

# The Irish Catholic

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## Bishop warns Catholics of the dangers of 'narrow nationalism'

Chai Brady

The message of an Irish army chaplain currently on the road to sainthood can combat a narrow sense of nationalism in Ireland that seeks to "exclude and scapegoat", the Bishop of Meath has said.

Bishop Tom Deenihan hailed Fr Willie Doyle SJ who died in 1917 during World War I, saying his generosity extended beyond nationality and creed.

The Dicastery for the Causes of Saints has opened Fr Doyle's cause, making him a 'Servant of God'.

"We see at home and abroad an increase in a narrow sense of nationalism which often seeks to exclude and scapegoat rather than include and reach out," Bishop Deenihan warned.

"The current stalemate with the Northern Assembly, the Ukrainian refugee crisis and the growing nationalism in politics throughout the world, are cases in point. Pope Francis has said before that the real Christian is someone who builds bridges not walls. Willie Doyle was a bridge builder," he said.

Bishop Deenihan said that the concept of an Irish priest working as an army chaplain with the British Forces in 1917 and ministering to soldiers who were Catholic and Protestant, and losing his life while bringing one to safety, points to "a generosity that

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### Giving the gift of love...



Launching Trócaire's Christmas 'Gifts of Love' were sisters Rose (1) and Aoibhín McHugh (4) from Kilcloon, Co. Meath. This year's gift of winter essentials is for Syrian children living in harsh conditions in Lebanese camps. The Irish public have bought more than one million life-changing Trócaire gifts since the year 2000 to support some of the world's most vulnerable families. The gifts can be purchased online at [trocaire.org/gifts](http://trocaire.org/gifts). Photo: Mark Stedman

**JASON OSBORNE**

Irish interfaith pioneer in US dies at 103

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Joy and consolation in November prayers

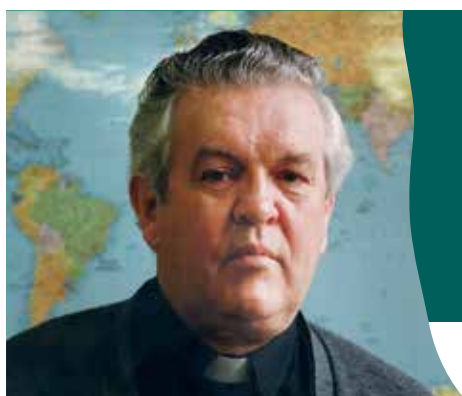
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**Michael Kelly's Editor's Comment will return next week**

# 'Crying need' for atonement after abuse – Archbishop Martin

**Ruadhán Jones**

There is a "crying need" for atonement, inner healing and hope in the aftermath of the abuse scandals, Archbishop Eamon Martin has said.

His comments come as Gardaí are investigating allegations of widespread abuse in schools run by the Spiritans, with allegations made against 77 members of the order for over 200 instances of abuse.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony in St Patrick's Pontifical University, Maynooth, the Primate of All-Ireland said

that atonement for abuse was one of the "key points" that were heard during the first phase of the synodal process.

The Church must discover "fresh models of responsibility and leadership" to facilitate the "role of women, as well as men", Archbishop Martin told the graduate class of 2022 in theology and philosophy, November 12.

He added it must help "reach out to those who in recent decades have left the Church, or who feel excluded, forgotten or ignored. There is a crying need for atonement, inner healing and hope in the aftermath of the abuse scandals".

Meanwhile, Gardaí are investigating allegations of abuse against members of the Spiritans, an Irish order, over a 50-year period. The investigation is being coordinated at a national level by the Sexual Crime Management Unit.

Some 77 priests are the subject of 233 complaints of alleged abuse, 47 in Ireland and a further 30 in schools run overseas, in Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Guinea, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the US.

A radio documentary for RTE's Documentary On One called *Blackrock Boys*, in

which brothers Mark and David Ryan recounted the protracted sexual abuse each suffered at Blackrock College, the most prestigious of five fee-paying schools run by the Spiritans, has brought the issue to national attention.

In a statement Fr Martin Kelly, leader of the Spiritans, formerly known as the Holy Ghost order, said: "I apologise sincerely to those who have been so grievously hurt and assure victims/survivors that our congregation is doing all in its power to help those who have been injured."

## Charity welcomes blessing of sculpture highlighting homelessness

**Chai Brady**

Homelessness charity Depaul has welcomed Pope Francis' blessing of a new sculpture depicting the plight of homeless people.

Ahead of the sixth World Day of the Poor, November 13, the Pope blessed 'Sheltering'. The bronze sculpture is life-sized and depicts the figure of a homeless person covered by a blanket pulled by a pigeon in flight. It is the work of Canadian artist Timothy Schmalz.

David Carroll, CEO of Depaul in Ireland said: "Homelessness is presently one of the most important issues that our country and our communities face. People



Pope Francis waves to members of the Vincentian religious orders and lay communities after blessing Canadian artist Timothy Schmalz' new sculpture, 'Sheltering'.

in homelessness in Ireland are in crisis and support is needed now more than ever as winter descends."

The sculpture was conceived to shed light on the problem of homelessness in the world and to promote practical solutions in line with the mission of the 13 Houses Campaign, an initiative of the worldwide Vincentian Family.

After participating in the blessing of Sheltering, Mark McGreevy, the President of the Depaul International Group,

said that the goal of the 13 Houses Campaign "is to house 10,000 people around the world, in the 160 countries where the Vincentian Family works. This is just the first step in an ambitious plan to change the lives of many of the 1.2 billion people who are currently homeless around the world through practical projects and pressure for systemic change".

# Bishop warns Catholics of the danger of 'narrow nationalism'

» Continued from Page 1 extends beyond nationality and creed".

He said: "It is a message that needs to be heard. Generosity is the hallmark of the Christian calling."

It is understood the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference support the cause and is "optimistic for its progression".

The Postulator for the cause of Fr Doyle, Fr John Hogan OCDS, said there is a huge amount of interest in the chaplain and that devotion to him "never died away with each generation finding something new in him".

"The great response we've had to the announcement that the cause was being opened is not surprising, a lot of people have been waiting for this for many, many years so we're delighted with that because we can build on that devotion going forward" he said.

On the battlefield Fr Doyle made no distinction in terms of pastoral care and love to soldiers whether they were Catholic, Protestant, Irish, British or German, Fr Hogan stated.

## Concerned

"As far as Willie was concerned, we were all children of the same God and he sought to communicate the love of God and the mercy of God to everyone. We know from documentary evidence that a lot of Ulster Protestants had a great regard for Fr Willie, so I think he's a great example of peace and reconciliation and an early model of ecumenism."

Fr Hogan added: "There's a lovely story of the soldier who was badly injured and Fr Willie went to tend to him and the soldier said to him 'Father I am not of your flock', and he said 'You belong to my God'. That was

the common denominator in Willie's relationship for people and that's something we need to bear in mind as well particularly with various denominations within Christianity."

Fr Doyle completed his Jesuit Noviciate in Rahan in the Diocese of Meath. His cause will be opened on Sunday November 20 in the Cathedral of Christ the King, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath, at 5pm.

People from all over Ireland, Catholic and Anglican priests from England, including the head army chaplains from both Ireland and England, clergy from the United States as well retired members of the Irish and British armies, the Jesuit provincial and many more are expected to be in attendance.

The website for Fr Doyle's cause is williedoyle.org

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Four new appointments to Maynooth staff

St Patrick's Pontifical University, Maynooth, is welcoming four new key academic appointments across its Theology and Philosophy Faculties.

The new academic appointees include: Professor of Moral Theology Tobias Winright, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy Dr Simon Nolan O.Carm, Lecturer of Systematic Theology Joshua Furnal and Programme Co-Ordinator for the Diploma in Youth Ministry and Spirituality Anne-Marie Dolan.

President of the College Fr Michael Mullaney, welcomed the appointments, saying he is "delighted that academics of such stature and experience are joining us here at Saint Patrick's".

"They bring a wealth of international knowledge and experience in their new roles."



# Expanded synod 'a kind of Vatican III', says Archbishop Farrell

Ruadhán Jones

The expansion of the synod by Pope Francis makes it "a kind of Vatican III", building on the legacy of the Second Vatican Council, the Archbishop of Dublin said on November 14.

The inclusion of the "whole Church", not just those in ministry or leadership positions, are called to "come to grips" with what the Spirit is saying to the Church, Archbishop Dermot Farrell said.

He added that the expansion of the synod "makes the synodal pathway resemble a council more than a synod".

The renewal of the Church begun during Vatican II "enters a new phase" with the synodal pathway, putting "flesh on the bones of the Vatican Council's understanding

of the Church as the People of God", he said in a homily for the feast of St Laurence O'Toole, Dublin diocese's patron saint.

There must be an openness to the reality that a "different Church rather than another Church" will emerge, the archbishop continued.

There are "risks" in the synodal pathway, principally that the Church, "both as institution and as fellowship", will be the chief focus.

"The Synod(s) will be a success only if we put the focus properly where it belongs," he said in his homily in St Mary's Pro-Cathedral. "This has to be on the Gospel: the person and message of Jesus, the events of his death and resurrection and outpouring of the Spirit, the life of discipleship."

Dr Farrell also called for the launch of "another evangelisation of Ireland", as there is a "credibility gap" for many of our contemporaries.

"The Gospel itself lacks credibility," he warned, adding that "a feature of this credibility gap is the failure to get across even the fundamentals about the faith, independently of any conviction".

A new evangelical initiative "would have to make room for questions as pivotal as the possibility of God actually being able to share his very being with us," said Dr Farrell.

"Such an initiative could not afford to ignore evolution or ecology, or 'nature as a grace-endowed reality'," he continued, quoting Fr Dermot Lane.

## Jewish actor credits Mary for conversion to Catholicism

Jason Osborne

Famous Jewish actor and comedian Gad Elmaleh has announced his conversion to Catholicism, saying that Our Lady played a crucial role and that she is his "most beautiful love".

A big star in France and further afield, Mr Elmaleh has starred in several big hits, including *Midnight in Paris*, *Priceless*, *Coco* and *La Doublure*.

His conversion to Catholicism is depicted in his new film, *Reste un peu*, ('Stay a while').

Mr Elmaleh will take the name of Jean-Marie when he is baptised, according to the Spanish newspaper *El Mundo*.

He studied theology in Paris, and in 2019 he featured in a musical in London about St Bernadette Soubirous, the mystic who saw Our Lady of Lourdes.

French newspaper *Le Figaro* reported Mr Elmaleh as expressing his surprise that in France the "vast majority of Catholics don't live their faith openly".



Cardinal Robert Sarah with Gad Elmaleh, the Moroccan-French comedian who recently announced his conversion to Catholicism from Judaism.

Mr Elmaleh's parents feature in his upcoming film, and are apparently not very "happy" with his decision to convert to Catholicism but have decided to offer him their support nonetheless.

He described the film as "a search in which I ask myself where, who, when, there's a God, there is no God," he said, but he affirms that always "the Virgin Mary calls me and protects me".

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Young people invited to WYD on 'Youth Sunday'

The Church celebrates the Feast of Christ the King on Sunday, November 20 and Pope Francis has nominated this day to be 'Youth Sunday'; A day where the Church can reflect on young people.

AMRI's Gerard Gallagher has echoed Pope Francis and encouraged young people to 'arise' and consider the next World Youth Day which

will take place in Lisbon, 1-6 August 2023 and will be the first since the Pandemic.

"World Youth Day provides a moment, a signpost to ignite and inspire a new energy for the young Church.

"Hopefully parishes will respond to this opportunity to reach out and invite young people to consider going on this great pilgrimage to Lisbon WYD," Mr Gallagher said.

World Youth Day is open to young people aged 16 and up. Contact your local diocese or movement for more information.



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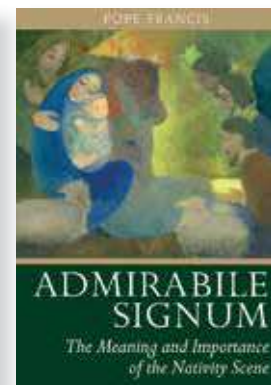
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# Renowned historian who pursued peace process Éamon Phoenix dies

Chai Brady

Tributes have poured in for the renowned historian, author and lecturer Dr Éamon Phoenix who made a "unique contribution to the peace process", following his death this week.

Belfast-based Dr Phoenix was an expert in the history of Ireland and Northern Ireland. He was a former teacher in St Malachy's College, Belfast, and lectured in Stranmillis University College. Bishop Noel Treanor of the Diocese of Down and Connor said he was "very saddened" to hear of his death.

He said: "Dr Phoenix had an encyclopaedic capacity to communicate to his students and to wider public audiences the complex and sensitive history of Ireland in a manner that was accessible, engaging, informative and insightful."

"His wonderful personal ability to contextualise historical events and their human impact and his unique entertaining story-telling style of delivery made a unique contribution to the peace process in Ireland."

The bishop said that Dr Phoenix was committed to the pursuit of reconciliation and, with an impar-

tial cross-cultural perspective, he assisted so many others in the act of remembrance and in coming to terms with the past.

"He leaves behind this legacy of a journey together towards mutual understanding and a shared human history. His academic professionalism and personal integrity led to him being a valued advisor on matters relating to Irish history and the Decade of Centenaries," Bishop Treanor stated, adding that Dr Phoenix was "devoted to his family", to whom the prelate extended his sympathy and prayers.

Primate of All Ireland Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh archdiocese also extended his sympathy via social media, saying: "My sympathies to the family and friends of Dr Éamon Phoenix, RIP – a most gifted historian, author and broadcaster – a very kind person and engaging communicator..."

Dr Maurice Manning, Chair of the Expert Advisory Group on Centenary Commemorations, said: "Éamon Phoenix was a historian of great integrity and empathy, a skilled communicator whose life was dedicated to building bridges

between communities and illuminating the history of his beloved Belfast."

The academic was a long-time contributor to the newspaper the *Irish News* and appeared many times on many broadcast stations.

High-ranking politicians including Sinn Féin, DUP and SDLP leaders, Taoiseach Micheál Martin and more also paid tribute.

Dr Phoenix died on Monday aged 69 at his home in Belfast following a short illness. He is survived by wife Alice, daughter Mary-Alice, son-in-law Stuart and granddaughter Nicole.

## NI academic selection causes continued disadvantage – report

Staff reporter

Academic selection in the North of Ireland "disadvantages the already disadvantaged" according to new research from Queen's University Belfast (QUB).

Called 'Is academic selection in Northern Ireland a barrier to social cohesion?',

the paper discusses the tests used by grammar schools to select pupils.

Transfer tests began on Saturday November 12 and will continue on subsequent Saturdays until December 10.

Authors of the paper, QUB academics Prof. Joanne Hughes and Dr Rebecca Loader, said: "Academic

selection perpetuates middle-class advantage and limits potential for the development of a more integrative and inclusive education system," they said.

"In a society emerging from conflict, those in more marginalised communities experience the consequences of this most acutely. In communities that are historically

segregated and susceptible to paramilitary control, educational failure and the absence of social mobility are more likely to manifest in violence and intergroup hostility. This system disadvantages the already most disadvantaged," according to the academics.

Middle-class interests have served to "mobilise a grammar school lobby... that

has acted decisively to protect its privilege", they added.

The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) told *The Irish Catholic* it is "reviewing the contents of the report and will continue to engage with our partners in education on all issues affecting Catholic maintained schools".

Bishop Donal McKeown of

the Diocese of Derry has previously been critical of academic selection, saying that all schools should focus on ensuring "quality outcomes for all young people".

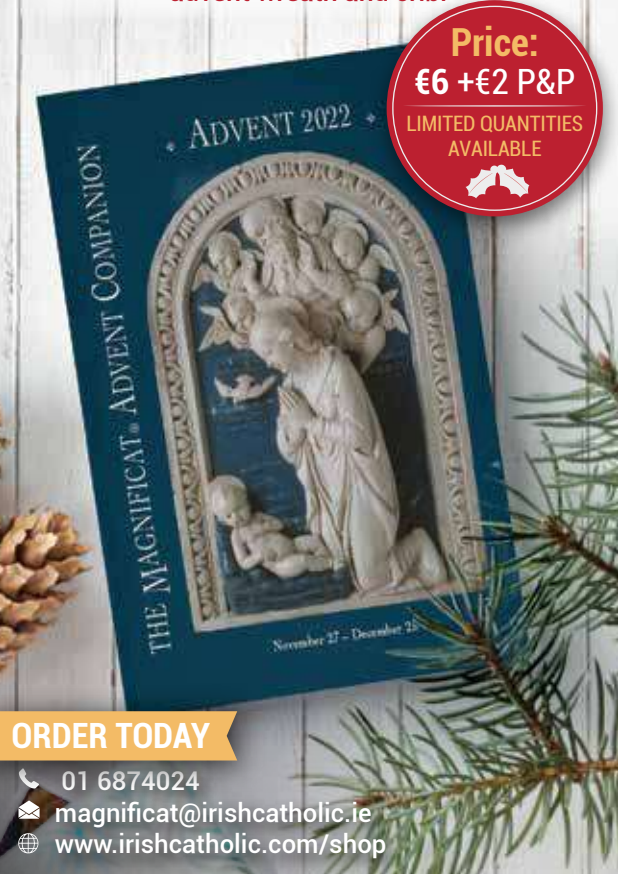
The bishop has described transfer tests as a "fake exam which claims to measure intelligence but really is only a competition for those who are best prepared".

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### Giving it socks...



Students from St Eugene's Primary School, Co. Derry, show off their odd socks on the first day of anti-bullying week, which runs from November 14-18.

### QUB Catholic chaplaincy submits plans for student accommodation

Jason Osborne

Plans to redevelop the Catholic Chaplaincy site at Queen's University Belfast have been submitted, with work due to start at the end of the present academic year.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* newspaper, Catholic chaplain to QUB Fr Dominic McGrattan said it's coming "at a time of real growth for us".

"We're celebrating our 50th anniversary and that's a milestone where you look back and you celebrate past achievements, but it's not enough just to do that," he said.

"You need to be looking forward and certainly at the level of engagement with the chaplaincy and the efforts that we're putting into developing campus ministry to be a world-class provider of faith and pastoral supports."

Student accommodation is included among the proposals, alongside an upgrade to the existing facilities at the Elmwood Avenue site.

A welcome area, coffee bar, recreation and counselling spaces are included in the plan.

The current plans aim for a completion date allowing the revamped site to be opened for the new academic year 2025.



# Is marriage doomed?

**I**s the institution of marriage doomed? According to a leading British think-tank, 'Civitas', wedlock is declining possibly beyond repair – it is now subject to “exponential decay”.

About one in 100 couples are currently married; in 40 years' time, the researchers predict, the numbers will be one in 400. The statistics apply to England and Wales, but the trend of declining marriage rates is apparent in all western societies (and align with a study by Iona earlier this year tracking the continuing decline of Irish marriage)

## Asking

Sometimes I ask people of my own vintage – the grandparent generation – if their offspring are married, or cohabiting (if they are in a couple relationship). Anecdotal, I often get the same answer: “They don't seem to think marriage is important.” Cohabitation is the common practice, marriage may occasionally follow later on. I know older couples who marry simply to assure inheritance rights. I've also heard younger people say that since



**Mary Kenny**

divorce is so easy, there doesn't seem much point in marriage.

It's astonishing how marriage has declined from being a condition of primary importance (even leaving aside the sacramental element), to something that's seen as almost irrelevant. The Civitas report says that there has been “a structural shift in societal view of marriage”.

**“Marriage could be over-emphasised as woman's destiny – or measure of success”**

Perhaps marriage was regarded as almost too overweening in past times: an aunt of mine dedicated very many of her prayers pleading for a “good husband” for her daughters. (Her prayers were answered, however!) Marriage could be over-emphasised as woman's

destiny – or measure of success. Think of the stigma that was once attached to the “old maid”, who was “left on the shelf”.

And marriage isn't always an easy pathway. Maybe this is why so many people don't want fully to commit. Keeping a marriage going can be hard work. Maintaining the commitments, the trust, even sometimes the renunciation of one's own ego – these things are challenges.

## Bonds

The culture in which we live so often undermines the bonds of matrimony. A recent Dutch survey claimed that it stimulated a woman's self-esteem to have an affair outside of marriage. I daresay it's always a stimulus to be admired or desired, yet Princess Diana's words “there were three of us in this marriage” surely signal the insecurity, damage and unhappiness that can accrue from infidelity?



It's interesting to look back on the same-sex marriage referendum in 2015, when the point was so often made by advocates that the right to marry was an

essential human right, and that the couple relationship was basically about love and commitment.

How paradoxical now, to observe that the right to

marry is increasingly disdained, and, if the Civitas study is correct, married couples will only be a tiny minority of the population in the near future.

**“About one in 100 couples are currently married; in 40 years' time, the researchers predict, the numbers will be one in 400”**

## The alumnae of Blackrock College

The revelations about abuse at Blackrock College are dismaying. Will no one say a word for the positive education it provided over the years – including to Frank Duff, Eamon de Valera and Brendan O'Regan, the dynamic businessman (and namesake of our excellent broadcasting critic) who developed Shannon Airport?

Tim Pat Coogan, author and republican – who has been a trenchant critic of the Catholic Church – wrote in

his autobiography, *A Memoir*, that: “My observation of the congregation [at Blackrock] over the years was that it contained high quotients of kindness and educational skill, and a marked tendency to temper the wind to the shorn lamb.” Boys whose parents had fallen on hard times were allowed to continue in their studies without being pressed for fees. Fr Michael O'Carroll (1911-2004) – had a “lasting influence”: he was theo-

logically conservative but politically “both liberal and democratic”. (He also wrote for this paper.) Fr O'Carroll, writes Tim Pat, tried to highlight the plight of the Jews during the Second World War, though neutrality and state censorship frustrated some of his efforts.

All sexual abuse is odious, but there must be many alumnae of the Spiritans who encountered no such experience, and heard no whisper of it either.

● Listening to Michéal Martin speak, as he nears the end of his present stint as Taoiseach, it's evident that he is basically a decent man who wants to do the best for the country. But he belongs to the category of politician, I think, known as “managerial”. They see their role as managing policy, and particularly the economy (often adding “in co-operation with our European partners”).

Politicians in the past sought to be more ideological, or even inspirational. I suppose the rise of “populist” political leaders elsewhere may be a yearning for a change from the managerial (or sometimes, as in Italy, because the managers don't seem to be all that effective).

In the final analysis, I believe the electorate gets the leaders they deserve, whether these be “managers”, inspirationalists or populists.

  
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# Politicians criticise hate crime legislation's 'lack of clarity'

Jason Osborne

Politicians have expressed concerns about the "subjectivity" and "lack of clarity" present in the proposed 'hate crime' legislation, which will add gender, including gender expression and identity, and disability to a list of "protected characteristics".

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* newspaper, Independent TD for Clare Michael McNamara said that he has concerns about the bill from a "broader, societal perspective".

"There is a subjectivity [in the bill] which

I think is unhelpful, and particularly given the increasingly intolerant people calling for tolerance...they'll tolerate anything but intolerance. That's a concern," Mr McNamara said.

