. But while that growth in Africa and the Americas kept pace with their respective region's population growth, Asia showed a 1.5% increase in the number of Catholics while the region's population grew less than 1%.

For the first time since 2010, the Vatican statement said, the total number of priests – diocesan and religious order – around the world decreased, going from 414,969 in 2016 to 414,582 in 2017.

Ordinations of diocesan priests continued to decline slowly from 6,577 in 2012 to 5,815 in 2017.

SPECIAL OFFER

Spring

Sale

50% OFF

VALID UNTIL MARCH 31ST

**How to Defend the Faith
Without Raising Your Voice**
Michael Kelly and Austen Ivereigh



How to Defend the Faith Without Raising Your Voice answers some of the most common criticisms of Catholicism and helps Catholics and non-Catholics alike to understand where the Church is coming from on controversial topics like abortion, euthanasia, same-sex marriage and the use of condoms in the fight against HIV.

WAS €14.99 **€7.49**

Padre Pio of Pietralcina
Fr Francesco Napolitano



Written by Fr Francesco Napolitano, who knew and worked with Padre Pio, this biography brings you up-close to an extraordinary mystic's humble beginnings and recounts stories of the obstacles he overcame, the people he touched, and the stigmata he bore.

WAS €14.99 **€7.49**

The Irish Benedictines
Eds. Martin Browne OSB & Colman O Clabhair OSB



These essays celebrate and explore the stories of these Irish Benedictines over a period of 1400 years across Dark Age Europe, through Reformation England, war-torn Europe and into modern Africa. In exile and persecution they established centres of learning and refuge; returning to Ireland they continue to devote themselves to these activities, seeking to glorify God in all things.

WAS €29.99 **€14.99**

Pope Francis in Ireland
Commemorative Souvenir



A collaborative souvenir coffee-table book from *The Irish Catholic* and Columba Books which provides a photographic record and reports from award-winning journalists of Pope Francis' visit to Ireland and the World Meeting of Families events from around the country.

WAS €24.99 **€12.49**

Trinity: A Story of Deep Delight
Anne Marie Mongoven



Sr Anne Marie Mongoven's book delves into the mysteries of the Trinity through investigation of dynamic literary images and reveals what the love between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit can teach us about loving each other and ourselves.

WAS €14.99 **€7.49**

Let Nothing Trouble You
Eugene McCaffrey OCD



Let Nothing Trouble You explores the remarkable story of St Teresa of Avila and the influence of this charming and witty woman. Teresa of Avila invites us to go cheerfully about our tasks. Her words of wisdom reveal a woman of deep spirituality, fully human and fully alive.

WAS €9.99 **€4.99**

Treasured and Transformed
Daniel O'Leary



By recognising divine beauty inside you, all around you, you will begin to perceive yourself and the world in a shockingly delightful way. You will discern the love and meaning in all your experiences. Instead of being diminished by your suffering, your vision will become profound and wise.

WAS €14.99 **€7.49**

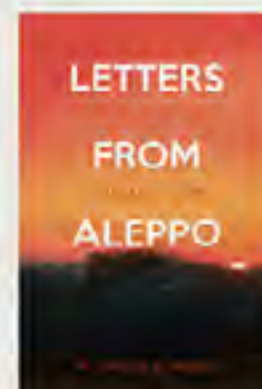
Already Within
Daniel O'Leary



This is a collection of Daniel O'Leary's contributions to *The Tablet* over the years. They are put together in this compendium in response to numerous requests from the journal's thousands of readers. The reflections bring a huge mailbag of comments about O'Leary's writing, challenging, compelling, thought-provoking, consoling, prophetic and prayerful.

WAS €14.99 **€5.99**

Letters from Aleppo
Fr Ibrahim Alsabagh



A day-by-day account of the unbelievable story of Fr Ibrahim Alsabagh, a Franciscan friar and parish priest living in Aleppo, Syria, during the Syrian Civil War. Written as bombs fell around him, the story tells of the tragedies of the Syrian people, but also tells of their unwavering faith and hope in the midst of death.

WAS €14.99 **€7.49**

Tomorrow's Parish
Donal Harrington



This book is for anyone who has an interest in the future of the Church. It will be of particular importance to those involved in parish ministry and parish pastoral councils, offering a fundamental resource for their formation and organisation in a new context.

WAS €14.99 **€7.49**

Beautiful Thoughts Beautiful Minds
John Scally



In our increasingly busy lives, this is a book which causes us to pause and ponder. It features a unique mix of inspirational fables and parables; heart-warming original stories and positive true-life stories guaranteed to lift the spirits. All royalties are being donated to Epilepsy Ireland.

WOS €14.99 **€7.49**

Faith Questions
Eds Brendan Leahy & Declan Marmion



In this short book Bishop Brendan Leahy and Fr Declan Marmion, amongst others, offer a series of answers to some of the most commonly asked questions on faith, including: What is Christian Faith? Are science and religion compatible? Why go to mass? What about women in the church? Did Jesus have faith?

WOS €9.99 **€4.99**

Following the Pink Ribbon Path
Mary Redmond Ussher



Following the Pink Ribbon Path is a journal of personal reflections, beautifully-crafted prayers, poems and inspiring quotes by Mary Redmond Ussher (1950-2015) who was a distinguished employment lawyer, academic and social entrepreneur, and founder of The Irish Hospice Foundation and The Wheel.

WOS €14.99 **€7.49**

Harvesting Hope with Anthony de Mello
John Callanan SJ



This is an examination of the areas of hope and fear which can come into our lives from the stresses and strains of our life today. Using the wisdom of one of the finest spiritual teachers of modern times, Fr John Callanan outlines how to deal with hopes unfulfilled and disillusionment.

WOS €14.99 **€7.49**

Medjugorje, The Last Apparition
Wayne Weible



Supernatural apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary have been occurring daily for 33 years in a remote mountain village in Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Medjugorje: The Last Apparition* takes you beyond the basics of the most important event happening in the world today. It presents a close examination of what will be the last apparition of the Mother of Jesus and how it will change the world forever.

WOS €14.99 **€7.49**

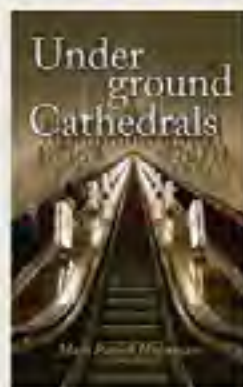
Mindful Meditations for Every Day
Sr Stan



Mindful Meditations for Every Day carries the reader through the calendar year, with daily meditations, mindfulness exercises and scripture for each month. The book can act both as a guide to the practice of mindfulness and as a source of daily inspiration.

WOS €12.99 **€6.49**

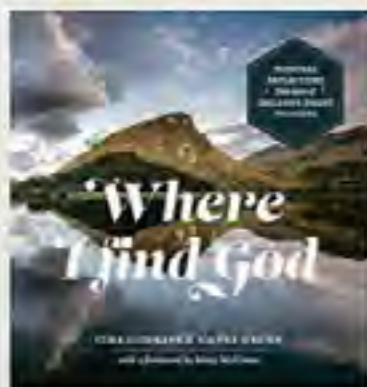
Underground Cathedrals
Mark Patrick Hederman



Mark Patrick Hederman offers a visionary and very stimulating image of how things might be if only we all listen to the voices of artists in our midst. He argues that the people who are carrying out the work of the Holy Spirit are mostly artists because in destitute times we have to rely on art to show us the way forward.

WOS €14.99 **€7.49**

Where I Find God
Cora Guinnane & Joanne O'Brien



Where I Find God is a thought-provoking book where many of Ireland's finest thinkers share where they have found, and continue to find, the Divine in their lives. The book includes contributions by Mary McAleese, Brent Pope, Sr Stan and Fr Peter McVerry amongst others.

WOS €24.99 **€12.49**

To order please fill in the form below and send it to
Columba Books, 23 Merrion Square North, D2, D02 XE02.
Alternatively you can
call us on 01 687 4096 or email sales@columba.ie

MY ORDER (Please put the quantity before each book)

- ___ Trinity: A Story of Deep Delight, Anne Marie Mongoven - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ Already Within, Daniel O'Leary - Price (was €11.99) **NOW €5.99***
- ___ Beautiful Thoughts Beautiful Minds, John Scally - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ Faith Questions - Eds Brendan Leahy & Declan Marmion - Price (was €9.99) **NOW €4.99***
- ___ Following the Pink Ribbon Path - Mary Redmond Ussher - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ Harvesting Hope with Anthony de Mello, John Callanan SJ - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ How to Defend the Faith, Michael Kelly and Austen Ivereigh - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ The Irish Benedictines, Eds. Martin Browne & Colmán O Clabaigh - Price (was €29.99) **NOW €14.99***
- ___ Let Nothing Trouble You, Eugene McCaffrey OCD - Price (was €9.99) **NOW €4.99***
- ___ Letters from Aleppo, Fr Ibrahim Alsabagh - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ Medjugorje - The Last Apparition, Wayne Weible - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ Mindful Meditations for Every Day, Sr Stan - Price (was €12.99) **NOW €6.49***
- ___ Padre Pio of Pietralcina, Fr Francesco Napolitano - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ Pope Francis in Ireland - Commemorative Souvenir - Price (was €24.99) **NOW €12.49***
- ___ Treasured and Transformed, Daniel O'Leary - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ Tomorrow's Parish, Donal Harrington - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ Underground Cathedrals, Mark Patrick Hederman - Price (was €14.99) **NOW €7.49***
- ___ Where I Find God, Cora Guinnane & Joanne O'Brien - Price (was €24.99) **NOW €12.49***

MY DETAILS

Name _____
Address _____
Phone Number _____
Email _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT

- ☐ PAY BY: Cheque/Postal order for € _____ payable to: **Columba Books**
- ☐ PAY BY CREDIT CARD: Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Debit ☐
- Card No: _____
- Exp date: ____ / ____ CVV No: ____

Discover more titles at
www.currachbooks.com and www.columbabooks.com



Letter from Rome



Elise Harris

This year's Roman celebration of International Women's Day happened to fall in a moment when Pope Francis has been drawing some fire over women's issues, in part for using allegedly sexist language during a recent sex abuse summit and also for a perceived lack of progress on his repeated vows of female empowerment in the Church.

At a couple of high-profile Roman events for Women's Day, however, leading women from the secular world as well as some of the highest-ranking women in the Vatican all had broadly positive things to say about Francis and the Church.

In one corner of Rome, famed Australian journalist Geraldine Doogue went to bat for major institutions, including the Catholic Church, insisting that while improvements and internal reforms may be needed, they're fundamental to a well-functioning society.

At a separate event, three of the highest-ranking women in the Vatican said they have seen progress, praising Francis for having a keen grasp on the issue and for taking concrete steps in the right direction.

In comments to journalists after a March 8 panel marking Women's Day, Barbara Jatta, who in January 2017 was named director of the Vatican Museums, said that while providing more leadership for women in the Catholic Church is "complex", her overall experience "is more than positive".

Conflict

A wife, mother and accomplished art historian, Ms Jatta said she has never felt a conflict between her family and her career, which has for the most part been spent in and around the Vatican.

"There's talk of misogyny, but that's because it was a completely masculine environment, so there wasn't the attitude of having a professional relationship with women," she said, noting that when she quit working for the Vatican library in 1996, this attitude was already changing.

Ms Jatta spoke at a panel organised by the Opus Dei-run Pontifical University of the Holy Cross as part of an annual course for journalists covering the Vatican. She was joined by Gabriella Gambino, undersecretary for the 'life' section of the Vatican department for Laity, Family and



A woman in Berlin on International Women's Day. Photo: CNS

Women inside and outside the Vatican sing the praises of Francis

Life, and Natasa Govekar, head of the theological-pastoral office of the Vatican's communications department.

Ms Jatta said that in the 30 years she has spent working in the Vatican, "the role of women has radically changed". That's due in part to changes in society as a whole, she said, but she credited Francis with the increased presence of women in leadership roles, saying he "has in some way perceived (the changes) in our society and in our times".

Similarly, Ms Gambino praised Francis for comments about women he made during his recent summit on child protection, which she helped to organise.

After a speech by Linda Ghisoni, also an undersecretary in Gambino's department, Francis said that to invite a woman to speak at such a high-profile event was not an act of "ecclesial feminism", which he said realistically boils down to "machismo with a skirt", but was rather a moment when he said he heard "the Church speak of itself".

Though women in some quarters took the Pope's comments as a tad patronising, Ms Gambino said they "immediately resonated" for her.

"I am not a theologian or a canonist," she said, but "I felt that he was expressing the true

presence of women in the Church... he was vocalising what I have always felt as a woman of faith, as a woman who today works in the Church and as the Church".

Both Ms Jatta and Ms Govekar voiced agreement, saying Francis' words helped clarify the "mistaken way" in which the discussion of women in the Church is at times viewed.

“It could be time for lay people ‘to step up, whether or not we’re invited to’”

Ms Gambino said that in her view, for the Vatican to function properly men and women must work together in collaboration, not competition.

"The problem of women in the Church will not be solved by the redistribution of men," she said, "but it indicates a dutiful understanding of how to give space to the feminine originality" which St John Paul II called "the feminine genius", and which she said enriches the life of the Church while respecting the different perspectives men and women offer.

Similarly, Ms Govekar said that woman "was created to bring man to relation", and to speak of women in the Church means trying to "illuminate men and women

together".

At another seminar organised by the Australian embassy to the Holy See, famed broadcaster in print, radio and television Geraldine Doogue, a long-time anchor for ABC Australia who's Catholic, spoke of the rise of women in the professional sphere in Australia and the value of large institutions, including the Catholic Church, which in recent years has suffered major blows to its public image due to widespread clerical abuse scandals.

Ms Doogue said "it's been an exceptional few years" for Australia, which she said has been "a bit convulsed" with scandals involving several major institutions, including the Church, banks and healthcare.