While believing religious freedom to be appropriately defended by the legislation as it stands, Mr McNamara said that "any subjectivity" or unclarity around freedom of expression is "ill-advised" and something he would be concerned about.

The bill states that in any proceedings for an offence under this section, a defence can be based upon a "reasonable and genuine

contribution to literary, artistic, political, scientific, religious or academic discourse".

However, it is not made clear what a "reasonable and genuine contribution" is, which has given rise to claims of subjectivity in the bill.

Speaking in the Dáil November 10, Aontú leader Peadar Kirby asked Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee, to rethink the bill, saying "one of the bill's major problems, which has already been mentioned, is the lack of clarity in its definitions".

"The Minister needs to proof those definitions against whatever judge might be sitting

in whatever court at some time in the future. We know that views and ideas on many of the issues being discussed today are fluid," Mr Tóibín said, adding, "In five years' time, for example, many people will have different views and ideas".

The terminology contained in the bill appears "sloppy or not well thought-out", Deputy Tóibín said, citing the line "Hatred means hatred [...]", and saying that it "reads like an advertising tag line as opposed to a clear, unarguable definition".

## Creeshlough Novena to bring healing to hurt community

Staff writer

A novena with addresses from special guests has started up as the month's mind Masses for the victims of the October 7 explosion in Creeshlough come to an end, with Fr John Joe Duffy saying that the intention is to bring about healing for a hurting community.

Former Tyrone man-

ager Mickey Harte is due to address those in attendance, along with Daniel O'Donnell and former Eurovision winner Dana Rosemary Scallon.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* newspaper, Fr Duffy said that the Church became a "hub" in the wake of the tragedy, and that the novena will give a sense of "continuity" in the Church's engagement with those who need

accompaniment.

"There are moments where they can cope and moments that are very difficult and challenging for those who have lost loved ones and for all who were affected by this trauma, including those in emergency services and those in our community who responded. People were affected in different ways," Fr Duffy said.

The novena began on Tuesday, and will run for two weeks. Among those addressing the novena are:

- Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry and Raphoe James Forster, November 15

- Bishop of Raphoe Alan McGuckian, November 16

- Dana Rosemary Scallon, November 17

- Fr Philip Baxter, Guardian of Ards Capuchin Friary, November 18

- Fr Vincent Finnegan, Franciscan from Rosstown, November 21

- Mickey Harte, November 23

- Daniel O'Donnell, November 25

## Memorial held for biker priest



A convoy of bikers pause in front of the Sacred Heart Church, Clones, where 'biker priest' Fr John Kearns spent 10 years ministering, on what would have been the priest's 65th birthday, November 6.

Ruadhán Jones

Bikers from across the country gathered on November 6 to remember Fr John Kearns, an active member of motorbiking organisations before his death in December 2021.

Fr Kearns was chairperson of the Bikers' Memorial Committee, which organised the November 6 event, up until his death from cancer aged 64.

Newly elected chairperson Annmarie Marshall paid tribute to Fr Kearns' "passion and love" for the Bikers Memorial. He was one of the co-

founders of an annual memorial church service for bikers who lost their lives in motorcycle collisions.

"He was always there for bikers and we're here for him now, to show our appreciation for what he did for us," Ms Marshall said.

A wreath was laid on his grave on what would have been Fr Kearns' 65th birthday, before 160 bikers joined a convoy in his memory.

Over €2,700 was raised on the day in aid of the Friends of Cancer Care, the charity that helped Fr Kearns' through his struggles with cancer.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Limerick parishes offer prayers for Vicky Phelan

Parishes in Limerick have offered prayers for cervical cancer campaigner Vicky Phelan, who died on Monday aged 48.

"You will always be remembered for your strength and bravery, you were inspirational to so many," the parishes of Donoughmore, Knockea and Roxboro in Ms Phelan's home

county, Limerick, said in a Facebook post.

"Gone too soon but her love and legacy lives on. Our thoughts and prayers are with Vicky's two children, her family and friends."

Ms Phelan was diagnosed with cervical cancer in 2014. She had undergone a smear test in 2011 showing no abnormalities, before her diagnosis three years later.

An internal Cervical Check audit found the original smear check result to be wrong and Ms Phelan settled a High Court suit in 2018 for €2.5 million.

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## Breda O'Brien

### The View



# When the love of God is rejected then unspeakable evil follows

**T**he internet can be dark, distracting place but sometimes those clicks can lead us to a place of grace. Recently, I stumbled across the online columns of Warren Harbeck, who writes for the *Cochrane Eagle* weekly newspaper in Alberta, Canada.

His mood chimed with mine. Harbeck was troubled by the war in Ukraine, and the fallout from the Canadian residential school abuse scandals.

**“Pope Francis issued a heartfelt apology last April in a meeting with First Nation, Inuit and Métis delegations at the Vatican”**

The indigenous people of Canada had their children taken away from them and placed in residential schools run by the Christian Churches, including the Catholic Church, in a process designed to assimilate them into mainstream Canadian culture.

It was later described as cultural genocide because the aim was to alienate these children from their own families, communities and culture. In the schools, the children were subjected to physical, mental, spiritual and sexual abuse. Pope Francis issued a heartfelt apology last April in a meeting with First Nation, Inuit and Métis delegations at the Vatican.

Pope Francis said: “I also feel shame... sorrow and shame for the role that a number of Catholics, particularly those with educational responsibilities, have had in all these things that wounded you, and the abuses you suffered and the lack of respect shown for your identity, your culture and even your spiritual values. For the deplorable conduct of these members of the Catholic Church, I ask for God’s forgiveness and I want to say to you with all my heart, I am very sorry. And I join my brothers, the Canadian bishops, in asking



French Cardinal Jean-Pierre Ricard of Bordeaux is pictured in a 2013 photo at the Vatican. He has admitted to abusing a 14-year-old girl 35 years ago. The Vatican will begin an investigation of Cardinal Ricard, who admitted in a public letter that he had abused a 14-year-old girl 35 years ago. Photo: CNS/Alessandro Bianchi, Reuters

your pardon.”

Any Catholic listening to the documentary, *Blackrock Boys*, produced by Liam O’Brien and featuring the brave brothers, Mark and David Ryan, would share the Pope’s sense of sorrow and shame that priests and lay-people could be capable of the kind of abuse described.

It does not matter that we have been hearing revelations like this for more than 25 years now. Each time is fresh and raw.

In a similar way, the hypocrisy displayed by Cardinal Jean Pierre Ricard, a member of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Vatican office charged with investigating clerics accused of abuse, was breathtaking.

He recently admitted that he had behaved reprehensibly as a priest aged 43, when

he abused a 14-year-old girl. This appalling news was followed by Fr Yannick Poligné of the Parish of Saint-Louis-Marie in Brocéliande being indicted for “aggravated rape of a minor, and drug abuse”.

### Sexual abuse

There is something malevolently evil about the sexual abuse of children by people who have promised their lives to Christ. Sporting bodies and scouting are riddled with abuse scandals, too, and I have had victims of secular organisations say to me that they are hurt by the fact that abuse of children by clergy gains so much more attention.

They are right, of course. Any abuse of children should be unthinkable. Nonetheless, there is a particular horror when the person is in a posi-

tion of trust because they are a visible representation of Christ in the world.

The religious studies scholar, linguist and great-grandfather that I mentioned, Warren Harbeck, was feeling the same sense of darkness in his November 3 column.

He talked about feeling completely inadequate when it came to praying for victims who are in the news. Instead, he has been comforted by a visual image based on Psalm 91:4, where it says: “He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge.”

As Harbeck says, the image reminds him of the “wings of a bird wrapped around the victims in a most comforting way – like a hen might wrap its wings

around its chicks, or an eagle spreading its wings out to protect its young from the scorching heat of the midday sun.”

### Maternal

Both of these images are maternal. It seems to me to be a perfect image of the love of God. Jesus uses this image when weeping over Jerusalem, saying, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.”

The interesting thing is that it comes at the end of a chapter in Matthew (Matt: 23), where Jesus speaks some of the harshest words in scripture about religious hypocrisy. Yet, at the end, it is to these religious hypocrites that Jesus offers the shelter of his maternal wings. It is startling.

When the love of God is rejected, all sorts of hypocrisies and evils follow, including unspeakable evil inflicted on children. We all need the shelter of those enwrapping wings, and we need to pray that others will be helped and healed by them, too.

## JOE WALSH TOURS



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**“There is something malevolently evil about the sexual abuse of children by people who have promised their lives to Christ”**



# Hospice promises new agreement with HSE won't affect ethos

**Ruadhán Jones**

"Out ethos won't change", a Catholic-founded hospice has promised as it becomes one of four hospices entering into a closer alignment with the HSE.

The CEO of Milford Care Centre, founded by the Little Company of Mary, has said a new funding arrangement with the HSE will not affect the hospice's independence.

"Our ethos won't change, our val-

ues won't change, we'll still remain linked and under the auspices of the Little Company of Mary," CEO Mary O'Brien told *The Irish Catholic*.

The hospice, which provides specialist palliative care and older person services in the Mid-West, will continue to offer care with "justice, respect, compassion, communication and accountability", Ms O'Brien promised.

Her comments come after Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly

received approval at Cabinet to redesignate four voluntary hospices around the country to ensure their financial viability.

The facilities are Milford Care Centre in Limerick, Galway Hospice, Marymount Care Centre in Cork and St Francis Hospice in Dublin.

The hospices will be redesignated a Section 38 organisation, which means they will be funded to provide a defined level of service on behalf of the HSE and their employ-

ees will be classified as public servants.

The redesignation will not affect the hospices constitution or governing instruments, Ms O'Brien said.

"We won't come under the under the HSE per se," she explained, saying that it is a service level agreement that offers the hospice better funding and access to public pension schemes.

Milford Care Centre will now offer their services "on behalf of

rather than ancillary to the HSE", Ms O'Brien said.

"We're looking forward to the collaboration. It will benefit palliative care services across the Midwest, along with our other partners who are also being redesignated in Galway, Cork and Dublin," Ms O'Brien finished.

St Francis Hospice, which also has a Christian ethos, was not available for comment at this time as negotiations are still ongoing.

## Don't tire in fight against abortion, says heroic pro-life doctor

**Staff reporter**

Never tire in the fight to "destroy" abortion, Dr Dermot Kearney told those who gathered for the Pro Life Campaign's national conference.

The Irish doctor, who risked his career to offer abortion pill reversal treatments in the UK, said pro-lifers must "never tire of doing what is right".

"Abortion must be destroyed," Dr Kearney told the gathering in the RDS, November 12, receiving a standing ovation.

"The abortion industry is based on fear," he continued, saying that "we have to counteract it with... honesty, courage and love".

"Never tire of doing what is right and do it with charity and love," Dr Kearney finished.

The conference was held the same day as the Government announced plans to make provision of the 'at-home' abortion pill a permanent feature.

Eilis Mulroy of the PLC called the decision "unconscionable".

"In addition to the dangerous and unforeseen consequences for women's health of allowing telemedicine abortion to continue, it is also linked to coercive abortion practices, something the HSE has acknowledged as a reality," Ms Mulroy said at the conference.

The decision demonstrates the Government's "cavalier disregard for women's health and an utter refusal to take steps to end the frightful and degrading practice of coercive abortion", she added.

📖 See pages 12-13.

## Shedding lustre on the priesthood...



Bishop of Cloyne William Crean blesses a wreath to be laid on the grave of Msgr Daniel Keller PP Youghal, to mark the 100th anniversary of the priest's death, November 8, 1922. Msgr Keller "shed lustre on the priesthood" through his work for evicted tenants in the late 1800s. Photo: Cloyne Diocese/Facebook

# Surrogacy legislation the height of hypocrisy



Out of sight, out of mind as Ireland seeks to offload harms of surrogacy to other countries, writes **Jason Osborne**

**G**overnment sources have reportedly confirmed media rumours over the weekend that they're looking to ban commercial surrogacy in Ireland, while permitting it abroad in legislation set to come before Cabinet this week. If that seems somewhat hypocritical to you, you're not alone. Since reading about the plans, I've been trying to figure out how something that's rightly recognised as harmful and exploitative to Irish women can be considered just fine for women living elsewhere.

### Surrogacy

Commercial surrogacy is, in essence, when a couple pays a woman unrelated to both parties to carry a baby to term for them, before handing the baby over after birth. Traditionally, many Irish couples have gone to Ukraine to avail of this, as it's one of few countries with a large surrogacy industry.

It doesn't take a well-formed Catholic conscience to recognise the practice of surrogacy is, as mentioned, harmful and exploitative. Paying a woman to make

use of her womb is the height of objectification, while separating a child from its natural mother immediately after birth is damaging to both mother and baby, whether it's recognised at the time or not.

If the aforementioned rumours are true, and the Government is set to ban commercial surrogacy at home, it implies that those in Cabinet are aware of the, to say the least, less-than-ideal position that surrogacy puts women in. At the same time, their promises of enhanced regulation for surrogacy abroad seek to make smooth the necessarily awkward demands Irish couples are and will be making of women living in countries that allow this exploitative practice.

People have forever been willing to do dubious things they may have some doubts about in order to make ends meet. A woman propositioned by a couple from a wealthier

society than her own to carry a baby for them in exchange for more money than she could hope to make by any other means will be sorely tempted to take them up on their offer. Just because she consents, however, doesn't mean it's right, or is what's best for her.

### Contradiction

To borrow an apt contradiction pointed out by *Gript's* John McGuirk, the same Irish Government prosecutes people for buying sex, or availing of prostitution. But isn't this just a lesser version of the same offence as surrogacy? A woman may consent to sleep with a man for money, and another may consent to carry a couple's baby to term for them, but that consent doesn't make it what's best for the woman (or for the baby, in the case of surrogacy). The Government seems to recognise this in the case of prostitution, and at least in the case of Irish

women when it comes to surrogacy, but is apparently paving the way for egregious harm to be done to women living abroad.

The Government is also currently going to immense lengths to help children who were separated from their birth mothers years ago by adoption to access their records, recognising that this is a human need felt by many. At the same time, it's going to legislate for children to be separated from their birth mothers by continents, multiplying the difficulty a child will have in identifying its birth mother should it ever discover its origins and feel the need to trace where it comes from.

While the proposed ban on commercial surrogacy in Ireland is to be welcomed, we're simply off-loading the harm onto women without voices or platform in Ireland, from whom we're unlikely ever to hear any complaint or resistance.



# “A legacy of incredible humanitarian significance”

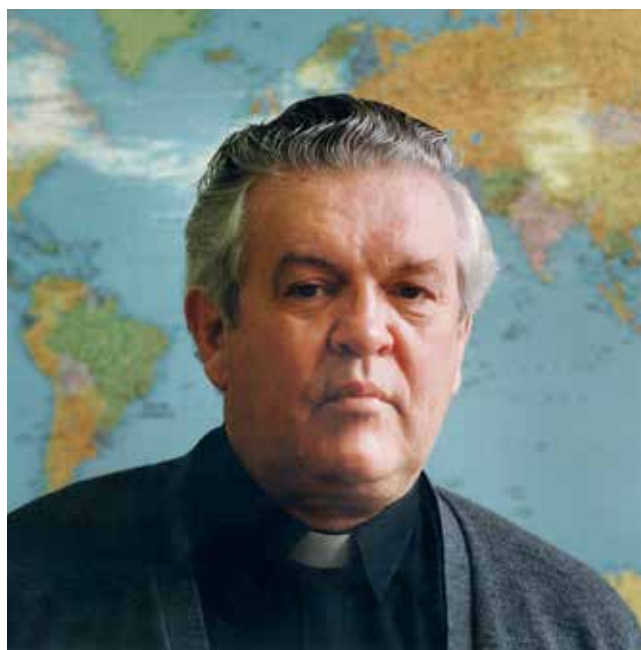


Photo: Concern Worldwide.

Fr. Aengus Finucane.

The Irish Catholic looks at a rich and varied life lived in the service of others and of God.

**F**r. Finucane was ordained as a Holy Ghost Priest in 1958. In his first assignment in Uli, Nigeria, Fr. Finucane found himself involved in the bitter civil war between Nigeria and Biafra.

Following Biafra's attempt to secede, this widespread conflict had displaced millions. What's more, there was a blockade of food, medicine and basic necessities by the Nigerian authorities.

*At the height of the crisis in the summer of 1968, it was estimated 6,000 children died every week.*

## An Irish effort

In response to the Biafrans' terrible plight, Concern Worldwide – originally called Africa Concern – was founded and began raising awareness and funds to help those suffering.

On 6th September 1968, the 600 tonne, Columille set sail for Sao Tome – a Portuguese island close to West Africa. The cost of chartering the ship and its vital cargo of powdered food and medicines was all paid for with donations from the people of Ireland.

To circumvent the blockade, the supplies were then flown from Sao Tome to Biafra overnight. The following day in Uli, Fr. Finucane was among the Holy Ghost priests who would help distribute the life saving supplies.

With his commitment and

that of the Irish public and priests, this operation grew into one flight a day for 11 months.

Fr. Finucane was deeply committed to helping the poorest of the poor. So after leaving Biafra, in 1972 he became Concern's Field Director in Bangladesh after its war of independence from Pakistan – the war had left millions in desperate need of food.

The period after Fr. Finucane's time in Bangladesh was particularly testing. In Thailand's Kampuchea refugee camps he saw the desperation of Cambodians who had fled the Khmer Rouge's genocide.

And in Uganda the horror of HIV in Kampala, where even in the best hospitals one third of the children born were HIV positive.

Fr. Finucane worked tirelessly to alleviate suffering, and recognised his responsibility to help the poor and underprivileged.

Concern appointed Fr. Finucane as its Chief Executive in 1981.

During his 16 years as the head of the charity he was 'on the ground' during many of the world's worst disasters. These included the 1983-1985 famine in Ethiopia and the Rwandan genocide in 1994.

Relinquishing his post in 1997, Fr. Finucane became Honorary President of Concern Worldwide US. He held this post until his death on 6th October 2009.

## Fr. Finucane's legacy

Fr. Finucane is the cornerstone behind much of what Concern has become today. It was he who expanded its aid work into 11 countries and dramatically increased its fundraising.

Tom Arnold – Concern's CEO from 2001 to 2013 – says:

*“There can be few Irish people of his generation, or of any other generation, who have contributed as much to improving the lives of so much of humanity.”*

*“He inspired a whole generation of Concern overseas volunteers.”*

Fr. Finucane continues to inspire as his legacy still influences Concern 12 years after his death.

**“Do as much as you can, as well as you can, for as many as you can, for as long as you can.”**  
– Fr. Aengus Finucane

In 2020 Concern worked in 23 countries, responding to 78 different emergencies, helping 36.9 million of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people.

Concern's vision, mission and work continues to strive to end extreme poverty, whatever it takes. The charity believes that no-one should live in fear of not having enough food.

## The devastation of climate change

Today one of the primary causes of acute food insecurity are weather extremes.

Climate change is increasing hunger levels and pushing even more people to the brink of famine. With multiple famines predicted, there are currently 41 million people teetering on the edge of starvation.

Extreme weather caused by climate change is having a devastating effect on the most vulnerable people in the world's poorest countries.

And these calamitous weather conditions are now more frequent and varied. No sooner has one disaster struck than another arrives. People don't have enough food for months, sometimes years on end.

In Malawi droughts, floods and strong weather patterns are a regular occurrence – placing huge stress

on land and crop production resulting in food shortages and hunger.

These weather extremes affect an already vulnerable population where 80% source their livelihoods from the land, 71% live below the poverty line and an estimated 20% are living in extreme poverty.

People like Yona Lambiki and his family.

Yona, a farmer, lives in Nkhambaza village with his wife and five children. He was always able to support his family with the crops and food he grew providing them with a healthy balanced diet. Any excess was sold, with some of the money used to pay for his children's schooling. But two years ago everything changed ...



Photo: Kieran McConville / Concern Worldwide.

Crops destroyed by Cyclone Idai.

In March 2019 Cyclone Idai caused devastating floods and loss of life in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The floods completely destroyed crops just weeks away from harvest – food people were relying on for survival.

Although his house wasn't affected, like thousands of others, the crops Yona was about to harvest were completely washed away. There was nothing for his family to eat, let alone any to sell.

## Help for now and the future

But thanks to Concern's generous donors and Yona's hard work he is now able to look after his family again.

Yona immediately received a vital cash transfer from Concern. With this he bought food and other basic necessities his family needed to be safe and free from hunger.

Yona received seeds including maize, tomatoes, beans, three bundles of sweet potato vines and other vegetables to grow so he could, once again, support his family. He also received, fertilizer and a hoe to help him grow his crops. As well as five goats for milk and manure.



Photo: Jason Kennedy / Concern Worldwide.

**“I would really love to meet everyone that is behind this support so I could thank them in person.”** – Yona Lambiki

Like other families in his community, Yona planted the seeds he received in his home garden. What they harvest is used to feed their families, any excess is sold to improve their livelihoods.

But Concern do far more than simply give communities plants, seeds and tools. They provide training in Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) to ensure long term, inter-generational support.

providing support for years – possibly decades – to come.

On speaking about the people who support Concern and make our work possible, he said, *“I'm so very happy with the support I have received from Concern. My life and family's life is healthy and can afford everything we could not afford before. I'm so happy and thankful to Concern.”*

## Will Fr. Finucane inspire you too?

There's a way you, just like Fr. Finucane, can leave the world a better place. And help improve the lives of families like Yona's both now and for future generations.

How? By leaving Concern a gift in your Will.

When you leave a gift, your legacy lives on – helping for years to come.

*“I know that this is a very personal decision. But I assure you, gifts in Wills have had a phenomenal impact in reducing extreme poverty, hunger and suffering around the world. Today, as the catastrophic combination of conflict, climate change and COVID-19 have plunged so many people into the grip of crisis, your gift will help us to be there in their time of need.”*

– Dominic MacSorley, CEO, Concern Worldwide

Gifts in Wills are a vital source of funding for Concern.

Your legacy will help families like Yona's reverse the many struggles caused by Climate Change ...

... will provide the tools and knowledge they need to not just survive but help themselves – a gift from you they can pass down for generations.

To find out more about how a legacy gives a safe, secure future, please request your complimentary copy of 'A World Without Hunger' – Concern's legacy booklet.

You'll learn of others who desperately needed help, and how legacies from people just like you have done so much.

There are also answers to common questions people ask about leaving a gift in their Will. And explains how to get started.

Requesting your free booklet does not oblige you to do anything else.

To receive your free, no obligation booklet – in complete confidence – please contact Concern's Legacy Manager, Siobhán O'Connor. Call **01 417 8020**, email **siobhan.oconnor@concern.net**, or write to 52-55 Lower Camden Street, Dublin 2





# Irish interfaith pioneer in the US dies at 103



Laois-native Fr Bill Treacy has left a loving legacy in the US, writes  
**Jason Osborne**

**I**rish priest Fr William 'Bill' Treacy died Sunday, October 16 in Washington state at the age of 103, with many believing him to have been the oldest priest in the USA.