Yet despite the problems with big institutions, Ms Doogue said "they're better than the alternatives on offer", and questioned how to improve institutions "without undermining them".

"Like death and taxes, we think they'll always be there," she said, noting that institutions are often scrutinised for their faults while the benefits they offer are taken for granted.

With much of global society becoming generally mistrustful of institutions, Ms Doogue challenged attendees to take another look, arguing that they're "crucial to

opportunities for people at all levels of society", including schools, universities, hospitals, the judicial system, government and even garbage pickup.

She insisted that institutions serve communities with a "forward-thinking view", and said her experience working in large media outlets – where, she said, she had the opportunity to succeed, fail and try again with role models encouraging her along the way – is an example of how institutions can provide room for people to grow and develop with the needed resources.

"I would not be here if I'd started out in a more ruthless environment," she said.

“Three of the highest-ranking women in the Vatican said they have seen progress”

Speaking of recent news that Cardinal George Pell, former head of the Vatican's Secretariat for the Economy and the highest-ranking prelate in Australia, was found guilty of historical sexual abuse, Ms Doogue said the time that's elapsed since the announcement has been "two of the worst weeks in my life".

"I think it's extremely demoralising for the Australian Church", which has been rocked not only by the Pell verdict but by years of investigation into abuse allegations by Australia's Royal Commission, tasked with looking into institutional instances of sexual abuse, and which recently recommended that Catholic priests be required by law to break the Seal of Confession if they are told about abuse.

Speaking of how a reconciliation between Church and state in Australia might be possible, Ms Doogue said that in her view, it could be time for lay people "to step up, whether or not we're invited to, and no matter how we step up".

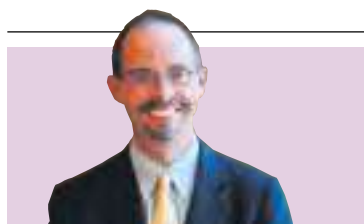
She noted how the number of enrolments in Catholic schools has increased, despite the scandals. Yet the number of regular churchgoers continues to drop, she said, recalling how a colleague had used the image of falling off a cliff.

"Although it's not quite that bad, it's pretty serious," she said, adding that the image of the Church in Australia "is under great, great stress", and it's time for some "egg-breaking moments" to seek solutions.

"I'm not talking about breaking doors, I'm just talking about keeping the show on the road in a sense," Ms Doogue said, adding that to do this will be "quite a challenge, and it's a big one for all of us to look at, because it is a crisis".

Elise Harris is Senior Correspondent at Cruxnow.com

Opening archives won't settle debate over Pius XII and the Holocaust



John L. Allen Jr

Whatever else Pope Francis' decision on Monday, March 4 to open the archives from the pontificate of Pius XII in 2020 may mean, there's one preliminary conclusion that seems take-it-to-the-bank, no-doubt-about-it, slam-dunk certain.

Here it is: opening the archives will not – indeed, by definition, cannot – settle the historical controversy about Pius XII and his alleged silence during the Holocaust.

That's because the debate is counter-factual, pivoting not on what Pius did or didn't do, but rather what he should have done.

Should Pius XII have publicly denounced Hitler? Should he have threatened to excommunicate anyone involved in the mechanism of the Holocaust? Should he have pressured the Allies to liberate Nazi extermination camps earlier? Should he have offered himself in ransom for German prisoners in Rome after the 1943 occupation of the city, or come up with some other dramatic gesture to register disapproval?

Answers to those questions involve subjective judgments about what would have produced the best results in a complicated set of circumstances – whether fortune would have favoured the bold, or discretion was the better part of valour – and, alas, there's no 'smoking gun' in anyone's archives that will provide conclusive resolution one way or the other.

Moreover, the debate over Pius XII is also a moral one, and as anyone who's ever taken moral philosophy or basic logic knows, one cannot deduce an "ought" from an "is". You can pile up all the historical facts you like, but in themselves they won't tell you what Pius or anyone else ought to have done.

Accusation

By now, the basic data points about Pius XII and the Holocaust are wearily familiar to anyone who's followed the back-and-forth since 1963, when Rolf Hochhuth published his play *The Deputy* and thereby launched the accusation that the pontiff was complicit, at least through his silence, in the mass extermination of Jews.

Prior to that point, it's well-established that Pius XII enjoyed broad admiration for his leadership during the war years, including within the Jewish community. In 1958, for instance, then-Israeli



Prime Minister Golda Meir famously wrote: "During the 10 years of Nazi terror, when our people went through the horrors of martyrdom, the Pope raised his voice to condemn the persecutors and commiserate with their victims."

After *The Deputy*, however, a more critical reading of Pius' record began to take hold, which in turn sparked an increasingly polemical body of apologetics seeking to defend the Pope. The exchange came to be known as "the Pius war", and while it's slowed in recent years, there's little indication that the underlying sentiments on either side have altered.

Proof that fresh data won't really change much comes from the irony that positions about Pius XII hardened at precisely the same time the Vatican was providing unprecedented access to its records. St Paul VI ordered the archives from the war years made public, which happened in a series of 12 volumes published between 1964 and 1981. St John Paul II authorised an additional release

of records in 2004 concerning prisoners of war.

Given that all those records have already been made public and put under a scholarly microscope, most experts are sceptical that anything new will come to light in 2020 that will really alter the calculus. (Granted, critics suspected the Vatican had "sanitised" those materials, but who's to say they won't lodge the same complaint this time?)

“The opening of the archives also may help clear the path for Pius XII's sainthood cause”

"Lovers of scoops may be a little disappointed," said French Church historian Philippe Chenaux, who teaches at Rome's Lateran University.

"It's not to be expected that [the material to be opened in 2020] will cause great changes in the interpretation of Pius XII and his attitude during the war," Mr Chenaux said.

That's not to say that the new material won't be of keen historical interest, but likely in other areas. As Mr Chenaux pointed out, the late 1940s and 1950s have long been a bit of a "black hole" for researchers – there are abundant studies of the war years and of the run-up to the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), but relatively little in between.

Movement

Those years produced some of Pius's greatest teaching documents, such as 1947's *Mediator Dei*, on the liturgy, and 1950's *Humani generis*, which helped open Catholic thought to evolutionary theory and the biological sciences. The period also includes some of Pius' most important administrative moves, such as his efforts in 1953/54 to rein in France's 'worker-priest' movement, which, in some ways, would anticipate later struggles over liberation theology.

Americans will be interested in whatever the archives may reveal about Pius' relationship with the US hierarchy of the day, perhaps especially his close ties with

Cardinal Francis Spellman of New York. It would be fascinating, for instance, to know what Pius really thought when Cardinal Spellman turned down the Pontiff's offer in 1944 to make him the first American Secretary of State – whether Pius regretted a missed opportunity, or, as he watched Cdl. Spellman move in a progressively more hard-line direction, felt he'd actually dodged a bullet.

Moreover, the opening of the archives also may help clear the path for Pius XII's sainthood cause, if only by removing one of the usual objections as to why it was "premature". (Notably, however, concerns about records still being confidential didn't get in the way of sainthood for John XXIII, Paul VI or John Paul II, which suggests that assessments of personal sanctity have relatively little to do with the details of ecclesiastical governance.)

In any event, what opening the archives will not bring, at least in itself, is an end to the moral dispute over the legacy of Pius XII vis-à-vis the Holocaust. Resolving that argument would require an opening of minds and hearts, not just records, and the former are generally far more difficult to unseal.

John L. Allen Jr. is the editor of Cruxnow.com

“Should Pius XII have publicly denounced Hitler? Should he have threatened to excommunicate anyone involved in the mechanism of the Holocaust? Should he have pressured the Allies to liberate Nazi extermination camps earlier?”

Letters

Letter of the week

Have we forgotten Benedict's request?

Dear Editor, This coming St Joseph's Day marks the ninth anniversary of Pope Benedict XVI's Pastoral Letter to the Catholics of Ireland. That – along with his decision to hand-pick Archbishop Charles Brown as an active and energetic Nuncio – stands as a sign of his concern for the Irish Church.

A re-reading of the letter might provoke some reflection as to whether we have taken it to heart. Whilst we may be able to claim to have made huge strides in the area of safeguarding and some progress in confronting the sad history of abuse, perhaps we have not responded as well to the rest of the letter.

One particular example raises a question. Amongst the concrete

actions that Pope Benedict asked for, we read: "I also propose that a nationwide Mission be held for all bishops, priests and religious. It is my hope that, by drawing on the expertise of experienced preachers and retreat-givers from Ireland and from elsewhere, and by exploring anew the conciliar documents, the liturgical rites of ordination and profession, and recent pontifical teaching, you will come to a more profound appreciation of your respective vocations, so as to rediscover the roots of your faith in Jesus Christ and to drink deeply from the springs of living water that he offers you through his Church."

That no apparent action has yet been taken with respect to that

request is disappointing. Surely the spiritual renewal of priests and religious must be part and parcel of any broader renewal in the Church as a whole. Given the importance that Pope Francis places on spiritual discernment, such a mission would surely be in line with his thinking as well.

Neglect on this point leads me to wonder if our pastoral strategies are being based upon the idea of the Church's peaceful death rather than the possibility of new life in Christ.

*Yours etc.,
Fr Bernard Healy,
Rome, Italy.*

Time we took back control of State's spending

Dear Editor, I agree with the thrust of David Quinn's article 'The rise of a godlike State' (IC 7/3/2019), but he could have gone much further, as he hints at the end of his article.

In describing the status quo, Quinn explains: "In return for taking so much money from us, the State has to be generous in how it uses that money. It has to fund the things we want."

Why stop here? Why must the State take so much

from us? Why should it decide what we supposedly want, and why is it acting as a middle man?

What if the State were to remove all funding to charities and voluntary bodies and use the savings to cut VAT and/or raise the income tax bands? Right away there would be a tangible benefit to the most needy in society, possibly obviating the very existence of some charities.

For people with more

disposable income, they could use the savings in tax to donate to the worthiest, most transparently-run voluntary bodies which align with their own individual values.

The State at the moment relishes having the power to grant favours to cronies through the charity sector and to control the ethos of the charities it pays, and it will not give up this power easily. And many voters and taxpayers are happy to be

treated like children who must hand up a portion of their allowance because 'they would only waste it otherwise'.

For those concerned about civil society flourishing along truly Christian, truly charitable lines we can – and in the current climate, I argue that we must fight for a better way.

*Yours etc.,
Jennifer Mooney,
Cloghan, Co. Donegal.*

Maybe not one of our most beloved actors

Dear Editor, In bemoaning Liam Neeson's recent spot of bother (IC 7/3/2019), your movie reviewer seems surprisingly unaware that for many Irish Catholics his star appeal ended when he performed the voiceover for the eerie but effective Amnesty abortion ad made early in the campaign to repeal the Eighth Amendment.

I'm afraid that, for many of us, since that nasty episode he has not been "one of the most beloved actors of our country" or "a man who could do no wrong".

*Yours etc.,
Sean Grace,
Malahide, Co. Dublin.*



Referendum and homeless crisis

Dear Editor, In the forthcoming referendum over divorce, will any consideration be given as to how, in the long term, the outcome could further impact and exacerbate the homeless crisis?

*Yours etc.,
Judith Leonard,
Raheny,
Dublin 5.*

Stick to your day job, minister

Dear Editor, Bro. Kevin in a recent letter to your paper (IC 7/2/2019) challenged Minister Josepha Madigan and her Government to address the crisis of homelessness faced by so many. Minister Madigan has made much of the fact that as a practicing Catholic, she is also critical of Catholic teaching on abortion, and other aspects of catholic doctrine, such as an all-male priesthood. Indeed Minister

Madigan is now an advocate for facilitating easier access to divorce.

One can only wonder what school of theology Minister Madigan attended that makes her feel competent to challenge not only current Church teaching but also the tradition of our Church since its foundations which are based on the Gospels.

Perhaps if Minister

Madigan concentrated her attention on areas where she is no doubt both skilled and best placed to address, then injustice within our society might better be served and the radical Gospel message of love of all our neighbours achieved.

*Yours etc.,
Frank Browne,
Templeogue, Dublin 16.*

facebook community

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

Fight social problems, not Church ones, Bro. Kevin urges Minister Madigan and Government

Words of wisdom from someone who practices what he preaches. Pity they wouldn't listen to someone on the ground that know the score. – **Peg Hanafin**

Yes one would almost suspect she is looking for a smokescreen for failures in housing. – **Peter O'Reilly**

Bro Kevin is absolutely right, Minister Josepha Madigan should get the priority in the right place, i.e. the homeless situation. Shame on this Government. – **Emily Giles**

Where is her voice when it comes to the Catholic ethos in schools or hospitals? Silent on both which speaks volumes. – **Siobhan Boylan**

The conviction for abuse of a top Vatican cardinal looks highly suspicious

An obvious miscarriage of justice. The poor man is the victim of a witch hunt and long term villification campaign by the media and anti-Church brigade. It is clearly an example of Christian persecution. – **Mary Murphy**

Sexual abuse victims have to have proof to accuse someone or else we are all targets, if the courts are going to prosecute on only the sexual abused victims' testimony that's not justice as anyone can accuse another. – **John Barton**

The worrying thing is, he was found guilty by a jury of 12 citizens. It just goes to show how so-called ordinary people can be brainwashed by the prevailing propaganda and anti-Christian ideology. Lots of people have lost all sense of objectivity and the difference between right and wrong. – **John Taaffe**

Terrible to be blamed in the wrong for anything. – **Eilish Higgins**

As Christians, we have the great consolation of knowing that it's never too late

And if they are deceased, the offering of holy Masses are beneficial for souls who may be in purgatory and by organising the Masses you will also receive great graces from God. – **Sean Hoey**

And don't we all have some regret over something said in anger, while being overly tired, or not enough 'I love you's' or 'thank you's'? It's never too late, our loved ones are always with us! – **Cynthia Neary**

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 Ricken of Green Bay, Wisconsin, joined young adults from the diocese for a sushi-making activity at the Neville Public Museum in Green Bay last week.