Fr Treacy was well-known among Seattle's Irish community, ministering extensively to them, as well as to those of different faiths, due to his role as a leading figure of ecumenical and interfaith relations in the Pacific Northwest in the US.

**“The archdiocese at the time was suffering from a shortage of priests while they served as military chaplains during World War II”**

“He was the icon of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue; seeking unity in the human family,” Fr Jim Dalton, a senior priest of the archdiocese and a close friend of Fr Treacy's, told CNS.

Born in Co. Laois on May 31, 1919, Fr Treacy was the first child of John and Mary Delaney Treacy. He went to primary and secondary school in Kilkenny, before entering St Patrick's Seminary in Maynooth in 1937.

From there, he was ordained a priest on June 18, 1944.

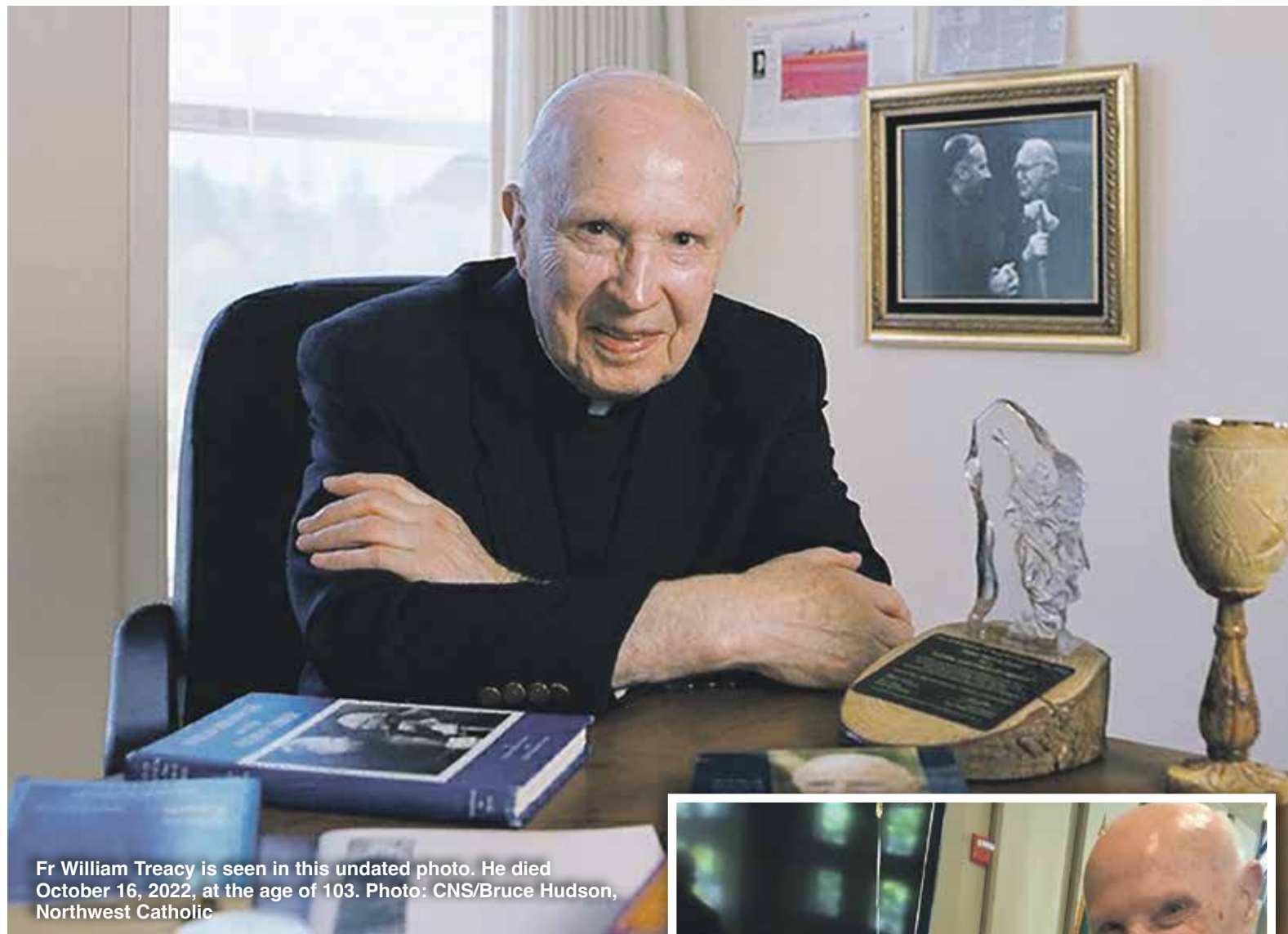
Fr Treacy ministered in his home diocese of Ossory for six months following his ordination, before answering the call of then-Bishop of Seattle Gerald Shaughnessy to volunteer for ministry in the archdiocese of Seattle.

The archdiocese at the time was suffering from a shortage of priests while they served as military chaplains during World War II.

Accepting the offer, what was to be a temporary assignment of five years extended to span the remainder of Fr Treacy's life.

Fr Treacy travelled to the US on the 'Ile de France' in 1945 – a troop ship full of soldiers returning to the United States after World War II. Landing at New York, he made his way over to Seattle, where he initially served as pastor in St Alphonsus Parish in Ballard.

He served for 16 years as a



member of the Chancery staff for the archdiocese of Seattle, while also serving as the chaplain of Holy Names Academy from 1952 to 1964.

His first assignment was at St Patrick's Parish in Seattle, followed by assignments to St Michael Parish in Olympia, Our Lady of the Lake Parish in Seattle and as the first resident pastor of St Cecilia Parish in Stanwood. On his retirement in 1989, Fr Treacy remained active, assisting at numerous churches throughout the archdiocese, including at Sacred Heart Parishes in Bellevue and La Conner, Immaculate Conception Parishes in Arlington and Mount Vernon, St Paul Parish on the Swinomish Reservation and at St Thomas More Parish in Lynnwood.

## Troubles

In 1982, during the height of the Troubles, Fr Treacy inaugurated Seattle's annual Catholic Mass in a Protestant Church on St Patrick's Day, encouraging Catholics and others to pray for Peace in Ireland on St Patrick's Day.

He also helped to start the sister-city relationship between Seattle and Galway, and often celebrated Mass in Irish for Seattle's Irish community.

Not limited to parochial duties and responsibilities, though, Fr Treacy served as the archdiocesan chaplain to the Legion of Mary from 1948 to 1978. He also ministered as chaplain to Council 676 of the Knights of Columbus, where he directed their nation-wide program for advertising Catholic teachings in city newspapers.

However, Fr Treacy is best-known

for his role as a panellist on the KOMO TV programme *Challenge*, which he participated in for 14 years from 1960-1974, and which drew thousands of viewers every Sunday night.

Fr Treacy and Rabbi Raphael Levine of Temple De Hirsch Sinai teamed with rotating Protestant Ministers to offer a Sunday night interfaith program, on which they would discuss important current events from an interfaith point of view.

**“In 1982, during the height of the Troubles, Fr Treacy inaugurated Seattle's annual Catholic Mass in a Protestant Church on St Patrick's Day, encouraging Catholics and others to pray for Peace in Ireland on St Patrick's Day”**

In 1960, their program *Who Crucified Christ* received a national award from the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Fr Treacy's TV collaboration with Rabbi Levine led to a close personal friendship, which resulted in their purchasing of the 300-acre Skagit Valley farm in 1966.

They created an interfaith centre there called 'Camp Brotherhood', which ultimately hosted over 250,000 people from differ-



Fr Treacy pictured celebrating his one hundredth birthday in Seattle in 2019. Photo: Consulate General of Ireland, San Francisco/ Twitter

ent faith and spiritual traditions, including groups from all over the world; Afghanistan, Pakistan, Israel, Palestine, India, and many other nations that sought to achieve harmony among the plurality of faith identities that made them up. When Rabbi Levine died in 1985, Fr Treacy carried on the original vision with the organisation's board.

## Childhood illness

Physical ownership of the property was assumed by Camp Korey in 2016, a place for families dealing with childhood illness and serious medical conditions. However, Camp Brotherhood's interfaith work continues in the programs of the group 'Paths to Understanding' – a group

that continues interfaith work through lectures, meetings and media. This includes a new show, *Challenge 2.0*.

Fr Treacy retired in December 2002 and seven years later moved to a small house on the camp property, where he resided until his death.

His mother and father, brothers Sean and Joe and sister Mary went before him in death, and he is survived by his grandniece Lorena and nephew John, as well as other relatives and friends.

When profiled by *Northwest Catholic* in 2019 on his 100th birthday and the 75th anniversary of his ordination, Fr Treacy said: “I tried to do the best. I leave the rest to God.”



# Merchants Quay Ireland

## Aoife was too scared to tell... until she came to Merchants Quay Ireland

**At Merchants Quay Ireland's homeless drop-in centre, Aoife finally showed the wound she carried.**

**S**he still can't bring herself to talk about her past. Where life started from, or what happened to her. We do know that Aoife had a bedsit until her money ran out. She's already suffered a mild stroke. But it's the deep, chronic ulcer weeping from her knee to her ankle that's most worrying. "I was never sick before in my life, never needed the doctor," says Aoife. The crutch she needs to help her walk is by her side.

"Being cold all the time makes you want to feel nothing at all."

Aoife was on the streets before she came to MQI. "Being without a home over the winter is horrible. You're always cold and you can't even wash yourself. When I first lost my bedsit, I didn't know where to find places like Merchants Quay. I was just outside all the time walk-

ing and trying to keep warm." Aoife quietly tried her best to take care of her wound. She dressed it with whatever she could find, wrapping it with cling film to keep it clean. She heard that there was a nurse at MQI who could help her. But Aoife was too scared to come. Until the pain became too much to bear.

**"I came here in pain, but I left smiling"**

Without a medical card, there was nowhere else to go for the health care Aoife so desperately needed.

"I was so afraid to come here at first. But I liked Nurse Marguerite from the moment I saw her. She just talked to me like an ordinary person, she's so kind. It was wonderful. She made me feel safe and told me not to worry. I was

scared and came here in pain, but I left smiling."

When clients feel safe, valued as people, and respected for their dignity and humanity, only then can their wounds begin to heal. The support you give to MQI, and the warm welcome you make possible, is what makes the difference.

**"She treats me like a friend"**

Aoife's face lights up when she mentions Nurse Marguerite. "She's an angel. She's so careful, always thinking about what I need to do and how she can help. She's so much more than a nurse, she treats me like a friend."

"One day I was early and waited in the dining room." Aoife tells us, "I was feeling weak, and one of the staff said 'Relax and sit down. Let me bring you something to eat,' and she came back with a full breakfast. That was so



Your love and kindness welcomed Aoife into the warmth of Merchants Quay Ireland, where she found the care she so desperately needed.

very kind. It made my day."

Aoife comes back to MQI for medical care and for kindness. "It's amazing at MQI, people talk nicely to me and try to help. Even one good word means the world to me."

When clients share their story with MQI staff they know it's a way for them

to talk to you directly. They know that you care about them, and that you send your donations and your love to keep the good work going. Aoife's last word is to you, our MQI supporters:

"Good people deserve good things to happen to them. People who give and

help are good people. God bless you and obviously thank you very much. I wish you all the good things you deserve."

\*\*\*

**Thank you for standing with MQI, and for supporting people who need your kindness and love.**



"We don't know who's coming in the door, so we have to be ready. There's always something we can do..." Nurse Marguerite

## How you help the deepest wounds heal, with Nurse Marguerite at MQI

**MQI's welcome starts with the help you give: a cup of tea, a hot shower and nourishing food. It's when clients feel warm, safe and cared-for that they find the courage to open up and share their story. When it comes to healthcare worries, Nurse Marguerite's dedication is a tenderness that soothes like a balm.**

**S**he treats people whose daily lives are a battle to get through. So often, clients are afraid to tell what's hurting them, ashamed of how they look, and worried about what could be wrong.

"I certainly see many untreated chronic illnesses, unattended for years," says Marguerite. "Diseases like epilepsy, diabetes, bowel diseases and respiratory illnesses from being out-

doors in the weather so much. Many patients have asthma and COPD, as well as heart problems, high blood pressure and pulmonary diseases that we can help with."

**"God knows what happened to Aoife."**

It's the very complex wound care that concerns Marguerite most. She's cleaning and dressing Aoife's leg ulcer three times a week.

"God knows what happened to Aoife. Very often,

people don't want to talk because it's too distressing. But over time, patients get to know and trust us. Aoife knows she's safe here."

Treating chronic diseases in the winter is more difficult because of the cold and wet. Marguerite particularly sees respiratory problems like asthma and bronchitis, worsen in the winter months. "Everything is harder. Nutrition is so important, and foot-care because people might walk

all day in wet shoes. So, keeping warm and dry can save lives. And certainly, people feel pain more in the cold. So, a hot meal and a hot shower are absolutely critical."

\*\*\*

**Keep our most forgotten close to your heart this winter. To donate please call 01-524 0139, visit [www.mqi.ie](http://www.mqi.ie) or return the donation form included in the enclosed insert pack. Thank you.**



**Merchants Quay Ireland**  
Homeless & Drugs Services

If you would like to make a Christmas gift to help Ireland's homeless and hungry this winter, just ring MQI on 01 524 0139, visit [www.mqi.ie](http://www.mqi.ie), or return the donation form included in the attached insert to Merchants Quay Ireland, FREEPOST F3736, PO Box 11958, Dublin 8.



# PLC 'face future with hope' at national conference



A panel of representatives for Students For Life from around the country speaking at the event.



On Saturday, the Pro Life Campaign's national conference took place in the RDS, Dublin, November 12. The event, 'Saving Lives and Facing the Future with Hope' was the first in person conference since 2019. Some of the speakers at the conference chat during a break: Katie Fenton, Students For Life; Lois McLatchie, Alliance Defending Freedom International; Dr Dermot Kearney, keynote speaker; Jacki Ascough, radio presenter; and Wendy Grace, radio presenter. Photos: John McElroy.

## Ruadhán Jones

**T**he Pro Life Campaign held their first in-person national conference since 2019, with a large crowd focused on the theme of 'Saving Lives and Facing the Future with Hope'.

Guest speakers encouraged the Irish pro-life community to keep fighting for the cause, pointing to signs of hope in the overturning of Roe vs Wade.

The keynote speaker was Dr Dermot Kearney, an Irish doctor whose work in the UK providing abortion reversal medication led to a campaign for his removal.

Dr Kearney told the crowd to "Never tire of doing what is right" in the fight to end abortion, adding "always do it with charity and with love".

Guest speakers included Aontú leader Peadar Tóibín, radio host Jacki Ascough, Lois McLatchie from Alliance Defending Freedom International and many others.



The Doctors for Life stand at the PLC's conference was manned by (from left) Dr Therese Boyle, Dr Eleanor Corcoran, Dr Michael Cooke, Nurse Fiona McHugh, Dr Brendan Crowley, Dr Ronan Cleary and Dr Janina Lyons (retired).



Eilís Mulroy of the Pro-Life Campaign closed the conference by thanking volunteers and supporters across the country, November 12.

## Aontú leader TD Peadar Tóibín speaking at the PLC's national conference.



Gerry Doherty (Derry), Keith Francis (Dublin), Caoimhin Jacob (Dublin) and Adam Fagan (Dublin).





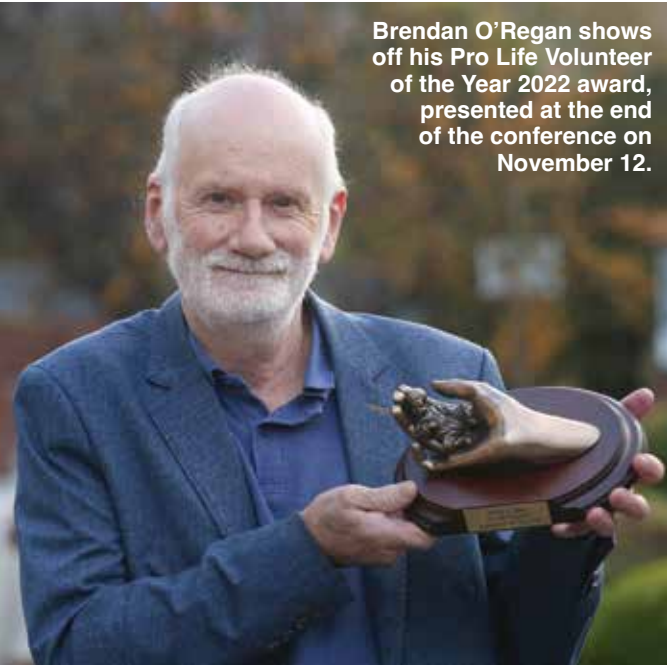
Speaker at the conference Jacki Ascough on Saturday.



Lois McLatchie, Alliance Defending Freedom International.



Keynote speaker Dr Dermot Kearney talks to the large crowd which gathered for the conference on Saturday.



Brendan O'Regan shows off his Pro Life Volunteer of the Year 2022 award, presented at the end of the conference on November 12.



Peter Lillis (2) from Kildare plays with his toy cars during the PLC's conference on Saturday.



Clodagh Gallagher (Waterford), Una MacBride Walsh (Westport, based in Geneva) and Mary Coyle (Dublin).



Some of the stands at the PLC conference.



Annie Ryan (Holy Family Mission), Tammie Richardson (Students for Life) and Teresa Jansen (Holy Family Mission).



Volunteers Anna Walsh, Eddie Mallon and Kieran Dower from Holy Family Mission in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, helped out at the conference, November 12.



Sophie O' Shaughnessy (Waterford) and Aileen Hooper (Cork).





Catholic social teaching is about instilling virtue and right action in people, writes **Dualta Roughneen**

Often described in certain quarters as the Catholic Church's best kept secret, its corpus of social teaching goes back long before the first 'social' encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, in 1891. You could say that it goes back to even before Jesus' time, with the Hebrew Bible containing many "injunctions concerning the needy, the stranger, the orphan and the widow", according to Anthony M. Annett, in his recent book *Cathonomics: How Catholic Tradition Can Create a More Just Economy*.

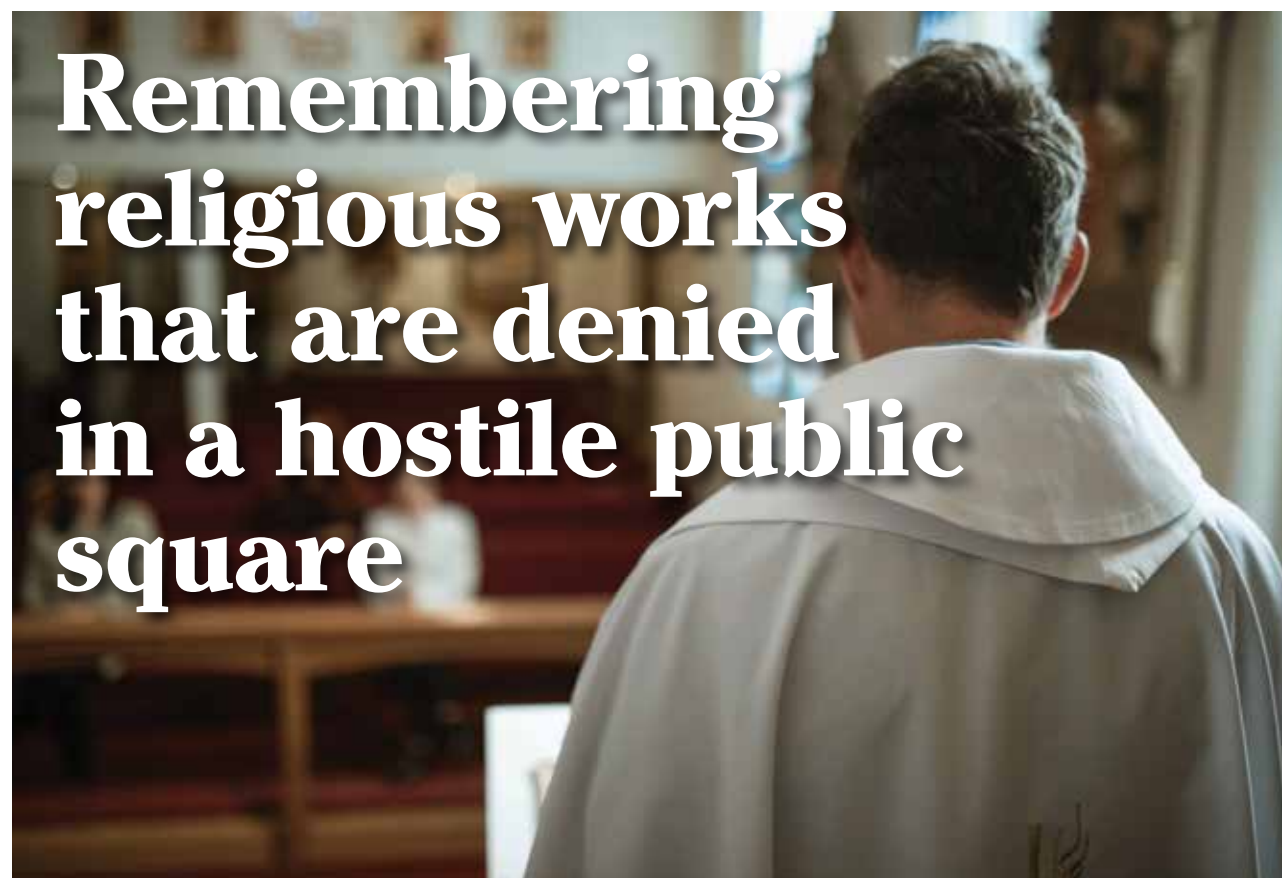
With a foreword by Jeffrey Sachs, and endorsement by Christine Lagarde, Annett's exploration of Catholic social teaching offers an in-depth historical navigation of the key documents and references and that seeks to remove some of the mystique associated with this teaching.

However, in reality, this teaching is not as much of a secret as many are led to believe. The teaching, for centuries, has been translated into the works of Catholic social groups in just about every country in the world. The Catholic Church is the largest nonstate provider of education, healthcare, and social protection services globally. Through a network of more than 325,000 schools and facilities, the Church lives rather than speaks of its commitment to social progress.

### Morality

Often accused of an asymmetric focus on sexual morality, the primary objective of Catholic ethics has been for centuries the delivery of education, health and other social services wherever it is needed. The emphasis on praxis rather than proclamation should not be considered something negative.

Yet, somehow this aspect of the Church's work and teaching is considered to be lacking. In this regard, Annett's work does a service to the Church. At the same time, potentially due to his background in global economics and its structures, he



# Remembering religious works that are denied in a hostile public square

misunderstands the objective of the Church's social teaching.

Focusing on the socialism/capitalism dichotomy, Annett is intent on drawing a conclusion from the corpus of Church teaching that has a socio-political structural impact. He misses the point that Catholic social teaching is about instilling virtue and right action in people rather than pre-determining a particular economic system.

**“Somehow this aspect of the Church's work and teaching is considered to be lacking”**

The late Rabbi Jonathon Sacks, in his 2020 book, *Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times* understands this point. He agrees with Annett that “market economics and liberal politics will fail if they are not undergirded by a moral sense that puts our shared humanity first”, but he draws a different conclusion.

“You cannot outsource morality” he says, which is essentially how Annett seeks to interpret Catholic social teaching. Sacks implores, “Morality is what allows us to get on with one another, without endless recourse to economics or politics. There are times when we seek to get other people to do something we want or need them to do. We can pay them

to do so: this economics. We can force them to do so: that is politics. Or we can persuade them to do because they and we are part of the same framework of virtues and values”.

The latter is what the Catholic corpus on social teaching is about: morality. How we treat others. How we work for others, whether as religious, or lay persons, whether as politicians or businesspeople. Sacks is of the view that outsourcing of our shared responsibilities to the State or to other intermediaries is contributing to the crises of division we are seeing in societies right now.

### Global audience

While Annett's and Sacks' works will reach a global audience, speaking often conceptually and theoretically, closer to home, Irish writer Matt Moran, has looked at the role of faith, the faithful and Catholic social teaching focused on Ireland, in a recent book *The Theology of Integral Human Development: The Role of Faith in International Development and Public Affairs*.

Covering a lot of the same ground as Annett, Moran demonstrates how the language of Catholic social teaching preceded the discourse used in international development today. The common good, integral human development, integral ecology, solidarity, subsidiarity, reciprocity, the universal destination of goods, the preferential option for the poor, along with compassion, justice, peace, rights, respect

and dignity, have all formed the lexicography and practice of how Catholic groups approach social development.

**“Moran demonstrates how the language of Catholic social teaching preceded the discourse used in international development today”**

In many respects, the narrative around the sustainable development goals has been playing catch-up with the Catholic approach to development. Working in the international development sector for nearly 20 years, I am acutely aware that there can be a certain snootiness towards religious and faith-inspired organisations that mirrors, although not to the same degree, the disdain towards religion in the public sphere in Ireland. This contribution by Matt Moran is a welcome addition to the growing literature that counters the cultural and social amnesia infecting Irish society in relation to our own past and also in relation to the history and foundations of international development in Ireland.

In international development as with social development in Ireland, religious groups and faith organisations preceded both the nation

states and non-governmental organisations in these arenas. Both the Irish state and well-known Irish international NGOs owe much to religion, religious groups and faith-based organisations.

Long before Ireland was a nation state, religious groups, in particular Catholic groups, were providing many of the services that were needed to feed the hungry, heal the sick, clothe the naked and all the other things that Catholics are required to do by their faith.

In international development, Irish missions were in the farthest corners of Africa, Asia and America, building schools, educating future leaders, setting up hospitals and cleaning the wounds of the sick and impoverished, long before empire had receded and movements towards nationhood were even considered.

### Anachronism

Yet, that legacy is conveniently forgotten or downplayed. Religious-led or inspired social services are an anachronism both in Ireland and in international development. The refrain, often left unanswered, is that the religious and the Church do not do enough for the poor despite the reality that religious inspired services are ubiquitous across the world. Whether schools, hospitals or hospices, they are everywhere.

While NGOs work across Africa with generous support from the public and governmental overseas assistance, personnel often stay for one

month, three months or a year (and five at most), depending on the difficulties that they encounter, and they do this most often with a good salary and relatively decent living conditions. More often, the religious, priests, nuns and often lay-persons, go for a lifetime, dedicating themselves fully to the service required by the call of Catholic social teaching. More and more so, mirroring the call for localisation which is relatively new to international development, religious social provision is being provided by local priests, nuns and lay, just as it was done in Ireland.

**“The majority of Catholic social services are now provided in the poorer parts of the world”**

The Catholic approach to integral human development is not just for places far away. While religious groups acted in place of the State for decades in Ireland, mirroring the role currently played in weak states, there remains an important role for the religious perspectives and approaches in public affairs today in Ireland.

### Antagonistic

Moran points out that this space is increasingly denied by an antagonistic public square which seeks to marginalise the religious voice, downplay the historical role played by religious social organisations, and deny the rights of religious perspectives to compete in the public square.

The majority of Catholic social services are now provided in the poorer parts of the world, with the space in Ireland and other 'developed' countries squeezed out by a dominant state. Eaten bread is quickly forgotten as these services are no longer required or desired in a time of affluence and comfort, and the religious are expected to exit stage-left.

Moran's book contributes to uncovering, afresh, the depth of Catholic social teaching and moving beyond the caricature of religious morality that has been portrayed consistently in a deliberately reductive manner. Catholic social teaching, integral human development, is not a political or an economic solution to the ills of the world, but a moral one that moves focus from the 'I' to the 'we', living not as atomised individuals but as part of a shared community.

At times, it feels like the author tries to do too much, covering too much ground and addressing too many questions, but he succeeds in knitting together these questions through a single common thread of the role of faith-inspired organisations, in public affairs, both as actors and as voices.

**“The primary objective of Catholic ethics has been for centuries the delivery of education, health and other social services wherever it is needed”**



# Out&About

## Cast out into the deep...



**HOLY LAND:** Bishop of Meath Tom Deenihan with Fr Eamon Kelly LC at Duc in Altum in Magdala during the 20th consecutive Meath Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Holy Land.



**KILKENNY:** Benemerenti medal recipients Michael Brennan, Annette Kennedy and Anna Mai Mullins are pictured in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Castlecomer, in honour of their great service to their parish and community.



**CORK:** Fr Marius O'Reilly leads a men's rosary rally in Cork, November 5.

### IN SHORT

#### Work of prison chaplains 'unheralded'

The work of prison chaplains is "vital but unheralded", Bishop of Kilmore Martin Hayes said on Prisoners' Sunday.

In a homily, Bishop Hayes prayed "for all prisoners", and remembered "their families, all prison staff and prison chaplains, whose work is vital but unheralded within prison services throughout the world".

Referencing the work of prison chaplain Sr Imelda Wickham PBVM, he said she "rightly praises the gifts and skills of those in the prison system who help keep it operational".

Bishop Hayes quoted her belief that "in all my years I have never met an evil person. Peo-

ple do evil things and we are all capable of that".

The bishop of Kilmore added: Policymakers in particular can learn from Sr Imelda who points to addiction as the greatest disease and cause of destruction in people's lives, leading to crime and prison: 'addiction is not a crime.'

#### Winner of Trinity Christian scholarship announced

The first recipient of the Bridget Clancy Scholarship for the M.Phil in Christian Theology at Loyola Institute, Trinity College Dublin, has been announced.

Frances O'Callaghan has been awarded the scholarship, donated by the Sisters of St John Of God.

In a statement from the Loyola Institute,

they say the scholarship is "aimed at women who will use this masters to contribute to Church and society in Ireland".

The Sisters of St John of God have confirmed that they will offer this scholarship for another three years.

For more information on this and other postgraduate scholarships in Christian Theology and how to apply see the Loyola Institute website.

#### Raphoe press forward with diocesan plan

The diocese of Raphoe has pressed forward with the recommendations under its pastoral plan 'Forward Together, Ar aghaidh le chéile', commissioning a Diocesan Pastoral Council

(DPC) and appointing a new director of pastoral renewal.

In addition, the process of forming and reforming parish pastoral councils is underway, led by Jim Deeds. Parishes from five of the six deaneries have been invited to take part in the process beginning with three information sessions.

This DPC has been in formation over the last year and includes clergy, religious and lay men and women from around the diocese, "committed to helping Bishop Alan McGuckian bring the diocesan plan to fruition", a statement from the diocese says.

The statement also announces the appointment of Mr Brian O'Driscoll as Director of Pastoral Renewal in the Diocese of Raphoe.





**BELFAST:** The Trócaire Society at Queen's University Belfast hosted a well-attended social night in the Hatfield House, November 5, to raise funds for the charity.



**MALTA:** Newly invested Dames and Knights of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem – Lieutenantcy of Malta are pictured at an investiture ceremony in Malta, attended by Dame Mairéad Walls, DC\*HS and Chevalier Damien Walls, KCHS, of Ireland.



**MALTA:** Chevalier Damien Walls, KCHS, Dame Mairéad Walls, DC\*HS (Toomebridge, Co. Antrim) and His Excellency Roberto Buontempo, GCHS, Lieutenant of Malta.



**LONDON:** The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem held the annual Jerusalem Ball on Saturday, November 5, to raise funds to support the Christian communities in the Holy Land. Pictured at the event in Gladstone Library, Westminster are Chevalier Brian Plunkett, KC\*HS (Bedfordshire) Dame Marjory Agha, DHS (Derry) and Chevalier Thomas Kilduff, KC\*HS (Cavan).



**LONDON:** Dr Husam Zomlot, Palestinian Ambassador to the UK, Ukrainian Catholic Eparch Kenneth Nowakowski KC\*HS and the Lord Mayor of London Vincent Keaveny KStJ KGCHS. Photo: Earl Smith, Faraday Media.



**DERRY:** Authors Ivor Doherty and Martin McGeehan present a copy of *Casting a Long Shadow: A People's History of the Long Tower* to Bishop of Derry Donal McKeown.



**DUBLIN:** Frances O'Callaghan (centre) was announced recently as the first recipient of the Bridget Clancy Scholarship for the M.Phil in Christian Theology at Loyola Institute, Trinity College. She is pictured with Congregational Leader of the Sisters of St John Of God Sr Geraldine Fitzpatrick and Dr Fáinche Ryan of the Loyola Institute.



Edited by Ruadhán Jones  
Ruadhan@irishcatholic.ie

Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



**CARLOW:** Taoiseach Micheál Martin is pictured with Ukrainian refugees, who are staying on the campus of Carlow College, and some of the staff of the college during a recent visit, November 3.



**LAOIS:** Parishioners in Portlaoise Parish remember their dead relatives and friends at a Mass of Remembrance, November 8.



**CAVAN:** Pictured at the blessing of the new columbarium in Kingscourt parish are Gerard and Kelly McKenna of McKenna Engineering, John and Martina Tully of Tully Memorials with Ciaran Boylan, Chairman of Kingscourt Parish Finance Committee and Fr Gerry MacCormack.



**DUBLIN:** Peter Durnin and Raphael Kelly, officers from the Lieutenantcy of Ireland attended Dublin City University at the invitation of Fr Seamus McEntee, Spiritual Director, and gave a 90-minute presentation to members of the St Dominic Society on the structure and mission of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

## ANTRIM

An Advent retreat to prepare hearts for Christmas takes place on the four Sundays of Advent, beginning November 27 from 1-8pm in the Belfast Jesuit Centre, Donegall St. To register contact [belfastjesuitcentre@gmail.com](mailto:belfastjesuitcentre@gmail.com)

## ARMAGH

Fr Emmanuel Fasakin will host a monthly gathering to help people reflect on different aspects of their faith. The evenings will include a period of exposition in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and some reflection on different themes. Venue – St Vincent de Paul Centre, Chapel Lane from 7.30–8.30pm. Next meeting, Thursday November 24 on 'Three persons in one God'.

## CARLOW

Graigecullen-Killeslin's annual bereavement Mass takes place Friday November 25 at 7.30pm. Candles for all parishioners who died in the past year will be lit at Mass each Sunday and will be presented to the families at the bereavement Mass.

## CORK

Youth 2000's Munster retreat takes place Friday November 18-Sunday 20 in Coláiste Chríost Rí, Cork City. Medjugorje prayer meeting every Wednesday at 8pm in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in Holy Trinity Church, Fr Matthew Quay, Cork city.

## DERRY

On the first Saturday of each month, after 11am Mass in St Brigid's Church, Carnhill, there is adoration and rosary, ending with Divine Mercy and Benediction at 3pm. On Thursdays, there is a Holy Hour for the unborn and for expectant mothers in Our Lady's Chapel, within St Joseph's Church building, Galliagh, starting at 7pm

## DONEGAL

God's Mercy in the Gospel of John, a silent retreat, takes place in the Divine Mercy Centre, Letterkenny, November 25-27. To book or for more information contact 074 916 9934 or [dvmletterkenny@gmail.com](mailto:dvmletterkenny@gmail.com).

## DUBLIN

Newman University church is hosting a remembrance prayer service Friday, November 18, at 7pm. The evening of prayer, reflection, and song will honour the faithful departed and provide a space to recognise that in grief there can also be tremendous hope.

St Mary's Pro-Cathedral is holding a World Youth Day Mass on Sunday, November 20, at 6pm, followed by music, testimony, hot chocolate and snacks.

Pure in Heart Christmas Annual Charity Ball will be on December 4 at 6pm till late in the Morrison Hotel in Dublin 1. It is a black tie event, suits for men suits and dresses/skirts for women. Includes a three-course dinner, dancing, music and Christmas raffle all included in ticket. Get your tickets by November 20 on [www.eventbrite.ie/e/pure-in-heart-christmas-charity-ball-tickets-421722101157](http://www.eventbrite.ie/e/pure-in-heart-christmas-charity-ball-tickets-421722101157).

## GALWAY

A weekly gathering for young adults (16-35 years) takes place on Wednesdays at 7.30pm in the Cathedral. An opportunity for adoration, silence, prayer, music, Scripture and reflection, followed by refreshments. Contact [youth@galwaycathedral.ie](mailto:youth@galwaycathedral.ie) for more information.

## KILDARE

Youth 2000 national Christmas retreat takes place December 9-11 in Newbridge College. Booking to open soon. Visit [youth2000.ie](http://youth2000.ie) for more information.

## KILKENNY

Eucharistic adoration takes place every Wednesday morning in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel Ferrybank Church from 10.30am to 12 noon and in Slieverue Church from 2.30–3.30pm.

## LAOIS

Christmas Fair in Ballyfin in aid of Mary's Meals will be held in Ballyfin Community Centre Sunday, December 4, from 11am to 3pm.

## LOUTH

Mass for the African Community takes place in St Nicholas' Church the third Sunday of each month at 2pm.

## MAYO

Pilgrimage of the Immaculate Conception takes place Tuesday December 6-Thursday December 8 for the sanctification of Ireland's bishops and priests. To book, contact Kay at 087 991 2047.

Catholic Men's road trip retreat takes place November 18-20, walking/cycling from Knock, Co. Mayo to Rosslough, Co. Donegal.

Cost €80, for men aged 16 and up only. Daily Mass, food and accommodation included. Text 083 389 1105 for more details.

## SLIGO

A Youth 2000 prayer meeting for 16-35 year olds takes place the first Monday of every month in the side chapel of St Anne's Church at 8pm. Adoration followed by chat.

## TIPPERARY

A contemplative retreat for young adults (18-40) takes place in Mount St Joseph Abbey, Roscrea, 18-20 November. Contact Sr Úna 090 6481666 or Michael 086 245 3123.

## TYRONE

Omagh Charismatic Prayer Group meet in the Pastoral Centre on Thursday evenings with Rosary at 7.40pm, followed by prayer meeting at 8pm.

## WATERFORD

Meeting for youth and adults on Wednesdays and Sundays at 7.30pm. Location X91 EY92 (beside St Paul's National Primary School). If you feel oppressed, if you are suffering, the Lord is coming to free you. Come and listen!

## WEXFORD

A St Padre Pio healing Mass takes place in St Abban's church, Adamstown, on Friday November 18 at 7.30pm. Individual blessing with St Pio's glove. Concelebrated Mass by Fr Bryan Shortall OFM Cap. and Fr Rober Nolan.



# Lessons for Irish pro-lifers in the US midterms



**Pro-lifers must fight cleverly to whittle away abortion laws, writes David Quinn**

**T**he repeal of Roe vs Wade last summer by the US Supreme Court was a great moment for the pro-life movement everywhere. From 1973 until this year, the result of Roe vs Wade was that a very liberal abortion law was forced on every American state no matter what voters in those individual states wanted.

Thanks to Donald Trump (and credit must be given where it's due), a number of pro-life judges were appointed to the Supreme Court and Roe vs Wade was overturned in a ruling called Dobbs vs Jackson. The decision did not suddenly mean that abortion was banned across the US. It simply meant that each state could decide its own law, which was the case before 1973.

They could do this through passing laws in their local parliaments (American states have a lot of autonomy), by putting pro-life or pro-choice amendments into their local Constitutions, or by rulings of state judges.

**“The repeal of Roe vs Wade last summer by the US Supreme Court was a great moment for the pro-life movement everywhere”**

When the Dobbs ruling was announced, it did not mean that the American pro-life movement could now rest on its laurels, its work done, far from it. In fact, in many ways its work was only beginning, or at least entering a brand-new chapter.

## Repealed

As soon as Dobbs was released, and Roe vs Wade was repealed the pro-choice movement went into over-drive. This involved not only the many, well-funded organisations that support abor-



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis speaks at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Orlando, Florida on February 24, 2022. Gov. DeSantis was re-elected by a landslide majority in America's recent elections. Photo: CNS/Octavio Jones, Reuters

tion, but also the Democratic party, their media allies, most of social media, their wealthy backers, plus many corporations which threatened states with loss of business if they passed pro-life laws. This was a mighty army to be up against.

Last week, the US held their mid-term elections. These take place halfway into the term of any American president. All of the House of Representatives (the lower house) goes up for election, and one third of the Senate (the upper house), plus lots of Governorships. Local elections also take place and there are typically many referendums as well.

## Expectations

Usually, the party of the sitting president does badly in the mid-terms. But this time the president and his party – Joe Biden and the Democrats, in this case – did quite well, exceeding even their own expectations. They have narrowly held on to the Senate and look to have lost the House of Representatives only marginally.

Various reasons have been given for the relatively poor performance of the Republicans, and two of them are Donald Trump and the issue of abortion. Trump seemed to turn the race into a sort of referendum about himself and his candidates. This

went down badly with a lot of swing voters, meaning the Republicans lost swing seats they might otherwise have won.

But the abortion issue also seems to have lost them votes. A big factor in this was the colossal amount of money the Democrats spent on pro-abortion ads via Facebook, TV and elsewhere. *The New York Times* estimates the amount at half a billion dollars.

The Irish pro-life movement knows what it is like having to deal with huge media and political bias. It is incredibly hard to fight. Now, imagine being massively out-spent on TV, radio and social media as well.

**“Trump seemed to turn the race into a sort of referendum about himself and his candidates”**

In the run-up to the mid-terms, many abortion campaigners were very misleading about the consequences of the repeal of Roe vs Wade.

The impression given was that abortion ‘rights’ had been repealed in full across America, or were about to be. A tone of hysteria was struck. Women were led to believe that if they had an ectopic pregnancy, they could not receive a termination. It would be the same

when faced with other life-threatening pregnancies.

Some Republican-dominated states were seeking to pass very strict, pro-life laws that would rule out abortion in cases of rape, but most Republican (or ‘red’) states were not doing this. For example, in Florida, the law would permit abortion along much the same lines as in Ireland. The Irish law is liberal, and so is the Florida law, but it was an improvement on the regime that existed under Roe vs Wade.

## Misleading

The massive ad campaign was also very misleading much of the time. Voters were led to believe that abortion would be banned even in hard cases, when most of the time this was not true. Even pro-Democrat CNN admitted that some ads were misleading. For example, in a number of election races, voters were being told that the Republican candidate would seek to impose a nationwide, federal ban on abortion if elected to Washington.

In fact, those candidates were quite explicit in saying it should be up to individual states, and not the federal Government to decide what their abortion laws should be.

The media like to complain about misinformation. But for the most part they were asleep at the wheel when it came to the misinformation campaign

emanating from the pro-abortion side.

There were also a number of state referendums concerning abortion. Very extreme pro-abortion measures were passed in Michigan, California and Vermont.

In California, Democrats put a constitutional amendment before voters that allows abortion up to birth, without exceptions, even for minors. Some 65% voted in favour.

**“Very extreme pro-abortion measures were passed in Michigan, California and Vermont”**

Despite the setbacks, pro-lifers did score some notable victories. For example, in Florida the sitting Governor, Ron DeSantis, won re-election by a landslide. As mentioned, the abortion law in Florida is roughly the same as here, but under the principle set out by John Paul II in *Evangelium Vitae*, such a law is acceptable if it is replacing something worse.

Florida-based pro-life Senator, Marco Rubio, also did very well.

There are lessons to be learnt by the pro-life movement. One, which we in this country know all too well, is that a well-funded campaign, often based on misinforma-

tion, and back for the most part by clear media bias, is very hard to fight.

Another is that most Americans do want access to abortion under certain circumstances. About a third of voters want a very liberal abortion regime, about a third are pro-life in the sense Irish pro-lifers would recognise, and the rest are somewhere in between.

## Breakdown

This breakdown means that in practice most states are going to have laws that are not ultra-liberal but will be (and generally are) a lot more permissive than any pro-life person would like.

Future battles will mostly be over whether the limit for abortion-on-demand should be six weeks, or 10, or 12 or 18.

The pro-life movement must adopt an incrementalist approach. Abortion has been a ‘normal’ part of life for a long time now and it will not be outlawed all at once.

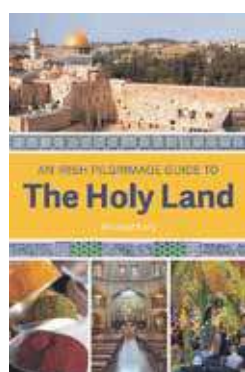
In states where the limit is current 24 weeks (say), pro-life campaigners must fight to reduce that as much as voters will accept. Anything else simply means they will lose.

Therefore, they must fight cleverly, just as John Paul II said in his great pro-life encyclical that might have been published 27 years ago but remains burningly relevant today.





## NEW RELEASES

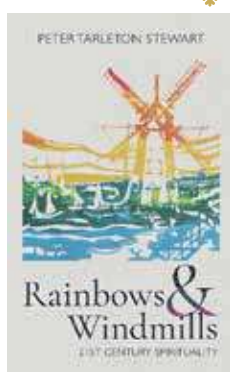


### An Irish Pilgrimage Guide to the Holy Land

Michael Kelly

In this unique guidebook, Michael Kelly takes readers on a pilgrimage to the sites associated with the life of Christ. The Gospel comes alive with vivid descriptions of Bethlehem, Nazareth and more.

**€12.99** was €16.99

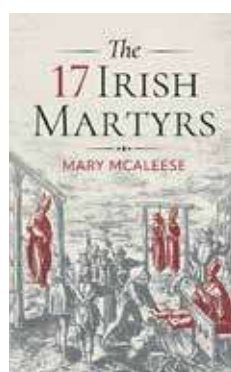


### Rainbows & Windmills

Peter Tarleton Stewart

*Rainbows & Windmills* offers an introduction to personal spirituality. Framed through Peter Tarleton Stewart's personal childhood experiences, he advises how to strengthen faith in the 21st century.

**€9.99** was €14.99



### The 17 Irish Martyrs

Mary McAleese

An historical account detailing the inspiring stories of the 17 Irish martyrs beatified by Pope John Paul II and what made their causes for martyrdom stand apart.

**€12.99** was €16.99

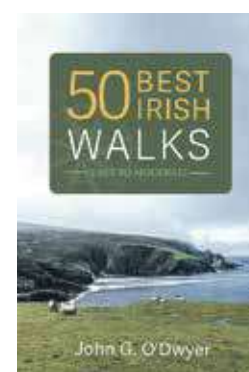


### The Way We Were

Mary Kenny

At a time when the values of Catholic Ireland are so often viewed in a negative light, Mary Kenny's approach is a balanced and measured recollection of Ireland over the past 100 years.