▲ **USA:** A house with an 'X' painted on it is seen in Beauregard, Alabama, earlier this month, after two tornadoes ran through the area. Mobile Archbishop Thomas Rodi asked for prayers for "those who lost their lives and their loved ones as well as those who have lost homes and businesses".



VATICAN: Pope Francis meets with representatives of the world's religious traditions and experts in the fields of development, the environment and health care. The group was meeting at the Vatican to discuss the contributions religions can make to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals in a way that responds to the needs of the poor and respects the environment.



SYRIA: Syriac Catholic Patriarch Ignace Joseph III Younan meets injured people in Douma.



USA: A student at St Mary of the Purification Catholic Montessori School in Houston receives ashes on Ash Wednesday.



ROME: Auxiliary Bishop Robert Barron of Los Angeles receives an honorary doctorate at Rome's Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas. Photos: CNS



The Destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem by Francesco Hayez (1791–1882).

What's to be learned through failure, through being humbled by our own faults? Generally that's the only way we grow. In being humbled by our own inadequacies we learn those lessons in life that we are deaf to when we are strutting in confidence and pride. There are secrets, says John Updike, which are hidden from health. This lesson is everywhere in Scripture and permeates every spirituality in every religion worth of the name.

Raymond E. Brown, offers an illustration of this from Scripture: reflecting on how at one point in its history, God's chosen people, Israel, betrayed its faith and was consequently humiliated and thrown into a crisis about God's love and concern for them, Brown points out that, long range, this seeming disaster ended up being a positive experience: "Israel learned more about God in the ashes of the Temple destroyed by the Babylonians than in the elegant period of the Temple under Solomon."

What does he mean by that? Just prior to being conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, Israel had just experienced what, to all outside appearances, looked like the high point of her history (politically, socially, and religiously). She was in possession of the promised land, had subdued all her enemies, had a great king ruling over her, and had a magnificent temple in Jerusalem as a place to worship and a center to hold all the people together.

Complacent

However, inside that apparent strength, perhaps because of it, she had become complacent about her faith and increasing lax in being faithful to it. That complacency and laxity led

Hard lessons from painful failures



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

to her downfall. In 587 BCE, she was overrun by a foreign nation who, after taking the land, deported most of the people to Babylon, killed the king, and knocked the temple down to its last stone. Israel spent the next nearly half-century in exile, without a temple, struggling to reconcile this with her belief that God loved her.

“To paraphrase James Hillman, success usually doesn't bring a shred of depth into our lives”

However, in terms of the bigger picture, this turned out to be a positive. The pain of being exiled and the doubts of faith that were triggered by the destruction of her temple were ultimately offset by what she learned through this humiliation and crisis, namely, that God is faithful even when we aren't, that our failures open our eyes to us our own complacency and blindness, and that what looks like success is often its opposite, just as what looks like failure is often its opposite. As Richard Rohr might phrase it, in our failures we have a chance to “fall upward”.

There's no better image available, I believe, by which to understand what the Church is now undergoing

through the humiliation thrust on it through the clerical sexual abuse crisis within Roman Catholicism and within other churches as well.

To recast Raymond Brown's insight: the Church can learn more about God in the ashes of the clerical sexual abuse crisis than it did during its elegant periods of grand cathedrals, burgeoning Church growth, and unquestioned acquiescence to ecclesial authority. It can also learn more about itself, its blindness to its own faults, and its need for some structural change and personal conversion. Hopefully, like the Babylonian exile for Israel, this too will be for the churches something that's positive in the end.

Moreover, what's true institutionally for the Church (and, not doubt, for other organisations) is also true for each of us in our personal lives. The humiliations that beset us because of our inadequacies, complacencies, failures, betrayals, and blindness to our own faults can be occasions to “fall upward”, to learn in the ashes what we didn't learn in the winner's circle.

Almost without exception, our major successes in life, our grander achievements and the boost in status and adulation that come with that generally don't deepen us in any way. To paraphrase James Hillman, success

usually doesn't bring a shred of depth into our lives.

Conversely, if we reflect with courage and honesty on all the things that have brought depth and character into our lives we will have to admit that, in virtually every case, it would be something that has an element of shame to it – a feeling of inadequacy about our own body, some humiliating element in our upbringing, some shameful moral failure in our life, or something in our character about which we feel some shame. These are the things that have given us depth.

“The Church can learn more about God in the ashes of the clerical sexual abuse crisis than it did during its elegant periods of grand cathedrals”

Humiliation makes for depth; it drives us into the deeper parts of our soul. Unfortunately, however, that doesn't always make for a positive result. The pain of humiliation makes us deep; but it can make us deep in two ways: in understanding and empathy but also in a bitterness of soul that would have us get even with the world.

But the positive point is this: like Israel on the shores of Babylon, when our temple is damaged or destroyed, in the ashes of that exile we will have a chance to see some deeper things to which we are normally blind.

QUESTIONS of faith

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

Why is God so silent?

A common question that often puzzles believers and non-believers alike concerns God's hiddenness. The question might look something like this: “If God wants us to know and believe in him, why doesn't he present himself more explicitly, perhaps through a miracle? If God can do anything, surely this is the first thing he'd do to let us know he exists.”

It's a thought-provoking query and one that has led many people stray from the faith. Why is God so silent and hidden?

There are many ways to approach this problem, all which complement each other, and so make a strong cumulative case to show there are rational answers to this dilemma.

The first way is to point out that God hasn't and doesn't remain hidden from the world – Catholics believe that God became incarnate in the person of Jesus who walked among us in the world. He could be seen, touched and heard, people died for his message – and books, which we now refer to as the Gospels, were written about him.

Likewise, the Old Testament records the history of God's relationship with the Jews, and some of what is written in there can be corroborated with archaeological findings. This line of thinking, which rests upon the point that God physically entered in humanity, dispels the view that he has remained hidden.

This response is usually greeted with a forceful objection that those accounts are too ancient and unreliable to trust – if God gave into the worries of Doubting Thomas who chose not to believe until he touched the holes in the flesh of Jesus, then he should do the same for us!

A rebuttal to this objection, although tenuous,

is to point out that, even if we ignore the Bible, God has revealed himself through general revelation. The Church teaches that by natural reason, humans can know God with certainty, on the basis of his works and by looking into our conscience where “the prudent can hear God speaking”.

This response may not cut the mustard with an ardent objector, but there are other ways to deal with this question. One really effective reply is that God doesn't just want us to know him, but have a relationship with him. It's not enough to simply be intellectually aware of God's existence but to pray and worship, and recognise him.

“The Old Testament records the history of God's relationship with the Jews...some can be corroborated with archaeological findings”

So, while a large-scale miracle, like God structuring the stars for them to read ‘I exist’ might persuade people that a divine creator is real, it would offer little in establishing a true and free relationship between God and creature.

The last response is to recognise that personal miracles happen all the time, by which people describe having a truly transformative experience where they come to believe and love God. While miracles should always be treated with scepticism, it's important to keep your mind open to such possibilities.

So, when asked why God is hidden, it's clear that he has remained open to us, striving in rational and sometimes mysterious ways to help us know and have relationship with him.

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

Cornerstone

Building tomorrow's parish today



#LiveLent

A special
web resource

Page 29

Giving up apples for Lent

Fr Joe McDonald

I think I'll give up apples for Lent! I guess to most people this immediately sounds a bit wacky.

I mean if I loved apples such a statement might have some merit. The truth of the matter is I rarely eat apples. I know I should. I mean we all know, myself included, eating apples would be a lot healthier than eating...say... pancakes. A lot less fun. Healthier, but less fun. Yes, when it comes to apples I am pretty clear, in my opinion, apples belong in three places. Crumble, sponge

or tart! So yes, I think I'll give up apples for Lent....

...I hope you realise at this stage that I am joking. For me to say that I intend to give up apples for Lent is not only silly, but more importantly, it could show a lack of respect for one of the most sacred seasons in the Church year. There's no doubt though people approach Lent in a variety of ways: smokers might see Lent as a time to try and break the habit, others as time to lose weight. I actually heard it the other day, 'thank God it's Lent next week and hopefully I'll lose a few pounds!'

» Continued on Page 28

Welcome to this week's Cornerstone

Fish & Tips:

Lenten calendar for children

Page 29



Scripture:

This week's reading is from St Paul's letter to the Philippians

Page 28

PPCs:

Donal Harrington proposes three models for PPC meetings and suggests the benefit of subgroups

Page 29



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.

Giving up apples for Lent

» Continued from Page 27



Fr Joe McDonald considers the possibilities that Lent offers us

Now look, we can get a little spiritually snooty about these things. There's no point making a fuss that those engaged in the battle of the bulge or trying to quit smoking or give up the 'demon drink' are not taking Lent seriously. They may well be. That's not for us to judge. It's far more important to think through our own plans for Lent.

I use the word deliberately because I have learned from previous years that if I don't have a clear plan then Lent comes and goes and before I know it we are into Holy Week. Now we can slip into being very harsh and judgmental with regard to this, not only of others but ourselves as well, which of course is neither helpful, nor in fact is it good for our soul. However rather than see our failure to in some way live Lent as a reason for blame or castigation I prefer to see Lent

as an opportunity. Before exploring this I would like to make a note with regard to Lent and Easter.

“My logic is as follows: Easter is clearly the greatest of all our celebrations.”

The point here is, a little bit like my gradual learning of the importance of having the plan, I now also realise that how I live Lent, or indeed how I fail to live Lent has a direct bearing on how well I celebrate Easter. My logic is as follows: Easter is clearly the greatest of all our celebrations. Easter is when we remember, and give God thanks, that He loved us so much that he sent his only Son, Jesus, that we might be saved. It's a great and beautiful feast. It follows that it is a time of grace. However, we need to be receptive to this grace. We need to be open. We need to

have prepared the soil. Lent is the sowing and Easter the harvest. Lent is the investment and Easter is the dividend, the legacy. With this in mind I can honestly say the years I lived Lent well were the years that I experienced the most Easter joy. (I am sure I do not need to remind you not to confuse that beautiful gift of the Holy Spirit with it's more glitzy cousin, happiness.)



I do not need to remind you not to confuse that beautiful gift of the Holy Spirit with it's more glitzy cousin, happiness.)



“By Spy Wednesday this year I will be closer to Jesus, by which I mean I will be better acquainted with him than I am now AND I will be a less sinful person.”

So back to Lent, the plan, and the significance of it, mindful of the great opportunity it affords. I favor a two fold approach. Let me put it in the form of a statement, or perhaps as a resolve or promise. It's my Lenten Contract. It might sound like this:

'By Spy Wednesday this year I will be closer to Jesus, by which I mean I will be better acquainted with him than I am now AND I will be a less

sinful person.'

Now that's not bad as an aim, or a goal or objective or intention, but the next step is crucial. So we have the 'what of our Lent' now we need it's 'how'. So now it might look like this:

'By Spy Wednesday I will become closer to Jesus through a weekly slow meditative Scripture rosary and my daily 10 minutes reading from my favourite Gospel or

psalm followed by 10 minutes sacred silence listening for the Lord. I will be less sinful through depriving myself of alcohol or dessert and matching this with a kind comment or good turn for a couple of people I am not that keen on. The money I will save on the drink or the desserts throughout Lent, I will give to Peter McVerry or St. Vincent de Paul'.

Corny? Not for you? What's your plan? Whatever it is my friends, don't fail to live Lent this year.

It's too good an opportunity to miss. You'll know the benefit of it come Easter.

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 3:17-4:1

My brothers, be united in following my rule of life. Take as your models everybody who is already doing this and study them as you used to study us. I have told you often, and I repeat it today with tears, there are many who are behaving as the enemies of the cross of Christ. They are destined to be lost. They make foods into their god and they are proudest of something they ought to think shameful; the things they think important are earthly things. For us, our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the saviour we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. He will do that by the same power with which he can subdue the whole universe. So then, my brothers and dear friends, do not give way but remain faithful in the Lord. I miss you very much, dear friends; you are my joy and my crown.

Spend some time in prayer with the reading.

1. Find a quiet place, and give yourself fifteen 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.



PPCs: meetings



Donal Harrington proposes three models for PPC meetings and suggests the benefit of subgroups.

The Parish Pastoral Council works through meetings. But there are options as to how the meeting and its agenda are structured. Consider the following three models:

(a) The traditional agenda; prayer, minutes, matters arising from the minutes, correspondence, item one, item two, and so on, concluding with 'any other business'.

(b) A one-item agenda, about an important topic or project. A subgroup researches and presents at the meeting. Then there is discussion, then time for prayer, and after prayer a decision may be made. Following this, there is time for other business.

(c) A mix of (a) and (b). The meeting is in two parts. One half is devoted to an extended discussion of some major topic, perhaps with a subgroup presentation as above. Or it could be a formation time for the group. The other half is for other agenda items as in the first model above.

These are only possible formats. But I think it is fair to say that, for the PPC to enter into its planning role, it needs to move away from exclusive reliance on model (a). It needs to utilise the other models as well, depending on what is most appropriate. In particular, PPCs need to free themselves from slavery to a business agenda and make more time for reflective, in-depth discussion. So model (c) might merit exploration. Or there might be a few meetings during the year along the lines of model (b), in place of model (a).

The use of subgroups makes the

PPC more effective. Sub-groups have two roles. One is preparing for a meeting. If, for example, the PPC wants to set up a Baptism team, it makes sense for some people to go and research it, find out the best practice. The discussion will then be informed, instead of people pooling their ignorance.

The other role is in following through from a meeting. Taking the same example, if the PPC decides to set up a Baptism team, the next step is not to do it themselves, but to mobilise a response. A couple of interested members could work on setting up a team.

They might accompany the new group for a while, but then leave it go. In this way, PPC subgroups would be short-term and members would not be drawn away from the PPC's proper role.

Ongoing Formation

Besides the initial formation emphasised above, the PPC would do well to keep the importance of ongoing formation in mind. Formation is more than an introductory explanation of how to do a job. It is a continuing process of initiation, entering more deeply into the experience. The following three points might be considered.