**€14.99** was €19.99



### 50 Best Irish Walks

John G O'Dwyer

A must read for anyone interested in exploring Ireland's hills and mountains, these trails range from easy to moderate walks all around the country.

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## UPLIFTING TITLES



### Finding Peace

Ed Sister Stan

Sr Stan's best selling book features a number of contributions from famous and not so famous people on where they find peace in their daily lives.

**€12.99** was €16.99



### Sending Positive Vibes

Fr Bryan Shortall

Fr Bryan's memories and reflections are interspersed with prayers, stories of Saints and rare insights into the lives of the priests and religious who work so tirelessly about us.

**€7.99** was €12.99

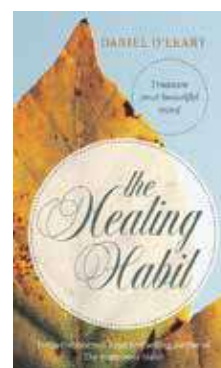


### The Happiness Habit

Daniel O'Leary

Written for all who believe in the power of humanity and for those who are ready to nourish the divine beauty of their hearts. Beautifully crafted, it's a perfect read to lift the spirit.

**€9.99** was €12.99



### The Healing Habit

Daniel O'Leary

Beyond current mindfulness projects, this little book is a tonic for your spirit, a healing for your heart, a setting-free of your precious mind. And therefore it carries the promise of a happier life.

**€9.99** was €12.99



### The Heavenly Habit

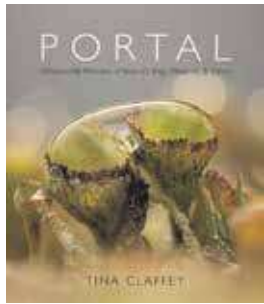
Daniel O'Leary

Nothing is beautiful or imaginative enough to do justice to the heavenly habit of a transforming grace. In this little book 10 artists offer their best efforts to capture the experience of that blessing.

**€9.99** was €12.99



# PHOTO BOOKS



**Portal**  
Tina Claffey

Award-winning photographer Tina Claffey's latest book is an immersive visual exploration through the realms of unique flora and fauna within Ireland's bogs, wetlands and eskers.

**€19.99** was €29.99



**Mythical Irish Beasts**  
Mark Joyce

Ireland's mythology is bursting with mysterious characters and this book is the perfect way to explore the island's magical heritage. It's a must have for children and adults alike.

**€16.99** was €22.99



**Mythical Irish Wonders**  
Mark Joyce

While we're lucky in Ireland to have a treasure trove of legends and myths, many of these strange and odd stories have been lost over time. Join Mark Joyce as he recounts many of these forgotten tales.

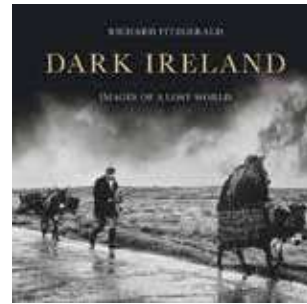
**€16.99** was €22.99



**Mythical Irish Places**  
Mark Joyce

Join a magical journey around the country visiting some of the most mythical places in Ireland. Full of beautiful illustrations, this is a book children and adults will enjoy for years to come.

**€16.99** was €22.99



**Dark Ireland**  
Richard Fitzgerald

Richard Fitzgerald's evocative images of rural life form a narrative thread with the not-so-distant past. The album is both compelling and profound; a fond tribute to a world no longer in existence.

**€17.99** was €24.99

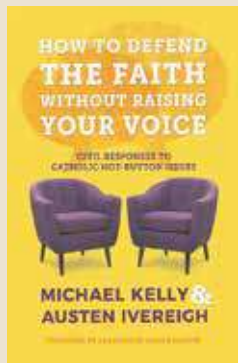


**The Bee's Knees**  
James Morrissey

A fascinating insight into the life of bees, incorporating the history of beekeeping in Ireland and profiles of Irish beekeepers, including the beekeeper at Glenstal Abbey.

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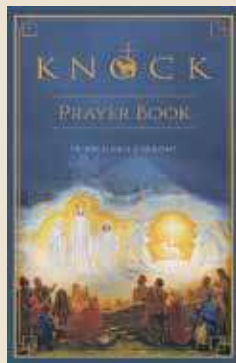
# FAITH TODAY



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

Answering some of the most common criticisms of the church, this book aims to help people understand why the Church teaches what it does and defend their beliefs in a calm and rational way.

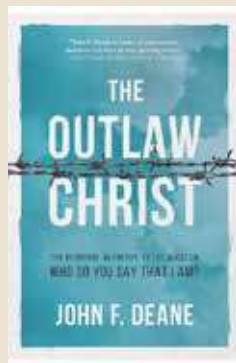
**€9.99** was €14.99



**Knock Prayer Book**  
Ed Fr Richard Gibbons

This book is a resource for those who may not get the chance to pray, have forgotten how to or would just like something simple and accessible to help them journey along the pilgrim road of life.

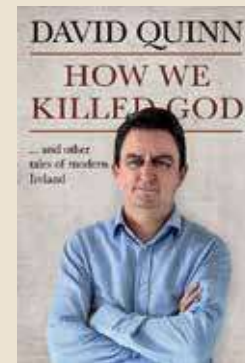
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**Outlaw Christ**  
John F Deane

In every age, the words and presence of Jesus Christ have given people belief and hope. This book follows poets in their search for the true Christ, from the 8th century up to our own day.

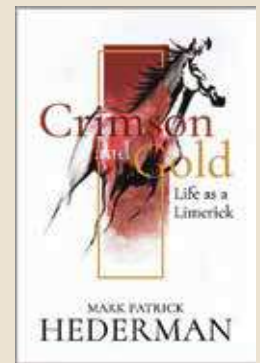
**€9.99** was €16.99



**How We Killed God**  
David Quinn

From the controversies that have plagued Church and State, this collection of David Quinn's numerous columns is a different take on nearly a quarter of a century of tumultuous change in Irish society..

**€12.99** was €16.99



**Crimson & Gold**  
Mark Patrick Hederman

As a Benedictine Monk, Hederman continues to explore how we as Irish Roman Catholics can hone in on the most precious aspects of our faith and cancel the surrounding noise.

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# CHILDREN'S BOOKS



**A Saucer Full of Secrets**  
Pam Henry

Join Alban and Sedu on an adventure to recover the four lost treasures of Ireland. With references to Ireland's mystical places and folklore, Pam Henry has crafted a wonderful take on Irish legends for children.

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**The Enchanted Lake**  
Sinéad De Valera

Set in the Éire of old, these timeless tales are brimming with ancient charm, captivating characters and magical locales transporting the reader to a world of wonder and enchantment.

**€16.99** was €22.99



**A Robin's Tale**  
Noelle Rock

*A Robin's Tale* is a thoughtful children's story addressing themes surrounding death which offer a safe way for adults and children to explore loss and grief.

**€9.99** was €14.99



## IRISH HISTORY

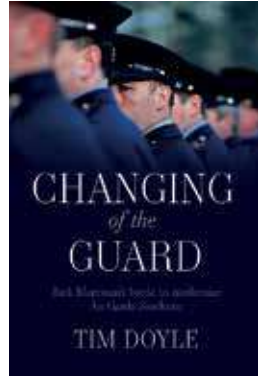


### Gaeilge: A Radical Revolution

Caoimhin De Barra

Blending well argued points based on sound research with the author's experiences as an Irish speaker, *Gaeilge* assesses the position of the Irish language in Ireland today.

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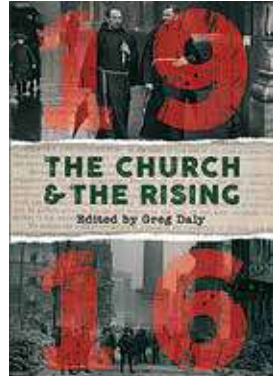


### Changing of the Guard

Tim Doyle

*Changing of the Guard* tells the story of Jack Murrinan as a transformational figure in the force at a time of great social and economic change.

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### 1916: The Church & the Rising

Ed Greg Daly

Discover multiple aspects of the 1916 Easter Rising, including information about the rebels' Catholic faith, the Church's reaction to the rising and the morality of revolution.

€4.99 was €9.99



### Yours Till Hell Freezes

Siofra O'Donovan

An intimate portrait of the young rebel martyr Kevin Barry, written by one of his closest descendants brings new life to his story, using material from family papers and the public domain.

€14.99 was €19.99

## MEDJUGORJE

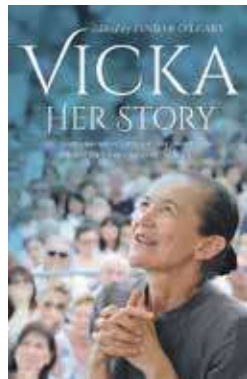


### Meeting with Our Lady of Medjugorje

Finbar O'Leary

This book gives a deep insight into the messages and happenings in Medjugorje through in-depth interviews with the visionaries, as well as rare and intimate interviews with the two locutionaries.

€6.99 was €9.99

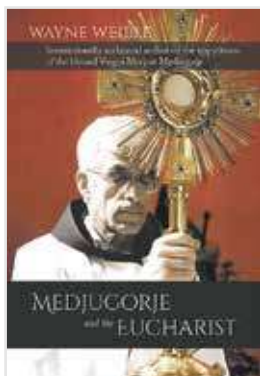


### Vicka: Her Story

Ed Finbar O'Leary

This is the fullest account given by the eldest visionary Vicka of her story and experiences with Our Lady. Here, Vicka relays many of the Messages which the 'Queen of Peace' has given to her.

€6.99 was €9.99

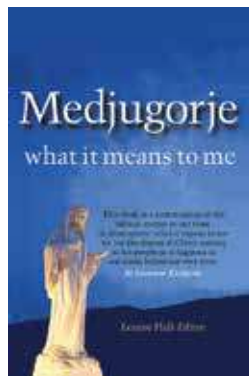


### Medjugorje and the Eucharist

Wayne Weible

The incredible apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Medjugorje are intimately linked with the Holy Eucharist. The heart of this book is personal witness that will add to the reader's faith.

€9.99 was €14.99



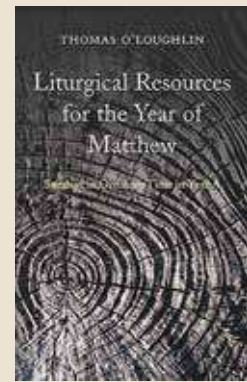
### Medjugorje: What it Means to Me

Ed Louise Hall

These deeply personal stories detail how a number of Irish people found themselves visiting Medjugorje, their encounter with God while there and the impact it has on their lives today.

€7.99 was €11.99

## LITURGICAL YEAR A

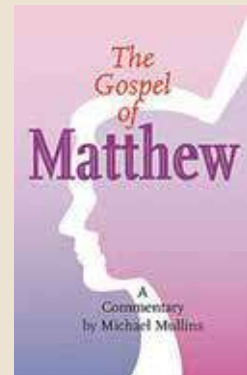


### Liturgical Resources for Matthew's Year

Thomas O'Loughlin

A treasure trove of extra resources, insights and practical suggestions for the liturgy every Sunday and on major feast days during next year's liturgical cycle.

€7.99 was €12.99

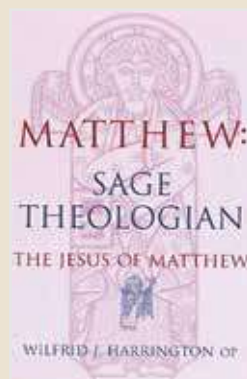


### The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary

Michael Mullins

Written as a guide for serious readers in the hope that it will deepen their spiritual and theological insight, and bring them to a level of academic competence of the gospel of Matthew.

€7.99 was €12.99



### Matthew, Sage Theologian

Wilfrid J. Harrington

A simple and clearly written book that will be invaluable to all who preach or those who simply want to understand the gospel of Matthew better.

€4.99 was €9.99

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- \_\_\_\_\_ The Way We Were - **€14.99**
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50 Best Irish Walks - **€12.99**

**UPLIFTING TITLES**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Finding Peace - **€12.99**
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# 'Amazing' devotion as crowds visit Padre Pio's relics

**Chai Brady**

The Diocese of Down and Connor brought relics of St Padre Pio to the diocese from November 6-11 to mark 20 years since he was declared a saint.

Fr Brian Watters CC of St Peter's Cathedral Parish, in Belfast, had the relics in the cathedral for three days from November 6.

"The numbers who came to visit the relics were way above our expectations, we were amazed. People from all over Ireland were here in the cathedral," Fr Watters said.

He added that aside from Italy and the Philippines, Ireland has the biggest devotion

to Padre Pio.

The relics were brought to the cathedral as well as All Saints' Church in Ballymena and St Patrick's Church, Downpatrick, Co. Down, last week. The relics were supplied by the Saint Pio Foundation. Bishop Noel Treanor said: "St Padre Pio is recognised by the Church as a model of faith and inspiration. He has helped so many people, and there is a profound devotion to St Padre Pio across the diocese and Ireland with many seeking his intercession in time of need."

Pope St John Paul II canonised Padre Pio in 2002, drawing crowds of an estimated 300,000 to St Peter's Square in one of the largest ceremonies in history.



People approach relics of St Padre Pio in St Peter's Cathedral, Belfast.







# World Report

## IN BRIEF

### Vatican confirms opening of abuse investigation of French cardinal

● The Vatican has decided to open an investigation into French Cardinal Jean-Pierre Ricard, the retired archbishop of Bordeaux, who admitted in a public letter that he had abused a 14-year-old girl 35 years ago.

“As a result of the elements that have emerged in the last few days and the statement made by the cardinal, in order to complete the examination of what happened, it has been decided to initiate an *investigatio praevia*,” or preliminary investigation, Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office, said.

Mr Bruni would not say if the decision was made by Pope Francis, although because the case involves a cardinal who is a member of Vatican dicasteries and who, at 78, is still eligible to participate in a conclave, people familiar with the workings of the Vatican assume the Pope had to agree.

### Kenyan bishops say drought at ‘crisis level’

● As Kenya’s drought reaches crisis proportions, Catholic bishops suggested enhanced post-harvest management and food banks to help guarantee food security.

“The current drought situation in the country, especially in the arid and semi-arid regions, has now reached a crisis level. The consequent famine is regrettable and unacceptable. This calls for urgent and decisive action from all actors,” said Archbishop Anthony Muheria of Nyeri.

He spoke while reading the bishops’ final statement to the media November 10, at the end of their general meeting in the coastal city of Mombasa.

The bishops also asked the government to finance school feeding programs in the drought-affected regions so that no child drops out of school. Failed rains, climate change, a recent locust infestation, the war in Ukraine and inflation are being blamed for Kenya’s food crisis.

### Mourners pay tribute to Scottish archbishop

● Following the death of Archbishop Mario Conti, who died November 8, many mourners have paid tribute to a “much-loved” Catholic prelate.

A statement released on the same day by the Archdiocese of Glasgow, reported that the archbishop died peacefully following a short illness at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital in Glasgow. He was 88.

The archbishop had given his life to the Catholic Church, having served as a priest for 64 years and a bishop for 45 years.

Reflecting on his predecessor’s passing, Archbishop Nolan of Glasgow said: “The death of Archbishop Mario will be felt not just in the Archdiocese of Glasgow, but across Scotland and beyond. He was a much-loved figure, a man of great energy and pastoral zeal, who loved the Church and the people in his care.”

### Report finds poverty growing globally, reversing recent gains

● Declining access to food, greater discrimination against women and widening restrictions on religious freedom have contributed to a higher rate of poverty worldwide, said a new report issued by a Fordham University program.

Overall, 26.2% of the world’s population lives in poverty, according to the Fordham Francis Global Poverty Score. The score is

based on seven measures for human well-being – four governing material needs and three related to spiritual needs – identified by Pope Francis during a 2015 address to the United Nations.

The Pope described material needs – water, food, housing and employment – and spiritual needs – education, religious freedom and civil rights – at the time.

## Ukrainian archbishop tells Pope Russia wants to destroy, not negotiate

Pope Francis has continued to call on Russian and Ukrainian leaders to negotiate an end to the war, but the head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church told him Russia wants only the destruction of Ukraine.

Ukrainian Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk of Kyiv-Halych met Pope Francis November 7 at the Vatican, the first time the two have met in person since Russia started the war in late February, although they have spoken on the phone many times.

Archbishop Shevchuk gave the Pope “a fragment of a Russian mine that destroyed the facade of the Ukrainian Catholic church building in the town of Irpin, near Kyiv, in March,” the archbishop’s office said.

“It is a very symbolic gift, not only because Irpin was one of the first ‘martyr towns’ affected by the Russian aggression against Ukraine, but also because similar pieces of landmines are extracted from the bodies of Ukrainian soldiers, civilians and children, a visible sign of the destruction and death that war brings every day.”

Returning to the Vatican from Bahrain November 6, Pope Francis had told reporters traveling with him that the Vatican is “constantly attentive” to what is happening in Ukraine and that the Secretariat of State continues to do what is possible and has worked behind the scenes to help arrange pris-



Pope Francis speaks with Ukrainian Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk of Kyiv-Halych during a private meeting at the Vatican November 7. Photo: CNS/Vatican Media

oner exchanges.

The Pope also told reporters he thinks the cruelty of the attacks on Ukraine and its civilians is the work of mercenaries, not Russians, who are “a great people” and have a strong “humanism.”

Meeting Archbishop Shevchuk the next day, Pope Francis reiterated the Holy See’s commitment to end the fighting and find a way to obtain “a just peace,” the archbishop’s office said.

“The war in Ukraine is a colonial war, and the peace proposals coming from Rus-

sia are colonial appeasement proposals,” the archbishop told the Pope, according to his office.

“These proposals involve the denial of the existence of the Ukrainian people, their history, culture and even the church. It is the denial of the very right to the existence of the Ukrainian state, recognised by the international community with its sovereignty and territorial integrity.”

Still, the archbishop thanked the Pope for all his prayers and efforts “to stop

the war and mediate peace, free hostages and prisoners and organise the universal solidarity of the Catholic Church on behalf of the suffering Ukrainian people,” the statement said.

Archbishop Shevchuk also visited with retired Pope Benedict XVI November 9 in the monastery in the Vatican gardens where the 95-year-old retired pontiff lives.

The archbishop said Pope Benedict assured Ukrainians of his constant prayers for peace.

## Vatican’s first auditor and deputy sue Secretariat of State

The first auditor general of the Vatican and his deputy are suing the Secretariat of State for \$9.25 million in damages.

Libero Milone and Ferruccio Panicco are seeking compensation for loss of earnings, damage to their reputations, and emotional suffering.

Mr Milone and Mr Panicco told reporters this week they also would submit records documenting financial crimes by senior Vatican officials, including embezzlement of funds.

Before coming to the Vatican, Mr Milone had been chairman and CEO of

Italy’s Deloitte global accounting firm. He had also worked for the United Nations. He was appointed auditor general at the Vatican in 2015 and told to resign two years later.

Three months after suddenly stepping down in the middle of his five-year mandate, Mr Milone said he was “threatened” into resignation by an “old guard” opposed to his work.

The Vatican responded with “surprise and regret” at this allegation, and Pope Francis used his 2017 Christmas address to criticise people who “betray the trust

put in them” and “wrongly declare themselves martyrs of the system, of a ‘Pope kept in the dark,’ of the ‘old guard.’”

The man said to be responsible for the firing of Mr Milone, Cardinal Angelo Becciu, told Reuters in 2017 that Mr Milone “went against all the rules and was spying on the private lives of his superiors and staff, including me”.

Cardinal Becciu is currently on trial for alleged financial crimes and was forced to step down in 2020 by Pope Francis. He maintains his innocence.

## German bishop calls Catholic teaching on sexuality ‘too simple’

Bishop Helmut Dieser of Aachen wants the Catholic Church to take a new perspective on sexuality.

“Same-sex feelings and love are not an aberration, but a variant of human sexuality,” he said in an interview with *Deutsche Welle* November 8. His remarks were reported

by the German Catholic news agency, KNA.

Homosexuals have a right to Church support and blessing, said the bishop, who is also the spokesman on abuse issues for the German bishops’ conference.

He said the current state of Church teaching does not

do justice to certain realities when it comes to sexuality: “The thinking is too simple.”

KNA reported the bishop said the Church can no longer signal to homosexual people that their feelings are unnatural and that they have to be celibate.

“Homosexuality is – as

science shows – not a glitch, not an illness, not an expression of any kind of deficit, and by the way it’s not a consequence of original sin, either,” the bishop said, adding that if two lesbians approached him to have a child baptised, he would do it. “Where is the problem, I ask.”





Edited by Jason Osborne  
jason@irishcatholic.ie

## Herding through a hungry land



Ngagati Namaiduk from the Maasai pastoralist community walks past his emaciated cattle during a dried-hay feeding programme at a traditional homestead near Bisil, Kenya, October 17. Photo: CNS/Thomas Mukoya, Reuters

## Catholic business leaders in Philippines pledge to cap prices at Christmas

A group of Catholic business leaders in the Philippines has forged an agreement to implement a cap on the prices of goods and commodities during the Christmas holiday season.

The group of more than 3,000 entrepreneurs said the decision was made in order not to take advantage of the high demand during the Christmas season, reported ucanews.com.

People in the Catholic-majority nation are expected to begin festivities in early December, which tempts businesses to raise the prices of commodities due to high demand.

The business group said having a price cap would

remind every Catholic entrepreneur of the mission to God and country.

Capping the price of goods and commodities reminds "each member of the association that although we are in business for profit, we still have a moral obligation to our fellow men," Larry Valdez, president of the Catholic Businessmen Association of the Philippines, told ucanews.com.

Mr Valdez said the groups would release a table of prices that its members would follow in selling goods commonly used during Christmas.

"Millions of Filipinos – rich or poor – are working hard to provide food on the table during the Christmas season. The

money that they are going to spend is hard-earned. Thus, it should not be taken advantage of by profiteers," Mr Valdez added.

Mr Valdez's group had responded to the call of the country's Catholic bishops, who urged business establishments not to engage in profiteering during the Christmas season.

"The birth of the Lord is fast approaching. It is proper to prepare for it in a special and particular way. While we wait for Advent, let us not forget that Christmas is not an occasion to take advantage of the poor... Profiteering makes the rich richer and the poor poorer," the bishops said in their statement.

The business association also asked the Department of Trade and Industry to ensure compliance with the Price Act, a law that prohibits hoarding and manipulation of prices of basic commodities.

DTI Secretary Alfredo Pascual told reporters on November 8 that the agency would act as a watchdog against those who would seek to make hefty profits.

In January, authorities filed profiteering charges against 124 business establishments believed to have hoarded essential goods for the 2021 Christmas season.

More than 100 of them were fined, and their business permits were revoked.