First, the experience of being on the PPC is itself formative. If the group takes care of itself as described, and if it stays focused on its role, then it will be experiencing (on a smaller scale) the kind of faith community it aspires to build. Members will find their own faith and their own sense of church being enhanced and enriched.

If something along those lines is not the case, then the PPC is probably not working as it should be.

Second, it is worth having an annual enrichment session, perhaps mid-year. This would be an opportunity to stand back from the work, to reconnect with the vision, to be re-energised. It could possibly take the form of a mini-retreat. An outside speaker or facilitator could be a big help.

“The PPC is vital to tomorrow’s parish. Though introduced in the Church over fifty years ago, PPCs are still quite new in Ireland.”

Third, it is important to hold an annual review. In a rollover system, this could be the time for initiating new members (rather than just leaving them to find their feet). The previous year's work could be reviewed and the year ahead surveyed. There would be an element of prayer and an element of enrichment. Through the occasion, the group would be renewing and refreshing itself.

Formation is an appropriate theme with which to conclude this chapter. The PPC is vital to tomorrow's parish. Though introduced in the Church over fifty years ago, PPCs are still quite new in Ireland. Much is involved in making them strong and fruitful. But formation is at the heart of it. Initial and ongoing formation are crucial in developing a planning mentality, in ensuring that members grow into the role and in maintaining good practice in working together as a group.

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!!

<h3>Second Week</h3>	
Sunday <i>Jesus was transfigured in glory in front of Peter, James, and John.</i> • Nice things in this life don't last forever. Thank God for something nice you have now.	Sunday <i>Jesus was transfigured in glory in front of Peter, James, and John.</i> • Nice things in this life don't last forever. Thank God for something nice you have now.
Monday <i>Jesus submitted to His arrest even though He was innocent.</i> • Pray for people who are in jail - those who are guilty as well as the innocent. 11	Tuesday <i>The mob hit Jesus and spit on Him.</i> • If you have money, give some to the poor. Otherwise say a prayer for them. 12
Wednesday <i>Jesus was tortured before the crucifixion.</i> • Say sorry if you have said any lies. Do one good thing today to help someone. 13	Thursday <i>Jesus spent the night in prison before he was arrested.</i> • Say an 'Our Father' right before you go to sleep. 14
Friday <i>Jesus died on the cross for our sins.</i> • When you wake up pray: Everything under I suffer to You. O Lord! 15	Saturday <i>Jesus was buried in the tomb.</i> • Plant a flower in your garden or in a flower pot. Watch it grow up to Easter. 16

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

PEOPLE OF GOD

St Patrick

St Patrick is the Patron Saint of Ireland and known for his efforts to evangelize and convert the pagan Irish of his time. In more recent times, his sanctity is less known. The feast day of St Patrick, March 17, has become more of a secular holiday than a remembrance of St Patrick's life and holiness. Despite the secularisation of his feast, St Patrick provides an example of the need for personal renewal, evangelical love, Christian courage and total devotion to God. His feast should be claimed by all Catholics as a memorial of his life, and his life example should be used to claim the world for Christ.

St Patrick's Breastplate

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left,



Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

EVANGELISATION

PRIEST
ON FIRE

Fr Peter Fitch, assistant priest from St Joseph's and St John's parish in Brighton, shares how baptism in the Holy Spirit, has set his priesthood on fire

I have been a priest for 15 years and a year ago I came to St Joseph's and St John's, where we are trying to bring parish renewal based on a model put forward in a book called "Divine Renovation" by Fr James Mallon. Part of this process is based on the running of the Alpha course. I had done an Alpha course as a student, but felt very uncomfortable about the day on the Holy Spirit. There was no escape, however, as they were doing Alpha in the parish and I ended up attending a couple of sessions, one of which was in Nick and Helen Well's home. At their suggestion I went to Joel's Bar,

a charismatic youth event, last Easter.

"I could see that the worship leader, Ben Gray from the Wellspring Community, was on fire for the Lord and I knew I wanted some of this fire."

I could see that the worship leader, Ben Gray from the Wellspring Community, was on fire for the Lord and I knew I wanted some of this fire. This opened me up to the prayer ministry. The praying over was an incredible experience for me. There were a lot of tears as God cleared out and healed my heart from all the past hurts and locked up emotions. This ended, however, up in a sense of great joy and laughter.

But it took God a whole year to get me ready to receive the Holy Spirit in this way. Attending the Divine Renovation Conference at Strawberry Hill and being prayed with by Helen and Nick in their house all helped. Afterwards the Mass became alive for me in a new way



and my preaching more passionate. I now know that God talks to us and awakens our hearts ready for his service. My hospital ministry has also become different. There have been times when I have experienced the presence of Jesus in amazing ways.

One Saturday, I remember I was called in to see a man who was very unwell. When I arrived I had to wear a bar-

rier nursing dress including a face mask. I was feeling very tired as I had already been to the hospital twice that day and felt as if I was a character from a horror movie. The man seemed disappointed that I was a Catholic priest but said, "never mind, you will do." He told me he was very scared of dying, so I asked his permission and placed my hands on his head and prayed in

tongues over him. He suddenly said, "Jesus is here. He's at the end of the bed. He is with us." Tears started to come down his face and mine too as we felt Jesus' presence in the room with us. Jesus had healed his fear and he was now totally at peace.

"I pray with more faith with people in the hospital."

Rather than hide away from prayer ministry and the power of the Holy Spirit, which I had done before, I now actively seek it, as well as asking for prayer from the laity. I pray with more faith with people in the hospital. I still administer the sacraments but I also pray with patients listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

I feel much happier in my priesthood and more settled. It is not all plain sailing but I have a deeper awareness of God working in my life.

I have sometimes felt annoyed that I have been a priest for 15 years and yet this grace has only been given to me now. Why did it not happen at the beginning? But I realise it is because the Lord has been preparing me and I had to understand my weakness and confront who I am in order for my heart to be more fully open to Jesus. I pray now for the courage to proclaim Christ more and to tell others more about Jesus and to share my joy with them.

Reprinted with kind permission from Goodnews magazine PO Box 67138, London SW11 9FD.

Sacraments

#LiveLent

Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh has launched a special web resource, and a Twitter and Instagram #LiveLent initiative, for Lent 2019. Archbishop Martin said, "In his message for Lent 2019, which I encourage everyone to read, Pope Francis is inviting the faithful to return to God with all their hearts and to observe the three pillars of the Lenten season: Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving. The theme for the Pope's message for Lent 2019 is 'For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God (Rm 8:19)'. "Appealing to the faithful to not allow this season of grace to pass in vain, Pope Francis says that if, 'the Lent of the Son of God was an entry into the desert of creation to make it become again that garden of communion with God that it was before the original sin, Christians today are invited to embody the paschal mystery more deeply and concretely in their personal, family and social lives, above

all by fasting, prayer and almsgiving.' "Fasting, the Pope says, means turning away from the temptation to 'devour' everything to satisfy our voracity; Prayer teaches us to abandon idolatry and the self-sufficiency of our ego; Almsgiving or charity, whereby we escape from the insanity of hoarding everything for ourselves in the illusory belief that we can secure a future that does not belong to us.

"Pope Francis tells us that if we follow this journey it 'is possible to rediscover the joy of God's plan for creation and for each of us, which is to love him, our brothers and sisters, and the entire world, and to find in this love our true happiness'.

"The path to Easter, therefore, demands that 'we renew our faces and hearts as Christians through repentance, conversion, and forgiveness' the Pope said pointing out that it is a call that involves the whole of creation.

"I encourage the faithful to reflect during this Lenten season on how to grow closer to God by our daily



actions, thoughts, words and to consider what sacrifice might be made to achieve this. I also encourage the faithful to support this year's Trócaire Lenten campaign which focuses on their work with communities in Guatemala, Lebanon, and Uganda." "For Lent 2019 we are providing online resources, including the mes-

sage of Pope Francis for Lent 2019, to assist our spiritual preparations for the joy and hope which comes with the Easter season. I encourage everyone to avail of our online resources and to take part in our #LiveLent initiative", Archbishop Martin said. The #LiveLent initiative involves short daily suggestions shared on

Twitter and Instagram based on the theme of the Holy Father's Lenten message on how to best #LiveLent 2019. These include suggestions on fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, which are the three pillars of the Lenten season; prayer and Scripture suggestions; opportunities for penance and fasting in our daily lives (e.g. fasting from gossip, fasting from negativity online, giving up certain foods for Lent, availing of the Sacrament of Reconciliation); suggestions of charitable acts (e.g. donating to Trócaire and other charities; donating your time by volunteering or helping out within your own family, school, parish; and behaving in a charitable way towards all those we meet).

Everyone is invited to take part using the hashtag #LiveLent and are encouraged to share with their own followers how they are putting the themes of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving into practice during Lent.

[Source: CatholicNews.ie].

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, March 14, 2019

Personal Profile

‘Goodness is godliness’ with housing hero

Page 34



Stopping scammers

No one is completely unsusceptible to the many wheeler dealers and scam artists offering sham services or duping many online. They capitalise on those who may be too trusting or ignorant of the warning signs.

Knowing the right steps to take can fortify anyone against making an expensive mistake.

Scamming comes in all shapes and sizes, it can be harder to judge whether a person is trustworthy particularly if you've never seen or met them before. Phone and online scams can be much more subtle in how they present a seemingly good deal or pose as an official company.

The online world is another place that poses a plethora of



Chai Brady investigates some intricate frauds

risks with many extremely tech savvy hackers stealing information with ease from avoidable mistakes made by those who aren't aware that a website or email is exhibiting many red flags.

Even someone who might know better can be taken advantage of, as those who've grown up using laptops and smartphones become more lackadaisical about online

security – perhaps relying too heavily on a computer's anti-virus software.

A survey conducted by a Clare-based tech company, Datapac found that 14% of Irish office workers had fallen victim to fraudulent online attempts to steal sensitive information such as passwords and credit card details, known as phishing. It most often comes in the form of emails that appear to be sent by

genuine sources which encourage users to share their personal information.

Despite millennials feeling the most confident that they can identify these scams – those aged 23-41 are twice as likely to fall victim according to the survey which was done in conjunction with security firm Sophos. About 44% of baby boomers admitted to clicking on a link or attachment in an email from a sender they didn't recognise, significantly more than millennials, 34%, and generation X: 26%.

Advantage

Sophos' Security Specialist Peter Craig tells this newspaper office workers are at an advantage compared to others. He said:

“There's a lot more awareness generally about online scams, but retired people or older people are probably at a disadvantage because they're not in a workplace where all this stuff is being drummed into them on a daily basis, where there is security awareness training going on to help employees of companies deal with those threats.

“They expect to be hit with security threats whereas perhaps somebody retired has never even considered this, and then those employees can take this knowledge home, they can share that with their families.”

There is a place for the Church in encouraging online security

» Continued on Page 33

Family News



AND EVENTS

Wifi drive-by

Packing your family into the car for a journey is a stressful business. Central to this is keeping your kids, no matter what their age, amused for the duration. So, how do you fend off those salvos of 'Are we there yet?' and 'I'm bored' when you've got offspring who no longer think it's cool to play I-Spy?

Shelling out for some new kit to keep the sprogs happy could be worth its weight in gold.

Mobile wireless internet is a must-have for most of us these days, so a Wi-Fi router in the car makes a sensible choice. Your offspring certainly won't want to go far without being connected, so investing in a Verizon Wireless Ellipsis Jetpack could be very handy, it supports up to a dozen wireless devices,

Coming in at around €50 it could be just what you need, but shopping around for a more powerful, or maybe cheaper model may be another option. Just remember to turn off the phones when you arrive at your family destination!



SEA IT TO BELIEVE IT! In era where the public are aware more-than-ever about the serious effects of climate change on oceans and marine life, a chance to explore the creatures of the deep shouldn't go amiss. Blue Planet II has been adapted for the stage with a wondrous visual display and immersive musical score that you simply have to experience to believe. And you'll have your chance on March 24 as this wonderful show is being brought to Dublin's 3Arena.

Marvel at the mysteries of our planet's oceans and wildlife as they are presented to you in breath-taking detail on a state-of-the-art 200sqm 4K Ultra HD LED screen, whilst the sweet sounds of Bleeding Fingers Music is performed in tandem.

From icy polar seas and pulsating coral reefs to the deepest reaches of the sea and enormous kelp forests, you'll embark on a journey you'll never forget.

A stroke of luck

While it's generally recommended that staying fit should be the body's desired state, a new study has shown that obesity can improve one's life expectancy after a stroke.

Dr Zuolo Liu – from the University of California – and her colleagues examined 1,033 people who had experienced an ischemic stroke – that is, a condition wherein the arteries that pump blood to the brain are blocked.

Overall, people with severe obesity had a 6% percent lower chance of dying from a stroke than people with a normal BMI, people with obesity had a 46% lower chance of death, and those who were overweight had a 15% lower chance of dying.

"Outcome from acute ischemic stroke is characterised by an obesity paradox: elevated BMI is associated with reduced three-month mortality over all, and reduced disability over most weight ranges," authors of the study said.

When doing good seems too hard



Last month I argued against utilitarianism, the school of moral philosophy that seeks 'the greatest good for the greatest number'. Utilitarianism is false because following it consistently means endorsing the idea that it's sometimes right to choose evil means to achieve good ends.

Here, though, I want to say a word against a different (and in contemporary philosophy more influential) family of anti-utilitarian arguments called 'demandingness objections'. I think that in this area utilitarians are in some ways closer to the truth than their critics. I want to make the case that you don't have to be a utilitarian to believe that morality makes huge, disruptive demands on almost all of us – demands that might upend our everyday lives. You just have to be a Christian.

What are demandingness objections? They run like this: "If this moral system were true, it would be impossibly demanding. It would ask too much of the people who believe in it, and be incompatible with living a good life and enjoying a variety of non-moral goods."