## Court says Indian cardinal must appear to face charges on land deals

A top court in the southern Indian state of Kerala has dismissed an appeal by Cardinal George Alencherry, who sought an exemption from appearing in a district court in cases related to his alleged involvement in the sale of Church lands.

The November 9 decision of the Kerala High Court effectively means the head of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church will have to appear in a court in connection with the criminal cases pending against him, reported ucanews.com.

Cardinal Alencherry had pleaded that he is "a senior citizen aged 77 years and the head of the Syro-Malabar Church," with duties like "performing religious ceremonies, rituals, including the ordination of bishops, priests, the consecration of churches" among other things.

Ucanews.com reported that the cardinal asked that the presence of his legal counsel be treated as his presence in court.

The prelate further submitted that he had to supervise administrative func-

tions across 35 dioceses, including 18 outside of Kerala and four outside of India.

He is also president of the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council and a member of the College of Cardinals, which requires him to attend meetings in Rome.

Justice Ziyad Rahman dismissed the cardinal's pleas as "untenable," saying the charges against him were serious and "punishable with imprisonment for seven years or more".

## Vatican roundup

### Pope: Seminaries don't form 'supermen', but humble servants

● The mission of a seminary "is not to form 'supermen' who pretend to know and control everything", but to help seminarians become priests who are humble servants of the communities they continue to belong to, Pope Francis said.

"The Lord calls some of his disciples to be priests, that is, he chooses some of the sheep from his flock and invites them to be shepherds of their brothers and sisters," the Pope wrote in a speech prepared for a group of rectors and staff members of seminaries in Latin America.

As priests, "we are fellow disciples of the rest of the Christian Faithful and, therefore, we share the same human and spiritual needs, just as we are subject to the same frailties, limitations and errors," he wrote in the text he handed to the group November 10 before speaking to them off the cuff.

The rectors and staff members were attending a course sponsored by the Dicastery for Clergy.

"The gifts of grace and the traits of a wounded nature," marked by a tendency to sin, are normal parts of the life of every baptised person and are present in the seminarians as well, the Pope wrote, so seminary training needs to help them become aware of both as they grow in faith and basic human maturity.

### Vatican opens clinic in St Peter's Square for World Day of the Poor

● As part of the Vatican celebration of World Day of the Poor, a dozen doctors and nurses and 90 medical students set up shop in St Peter's Square.

"We know there are people who need medical care and are not getting it, so our aim is to offer exams and blood tests and make referrals to specialists," said Dr Giuseppe Marinaro, an emergency room physician from Padua, who was on duty in the square November 10.

While the primary goal is to help the poor, especially those living on the streets around the Vatican, the presence in the square of three campers modified as clinics also is "a provocation,"

said Archbishop Rino Fisichella of the Dicastery for Evangelisation, which coordinates the World Day of the Poor events.

"The poor exist and there are more of them than most people think. This is a reminder. The poor evangelise us. The poor allow us all – believers and nonbelievers – to understand an essential of the Gospel, which is to serve others," especially the most vulnerable.

The "field hospital" in the square opened November 7 and was to offer free medical services to anyone who asked from 8 am to 7 pm each day through November 13, the day the Church marks the World Day of the Poor.

### Pope Francis meets with Fr James Martin at Vatican

● Pope Francis received Fr James Martin, SJ, in a private audience in the apostolic palace inside the Vatican on Friday.

In a tweet published after the encounter, Father Martin wrote he was "was deeply grateful to meet with Pope Francis in the Apostolic Palace this morning for 45 minutes."

The conversation covered "the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties, of LGBTQ Catholics," Fr Martin added, writing: "It was a warm, inspiring and encouraging meeting that I'll never forget."

The Vatican does not customarily comment on papal meetings with individual priests or bishops.





# Letter from Rome



John L. Allen Jr

**R**eaders may have noticed that I've been absent from the *Crux* site for more than three weeks. The reason, which I didn't announce in advance, is that I recently had to have a fairly major surgery on my oesophagus, and then I spent more than three weeks in the hospital here in Rome recovering.

Although I'm home now, my recovery is not complete. I have to spend the next couple of weeks on a largely liquid diet, performing physical therapy exercises and going through a series of follow-up appointments, all calculated to make sure I get back to something resembling normal. I was lucky to be in excellent hands – my surgeon, Dr Giuseppe Maria Ettorre, is considered among the best in the country, and recently performed an abdominal surgery on former Italian President Giorgio Napolitano.

I went into the hospital on October 17 and came out on November 11, meaning I spent 25 days there. Most of that time I had two large drainage tubes coming out of my side and a large IV pumping me with nutrients, since I wasn't able to eat or drink on my own. I also couldn't really have any visitors other than my wife, who was able to come three times a week for an hour at a time, because of tight restrictions on outsiders related to infection risks.

## System

That lengthy period inside the system, most of it spent alone, left me with some basic take-aways about the practice of health care. I offer them here since the Catholic Church is the world's largest private provider of health care, and perhaps these thoughts may be of some use to practitioners.

**“I went into the hospital on October 17 and came out on November 11, meaning I spent 25 days there”**

First, the experience taught me the importance of maintaining the Catholic identity of Church-affiliated or sponsored health care facilities.

I was in the Lazzaro Spallanzani Hospital, which is Italy's national institute for infectious diseases and also one of its main transplant centres. Spallanzani was an 18th Century priest and biologist – ironically, he's considered the father of artificial insemination – but by



## After a serious scare, three thoughts on Catholic health care

**“There's to a health care system that's even more relational, truly human and, therefore, all the more Catholic”**

now the facility is public, though, like pretty much everything in Italy, “public” here still means culturally Catholic.

In my ward, there's a small statue of the Madonna at one end of the main corridor, and at the other was a stairwell that looked out over a church dedicated to St Camillus de Lellis, a 16th and 17th Century Italian priest and founder of the Camillians, a religious order devoted to care of the sick.

I'm not a particularly spiritually intense person – I'm not the kind of guy to pray novenas, or to dream of making the Camino di Santiago. Even so, I spent considerable time praying to the Madonna and to St Camillus over the last 25 days, and the presence of those tangible reminders of the Faith brought me deep comfort.

## Tradition

Second, it's important to bring the Catholic tradition to bear by remembering that the ultimate aim isn't to treat a condition, but a person.

Perhaps the most agonising aspect of my experience was the lack of communication from

decision-makers. No one ever volunteered information about where I was in my recovery, or what the next steps might be, or how my progress was being evaluated towards an eventual dismissal. To the extent I ever knew any of those things, it was because I asked repeatedly, and generally got answers only grudgingly.

## Absence

In the absence of such information, your mind tends to go to dark places, and the anxiety bred by such a vacuum can become all-consuming.

What may be hard for health care personnel to grasp is that uncertainty is every bit as painful for a recovering patient as whatever physical ailment is at issue. Lying for hours in one's bed wondering whether some new problem has been discovered, what's being evaluated to gauge your progress, and what the timeline might be for dismissal, is a source of constant and profound stress, and, in the end, it can impede recovery as much as infection.

To quote the movie *The Shawshank Redemption* – an apt refer-

ence, given that a lengthy hospital stay bears an uncanny resemblance to a prison term – “Alone in the dark with nothing but your thoughts, time can draw out like a blade”.

Health care providers would do well to remember they're treating people, not just maladies, and those people crave information as much as they do oxygen or blood or antibiotics.

**“Perhaps the most agonising aspect of my experience was the lack of communication from decision-makers”**

Third, health care systems would do well to treat the people at the bottom of their hierarchies with great respect, because they're often the only people who can relate with patients on a truly human basis.

Doctors and nurses are often delightful personalities, of course, and when you get to know them outside of a hospital ward it's a different experience. On the

inside, however, they generally try to maintain a degree of clinical distance from patients, and often interact solely in the context of treatment and monitoring.

The people who sweep the floors, however, or empty the garbage, or bring around the meals, don't have the same attitude. They're free to relate with patients as human beings, not as objects of professional responsibility.

For instance, during my stay at Spallanzani I befriended an orderly named Francesco, who works on my ward and with whom I would spend long stretches of time talking about our families, our homes, our experiences of Rome, soccer (inevitably) and any number of other topics. While I know I owe my physical recovery primarily to my doctors and nurses, my psychological survival over those 25 days was due in no small measure to Francesco and others like him.

Let me be clear that these are thoughts intended to help health care providers grasp what the experience of a lengthy hospitalisation is like from the patient's perspective. Despite whatever frustrations I felt, I'm deeply grateful for the outstanding care I received, and I know that my capacity even to pen these lines is because of it.

So, thank you to everyone involved – and here's to a health care system that's even more relational, truly human and, therefore, all the more Catholic.



# Catholic leaders vow to continue fight after state abortion measures pass



Carol Zimmermann

**A**lthough Catholic leaders and state Catholic conferences had pushed for the defeat of ballot measures protecting legal abortion and urged voters to pass measures restricting abortions, state voters ultimately went the other way November 8.

Voters in California, Vermont and Michigan approved abortion protections, while Kentucky and Montana voters rejected abortion restrictions.

These ballot measures were the first time voters faced the opportunity to weigh in on abortion laws since the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision in June that overturned Roe v. Wade, its 1973 case legalising abortion nationwide.

Catholic bishops in states where these votes took place expressed disappointment and renewed their commitment to keep up the fight to end abortion and to provide support to women and families in need.

"Abortion is now legal in Michigan at an unprecedented level, and millions of lives are at stake," wrote Detroit Archbishop Allen Vigneron in a letter to Catholics posted on the archdiocesan website November 9.

"We awake today to the news that Proposal 3 has passed, altering our state constitution to allow for unregulated and unsafe abortion on demand in Michigan," he wrote, saying that people of faith are "deeply saddened by this grave assault on the dignity and sanctity of unborn, innocent human life".

## Unjust

The archbishop called the measure an "unjust and perverse law" and pointed out that in the last several months pro-life advocates in the state had "worked tirelessly to spread the truth about Proposal 3, imploring voters to make an informed decision at the ballot box".

**“Catholic bishops in states where these votes took place expressed disappointment and renewed their commitment to keep up the fight to end abortion”**

"I offer my deepfelt gratitude to all who prayed, spread awareness, voted and otherwise worked against this proposal," he said, "and I share in their sorrow at the outcome".

He asked Catholics to join him in prayer about this issue and to renew their "commitment to accompanying women and families in need, with



A Michigan billboard against Proposal 3, a ballot measure to codify a right to an abortion, is seen along I-75 outside of Detroit November 6. Voters approved the measure in the November 8 midterm election. Photo: CNS/Evelyn Hockstein, Reuters

greater resolve than ever," pledging to "continue our efforts to build a culture of life in which abortion is unthinkable, all families receive the support they need, and the dignity of all people is recognised".

In October, the Michigan Catholic Conference released a letter to Catholics in the state urging them to reject Proposal 3 and describing the measure as "the most extreme proposal concerning abortion this state or country has ever seen".

The measure, also known as the Reproductive Freedom for All Amendment, modifies the state's constitution to remove restrictions on abortion in the state and eliminate other pro-life laws.

"As citizens and pastors in Michigan, we call your attention to an immense threat to the dignity of human life on this November's ballot," the bishops wrote, pleading with Catholics to vote against it.

The California Catholic Conference had similarly urged Catholics to vote against that state's abortion measure called Proposition 1.

## Right

On its website, the Catholic conference – which is the public policy arm of the state's bishops – said the measure "would enshrine the explicit right to abortion in our state constitution, setting a nationwide precedent. It is the most egregious expansion of abortion this country has ever seen".

It also said the measure was the first time in California when "voters are being asked to vote for unrestricted late-term abortion, ending any real chance for California to protect unborn life in future laws".

In Vermont, voters passed Article 22, also called the Reproductive Liberty Amendment, to protect "per-

sonal reproductive autonomy" for people of any age.

The measure came to the state's voters after state legislators passed a law in 2019 guaranteeing "reproductive rights". After the Dobbs decision, the measure's supporters said the constitutional amendment was needed to provide more protections for abortion.

## Vote

In September, Bishop Christopher Coyne of Burlington, Vermont, wrote to Catholics in the state urging them to vote against the abortion measure and instead to promote laws and policies that "directly confront the reasons why people choose to have an abortion".

He said there are "many problematic implications of this proposed addition to Vermont's constitution. The most problematic, however, may be the explicit intent of our state's lawmakers by this amendment to create the strongest legal precedent for keeping abortion on demand for any stage of pregnancy, even late-term pregnancies, for any reason".

In other state ballot measures, Kentucky voters rejected a constitutional amendment that said there was no right to abortion in the state, while Montana voters rejected a measure to approve the Born Alive Infants Protection Act requiring doctors to try to save the life of infants "born alive at any state of development".

In Montana, in urging voters to support the measure, the state's Catholic conference issued a statement in September saying it was "the epitome of commonsense legislation" and was needed to "safeguard those infants who, through no fault of their own, are born into some of the most dif-

ficult and challenging circumstances imaginable".

The bishops said the measure reiterated a similar law passed by Congress in 2002 and would go a step further, noting that the previous law did not "provide specific measures for enforcing protection of these helpless infants and failed to specify that a born-alive infant is entitled to medically appropriate care and treatment".

**“The measure came to the state's voters after state legislators passed a law in 2019 guaranteeing 'reproductive rights'”**

Kentucky's Catholic bishops, who urged voters to vote yes on Amendment 2, said in a November 9 statement that they were disappointed by the measure's rejection by state voters but stressed that "this is not the end of the debate or of the need to work diligently to increase respect for the dignity of each and every human life".

"We pray that the defeat of the amendment will not lead the courts to assume the role of determining public policy on abortion. The General Assembly is the proper venue to settle such deeply divisive issues," the bishops added in the statement posted on the website of the Kentucky Catholic Conference.

They said that while the measure's defeat "is cause for sadness," they also saw the vote as a "call to redouble our efforts at ensuring that every Kentuckian has the support they need to thrive."

The prelates pledged to renew their commitment "to work with

legislators to pass laws that protect the unborn, support women and families, and respect human life and dignity in all stages of life".

## Measures

The vote tallies on the abortion measures reported by *The New York Times* November 10 showed 52.4% of Kentucky voters rejected a constitutional amendment against abortion, and in Kansas, 52.6% voted against the Born Alive Infants Protection Act.

In Vermont, 77.2% voted in favour of the Reproductive Liberty Amendment, while in Michigan, 56.7% of voters approved a proposal to create a state constitutional right to reproductive freedom. And in California, 64.9% of voters approved of amending the state's constitution to protect reproductive freedom.

Abortion also was a major issue in voting for candidates. *The Washington Post* reported that network exit polls said almost three in 10 voters across the country said abortion was the most important issue in their vote and that about four in 10 voters nationwide said they were angry with the Dobbs decision.

The day after the midterm elections, Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life, accused Democrats of using fearmongering as a "key messaging tactic," saying that "misinformation about pro-life protective legislation and falsehoods about the impact of the US Supreme Court decision in Dobbs fuelled pro-abortion campaigns".

She also said that pro-life candidates still "made numerous gains and it appears that the United States House of Representatives will have a majority of pro-life members".



# Letters

## Letter of the week

### Jesus' teaching on sexual sin integral part of the Gospel

**Dear Editor,** Many of the reactions to Fr Sheehy's homilies, including Bishop Browne's reaction, seem to overlook completely a very important truth, namely, that Jesus Christ preached strongly against sexual sins. In Matthew 5, he warns us that lustful thoughts can lead to damnation and must be avoided even if this involves serious sacrifice.

In Mark 7, he warns us that vices can 'defile a person' in one's very heart, and he lists 12 vices, a list that includes

three vices related to sexual behaviour: (1) unchastity/sexual immoralities, (2) adultery, and (3) licentiousness/sensuality. (Note that adultery is not the only sexual sin, according to Our Lord.)

Matthew 15 presents this teaching too, but shortens the list to six vices: but still including two sexual vices [unchastity and adultery]. Christ's early followers followed suit in this, for example, St Paul in 1 Corinthians 5-7 and Romans 1.

In light of these facts, may I propose

respectfully two questions to Bishop Brown and all the bishops: If Jesus Christ preached against sexual sin so strongly, is it not incumbent upon priests and bishops to do the same, as an integral part of their preaching the whole Gospel? And, if it is thus incumbent, where and how is this preaching/teaching to be done?

Yours etc.,

**Dr John Murray**

School of Theology, Philosophy, and Music, Dublin City University

## A confusion the Vatican did not create

**Dear Editor,** Under the headline: 'Synodal process creating confusion that the Vatican needs to address', David Quinn declares: "The Church explicitly invited people to criticise its teachings in this, and other regards." [The Irish Catholic – November 3, 2022].

As it is clear that the teaching he is referring to is "the permanent and indissoluble union of one man and one woman", this is a most serious charge. He should therefore have clearly cited the "explicit invitation" from "the Church" to criticise this that he is referring to.

Not to do so was to foment the very confusion he complains about. How is the Vatican to address a confusion it had nothing whatever to do with?

Yours etc.,

**Sean O'Connell**

Coleraine, Co. Derry



## A misunderstanding of the Latin Mass

**Dear Editor,** Stephen Clark [The Irish Catholic – November 3, 2022] misunderstands why so many Catholics like the Mass in the Extraordinary Form (Latin Mass). I like to attend the Sacrifice of the Mass in both this and the Novus Ordo Form (English Mass). I attend more of the latter.

As he says language is important when it becomes the language of the heart. The use of the personal missal

overcomes problems associated with language in the Extraordinary Form. Language is not a barrier to the pursuit and effort of engagement in the best possible interaction with God as one seeks to participate in the sacrifice.

The Extraordinary Form is neither suited to Stephen nor to most Catholics. That's natural! But it is a huge exaggeration on his part to claim that those who like the Extraordi-

nary Form "idolise it".

No, the Catholics concerned find it an effective means of seeking to idolise God. There is no evidence to suppose otherwise in the case of the vast majority of those who attend the Extraordinary Form.

If the dispositions and demeanour of the priest and laity are appropriate in each case comparisons between both forms are odious.

It is great that so many

Catholics find deep meaning in the Novus Ordo. But should Stephen Clarke observe current realities accurately, he will find that the only obsession that pertains to either of the two forms now is the obsession accompanying the heavy-handed efforts to wipe the Extraordinary Form from the face of the earth.

Yours etc.,

**Neil Bray**

Cappamore, Co. Limerick

## Disappointed with review of 'The Banshees of Inisherin'

**Dear Editor,** Having had the pleasure of seeing *The Banshees of Inisherin* with its splendid imagery, breath-taking cinematography, outstanding individual performances (especially from the four main actors) and dark humour, I was really taken aback and disappointed to read its review from your film correspondent Aubrey Malone [The Irish Catholic – October 27, 2022] which appeared to be more about his attempt to sabotage the success of a great Irish film by directly attacking and insulting director Martin McDonagh, suggesting he had "ambition to be the Irish Quentin Tarantino" and the film "in another director's hands could have been a masterpiece" which is also somewhat ironic!

Considering McDonagh also wrote the screenplay makes a mockery of his latter comment and further demonstrates the reviewer's undoubted bias against him which is also evident in his criticism of certain aspects within this most thought provoking film which he found not believable.

The fact that he didn't issue spoiler alerts and gave away the two most major events in the film demonstrates contempt for not only this excellent film cast and crew but its audience as well which to date by all reports have been enthralled.

Yours etc.,

**John Burke**

Clontarf, Dublin 3

## Calls to silence a fellow priest

**Dear Editor,** It has emerged this week in an interview with the *Irish Independent* that ACP (Association of Catholic Priests) spokesman Fr Tim Hazelwood called on the bishop of Kerry to silence a fellow priest (Fr Sheehy) and withdraw his permission to offer Mass in public after he defended Church teaching on RTÉ.

How times have changed. It is not that long since their spokesmen wanted priests restored to public ministry after they denied central tenets of the Faith (including the divinity of Our Lord) and were silenced after several chances to recant.

Yours etc.,

**Liam Foley**

Chill Churnáin, Co. Limerick

## facebook community

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

### Sermons of tragic Fr Cummins reprinted in light of demand

He was my best friend and friend to so many. He is sadly missed by family and friends. – **Mairead D'Arcy**

This is indeed good news about a good man taken far too soon. – **John Heneghan**

This is a beautiful collection of homilies – worth every penny to buy. – **Máire Hctor**

### 'Hate speech' law could be used to suppress opinions the establishment disapproves of

Main problem isn't from right or left, the main problem is from the lukewarm in the middle, who know what truth is, but too cowardly to speak it. – **John Donohoe**

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

## Urgent need to express Church's beliefs on sexual morality

**Dear Editor,** In a growing modern liberal Ireland that is quickly becoming less interested in religion often eliciting cynical sniggers when the topic is discussed in the media, there is an urgent need for the Catholic Church to articulate clearly in unambiguous terms what its beliefs and teachings are particularly in relation to matters of sexual morality.

This should include issues like cohabitation, homosexuality, same sex marriage, same sex relations, sex outside marriage, transgenderism, contraception, abortion, pornography, euthanasia, separation of Church and State, removing religious teaching from schools. The Church should restate its beliefs about purgatory, heaven, and hell and what are its requirements for people to receive Communion.

It should state very clearly what it believes is right and good as opposed to what is wrong and bad and what it considers as serious sin (mortal) and what it considers less serious sin (venial).

It should remind people that the Catholic Church which is comprised of its lay congregation as well as its hierarchy, is by no means the only way to salvation but just one option that has rules and regulations to help people who believe in the afterlife to achieve salvation.

When the Church has agreed a clear and precise view on all relevant issues it needs to communicate it professionally with the general public including the media. The quicker the better for all concerned.

Yours etc.,

**Eddie O'Mahony**

Tramore, Co. Waterford

## 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.



# Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, November 17, 2022

## Personal Profile

Hearing more  
than 'a voice in a  
cloud'

Page 32



# Adopting a greener way of life

**T**he 2022 United Nations Climate Change conference, COP27, is drawing to a close in Egypt, and whatever else about it, these yearly gatherings continue to spark conversation and debate about how best to address the environmental issues the earth is facing.

In my experience, very few people doubt that environmental action ought to be taken at both personal and societal levels, but a valid debate continues about just what kind of action that ought to be. After all, a delicate balance has to be struck between addressing global warming and not burdening the world's most



**With COP27 coming to an end, how to care for creation is on more minds than ever, writes Jason Osborne**

financially-strapped countries and populations with standards that are impossible for them to meet, and that prevent them from rising out of poverty as we in the West did largely thanks to cheap and plentiful fossil fuels.

But while the debate rages, it's possible for us to get on with things individually. To my mind, and the Pope's, the Catholic,

spiritual life is more than compatible with a life lived in healthy accordance with nature. Indeed, it seems more respectful to God to treat all that he has made with a healthy dose of awe and care – not just the human.

It's not just about doing "green" things, either. A simpler, humbler way of life is ultimately to the good of God's creation, as

one might expect. We'll revisit these, but to appreciate what you have more, consume less and introduce a certain spiritual attentiveness into yet another area of your life are all things that will benefit us on our pilgrimage to heaven as well as leave the earth in a better state than we found it in.

So without further ado, here are some tips regarding how to live in a manner more respectful of God's creation, while also (hopefully) buffing up our spiritual lives a little.

### **Buy only what you need**

Philosopher Simone Weil once said that the highest degree of

attention is the same thing as prayer. While a highly mystical statement like that requires some parsing, a simpler way to put it would be that a properly spiritual life is an attentive one, where we're conscious of what we're doing and how we're behaving rather than trudging on unconsciously.

One of the ways in which many of us, in the West, are least conscious is when it comes to our purchasing habits. We buy what we don't need, and we buy too much of what we do, all of which has to come from somewhere and has to go somewhere. Whether it's food, clothes,

» **Continued on Page 31**



## Family News



### AND EVENTS

#### 'EXCEPTIONAL' ANCIENT BRONZE STATUES EMERGE IN ITALY

Archaeologists in Italy have found more than two dozen beautifully preserved bronze statues dating back to ancient Roman times in thermal baths in Tuscany, in what experts are hailing as an "exceptional" discovery.

The statues were found over the last two weeks in San Casciano dei Bagni, a hilltop town about 160 kilometres north of Rome where archaeologists have been exploring ancient ruins for the last three years, Reuters reported.

"From the bottom of the pool at the lowest point of its monumental construction, 24 masterpieces of bronze statues between the second and first centuries BC have re-emerged," Jacopo Tabolli, an assistant professor from the University for Foreigners in Siena who is leading the archaeological project, said.

Mr Tabolli added the statues – which according to Italy's ANSA news agency are 2,300 years old – used to adorn a sanctuary before they were immersed in thermal waters, in a sort of ritual, "probably around the 1st century AD".

#### PARALYSED MAN COMMUNICATES USING BRAIN IMPLANT

A paralysed man who cannot speak or type was able to spell out over 1,000 words using a neuroprosthetic device that translates his brain waves into full sentences, AFP reported US researchers as saying.

"Anything is possible," was one of the man's favourite phrases to spell out, said the first author of a new study on the research, Sean Metzger of the University of California San Francisco (UCSF).

Last year, the team of UCSF researchers showed that a brain implant called a brain-computer interface could translate 50 very common words when the man attempted to say them in full.

In the new study, published in the journal *Nature Communications*, they were able to decode him silently miming the 26 letters of the phonetic alphabet.

"So if he was trying to say 'cat', he would say charlie-alpha-tango," authors said.

A spelling interface then used language-modelling to crunch the data in real time, working out possible words or errors.

#### US TICKET HOLDER WINS RECORD \$2BILLION LOTTERY

A single ticket sold in California scooped an eye-watering \$2 billion after a delayed draw in the US lottery, AFP reports.

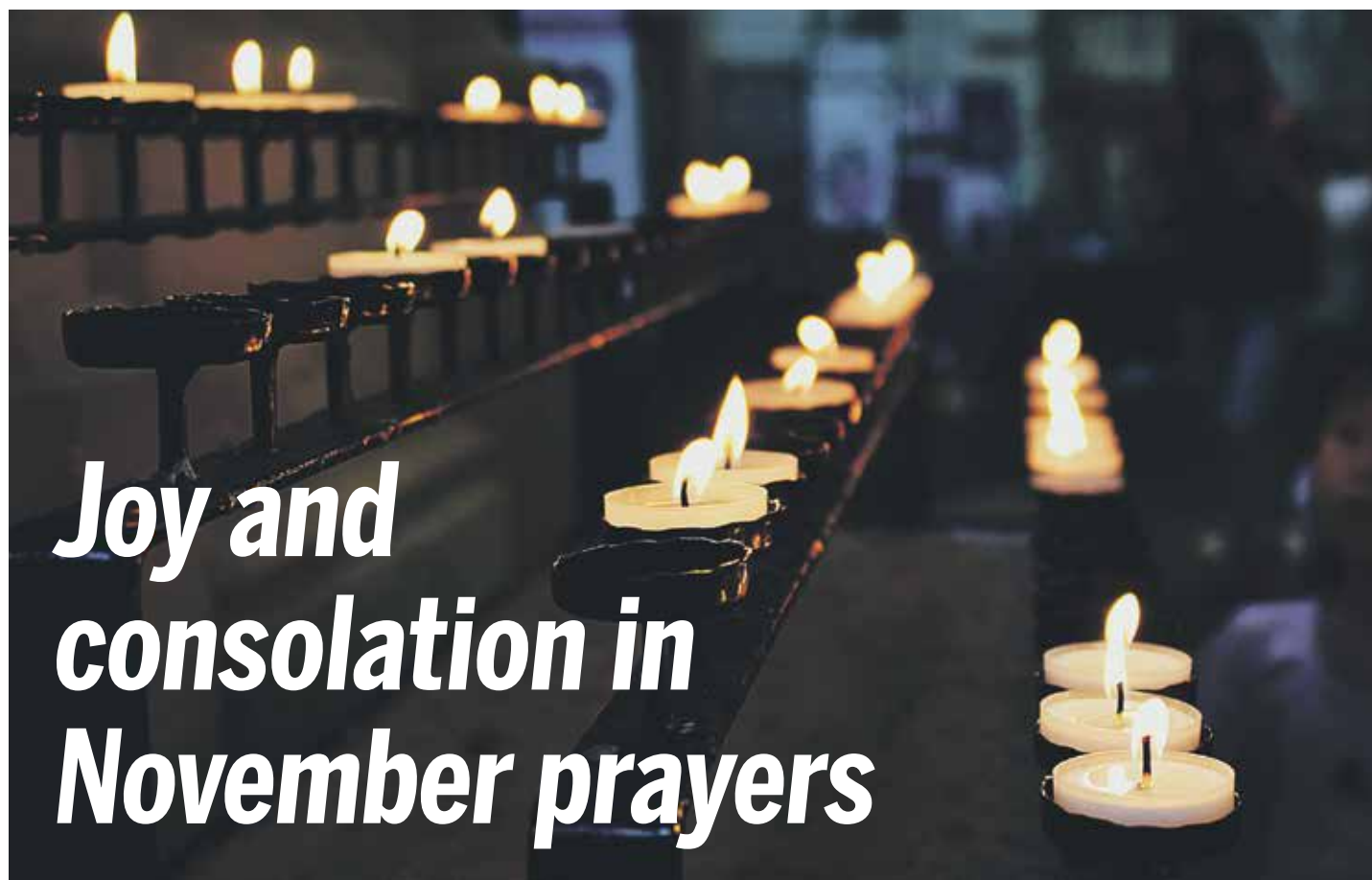
Only one of the millions of tickets sold across the country matched all six numbers in the Powerball draw, California Lottery said.

"California Lottery makes its FIRST EVER Billionaire!" the organisation tweeted.

"One lucky ticket sold at Joe's Service Center in Altadena matched all 6 numbers in the November 7 #Powerball draw. The final jackpot amount for this draw came to \$2.04 BILLION dollars."

The winner, who has not been named, can choose to take a lump sum all at once, estimated to be around \$1.4 billion, or the entire amount in annuities over three decades.

Most winners choose the lump sum payout.



# Joy and consolation in November prayers

November can be a dark, bleak month, situated between the mellowness of October and the excitement of the lead up to Christmas. With all its dreary days and inclement weather, it is a month I quite enjoy as the wind and rain provide the perfect excuse for snuggling up on the couch reading or watching a film while enjoying a hot drink.

**“Many of us, while sorry for our sins, feel the effects of our attachment to sin or have sins we hold onto”**

It's also a month I love because it's the month of the Holy Souls in purgatory when the Church remembers and prays for all those who have died. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* clearly outlines the Church teaching on purgatory saying that "All who die in God's grace and friendship but still imperfectly purified are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven." (CCC 1031).

The doctrine on purgatory is often forgotten or misunderstood. Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron of Detroit, wrote to Catholics in the Archdiocese of Detroit ahead of All Souls Day this year announcing the creation of a new lay apostolate dedicated to prayerfully interceding for the faithful departed. His communication 'A Call to Prayer: A Pastoral Note on Praying for the Souls in Purgatory' also contains some catechesis about the Catholic doctrine on purgatory and encourages Catholics to remember the dead in



## A parent's perspective Maria Byrne

their prayers during the month of November and throughout the year.

Archbishop Vigneron wrote that "an essential characteristic of the virtue of love is our devotion to Christian prayer – especially intercessory prayer for all, for the living and the dead". He was eager that the new confraternity would help to develop a better awareness of our need to pray for our brothers and sisters who have passed from this life and who need our prayers "in preparation for their final journey of purification and sanctification to enter heaven".

My mother died of cancer some years ago. She was a very devout Catholic, attending daily Mass, prayed every day and demonstrated a great love of God in her daily life. Yet, in her final years she often reminded those of us who would be left behind to pray for her after her death. She trusted completely in Jesus, her loving saviour, but realised that God in his kindness and mercy has provided us with a way to cleanse us of any temporal punishment due to sin.

This means that, even though we are assured of God's saving grace in the Sacrament of Confession, certain consequences of our sins can still remain. The Church teaches that every sin entails an unhealthy attachment to creation which must be purified either on earth or after death in purgatory (CCC 1472). Many of us, while sorry for our sins, feel the effects of our attachment to sin or have sins

we hold onto.

Office gossip over morning coffee may make us feel like part of the crowd; lying to get out of a sticky situation or an unwanted engagement can be glossed over as "just white lies" and we can still have an inclination to see something positive in past transgressions.



God's perfect justice means that the damage caused by sin must be repaired. When trying to explain this to children we can think of times when, in a temper, they may have broken something we love. Of course when they express their sorrow, as loving parents we'll be quick to forgive, but will expect them to make some attempt to repair or replace the item or to do something good to make up for the hurt they've caused.

With Christmas approaching rapidly, those of us who have lost loved ones may mourn the fact that we won't be able to buy them cards and gifts. I often shed a silent tear when I see Christmas cards for mothers and fathers, really missing

choosing cards and presents for my parents. We are blessed to know that we can still give them an even greater gift, the gift of our prayers. Fr Paul O'Callaghan, an Opus Dei priest and lecturer in theology at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome, in a recent interview with CNA (Catholic News Agency), said that the idea of praying for the dead is very, very old. He explained that "Purgatory is not an individualistic doctrine where I sort of resolve and sort out my particular personal problems and sins and faults" but "It's something that the whole Church does together". When we go out of our warm, cosy houses on cold November evenings to visit the cemeteries and pray for our loved ones, we are demonstrating "a great sense of solidarity with those who have died before us".

### Body of Christ

Fr O'Callaghan says that Christ frees us from our sins but, since the Church is the Body of Christ, the Church also cooperates in that process. He emphasises that this is why the prayer of Christians for the dead is so valuable and so important. The practice of gaining indulgences, either partial or plenary, which removes part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin, and can be applied to our departed loved ones, is not some superstitious custom. According to Fr O'Callaghan, it's a beautiful thing that God, being totally knowledgeable about our fallen human condition, provides us with the opportunity to be "definitively purified after death". What a joy and consolation that should be to us all.



» Continued from Page 29



furniture, appliances or something else, it's quite likely we don't need everything we buy – that's certainly been the case with me.

## “Cutting down on unnecessary purchases with the intention of cultivating a more conscious approach to God's gifts to us is sure to do both you and the environment a whole lot of good”

Nothing we do is without effect, and to buy carelessly before discarding carelessly is to cultivate a, potentially unconscious, wasteful attitude in ourselves. It's quite opposed to the humble prayer thanking God for the food, say, that God has given us to eat, or the clothes he's given us to wear.

It might sound simplistic, but if you're in the habit of wasteful purchasing, try to ask yourself if you really need what you're buying, or if you really need this much of what you're buying. Cutting down on unnecessary purchases with the intention of cultivating a more conscious approach to God's gifts to us is sure to do both you and the environment a whole lot of good.

## Appreciating what we have

This point is closely connected to that which is above, but deserves a mention of its own. I was once a compulsive book-buyer, tending to buy books faster than I could read them (which I understand is quite common among book lovers). However, it got to a point where I had books that had been sitting on my shelves for years that I hadn't

read yet, and I even got rid of books on a couple of occasions that I never got around to. Wasteful? Yes. Appreciative of the good books I'd purchased? No.

It's a slightly silly example, but my former underappreciation of my books is but a single example. A more relevant experience for people of my age might be the moment you get hungry, look into cupboards and shelves full of ingredients, and judge that there's “Nothing to eat” because you'd have to make it and there isn't anything easier to hand. Food is ordered instead, and good food remains languishing on the shelves.

Appreciating what we have is a good way to take the things more seriously that God has created and given us. Reading the books you've bought is to love reading and be properly appreciative of what you have, and using the food you've bought, even if it takes slightly longer to end up on a plate than ordering, is of course less wasteful than letting it spoil out of laziness.

## Give and take

Get into the habit of offering old items to family and friends rather



than throwing them straight out. Similarly, be open to receiving things second-hand from those around you rather than having to have them brand new. This exchange is not only environmentally beneficial by giving things a “second life” as it were, but you can also help those in need out.

## “If no one wants what you have to give, have a look to the many charity shops dotting our island to see if they'll take it”

This keeps pre-existing items in circulation and so plays a small part in reducing the demand for mass-production that our societies have built up in recent decades. If no one wants what you have to give, have a look to the many charity shops dotting our island to see if they'll take it.

## Turn off appliances

In keeping with those practices that are both environmentally and spiritually beneficial, turning off appliances saves electricity and affords us some of that silence and stillness that's so difficult to come by in our noisy, modern age.

As old-fashioned as it might sound, switching off the TV, radio, laptop and whatever else might be running permanently gives you some silence in which to hear God. It's not for no reason that some of Catholicism's oldest monasteries are shrouded in deep silence, to better help those present hear God's voice and experience his presence.

So this little act of flicking a switch from on to off for even a couple hours more a day will yield results both environmental and spiritual.

# Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



I've a fool proof solution for next time Ireland is facing drought conditions. All that we have to do is have the Department of Education schedule in a week of school holidays. Then, it is sure to bucket down for the entire week. That, at least, is precisely what happened during the recent mid-term break, as many still-sodden Irish families will have noticed.

We somehow managed to take the entire week off, to spend some time by the coast. The North Atlantic threw all it could at us all week long, but it failed to dampen our spirits. One day the roof nearly lifted off the house, as a force 10 storm blew in. Yet I loved staring out to sea as enormous waves broke on the rocks. The wind's eerie howling in the chimney only served to make it all the cosier by the fire.

Coats and wellies were donned most days, as we braved walks along the cliffs. Wetsuits were worn, as the kids relished surfing down the large waves thrown in by the inclement weather. Comforting stews were cooked, and popcorn was duly popped for movie nights by the fire. Ghosts were glimpsed on Halloween, and pumpkins were carved.

On the only vaguely humane day of the week, I

went sailing with the two older kids, where we were reminded that it was indeed November, as hypothermia slowly began to set in, just as we made it back to shore. One other exciting excursion involved going to Cork City for a day, to see all the action. Yet we were back in the peace of our coastal cottage by dusk. On those rare moments when the clouds parted at night, the star strewn sky amazed the kids, until the cold wind shepherded them back indoors for a cocoa before bed.

I think that the test of a good holiday is whether you get so relaxed that you forget what day of the week it is. By Thursday, I thought it was Friday, or perhaps it was the other way round. Either way, I was sufficiently removed from my normal routine to no longer care. It simply didn't matter, as each day flowed easily into the next.

By the time Sunday evening rolled around and the school uniforms were laid out, and the workaday world threatened to return with a vengeance, we were rested and ready for it. Most importantly, after nine meandering days spent enjoying the kids' company, we felt closer to each one of them, and to each other.





# Hearing more than 'a voice in a cloud'

## Personal Profile



Ruadhán Jones

Sometimes we expect a 'voice from the cloud' moment when it comes to vocations, according to Fr Dave Twohig O.Carm. But for him, there was no clear line to his own vocation. Instead, it gradually evolved until he realised that he wanted to serve people as a priest.

"Believe it or not, that's a hard question for me to answer," says Fr Twohig when I ask if the practice of the Faith was in his family background. "It was there but it was never quite explicit."

**“And my mother’s name is Teresa and she was named after St Thérèse, one of the great Carmelite saints!”**

Fr Twohig's mother went to Mass regularly, he recalls, but he never went to Mass with his parents: "If you know Beaumont parish, the church is beside the school and so mam would drop us to school and she would go to Mass," he explains.

"Still to this day she'd speak to me about praying for everybody every day... There wasn't a regular practice. When I told my wider family, my aunts and uncles and my grandmother, that I was think-



Fr Dave Twohig O.Carm.

ing about joining the Carmelites, they all said, oh yeah sure we have great devotion to [the Carmelite parish on] Whitefriar Street, my nanny used to go there very week.

"And my mother's name is Teresa and she was named after St Thérèse, one of the great Carmelite saints! It was only as I was beginning to explore my own journey that all this came out. Would I say that faith was practiced in the home? We didn't pray the rosary, we didn't go to Mass, it wasn't practiced in that explicit way, but I think there was a sense of faith in my parents."

Fr Twohig's journey or exploration began after he finished school. He did the Leaving Certificate when he was 17 and worked for a

year as an architectural technician. He loved building, so decided to study to make this his permanent career. He attended Waterford Institute of Technology.

### Prayer

"While I was in Waterford, I began to spend time in prayer. I went into the church regularly and sat in silence and I suppose I've always had a sense of God's presence. I was always attracted to and inspired by the Gospel stories of Christ and his message," Fr Twohig says.

He started to explore the sense of God's presence in his life. Having found silent prayer and the scriptures particularly attractive, he wanted to know more. He turned to his home parish in Beaumont, North

Dublin, a Carmelite parish.

"In that period I think there was a kind of desire to work with people in a different way, in a more social and a more care based approach," Fr Twohig explains. "That was important to me. That's why I went back to the Carmelites and asked if there was something I could get involved in, some kind of a faith based social programme.

**“Fr Twohig was ordained in 2013, having spent two years ministering as a deacon in Knocklyon parish”**

"I think sometimes with vocation stories, people are expecting to hear something like a voice from the clouds or some moment of great conversion. For me it was a more gradual explanation of my own thoughts and who I was and what did I feel. What that presence of God meant to me and what was he asking of me. That's really where it started and slowly developed from there."

Fr Twohig was ordained in 2013, having spent two years ministering as a deacon in Knocklyon parish. After his ordination, he moved to Whitefriar Street in the heart of Dublin.

"I found Whitefriar Street to be a great and rewarding place to work and meet people," Fr Twohig reflects. "Probably the greatest revelation for me in terms of ministry is Confession, the Sacrament of Penance. It's a time where people are vulnerable, but they are open to sharing and you can see the importance of faith in people's lives.

"It gives them strength and courage in difficult times. I've always found it a very rewarding, challenging, but fulfilling ministry, trying

to represent the mercy of God to somebody and to give them a word of encouragement."

Fr Twohig has worked for many years in youth ministry, taking up roles within the Carmelite order at national and international level. He believes the Carmelite tradition has much to offer to young people today.

"I think in the modern milieu, there is a deep desire in young people for silence and space. It's something that's very important in Carmelite spirituality. We speak about standing in the presence of God and contemplation is an awareness of God that can only be brought about by silence and peace in yourself through prayer."

In his youth ministry work, Fr Twohig continues, "we organised events and you'd have speakers and activities and different kinds of things. And then in the evening, we would have some form of prayer that was either Eucharistic adoration or silent prayer with a poem of St John of the Cross.

"When we got feedback, what we found was the young people always liked that time of silence, to have space and a peaceful place. Whatever the speakers were, it was always that time of silence."

Fr Twohig gives one last example to show how silence and contemplation, so important to his own vocation, are also important to young people: "We always have a pilgrimage to Lourdes and inevitably every time they come back, and ask what they most enjoyed about Lourdes it was sitting at half 10 or 11 in the grotto, in the silence.

"From what I have seen in youth ministry, I think in a world of activity and noise the gift of Carmelite spirituality is of silence and of prayer. I think that really does have an attraction to people, to step outside of that and find a bit of peace."

**Do you know someone who we should profile? Send an email to [ruadhan@irishcatholic.ie](mailto:ruadhan@irishcatholic.ie)**



## Children's Corner

Chai Brady

## Escape quicksand and avoid that sinking feeling

Quicksand is created when water is trapped in sand or marshy earth, thus creating a soil that is halfway between a solid and a liquid.

Although the name quicksand would indicate it is in fact created with sand, it can be any mass of clay or dirt particles that contain trapped water. It is found at some beaches, bogs, and riverbanks.

But how can we learn more about it, while not getting too close?

It's a life-threatening natural phenomenon that has been portrayed in a huge number of films but is not completely understood by many.

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

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

In order to understand how to save yourself if this happens, the best thing to do is study your own homemade quicksand— which is very easy to make.

### Ingredients:

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

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

Poking it quickly has the same effect, making

the substance very hard. If you poke it slowly your finger can enter your quicksand easily. It works the same way as real quicksand.

Much can be learned from this. Many people who unknowingly walk right into quicksand panic, and make harsh movements in order to get out, this will cause the substance to act as a solid. Slow and steady movements are the best way of manoeuvring in quicksand, as it allows water to mix more easily with the sand or dirt particles.

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

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







# TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



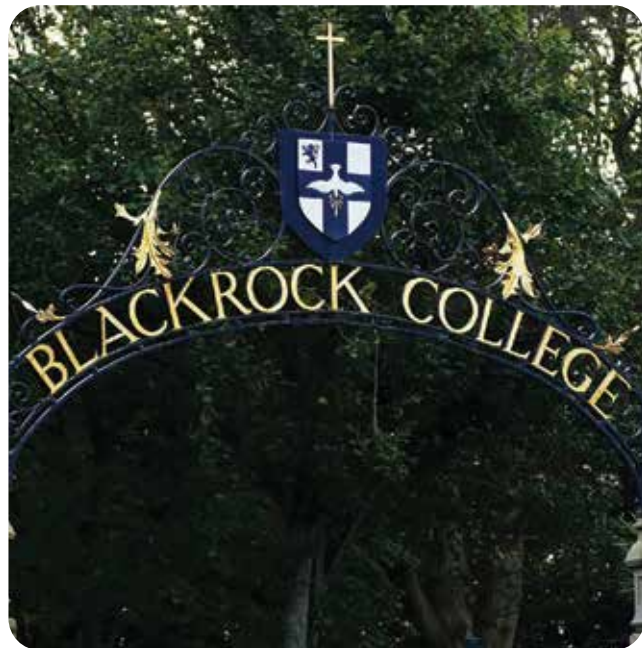
## Shocking indication of abusers' collaboration

**I**t was another week of disturbing religious controversy, but I'll start with something different.

Philip Nolan was a familiar figure right through Covid times as he was a member of the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE). Now Director General of Science Foundation Ireland he was promoting Science Week on **The Pat Kenny Show** (Newstalk, Tuesday). I liked one particular line he pursued – to the effect that scientists needed to be “quite humble about what their data is showing at a particular point in time”.