Objection

The objection specific to utilitarianism is usually something like this: given the vast amount of suffering in the world, promoting the greatest good for the greatest number would involve running around doing good all the time, leaving no room for trips to the zoo, expansive DVD collections, etc.

Enter Peter Singer. Singer is not, to put it mildly, my favourite philosopher. He's notorious for defending euthanasia, abortion and post-birth infanticide, and holds that humans with cognitive



Everyday philosophy Ben Conroy

disabilities aren't our moral equals. But in a paper called 'Famine, Affluence and Morality', Singer has a genuinely good insight.

Singer asks you to imagine that you're walking through a park and suddenly notice a small child drowning in a shallow, muddy pool. Wading in to save the child will involve getting your clothes filthy. Everyone agrees that you ought to save the child. This would still be the case if you saw a variety of other people standing around refusing to help.

"A person in enclosed religious life is doing a tremendous good for God's Kingdom by their prayer, even if it limits their capacity to relieve poverty"

If the suit was luxurious and would cost thousands to restore, nothing changes. The central intuition here is that if you can do something to save a life without giving up anything of moral importance, you ought to.

How does this apply to real life? Well, it is easy to save a child's life immediately: you can donate to the Against Malaria foundation. The general consensus is that you can save a child from dying of malaria for between two and seven thousand dollars.

So if you you're currently spending the money on things that aren't of moral importance, shouldn't you give it away instead? (Or give your leisure time where it will help to save lives or alleviate desperate poverty?)

This is where demandingness objections come in: where does this logic lead? After you've saved one child, what about



the next? Must we give away everything, draining our lives of everything else we value until the ills of the world are solved?

Not exactly. Catholic moral philosophy is rich with 'special obligations', things we owe to people by virtue of our relationship to them. The most obvious example are the specific responsibilities parents have to their children, which put limits on their availability for other good works (though even here, remember Christ's disturbing words in Luke 14:26 and Matthew 19:29).

Catholics also have a much broader view of what constitutes the good than any utilitarian: a person in enclosed religious life is doing a tremendous good for God's Kingdom by their prayer, even if it limits their capacity to

relieve poverty. The same goes for artists and creators like Michelangelo or Tolkien, who spend their lives creating things of beauty.

But it's also true that the Catholic answer to 'where do our obligations of benevolence end?' is 'much further out than most of us want'. "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none" is an unsettlingly straightforward instruction. Jesus' account of Last Judgment is similarly uncompromising. And if we ask, like the apostles, 'who is my neighbour?', the parable of the Good Samaritan gives a clear answer.

"It's also true that the Catholic answer to 'where do our obligations of benevolence end?' is 'much further out than most of us want'"

And let's be serious. Usually, we don't sacrifice the opportunity to save lives or serve our neighbour in order to save souls, grow in holiness, or create beautiful things. We mostly do it in order to have a fancier car, a bigger house, or more books than we will ever actually read.

Does this mean, though, that even most of the people we consider to be generally good Christians, are nowhere near Christian enough? That an authentically Christian life requires far more self-sacrifice than most of us are willing to entertain? I think it does. We can certainly critique utilitarianism for being demanding in the wrong ways: but our Lord was more demanding still.

» Continued from Page 31



awareness he says, “they can spread that in the parishes” as there are many isolated people that might not be receiving these messages.

Device

Ransomware is another online attack that has hit headlines and involves a person encrypting your device, making it inaccessible and then asking for large amounts of money to re-open it.

“Imagine you’ve got all these pictures of your grandchildren and they’re really precious to you. This virus, this piece of malware, encrypts all these pictures. You get presented with a screen saying unless you pay so many bitcoin or so many thousand dollars you’re never going to see them again. That would be quite a worrying thing,” Mr Craig says.

“There are measures you can take to protect yourself against that, so keeping everything up to date, installing security tools, but also backing up those important pictures.

“Back them up to a USB stick or a hard drive. That means if your machine does get infected with ransomware you can start again, copy your photographs back and get everything back to how it was before.”

“Companies never ask you to send a password or credit card number via email: this is another red flag”

The attacks often come via a link in an email or an attachment. These emails may appear to be something a person might be expecting: did you order anything from the ‘company’ that’s contacting you? If receiving an email with a request to change a password, it could easily be a phishing attempt. Check the email address you’ve received the email from, does it look legitimate? Legitimate companies never ask you to send a password or credit card number via email: this is another red flag.

Other small steps include not clicking on links sent from unknown or dubious accounts, watch out for bad spelling or grammar and a lot of care must be taken particularly when receiving messages such as: ‘Your account will be closed’ or ‘Urgent action required!’

Dating websites can also be an

extremely dangerous places, with Mr Craig mentioning two women who were duped into giving over £105,000 (€122,000) last month to fraudsters online.

He says: “It’s so easy to research these days, because people put personal information about themselves, about their families on Facebook, on other social media sites, it’s easy for a criminal to target somebody.”

If there’s large amounts of cash on the line, Mr Craig adds that “they’re prepared to put the work in, to research all that information and to target them quite carefully and in a sophisticated manner”.

“As far as advice goes to stopping that, it’s all the usual things. If it looks too good to be true, don’t bite. If it’s out of the blue from someone you’ve never met before – I guess on a dating site that’s not quite so easy to judge – but anything that involves money or transferring money is something you should be wary of. Anything where they’re putting you under time pressure is something that you should be wary of.”

* * * * *

Scammers can be extremely professional. Due to the huge amount of planning that was going into a particular phone scam An Garda Síochána felt the need to warn people what to look out for. In association with FraudSMART, a fraud awareness initiative led by Banking & Payments Federation Ireland (BPF), they advised consumers last month to be on alert to a phone scam in which fraudsters claim to be calling from utility companies on the pretence that there are issues with the customer’s broadband service.

The key details include:

- A utility company: e.g. telephone/mobile phone provider, broadband provider or software company, calls offering to ‘fix’ computer or broadband problems. The caller attempts to trick you into revealing your banking or card details and providing codes from your card reader to access your online banking and make fraudulent payments.
- You may be asked to allow the caller to take remote control of your computer to ‘assist’ you, however this could allow the fraudster to show you fraudulent screens.
- The callers are professional and will be able to transfer you to their ‘supervisor’ should you request

this. They sound genuine.

Detective Superintendent Gerard Walsh of the Garda National Economic Crime Bureau gave the following advice: “If you have received a suspicious call, hang up and phone the company the person is purporting to be from directly yourself. Do not use a number given to you by the caller and make sure you hear a dial tone before making the call. If you are concerned that you may have fallen victim to a scam contact your local Garda Station and also your bank.”

“If you have received a suspicious call, hang up and phone the company the person is purporting to be from directly”

FraudSMART advises that if someone purporting to be from a company calls, never give out personal information until you’ve established their identity and it is a genuine representative. Their identity can be checked by looking up the organisation’s number on their website or in a phone book.

They say: “Make sure you hear a dial tone before you dial. Do not use a number the caller has given to you as this could be a fake number.

“Don’t assume you can trust caller ID. Fraudsters can spoof a number, so it looks like they are calling from a particular company or bank, even when they are not.

“It takes two people to terminate a landline phone call, you can use a different phone line to independently check the caller’s identity or at least make sure you hear a dial tone before you call anyone.”

They add that fraudsters may have basic information about anyone, and it would be wrong to assume the caller is genuine because of this as it can be sourced online through social media, phone books, websites and more.

Most importantly of all, when being targeted by any scammer, they may try and rush a person into making a decision. Whether it be online, by phone or in person, taking time to make sure you’re fully aware of every aspect of the situation and are fully satisfied all relevant checks have been made may save you a whole lot of heartbreak in the future.

Dad’s Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



You’ve got your hands full.” That phrase is apparently the new “hello”.

At least, that is what random strangers typically say to me on the street by way of greeting.

I suppose it’s not an altogether inaccurate statement of the obvious. Particularly as I rush down the road – late for school again – with a baby strapped to my front in a sling, a scooter over one shoulder, a nappy bag over the other, trying to corral a wobbly four-year-old on her bike, while simultaneously negotiating a dispute settlement between the older children.

A typical day starts at 6.30am and ends at 11pm – with sporadic wake ups in the night, of course. Weeks pass in a blur of rushing to and fro between school, cubs, swimming, beavers, gymnastics and birthday parties. Somehow we both also manage to find time to do demanding jobs, amidst the chaos.

The moment you have the house clean and tidy, it immediately collapses into disarray. It is endless. Life as a parent of four small kids can be exhausting and frustrating at times, but the truth is I love it. As we bumble along to school in the morning, we walk a quiet path that follows a stream. The kids run to and fro playing and laughing, or spotting seasonal changes in nature, while the baby gazes serenely at the passing trees, occasionally smiling up at me. I feel my heart expand outward, from the warmth of the love I feel.

Blessing

There was once a time when children were universally considered a blessing. Recent decades have brought a strange tendency in our culture to focus on the chaos and disorder children inevitably bring. I suppose, to the casual observer of harried families caterwauling around a supermarket, the chaos is all they see. Things like inner joy and love are invisible, after all.

Perhaps this is why so many nowadays see the advent of children a disastrous curtailment of their freedom – something to be avoided at all costs. Yet this

view is fundamentally a misconception, since virtually all who’ve been there know that parenting is perhaps the most fulfilling aspect of their lives. Yet that widespread misconception about parenting as a negative experience persists, especially amongst young adults.

Whole European nations are under demographic strain due to low birth rates. There are multiple factors, but this quite understandable misconception must play a role. People only see the outward struggles of parenting, but not the inward joy those very struggles bring.

Nowadays, a family with four children is considered quite large. Yet I think of the past, and my father as one of eight, or my mother as one of six – in the days before dishwashers, washing machines and all the rest of it. They recall very happy childhoods. The difference was that back then, mothers invariably worked in the home. Yet nowadays, with a mixture of part time working, sharing the load and childcare working parents can manage quite well.

Outsourcing

We’ve tried to avoid outsourcing as much possible. The right amount of exposure to childcare helps small kids to socialise, but too much is detrimental. The detail of their lives is important for small children. It’s being there for a football match, and being the one who drops them to school, and picks them up again. We may be tired and cranky when we do so. We are not always the ideal parents we want to be, but half of parenting is about simply turning up. Small kids just want their mum or dad around.

Even as the chaos increases as numbers increase, I can only welcome it, because I welcome each of the children. All their childlike needs and demands, and the attendant noise, mess, spillages and breakages are part of the package. The kids are profoundly welcome as the most precious things in our lives, and so we must also welcome all that comes with them. Perhaps the next time someone greets me with a look of pity saying, “you’ve got your hands full”, I’ll smile and reply, “I do, thanks be to God.”

'Goodness is godliness' with housing hero

Personal Profile



Chai Brady

Working at the coalface to combat homelessness and help communities for most of his life, one priest is determined to help those suffering as a result of Ireland's insidious housing crisis.

Currently focusing on housing families, Fr Patsy Carolan OMI has been helping vulnerable people in whatever community he finds himself in, from Birmingham to Dublin.

At the end of February he became the first priest to win the All Island Chartered Institute of Housing Aware for Housing Hero 2019 in Belfast for his dedication and commitment to housing in the UK and Ireland for more than half a century.

In the wake of his award he says: "I'm fully committed to housing and my work as an Oblate, I'm trying to play my part and to do something. We can only play a small part in it, but we can play a part."

Fr Patsy (80) doesn't seem to be slowing down in his battle against deprivation and poverty. In his community in Inchicore, Co. Dublin he is on the board of two schools, the chairperson of the basketball club, chairperson of the community employment group and on the board of a drug rehabilitation initiative.

Long journey

Still facing down the issue of affordable housing he is also on the board of the Circle Voluntary Housing Association and has been



Fr Patsy Carolan OMI wins the All Island Chartered Institute of Housing Aware 'Housing Hero 2019' in Belfast last month.

since 2003 – only ever missing one meeting in over 15 years.

It was a long journey up to that point. Hailing from Bailieborough in Cavan, Fr Patsy was one of 10 children. His father died in his late 30s but the family managed to keep the family business running with many of the children chipping in to help.

“An avid GAA fan, he used to play for Cavan during the years he was studying, which technically wasn't allowed”

Fr Patsy knew from a young age that he wanted to be a priest, saying he wasn't sure why at the time, but he "hasn't changed his

mind since". He first came into contact with the Oblates in school and after finishing the Leaving Cert in 1956 he went to the Oblates in Ardagh, Limerick and spent one year there.

He returned to Dublin to study philosophy for two years and spent four years studying theology in Kilkenny.

An avid GAA fan, he used to play for Cavan during the years he was studying, which technically wasn't allowed.

"I was a reasonably good footballer and I played in the Ulster final in 1960 for Cavan against Down when I wasn't really supposed to be playing at that level. I got into a bit of difficulty over it," he says.

"There was a priest called Fr Paddy Mee who was an Oblate at the game who said 'you are in

trouble but tell them I told you to play' and I did that."

After that final he stopped playing at inter-county level.

After Fr Patsy was ordained in 1963 he did another year of study in Inchicore before being sent to Norris Green in Liverpool for five years where he served as a youth leader.

The priest who had helped him out of trouble, Fr Paddy, had been posted in London and bought an old nursing home in view of setting it up as a hostel for over 100 Irish men in 1972. Fr Patsy was soon to follow and help, and spent six months looking up how to manage it.

Receiving funding from the British government they began building new developments to help people who were homeless, out of work, struggling with

addiction and more. Between 1978 and 1990 he served as a parish priest in Bristol and Essex before returning to the housing issue and helping many Irish people who had travelled to Britain for work and subsequently lived in poverty.

Returning to Ireland in 1997 he was involved in rebuilding what is now known as the Oblate Hall in Inchicore which has become hugely important to the community with a basketball hall, gym, crèche, afterschool, drug rehabilitation centre and more.

“People are still very good, so generous, so prepared to give their time”

Regarding his work with Circle Voluntary Housing Association he says they have in the last couple of months bought 11 apartments in Enniscorthy, 32 in Arklow and 40 houses in Waterford City. They've also bought a site in Clondalkin for 19 apartments, and a site in Santry as well. The group is about to start building 52 apartments on Railway Street in North City Dublin and 53 apartments in Inchicore.

Fr Patsy says over the years the Government has shown "no real commitment" to tackle the issues, adding "they took away house building from the council and left it to the property developers and it just hasn't worked".

Despite a move away from religion in modern Ireland he says: "People are still very good, so generous, so prepared to give their time. The religion that they were brought up to understand wasn't really following Christ, it was about following rules and regulations.

"To me anybody who does good is following Christ, goodness is godliness. People are still very good, even though they may not be going to Church, they still have a wonderful attitude.

"I see myself in a position as a priest to be able to contribute to something to help people," he adds.

Time to have an honest heart-to-heart with him

We are married three years and in the last year or so my husband has been going out with his friends or work colleagues much more than before. He goes out every Saturday night and usually comes home drunk, really affecting our Sundays as a family because he is hungover and in a bad mood.

The first thing you need to do is talk: remember do not go on the attack. As this is a recent enough development you have to ask why he is suddenly going out and getting drunk – are there stresses or pressures he is under that you might not be aware of? Perhaps he is just trying to be 'one of the lads' but life is different now he has a family and a wife and not just himself to consider.

This isn't about cossetting your husband but about discussing getting the balance right. Going out is one thing, but is coming home drunk, slurring words and being hungover ever acceptable to you? If you keep grinning and bearing it, then I suspect

nothing will change. However, try not to play the blame game, that will only make him defensive and most likely he will shut down the conversation. It would be good to talk about expectations and see if you can compromise, he might think he should be going out every week whereas perhaps every two weeks would be better.

Impact

He needs to understand full the impact it is having on you. He could be totally unaware of this. Again it needs to come from a place of love, you want to spend time together and make the most of your weekends together. I can imagine your finding it difficult at this stage as you have come to expect it. But as you haven't talked about it that frustration and anger will fester.

Don't use language that says 'he makes you feel' a certain way, a guilt trip won't work here. Instead you need to ask him how he feels about missing out on family time on Saturdays. It would

be good to suggest an alternative for Friday evenings, can he do something else with friends, dinner or the cinema. Probably more importantly can you do something together, make every other Friday your time and your date night.

From a health perspective binge drinking has a huge impact, it would be good to come at a point of concern for his health. The discussion certainly needs to focus on the why – why is he suddenly feeling the need to drink so much and does it bother him that it takes away from quality time together as a family?

In this discussion it would be also healthy to talk about you getting out with your friends and getting time to yourself as well.

You need to remind one another that you are a team, you are partners. Lots of things change when you are married, in a way it's probably difficult as you might have expected the mourning of his single life to have happened in the very beginning. That is why it is likely there is something triggering this behaviour and if you can get to the bottom of that then that could be a starting point for getting back on track.



Love Notes

Wendy Grace

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Lent vies with profanity for TV coverage

The onset of Lent usually prompts some extra interest in religion in the media, however short lived.

Ivan Yates had a fairly positive coverage of Ash Wednesday, on his show **The Hard Shoulder** (Newstalk). He said he had seen lots of people with ashes on their foreheads in Dublin during the day, though roving reporter Henry McKean hadn't see too many.

McKean described how he had met his wife on a similar outing at Clarendon St Church on Ash Wednesday a few years ago. Yates announced a faith slot, 'What's It All About', for his programme for every Thursday for Lent (good idea) and announced that Archbishop Eamon Martin would be his first guest. He said he wouldn't be getting into the controversial issues, just talking about the life of Faith.

Soon after, on the News, Newstalk reported positively on a drive-through application of ashes in Galway, and highlighted people being proud to wear the ashes.

That interview with Archbishop Martin was well worth a listen. Yates, from a Church of Ireland background, seemed to be agnostic about religion, but said he was open to persuasion, and sounded particularly interested in what happens after death.

Archbishop Martin, introducing the #livelent initiative for social media, said that in



Some of the cast of *Derry Girls* (Channel 4).

40 days one could break some bad habits and create some good ones. He spoke of heading for an engineering career but was deeply impressed by Pope St John Paul II's words to the young people of Ireland during that papal visit, and wanted to follow a path of service to God and his fellow human beings.

He said "I can't accept emptiness", had a strong Faith in something beyond this life in line with the age old human yearning.

With regard to Ivan's curiosity about the next life he said he felt "an eternity of

love" and a strong belief that he would be reunited with loved ones.

Profanity

Archbishop Martin went to school in Derry, and I wonder what he thinks of *Derry Girls* (Channel 4, Tuesday). Last time around I thought it had potential but was spoiled by the gratuitous profanity and bad language. I had faint hope that the new series would be an improvement, but no, right from the start the language was profane, foul and gratuitously crude.

The sad thing is that it

would have been just as funny without it, and could have been a warm but quirky drama most of the family could enjoy. And admittedly it was very funny – this time the girls from the Catholic school in Derry went on a bonding exercise with boys from a Protestant school in order to build bridges between the communities during The Troubles.

The accompanying nun, Sr Michael, a tough nut seemed to have no time for priests, especially the suave philanthropic cleric who led the wishy-washy workshops.

Eventually she found common cause with a prim teacher from the Protestant school, a lay woman who couldn't see the point in getting them together at all.

There was a particularly funny scene where the priest tried to get the youngsters to



Ivan Yates.

PICK OF THE WEEK

DISCOVERING PATRICK – SAINT OF IRELAND
EWTN, Saturday, March 16, 10pm, also St Patrick's Day 5pm

Fr Nathan Cromly, CSJ and a group of Catholic pilgrims travel to Ireland to walk in the footsteps of St Patrick.

VOX NOSTRA WITH VLAD SMISHKEWYCH
RTE Lyric FM, St Patrick's Day, 7am

On the feast day of Ireland's patron, Vlad explores the pantheon of saints and sinners of Irish early music.

ST PATRICK'S DAY MASS
RTÉ1, St Patrick's Day, 11am

From St Patrick's Church in Strandhill, Co. Sligo. The celebrant is the Very Rev. Canon Niall Ahern with Deacon Rev. Damian Kearns. Music from St Patrick's Choir, Scoil Asciús Naofa Choir, and traditional group Cairde Knocknarea.

outline what Catholics and Protestants had in common, but all they could come up with were differences.

Immediately following this, also on Channel 4, there was the first episode of a new comedy series, **Home**, which I found funnier, more humanly warmer, with much less bad language, though what did feature was still pointless, gratuitous and grating, especially so with a child actor taking a central part.

This one told the story of Syrian refugee Sami, an English teacher who stows away in an English family's car while they are passing through Calais. When they unpack they get more than they bargained for.

The script is sharp, smart and funny and the characters are likeable, which always helps. The mother is generous

and wants to help Sami – at one stage all she has for him is a loyalty card from a coffee shop – if he buys a few more coffees he'll get a free one!

The mother's new boyfriend is very suspicious of Sami but he's also something of a blow-in to the family and after a row ends up sleeping on an adjoining couch to Sami.

There are touching moments as Sami tries to reconnect with his family, lost in transit, and between the many funny situations there are timely reminders of the plight of asylum seekers and reflections on welcoming strangers.

✉ boregan@hotmail.com,
@boreganmedia



Pat O'Kelly

Music

New Music Dublin lives up to its eclectic promise

New Music Dublin, cancelled in 2018 due to weather, then partially salvaged last September resurrected itself at the beginning of this month for an action-packed weekend.

However, one would require exceptional stamina to cover the broad spectrum of its endeavours. As festival director John Harris commented, "the range of music being performed is immense...and it represents an incredible outpouring of Irish and international musical creativity".

The festival enjoys Arts Council funding together with substantial RTÉ input through its orchestras, quartet and youth choirs. The National Concert Hall is the lynchpin



Jean Deroyer.

of the entire operation.

I am selective in my choice of programmes, more for practical than aesthetic reasons and being particularly keen on hearing Ensemble Musikfabrik. Based in Cologne, and among Germany's leading exponents of

contemporary music, I am overwhelmed by the group's volcanic virtuosity in music by Swiss Michael Wertmüller (b. 1966) and non-conformist US artist Frank Zappa, who died in 1993.

Dating from 2013/4, Wertmüller's *antagonisme contrôlé* was written for the veteran saxophonist Peter Brötzmann, considered one of the most influential musicians in the free jazz scene. To say the piece is explosive is an understatement as, to me, the soloist portrays something of a wounded caged animal constantly badgered and goaded by braying hostile forces.

The piece, at times, is violently orgiastic in its percussive ferocity. There are moments of calm between

the periods of shattering mayhem but, gruff and garrulous, Brötzmann's improvisations respond to Musikfabrik's notated harassment with rasping resentment. Not for the faint-hearted, I decided to submit rather than resist as Norwegian conductor Christian Eggen directs the onslaught.

There is little relaxation, but some amusement, in eight intricate Zappa pieces. Once again Musikfabrik's playing is phenomenal with its 17 musicians, under percussionist Dirk Rothbrust, stunning virtuosi.

Directed by French maestro Jean Deroyer, the RTÉ NSO introduces complex major works by our own Jennifer Walshe – *The Site of an*

Investigation – and David Fennessy – *Conquest of the Useless*. Both composers are also soloists – she as versatile vocalist and he on electric guitar. Their music is extraordinarily imaginative.

I find the adventurous 30-minute Walshe piece thought provoking and disturbing. Maybe that's the idea behind the composer's message alerting us to "our calamitous situation". I hear touches of Mahler's *1st Symphony* coming through Ms Walshe's idiosyncratic scoring but wonder if 'the lady doth protest too much'.

● The inspiration for David Fennessy's mammoth three-movement 70-minute work comes from Werner Herzog's fantastic 1982 film *Fitzcar-*

raldo with its principal character dreaming of building an opera house in the Amazon jungle. In Fennessy's lengthy central Caruso movement the great tenor is heard as an ethereal spirit above the composer's earthly guitar.

In the finale, actor Aaron Monaghan declaims from Fitzcarraldo's diaries as he moves through the orchestra and climbs a ladder to the choir balcony. Mezzo Jennifer Johnson's lesser role is somewhat mysterious but Monaghan's clarity adds to the music's dynamic where the orchestra, with added electronics, represents the jungle and the river that flows through it. For the most part, fascinating stuff if a little too much of it.



BookReviews

Peter Costello



Recent books in brief

The International Eucharistic Congresses: A Spiritual Odyssey: 1881-2016

by John Francis Allen
(Gracewing, £20.00)

When the Eucharistic Congresses were held in Ireland it was the public events that attracted the attention of the commentators at the time and of historians since. But as the author of this valuable book makes clear, the Congresses also have a scholarly and theological side to them. These proceedings are always published, but as I know from library experience, are very rarely consulted.

Fr Allen's detailed history will go a very long way to opening up for both scholars and ordinary readers what was said, thought and resolved at these meetings. It will be of vital interest to those concerned with ongoing liturgical and Eucharistic studies and deserves wide readership in such circles.



Slí na Manach: Our Photographic Camino

by Dom Laurence Walsh

(Mount St Joseph Abbey, Roscrea, Co. Offaly, €20.00; please use the website link <http://bit.ly/2Kgt8Qn> to order your copy)

I have a regard for Mount St Joseph's Abbey as it was where my father was educated and where he developed his skills as a mathematician. But this beautifully produced photographic album deals with the monastery, the part of the establishment less open to the view of the public. Through the lengthy captions to the images spread over the century and a half, he compresses not only the history of the monastery, but also its distinguished visitors, its happy days and sad events, and the characters over the years who gave the community its particular charisma.

Though of interest to all those associated over the years with the place, the album also gives a vivid impression of the actual day-to-day life of service and devotion that is monastic life. This is a lovely book, created with care and love.



Streams of Living Waters, Celebrating the Great Traditions of Christian Faith

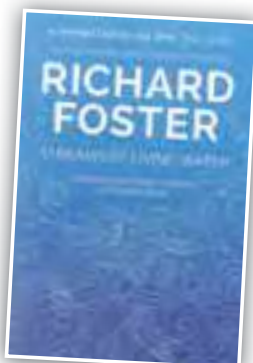
by Richard Foster

(Hodder, £10.99)

This is a book which will be of interest and value to every Christian, whatever tradition of the Faith they belong to. Author Richard James Foster is a theologian and author in the Quaker tradition. His writings address a common Christian readership.

Here he writes of what might be seen as a core of shared faith in six dimensions of Faith and practice, elements which actually unite Christians rather than divide them. In short these are: the contemplative tradition (a prayer filled life), the holiness tradition (a virtuous life), the charismatic tradition (a Spirit-empowered life), the evangelical tradition (a Word-centred life), and finally the incarnation tradition (or a sacramental life).

These elements can be found in all traditions, but are given different weight. Foster suggests that all are relevant to the fullness of the Christian life in the modern world. Though he says these streams of Faith can be found in many prophets, teachers and writers, "no one models these dimensions of the spiritual life more fully than Jesus Christ, if we want to see this river of life in its most complete form, it is to Jesus that we must turn".



The life of St Patrick reimagined...rather than revealed

Saint Patrick: The Legends and History of Ireland's Patron Saint

by Roy Flechner
(Princeton University Press, £22.00)

Peter Costello

The feast of Ireland's national apostle is upon us, in all its curious modern forms. And here just in time for the world-wide celebrations is a new inquiry into the history and the legends that surround St Patrick.

But readers expecting from the title a narrative account of the saint, a sort of biography with diversions, may be disappointed.

Roy Flechner, a lecturer at UCD, takes a different approach. While dealing with the saint himself, the medieval legends about him, and the modern devotions to him, his approach is to take a series of topics and to deal with these, presenting not a narrative but "an exegesis" of what has been written and claimed about Patrick.

He is happy to demolish earlier theories, but that done, he replaces them with some perhaps extravagant theories of his own.

The leading idea, which has already proved controversial, is his notion that St Patrick fled to Ireland to escape the hereditary duties that devolved on him from the social position of his grandfather and father not only in the Church, but also in the local administration of Roman Britain.

Needing money to support his work in Ireland he brought the family's slaves with him and traded in these.

This is an idea derived from Flechner's understanding of Roman law as it was applied in Britain. But to think that a man with a mission might need money in a society that did not use money is odd.

Hospitality

In fact it would seem that Patrick was self-confident enough, from his own time in Ireland as a bondsman, to rely on the obligation on chiefs and others of hospitality to entertain strangers. As a sort of druid (so to speak) Patrick would have been of a class greatly respected and wel-



Pilgrim climbing the mystic slopes of Croagh Patrick.

comed in Ireland. The idea of being a slave trader is not only surprising, it seems unbelievable.

In dealing with the medieval accounts of St Patrick he thinks they have been manipulated, which makes them quite unreliable. But behind them lay centuries of tradition. Yet he takes no account of the conservative strength of oral tradition in a pre-literate society such as Ireland then was.

Studies in Africa, Asia and the Pacific have demonstrated that oral tradition does preserve true facts from the quite distant past.

“Very quickly Ireland had adapted the new faith to its own social ways, and the Church was dominated by abbots and monasteries”

I suspect the interest of most readers will be more in the biography of the saint. What do we know, what can we know? Not too much perhaps, aside from what can be

gleaned in some way from the Confession and the Letter to Coroticus.

Those medieval legends of the saint tell us little about Patrick the man, but more about the social and religious rivalries of medieval Ireland. And the recent forms of celebration are also aspects of various societies in North America, Ireland and elsewhere.

They are quite remote from the real life of Patrick – whatever it may have been. Croagh Patrick, Lough Derg, the holy wells, these owe as much to prehistoric Ireland as they do to medieval beliefs.

More striking is the fact that Patrick introduced an episcopal Church on the Roman model, but very quickly Ireland had adapted the new faith to its own social ways, and the Church was dominated by abbots and monasteries, modelled on the way Celtic Ireland was run, with coenobitic ideas derived from Egypt. St Patrick was honoured, but not always imitated.

One would have liked some comparison of how Christianity leaked beyond the Imperial frontiers into Germany, Scan-

dinavia and the Middle East. But there is nothing on this which would have provided a context to think about Patrick's mission.

“Croagh Patrick, Lough Derg, the holy wells, these owe as much to prehistoric Ireland as they do to medieval beliefs”

Despite the criticism that will come its way, Dr Flechner's book is to be welcomed to some extent. By its controversial ideas it will serve a very important and necessary role. It will arouse others to debate and so to further research and to the constant and important reappraisal of the old materials and of new sources which will enlarge in some ways what we know.

As yet the definitive life of Patrick, if such a thing is possible when history is as a matter of course a process of constant revision, has yet to be written. This book re-imagines St Patrick, but perhaps goes only a little way towards revealing the real man for what he actually was.

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.

Dark days for Dublin football



Dublin fans cheer on their side from Hill 16 in Croke Park.

Dublin: The Chaos Years
by Neil Cotter
(Penguin Ireland, €18)

J. Anthony Gaughan

This is a refreshingly honest account of the interactions between the managers, players and fans of the Dublin senior football team from 1996 to 2010. It records the behind-the-scenes abuse, backchat, disloyalty and other challenges faced by the managers of that period.

Pat O'Neill led the Dubs to victory in the All-Ireland of 1995, but soon after stood down. He was followed by Mickey Whelan. A complete Dub, he had majored in sport science in a US college. He introduced novel training drills and set about grafting new young players into the team. Senior players were unenthusiastic about these initiatives.

There was serious division in the dressing-room between the established players and aspirants to a

permanent place on the team. After failing to come near to winning an All-Ireland, Whelan's contract went, following a public humiliation at the hands of the Dublin fans.

Next up was Tommy Carr, a former player. An army captain, he failed to take full control of the dressing-room. The splits among the players became more noticeable – between the senior and new young players, between players from different clubs and even between Northsiders and Southsiders.

When Carr failed to deliver the Sam Maguire Cup he also went. He was so upset by the manner of his dismissal that he did not attend a match in Croke Park for the following ten years.

Publicity

Tommy Lyons began with verve and a blaze of publicity but some of the players regarded him 'a culchie'. His days were numbered after a 'rumble' in the

dressing-room, led by Des-sie Farrell, later CEO of the Gaelic Players Association. Lyons' exit was marked by disgraceful scenes, orchestrated by a section of the Dublin fans, known to the players as the "drunken muppets".

“When Carr failed to deliver the Sam Maguire Cup he also went. He was so upset by the manner of his dismissal that he did not attend a match in Croke Park for the following ten years”

Paul Caffrey was the next to take over. An innovator, he had each player carry in his kit-bag a 'blue book' with inspiring quotations – shades of Mao's little red book!

He also devised a pre-match formal salute by the players to their fans on

Hill 16 – shades of the 'All Blacks' Haka.

More controversially, he encouraged "verbals". This consisted of taunting or abusing one's marker. In fairness to Caffrey, this unsporting conduct was not introduced by him. It was already associated with some members of the Tyrone team and it had been creeping into the game for some time.

The end came for Caffrey after a comprehensive defeat to Tyrone. He reacted by going abroad to avoid the fans.

Next was Pat Gilroy. A godson of the revered 'Heffo', he was a strict disciplinarian, he insisted on punishing training drills and schedules, but he had access to unprecedented funding.

He led the team to success in 2010 and inaugurated a period of remarkable success for the 'Dubs' and very happy times for their fans.

The dark days were done.

Mainly about books

By the books editor

The 'external soul' in modern Dublin

Travelling round the city as I do, largely by bus and tram, and graced with the benefit of not carrying any kind of phone or tablet, I have the leisure to observe other people's interaction with their media devices. I find it very suggestive, and believe that it ought to be of great interest to modern anthropologists.

Let me explain.

The 'external soul', or life token, was much discussed in the last decades of the 19th Century as a motif in many folk tales and legends. The life of a hero would be bound up with some object external to them, perhaps some token, a tree or a stone. If the life token was destroyed his life was at an end. To overcome an enemy the hero would have to search for and destroy his life token.

That, very roughly, was the notion, to which some long and elaborate books were devoted such as Sidney Hartland's *The Legend of Perseus* (1894).

But what has this to do with the person absorbed in their phone sitting opposite me in the Luas?

It struck me that for many people the memory on their phone is their memory: what they have been doing, photographs of where they have been and those they love and may long to see again, their emerging plans for the future, all their life in digital form.

One can see how absorbed they are they are watching an epic in a way, the epic of their life, which for them is just absorbing as Sir Galahad's quest for the Holy Grail.

But what if the phone is lost, stolen or destroyed? Like the people in the fairy tales and myths they are lost. Their life is gone. All that they retain is a shattered psyche which attempts to reconstruct their life and the record of its past, though its very nature may have vanished.

Profession

Perhaps this sounds an exaggeration, but to the observant anthropologist who, according the standards of his profession, merely watches a society and notes his observations, without making any moral judgement, their life of the modern city is of endless fascination.

But is this modern way the way people really want to live their lives? When we find children texting each other across the school playground rather than actually talking to each other we know that some very strange is happening, perhaps something very damaging.

The claim of modern communications since the middle of the last century is that it will bring us closer together.

But, as I write this, a new survey is reported that claims that social media has replaced religion seemingly in the lives of most people. One can imagine that many people might think that a good thing. Yet social

media brings immediate harm through cyber bullying and the propagation of lies far worse than any priesthood might manage.

People tend today to think themselves in charge of technology. They are in command of their lives, external souls or not. Yet this may not be the case. The philosopher Samuel Butler, a seemingly godless person yet who claimed to belong to the advanced wing of the Anglican church, in an 1863 essay 'Darwin among the Machines' suggested that we are not in command. It is actually the machines that are using us to promote their own evolution. A chilling idea in the 19th Century, it is positively frightening today.

Whatever about our souls and their fate, such an idea suggests that our machines are in fact making us less than human, that very slowly they are destroying us.

But enough of these fruitless musings. I have reached my stop on the Luas or the bus, and must leave the host of self-absorbed passengers. I have come home...home to my own little, self-absorbed world. But that at least is where my loved ones, my 'little platoon' are in all their human reality, and not as mere digital spooks of the social media jungle.

But next time you are on a tram or bus, close your own phone and look at the people, perhaps even speak to the person beside you. Human contact can be quite interesting.

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

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 April 11th Tour.

CNA
TARMAC CONTRACTORS

Rickardstown, Newbridge, Co Kildare
Serving Naas and Wider Area

Call now for your free quote!

Chris 087 249 8985 | Michael 085 106 8744
Tel 045 438226 | info@CNAContractors.com

www.cnacontractors.com

PILGRIMAGE

CHRISTMAS PILGRIMAGE GROUP to the Holy Land. ex Dublin 19th – 27th December. Also Holy Land Pilgrimage 31st October – 8th November 2019. Taking in Bethlehem, Jerusalem (Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Last Supper Room and Calvary), Mount Tabor, Cana, Nazareth, Jericho, River Jordan, Dead Sea and Sea of Galilee. **MEDJUGORJE PILGRIMAGE** for Youth Festival 2019 August Bank Holiday Weekend. ex Dublin 7 nights. Both Pilgrimages can be made by instalments, "this pilgrimage is operated by Joe Walsh Tours who are bonded and licensed". Contact James Treacy 0860572216.

Please pray for the beatification of

Little Nellie of Holy God

"May God enrich with every blessing all those who recommend frequent Communion to little boys and girls proposing Nellie as their model"

– Pope St Pius X, June 4, 1912

Please remember

THE IRISH HOSPICE FOUNDATION

when making your will so that everyone in Ireland will have access to hospice care one day.

Contact:
Anna Sadlier at 01 679 3188 or
anna.sadlier@hospicefoundation.ie
www.hospicefoundation.ie



The Irish
Hospice
Foundation

**I AM
DIVINE
INNOCENCE**

An encouraging message
from Heaven
Just Published

A Revelation in our time of Christ as Divine Innocence.
A message of hope - an invitation to belong to the Holy Family itself.

Heaven's answer to abortion.

Available online for only €8.99 as book,
€4.99 as ebook or from family of Divine Innocence P.O. Box 676A Surrey KT5 8WR

DUDLEY PLUNKETT

LITTLE FLOWER PENNY DINNERS



Little Flower Penny Dinners have been providing meals and services to the homeless and the elderly for over 100 years.
Please help us continue and donate what you can on our website www.LFPD.ie
or by phoning us with your credit/debit card details or by post to Little Flower Penny Dinners, 11 Meath St, DB
Phone 01 4536621 or 01 4546795
e-mail: salrigid@littleflower.ie

LEGACY
Help evangelize
Ireland by
remembering
The Irish Catholic
in your will.

Since 1930, we have been Ireland's leading Catholic weekly. Your help will grow subscriptions to schools and parishes.

For more information contact us on
01-687-4020

Remembering
**MEMORIAM CARDS
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
CARDS & NOTELETS
BOOKMARKS**

Samples / Information
KENNEDY PRINTERS
BANTRY, CO. CORK, IRELAND
Tel. 027 50102
www.kennedyprinters.ie
email: info@kennedyprinters.ie

BÓTHAR

PLEASE REMEMBER BÓTHAR IN YOUR WILL.
€1,800 will allow us to give an Irish, in-calf, dairy heifer to a struggling family in Rwanda, completely transforming their lives. Your gift will live on for generations. Phone the office on 061 414142 or info@bothar.ie

Classified Ads

SERVICES

ALL UNWANTED home waste removed. Cookers, fridges, beds, suites, wardrobes, carpets etc. Removed and disposed of in a proper manner. No job too small or big. Contact Tommy, 087 6406015.

THE THIRTY GREGORIAN MASSES

THIS IS the ancient custom, instituted by Pope Gregory the Great, of having 30 Masses said for one deceased person for release from Purgatory. Can also help in healing family tree. For information please phone 087-9381997.

SCAPULARS & ROSARY BEADS

BROWN Scapulars & rosary

beads – direct to you post free. The brown scapulars are made from pure wool and last for many years. €1.00 each. With miraculous medal attached €1.30. (inc postage). Information leaflet also supplied. Any quantity. Rosary beads are excellent quality in glass / lustre in all colours. Also wooden Padre Pio beads. €1.00 each inc postage. Rosary leaflets supplied. Any quantity. Phone (00353) 087 9381997, info@theopendoor.ie

MARBLE ALTAR

WHITE MARBLE ALTAR 4 feet x 9 inches square, height 3 feet x 5 inches and Church benches in N. Wicklow. Contact: 085 860 1794.

The Irish Catholic PREPAID CLASSIFIED AD COUPON

Please print your advertisement in the coupon, placing ONE word in each space. Below, please print your name and address. Do you require a Box Number? YES ☐ NO ☐ (Please tick ☒) Box Number €6 extra.

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

Name and contact detail form MUST be filled out

Name
Address
Landline Mobile
The Irish Catholic, 23 Merrion Square North, Dublin 2.

I enclose Cheque/PO: €..... I wish to pay by Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Laser ☐
My Visa/Mastercard/Lasercard number is:

Expiry Date: Signature

Phone: 01 687 4094

Follow *The Irish Catholic*
on Twitter

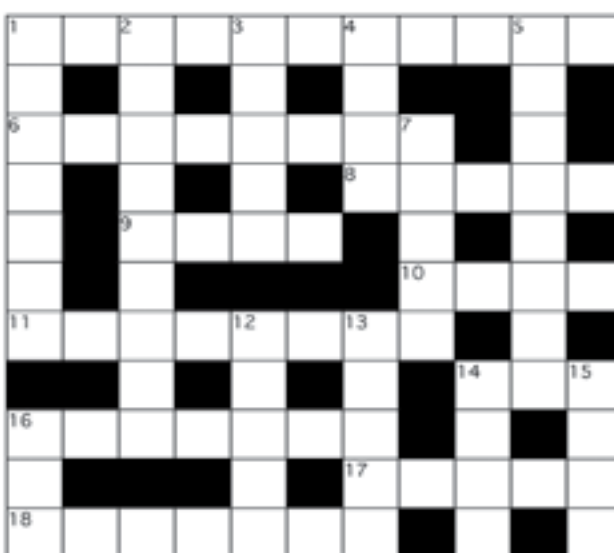


IrishCathNews

Leisure time

Crossword Junior

Gordius 273



ACROSS

- 1 Sail across it to get from Ireland to Britain (3,5,3)
6 Part of the airport where you meet people who have just flown in (8)
8 Finished (5)
9 Brave person (4)
10 You might toss this piece of money (4)
11 This frame allows you to carry things on top of your car (4,4)
14 A hen lays it (3)
16 Fell (7)
17 Gave out cards (5)
18 Smokers put their cigarettes out in one (7)

DOWN

- 1 We hope this 'pops' before the

bread in it is burnt! (7)

- 2 This crawling creature is very good for the soil (9)
3 The Lagan or Clyde perhaps (5)
4 Where you might buy some bargains (4)
5 Going in (8)
7 A quick bite to eat (5)
12 It helps you draw straight lines (5)
13 This person carries a golfer's clubs (5)
14 Test (4)
15 You'll see it at the entrance of a field (4)
16 Popular hot drink (3)

SOLUTIONS, MARCH 7

GORDIUS No.393

Across – 1 Wed 3 Counterfoil 8 Ritual 9 Tapestry 10 Drive
11 Senna 13 James 15 Mistake 16 Witches 20 Roomy 21 Sweet
and sour pork 23 Cuter 24 Capuchin 25 Hairdo 26 Polished off
27 Wok

Down – 1 World-famous 2 Detritus 3 Crate 4 No trump 5 Reeks
6 Ostend 7 Lay 13 Joker 14 Shiny 17 Heathrow 18 Mourned
19 Pen-pal 22 Ticks 23 Chaff 24 Cop

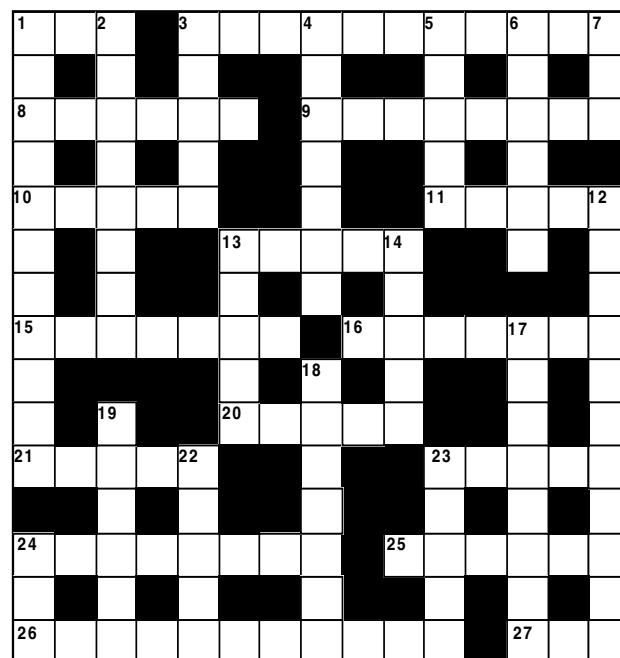
CHILDREN'S No.272

Across – 1 Confetti 5 Pie 6 Exact 8 Ripples 11 Igloos
12 Playpen 14 The 15 Glory 16 Sniff 18 Mine 19 Servants

Down – 1 Chewing-gum 2 Neatly 3 Trip 4 Lesson 5 Pal 7 Trophy
9 Isle 10 Prying 13 Effort 14 Trees 17 Jar

Crossword

Gordius 394



ACROSS

- 1 The Spanish potassium is the making of this creature (3)
3 Colonists go out to find specialists in treating tumours (11)
8 Sections of wall covering made by friends around the north-east (6)
9 A different kind of chest rub is needed as a source of wonderful liturgical music (8)
10 Gallic brilliance (5)
11 You chaps call this a country? (5)
13 Goodness, it's attributed to glue! (2,3)
15 Cereal crop that sounds like a pain in the mouth! (7)
16 Singer in the style of Bing Crosby or Michael Buble (7)
20 Thin soup (5)
21 Irate Christian symbol (5)
23 Prosper, like Joyce's Leopold (5)
24 Attained, accomplished (8)
25 Travelling onwards, finding this emotionally affective (6)
26 Interlopers (11)
27 Many a commercial is crazy (3)

DOWN

- 1 Much pieties involved in a

way that ignores unpalatable aspects (11)

- 2 Tragic Shakespearean monarch (4,4)
3 Young hunter found in a hollow letterbox (5)
4 An actor's position concerning Wild West transport (7)
5 Garishly coloured (5)
6 When stirred thus, my tea's full of vapour (6)
7 Took a seat (stools are taken to begin with) (3)
12 & 19d Nag thy redeemer too? Perhaps with this hymn (6,2,3,2,4)
13 Explanatory information on the cover of a book (5)
14 Fen that makes the Red Planet hot (5)
17 Such blatant favouritism points me out (8)
18 The novice takes our Desmond on pilgrimage here (7)
19 See 12 down
22 It's inclined to soak things (5)
23 Reserves some reading matter (5)
24 Perform a role in a play or film (3)

Please make a little room
in your will for people
who are homeless

Contact our Fundraising
Department in strictest
confidence

Tel. 01 8515 900
Email: info@focusireland.ie
www.focusireland.ie

FOCUS
Ireland



Everything Family & Life does to save babies and strengthen the family relies on you and our other generous friends. This work has never been more needed.

A gift in your Will ensures that the most effective pro-life / pro-family organisations will continue working for the kind of society we all desire, and will leave a loving mark on countless lives for years to come.

For further advice or to avail
of our Solicitor's free Wills
service, please contact us
today on

01-8552790

Family & Life

26 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1
Ph: 01 8552790 | email: fandi@iol.ie

www.familyandlife.org

Will the MSC Missions

Missionaries of the Sacred Heart work in poor parishes
in Africa, Russia and Venezuela

Please remember them in your Will

Contact:

Mission Support Centre, Western Road, Cork.
Tel: 021 - 4543988

www.mscmissions.ie

When you remember
Trócaire in your
Will, you bring hope
to people living in
the world's
poorest places

Trócaire

It's easy to get started, and we'll
help you every step of the way.
Call **Grace Kelly** on 01 629 3333,
email grace.kelly@trocaire.org
or write to me at Trócaire,
Maynooth, Co Kildare.

One day, parents and their
children will tell the story
of how your legacy of love
changed their lives.
Thank you for considering a
gift to Trócaire in your Will.

Sudoku Corner

272

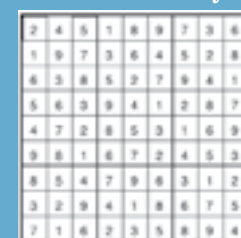
Easy



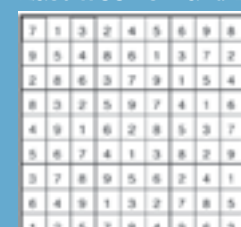
Hard



Last week's Easy 271



Last week's Hard 271



Notebook

Fr Vincent Sherlock

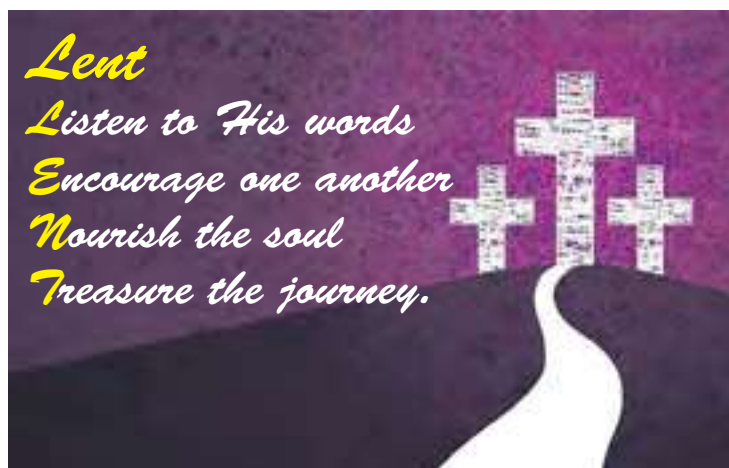


Lent – a great opportunity to download

I LISTENED TO 'The Deer's Cry' in the house before Mass. It is a favourite of mine and I thought that I might play it at Holy Communion time if there was no choir. There was no choir, so I left the phone on the altar, moved the microphone close to it and clicked 'play' but nothing happened. I tried again but no sound. I gave up. Only later, did I realise that when I listened to it in the house, I was using Spotify and the WiFi connection at home. I was listening to the song in 'the cloud'. I had not downloaded it to my phone.

There's something being said here about the need to download. It's one thing to have an awareness of the story of our Faith, the teachings of our Church and the core message of the Gospel but if we leave it 'in the cloud', it may well prove to be silent when we most need it and depend upon it. The hard drive is the key. Files downloaded to the hard drive are readily accessible and more local to us. We don't need to have the wireless connection or a password.

Well maybe we do need the password. A priest told me once of visiting a school and talking to the young children about blessing



themselves. In teacher style, he blessed himself, using the left hand and very slowly spoke the words as he moved his hand from forehead to chest, from shoulder to shoulder and to a joined position. A young pupil, watching and listening, asked the priest: "Does that mean we are logged in to God now? The password is the blessing and the logging in will take care of itself, but the downloading is essential."

Lent, a chance to download – to make our own of the Scriptures, to become familiar with the Stations of The Cross, to speak again those

words: "Bless me Father, for I have sinned" and to hear those words of absolution – absolved from sins: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen" – logged in.

Forgiveness

Download the message of forgiveness and of letting go of baggage, however justified, that places distance between us and another.

Take to the hard drive memories of friendships that might have soured and journey back, beyond the moment

of friction to the years of togetherness shared and moments enjoyed. If only we could do this, what a difference it could make. If only we could remember what brought us together and focus less on what drove us apart.

I'm not saying it is easy to do this. I am not foolish enough to think that some hurts are beyond repair but not all. It is possible to re-claim friendship and re-build bridges. The desire must be there of course, desire in the heart of one that might eventually get through to the heart of another.

Think about it at least. If you are reading these lines and connecting with them in some way, maybe that's the reason you are reading them. In the cloud we know the right thing to do, we know the tune, but we run the risk of not downloading and of losing words and a tune that could truly bring us joy.

So, log-in this Lenten Season. Do everything possible to be at peace with people and to be a means of peace. Begin, and continue: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen"

After all, that's the password – WiFi or no WiFi!

She set up the box...

On Ash Wednesday I was called to a house where a lady was found dead. I had seen her the previous Sunday, walking up the hill to the church to join us for Mass.

At the end of that Mass, I mentioned that the Trócaire Boxes had been placed in the parish bulletin and I encouraged people to bring them home. I said I knew there are many calls for charity now and it's not easy to respond to them all, but that the Trócaire Box gave us 40 days to respond and that a little now and then could make a huge difference to those depending on us.

As I stood in her kitchen, I noticed the Trócaire Box set up and in place on her worktop. Her intentions were good.

May she rest in peace.



Photo: Water from the lake being brought to the health centre by use of hired donkey carts.



A CATHOLIC HEALTH CENTRE IN TANZANIA NEEDS CLEAN WATER

The Sisters of the Incarnate Word administer a mission health centre, primary school and school hostel in the Catholic Diocese of Musoma, Tanzania. Sister Irene recently contacted The Little Way Association for financial help to install a desperately needed new water system for the health centre. "Water supply has been an issue since the mission started to expand", she wrote. "Initially the water supplied by water mills was enough to serve the small community, but now we are experiencing great water shortage to the point of hiring donkey carts to fetch water from the lake. This is very expensive and unhygienic. With a solar powered water supply system our health centre patients will get constant, clean water for their use, and the whole community will benefit."

Can you help the Sisters in their life-saving work for disadvantaged mothers, babies and the sick?

A reliable supply of clean water will make such a difference. Every donation that we receive in response to this Appeal will be sent, without deduction, to this project or a project in similar need.



"True glory is that which will last eternally, and to reach it, it isn't necessary to perform striking works but to hide oneself and practice virtue in such a way that the left hand knows not what the right is doing." - St Therese

In our modern age of materialism and selfishness, when so many are searching for an authentic spirituality, Therese's little way of simple love for God and others has a powerful appeal. Perhaps we too can join her on the 'little way'.

All Little Way benefactors share in a daily Mass offered for their intentions in the Missions.

HELP FEED THE HUNGRY

Please spare a thought for the thousands who die each year of hunger and disease in mission lands. Your donation will relieve the pangs of starvation, and every euro you send will be forwarded to a missionary for food and medicines for the hungry and sick.

Crossed POs and cheques should be sent and made payable to:

THE LITTLE WAY ASSOCIATION

Sacred Heart House, 119 Cedars Rd, Clapham Common, London SW4 0PR
(Registered Charity No. 235703) Tel 0044 20 76 22 0466
www.littlewayassociation.com

I enclose €..... to be allocated to:

€..... **CLEAN WATER PROJECT**

€..... **HUNGRY, SICK AND DEPRIVED**

€..... **MASS OFFERINGS**
(Please state number)

€..... **LITTLE WAY ADMIN EXPENSES**

☐ Please tick if you would like an acknowledgement

Name (Rev. Mr. Mrs. Miss)

(Block letters please)

Address

To donate online go to
tinyurl.com/lwadonations

DONATIONS FOR THE MISSIONS ARE SENT WITHOUT DEDUCTION FOR ANY EXPENSES.