### Humility

I thought there was very little of that humility on display in coverage of COP27, the climate related conference that dominated the media last week. Any event that discusses existential threats must be of serious and urgent interest, but I'd like to see a bit more of that spirit of humility and scientific curiosity that Mr Nolan emphasised – none of which is inconsistent with urgency. It's off-putting when environmentalists try to suppress any disagreement, with insults like ‘climate denier’, and tantrums on media shows when anything other than the dominant narrative is entertained. Such discussion used



to be aired, but now it rarely is. Maybe that's because the science is crystal clear, but still, dissenting scientific voices should always be welcomed, and challenged if necessary.

Relating to COP27, former President Mary Robinson was interviewed (almost reverentially) on **Morning Ireland** (RTÉ Radio 1, Tuesday). The group she chairs, ‘The Elders’, seems rather pretentious, but I did agree with her when she suggested “we have to get away from too much doom and gloom”. I do worry about the effect of the climate doom on young people – add in a bit of hys-

teria and you have trouble. The media has swallowed the dominant climate narrative – even campaigning as well as reporting. On that show during COP week they had a totally unchallenging and affirming interview with Sumaya Mohammed, an articulate 16-year old climate activist from Cork.

### Revelations

Also getting heavy coverage last week were the revelations about child abuse in Blackrock College, which is run by the Spiritans (formerly the Holy Ghost Fathers). This started off with **The Blackrock Boys**

(RTÉ Radio 1, Monday) part of the *Documentary on One* series. Strange that it was broadcast in the second half of *Drivetime* on the Monday evening rather than in its regular weekend slot – designed, I reckon, for maximum impact, with no consciousness of any watershed or ‘little ears’, apart from a little warning at the start. It was legacy abuse (mainly 1960's to 1980's) but kicked off a reopening of the clerical abuse scandal. The stories outlined were such as to make you physically sick. What I found particularly disturbing across the week's coverage were the suggestions of certain priests collaborating in the abuse. If true, this suggests a particularly cynical depravity.

### Sparked

On the **Pat Kenny Show** (Newstalk, Tuesday) the news sparked an item that was hardly about the Blackrock story at all, but a recounting of the abuse experiences of child protection expert Shane Dunphy. His experience also featured the element of collaboration between clerical abusers.

Not surprisingly the controversy teed up a week of the matter on **Liveline** (RTÉ Radio 1) from the Tuesday. Again it wasn't for ‘young ears’ we were warned, and while the amount of hurt is undeniable, I'm

### PICK OF THE WEEK

#### SONGS OF PRAISE

**BBC One Sunday November 20, 12.15pm**

The Rev. Kate Bottley celebrates the blessings animals bring to our lives as she takes part in a special pet service in the magnificent Worcester Cathedral.

#### EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND

**Channel 4 Monday November 21, 7.35am**

The Tenth Anniversary – Debra discovers that Ray accidentally taped over their wedding video, Fr Hubley returns for a re-enactment.

#### DEFENDING LIFE

**EWTN Monday November 21, 10.30pm**

Janet Morana and Fr David Begany uncover the dangerous practice of chemical abortion and how it's just as bad for the mother as it is for the baby.

not convinced of the value of constant and graphic descriptions of child abuse day after day. Again I was shocked by indications of collaboration between abusers, lay and clerical, as well as the casual cruelties apart from the sexual abuse. Some contributors were jaundiced towards the Church and religion in general, but some were nuanced (including in the original documentary and abuse victim Stephen on Tuesday's *Liveline*) – having come across clerics and teachers that were good people and that they admired, while showing the damage that was done by the abusers, including to heart-broken parents. I was also struck by those who said that their wives had saved

them – whether by emotional support or encouraging counselling.

From listening to *Liveline* and *The Blackrock Boys* I get the impression that the current administration of the Spiritans, under the guidance of Fr Martin Kelly, is showing openness and understanding to victims and engaging seriously and positively with the abuse and the further allegations.

On this front, and in relation to the support victims have received from friends and family, some elements of hope were seeing the light.

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Pat O'Kelly

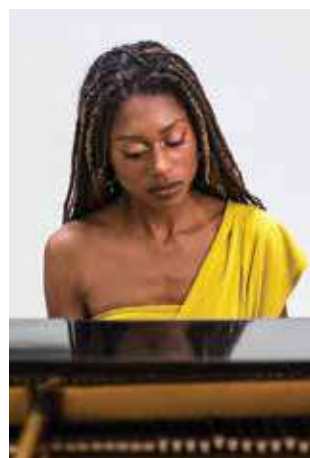


# Music

## UK pianist's first Dublin concert a 'mixed bag'

A recent event in the National Concert Hall's International Concert Series brought young UK pianist Isata Kanneh-Mason to Dublin for the first time. Isata is the eldest of the family of seven each of whom appears to be endowed with an unusual element of musical genius.

The Kanneh-Masons come from Nottingham where London-born father, Stuart, of Antiguan ancestry, is a business executive. Mother, Kadiatu, born in Sierra Leone, had come to Wales before lecturing in English at Birmingham University. With both parents enjoying a deep love of music and, realising their offspring were being drawn to the art, they encouraged their separate and combined musical inclina-



UK pianist Isata Kanneh-Mason.

tions in every possible way.

Six of the seven children studied at London's Royal Academy of Music while fifth

in line, pianist and cellist Jeneba, attended London's Royal College of Music.

### Brother

Jeneba's older brother Sheku became something of a household name in Britain and further afield, when he played at the wedding of UK's Prince Harry to Meghan Markle in 2018. Two years earlier he was chosen as BBC Young Musician of the Year. He has also been a member of the Chineke! Orchestra, together with his sister, Isata and violinist brother, Braimah.

The orchestra was, by the way, established in 2015 with the intention of employing black and ethnic minority classical musicians. Sheku

has called it “a really inspiring project”. In May of this year he became the Royal Academy of Music's first Menuhin Visiting Professor of Performance Mentoring.

But to return to Isata. Currently artist-in-residence with London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, she has a busy schedule of appearances with other European and US ensembles as well as a stream of international solo recitals.

A Decca recording artist, her 2019 album, entitled *Romance – the Piano Music of Clara Schumann*, entered the UK classical charts at No. 1 with the Gramophone magazine extolling her recording as “one of the most charming and engaging debuts”.

### Mixed

After all that I have to admit I found her NCH recital, devoted to Mozart, Fanny Mendelssohn, Debussy, Chopin and Clara and Robert Schumann, something of a ‘mixed bag’. Her inclusion of Fanny Mendelssohn's Easter Sonata was interesting as for years the work had been attributed to her brother Felix. While the second Largo e molto espresso movement is meant to depict our Saviour's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, it left me unmoved.

In the trio section of the Sonata's scherzo Fanny Mendelssohn goes on a rhapsodic jaunt, which Ms Kanneh-Mason followed with abandon. Happy to relate Clara Schumann's C minor Scherzo

came alive with Isata Kanneh-Mason robustly responsive to its freedom of expression. Robert Schumann's 13 Kinderszenen (Scenes from childhood) were nicely contrasted and elicited a broad range of the pianistic colour I had found in short supply elsewhere.

Among other NCH events, young Swedish violinist Daniel Lozakovich (20), with the NSO conducted by Venezuelan Diego Matheuz, gave a spell binding account of Beethoven's Concerto. The ethereal quality of the slow movement, beautifully expressed by Mr Lozakovich, held the audience entranced. One could have heard a pin drop. Astonishing.



# Jesus Christ, the universal king

**T**oday, the last Sunday of the liturgical year is when we celebrate Jesus Christ, the Universal King. The end of the liturgical year anticipates the end of time when "the kingdom of God will come in all its fullness. Then the just will reign with Jesus Christ for ever, glorified in body and soul, and the material universe itself will be transformed. God will be 'all in all' in eternal life" (Catechism 1060).

This Sunday's reading from Luke (23:35-43) takes us to the foot of the cross on Calvary. At the end of his journey, over his head, his crime was posted, "Jesus Christ, King of the Jews." How many took the charge seriously? Did anybody of sane sense really think that he was a threat to Caesar or to public order? The irony of that day was that he was a king, though not in a way that the worldly mind could understand.

**“The famous psychoanalyst Carl Jung said that the world is so rich with delusions that truth is priceless”**

## A king different to earthly royalty

Jesus as king was the reversal of the ways usually followed by the royalty of this world. He did not sit on an elevated throne to symbolise his power, but he hung from a cross, too weak to save himself from death. He did not wear a bejewelled crown but he was capped with a crown of sharp thorns, an appalling sight, without beauty, without majesty, a thing despised and rejected by people. He had no armies at his command nor servants in attendance: instead, he came to serve and to offer his life as a ransom for many.

Earthly kings are usually removed from commoners who must keep their eyes downcast and may not speak until they are first spoken to. Jesus came to his own and sought the lowliest of them. Now he was dying between two condemned criminals. One of them joined with those who were mocking and taunting, but the other spoke up and rebuked his companion. "Have you no fear of God at all? We got the same sentence as he did, we deserved it. But this man has done nothing

## The Sunday Gospel

Fr Silvester  
O'Flynn  
OFM Cap.



wrong." Then he turned to Jesus and uttered one of the most wonderful prayers of all time. "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom". It is interesting that this is the only occasion in Luke's Gospel that Jesus is addressed simply by name with no title attached. In the brotherhood of suffering there are no distinctions of privilege or class. Yet they are not equal because this brother in suffering will be revealed on the third day as the divine brother who has conquered death and will welcome his companion on Calvary into paradise.

## The kingdom of God is at hand

Jesus announced at the beginning of his public ministry that his mission would be to establish the kingdom of God in the world. "The time has come, and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:14). His preaching and way of life set out the ideals of what the world would be like if we all lived up to his plan.

We have been given the king but the kingdom is still not fully grown. In sporting terms, we have the best management in the business, but the league is still in progress and we have won nothing yet. That is why Jesus compared the kingdom to seeds falling on different kinds of soil, plants battling with weeds, a hidden treasure etc. The ultimate triumph of the reign of God is still in the future. The task of the Church is to be at the service of the kingdom. But, as Saint Augustine remarked, there are many in the Church who are not in the kingdom while there are many in the kingdom who are not in the Church. The qualities of the reign of God are listed in the Preface of today's Mass... a kingdom of truth and life, of holiness and grace, of justice, love and peace.

## A kingdom of truth and life

In the Gospel, Satan is identified as the father of lies and a murderer from the beginning. In other

words, anti-truth and anti-life, the exact opposites of the reign of God. The first victim of any war is truth. Propaganda becomes a most powerful weapon. Many people today are like Pontius Pilate who disdainfully asked Jesus, "What is truth?" Truth has become what suits me, regardless of the facts. Facts have been replaced by slogans. Slogans win elections more than reasoned debate.

Do we have a world where truth is respected? Is there truth in business dealings, tax returns, court testimony, tribunals, media reporting, daily conversation? We have fake news, conspiracy theories, misleading propaganda and imbalanced panels discussing serious issues of morality. The famous psychoanalyst Carl Jung said that the world is so rich with delusions that truth is priceless.

**“In sporting terms, we have the best management in the business, but the league is still in progress and we have won nothing yet”**

The second ideal is life. Jesus came that we might have life and have it to the full.

How do we respect life if we vote for abortion, condone war and capital punishment, close our hearts to famine, homelessness and poverty?

## A kingdom of holiness and grace

The kingdom of Jesus will be recognised in the evidence of holiness and grace. Is the name of Jesus a holy name any longer? Is Sunday the Lord's Day, a holy day? Has the shopping arcade become the new Sunday temple? Kingdom people are prayerful and reverential. They cooperate with the graces of the Holy Spirit.

## A kingdom of justice, love and peace

Saint Paul said that the kingdom of God is not about material things but about saving justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:17).

## Prayer for today.

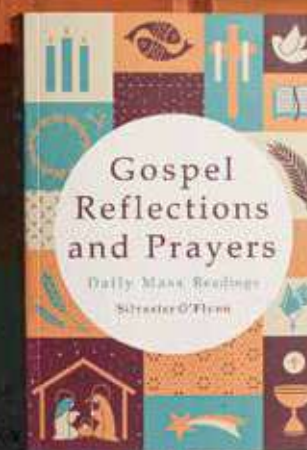
Our Father, who art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.



A stained-glass window depicting Christ the King and Lord of the Universe is seen in the Cathedral of St Peter in Wilmington, Delaware, 2021. Photo: CNS / Chaz Muth

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# In exile – marking an anniversary

**F**orty years ago in November of 1982, I began writing this column while a doctoral student in Belgium. I chose to call it 'In Exile' for two reasons. Superficially, I chose this title because I was living in Europe, far from much of what I considered as home. While I was not pretending to be Robert Browning, writing *Home – Thoughts, From Abroad*, I did take an amateur's delight in the small parallel. For much more significant reasons, I chose this title because all of us live our lives in exile. We live our lives (as St Paul says) seeing "as through a glass, darkly". We live in our separate riddles, partially separated from God, each other, and even from ourselves. We experience some love, some community, some peace, but never these in their fullness. Our individual existence places a certain barrier between us and full community. We live, truly, as in a riddle. God, who is omnipresent, cannot be physically sensed; others, who are as real as we, are always partially distanced and unreal; and we, in the end, are fundamentally a mystery even to ourselves.

## Exile

In that sense, all of us are far from home, in exile, longing to know more fully and to be known more fully, distanced from so much. And, while on this pilgrimage, our perspectives are only partial; our vision, even at best, that of the "foreigner", one out of the main-



**Fr Rolheiser**

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

stream, who does not fully see nor understand.

**“We live in our separate riddles, partially separated from God, each other, and even from ourselves”**

From this exiled perspective, I have for 40 years offered my reflections. The column has taken a variety of forms. As Margaret Atwood once said: "What touches you is what you touch!" I have touched on a whole lot of things; but all of them, in their own fashion, were in one way or another trying to untangle the riddle, to end the exile, to help to get a pilgrim home!

Initially, the column ran in only one newspaper, the *Western*

*Catholic Reporter*. In 1987, the *Green Bay Compass* picked it up, and one year later the *Portland Sentinel* began to publish it. In 1990, the column got a major break. It was picked up by the *Catholic Herald* in London, England, a national paper in the United Kingdom that, at the time, was privately owned by Otto Herschan who also owned *The Irish Catholic*, a national paper in Ireland, and the *Scottish Catholic Observer*, a national paper in Scotland. With that, the column now had a home in six newspapers in five countries, nationally in three of them. Moreover, with lax copyright laws in Asia that are not as rigorous, nor as enforced, as here and, soon, a number of dioceses in Asia began to pirate the column and publish it.

The early 1990s brought more breakthroughs for the column:

*The Catholic Register* and the *Prairie Messenger*, both national papers in Canada, picked up the column in 1992. To my mind, that was circulation enough. However, after the publication of *The Holy Longing* in the USA in 1999, the column's circulation exploded. Within three years, it was being carried by more than 60 newspapers in more than ten countries. That has since grown to more than eighty papers. Since 2008, the column has also been published in both Spanish and Vietnamese and is finding a readership in Vietnam, in Mexico, and in parts of Latin America.

## Gratitude

I owe a debt of gratitude to a lot of people, but need to single out several to thank specially. First, a deep thanks to the *Western Catholic Reporter* (in Edmonton, Canada) and its then editor, Glenn Argan. It was the first newspaper and Glenn Argan was the first editor to take a chance on me, an unknown prairie boy with little in the way of sophisticated credentials or contacts. Because of this, through all these 40 years, I have always coded the column as WCR because, before anyone

else, I was writing it for the *Western Catholic Reporter*. Today, each week, when it is emailed to some 80 plus newspapers, it goes out under the coded label 'WCR'. I suspect none of the editors receiving it know what that means, but now you know.

**“I owe a debt of gratitude to a lot of people, but need to single out several to thank specially”**

A special thanks to Delia Smith for taking the column to the *Catholic Herald* in London and to Otto Herschan its then owner and publisher. From 1990 until his death, Otto made sure that any newspaper he published had my column in it. As well, deep thanks to JoAnne Chrones, my tireless Executive Secretary for these past 28 years, to Kay Legried, who pitched the column to various newspapers, and to Doug Mitchell who lays a critical, proofreading eye, to every column.

Truth be told, when I first began writing this column, I was probably more solicitous about bringing a column to birth than about helping bring God's kingdom to birth. Our motivation is perennially in need of purification. I hope that I have matured in this area during these 40 years and my biggest thank you of all goes out to you, the reader.

**“We experience some love, some community, some peace, but never these in their fullness”**

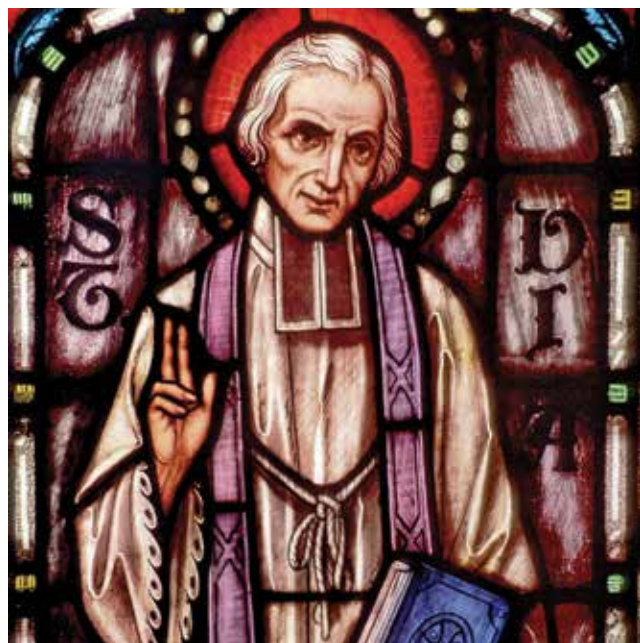


# BookReviews

Peter Costello



## Wisdom for the devout life



Author Fr Eamon Flanagan CM dedicates one of his nine poems to St John Vianney, depicted here in a stained-glass window. Photo: CNS/Crosiers.

**Life in Abundance: Attractiveness of the Catholic Way of Life**, by Eamon Flanagan CM (Kolbe Publications, €10.00).

**J. Anthony Gaughan**

This collection of essays and poems contains a large measure of wisdom and useful information.

But this is not all for also at the outset the author provides an excellent reading-list for those who wish to pursue what St Francis de Sales described as *The Devout Life*.

The list includes spiritual classics from all the ages of the Church. In the early age there was Gregory the Great's *Moralia*; in the Middle Ages Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*; in the period of the Renaissance St Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*; in recent times R. Garrigou-Lagrange's *The Three Ways of the Spiritual Life*, Eugene Boylan's *This Tremendous Lover* and Henry J.M. Nouwen's *Reaching Out*.

In two essays 'Holiness in Young Families' and 'Growing up in the Church' Fr Flanagan discusses how parents could and should be actively engaged in the spiritual formation of their children.

He acknowledges that in the early life of children's spiritual development this is achieved by seeing rather than by hearing. Thus to that end the importance of having sacred images and pictures in the home. Good example he also emphasises is important at this time and crucial in passing on the Faith to teenagers. Parents who are faithful to the practice of the Faith tend to transmit it

to their sons and daughters by a process of osmosis.

Fr Flanagan also suggests that parents might recommend a reading programme for their children which would include the lives of the saints and challenging books such as Michael Paul Gallagher's *Free to Believe*. And he emphasises the importance of parents ensuring that their children participate in the usual parish and school programmes for young people.

The essays range across many aspects of the contemplative and religious life. There is an essay on the 'Call to Holiness' and one on the 'Sacramental Life and Prayer'. The author illustrates how the virtues and the Commandments complement each other. He provides insightful reflections on the Fourth and Fifth Commandments and points to the prime duty of every Christian to be a 'Peace-Maker'.

Eamon Flanagan, a Vincentian now based at St Peter's Church, Phibsborough in Dublin, dedicates two of his nine poems to priests: St John Vianney, Curé of Ars and Fr James Shryane. The latter was a curate in the author's home parish at Gurteen in Co. Sligo from 1941-1951. The poem is an ode to Fr Shryane's selfless dedication to the service of those committed to his care, a storing example of what service means or ought to mean these days.

In the present climate of fake news and clashing opinions, views and ideologies Fr Flanagan is to be thanked for this publication which sets out clearly the teaching of the Catholic Church.

### A force for good? Reflections on neutrality and the future of Irish defence.

Dublin: Afri 2022, ISBN 0-9511178-3-5 (Afri can be reached at 8 New Cabra Road, Dublin7, DO7 T1W2; email: admin@afri.ie)

**Frank Litton**

**W**ar once more in Europe, once more slaughter, devastation, lives destroyed. Once more efforts to make sense of it all, to come to terms with its horror, find expression in a melodrama that tells of the undoubtedly good confronting the utterly evil. Important facts about the context of the war are occluded and the possibilities of ending it diminished.

While not directly engaged in the fighting, our partners in the EU supply weapons and munitions worth billions vital to Ukraine's defence. Our neutrality comes into question. Should we abandon it to join, without reservation, the side of the 'good'? Should we follow Sweden and Finland in recognising the threat Russia now poses to Europe?

With this publication NGO Action from Ireland (Afri) makes a valuable contribution to the debate. The book, or pamphlet, is short, some 55 pages. Yet, each of its six contributors make substantial points.

Nobel prize-winner Mairead Maguire reminds us of the horror of violence from which the melodrama distracts us as it opposes 'good violence' to 'bad violence'. The enemy is guilty of the latter, while we cheer on our side as it advances with blazing guns. She recalls us to the truth:



the maiming, killing, destroying of habitats that devastate now and inflict long-lasting injuries.

**“Should we follow Sweden and Finland in recognising the threat Russia now poses to Europe?”**

Dr Karen Devine from DCU outlines Ireland's foreign policy in the 50s and 60s when Frank Aiken was Minister for Foreign Affairs (then External

Affairs). The state's neutrality gave him a position, and a standing, from which he made substantial contributions to making the world a safer place. His persistent efforts played a key role in securing the first nuclear non-proliferation treaty; he worked hard to strengthen the United Nations and its peace keeping capacities.

### Neutral buffer

He urged the importance of a neutral buffer zone in Europe separating East from West, increasing the security of both sides and reducing the

chances of conflict.

In Article 29 of the Constitution of Ireland, "Ireland affirms its devotion to the ideal of peace and friendly cooperation amongst nations founded on international law and morality. It affirms its adherence to the pacific settlement of international disputes by international arbitration or judicial determination". Aiken worked with diligence and creativity to give effect to these affirmations.

Have subsequent ministers, and the military establishment shown equal commitment to the obligations found in the Constitution?

Prof. Maguire in an open letter to Lieutenant General Sean Clancy demonstrates that the answer in both cases is 'NO'. The recent 'White Paper on Defence' is a sorry document, lacking the seriousness and cogency so evident in Aiken's contributions, liberally quoted by Dr Devine.

Its barely concealed agenda, delivered in the style of modern political 'spin' is to ready us for closer involvement with NATO. It is no surprise that secular, progressive, Ireland enthusiastically encourages the development of an arms industry here, paying no heed to the Pope's repeated condemnations of the arms trade.

The well-known French Catholic political philosopher, Pierre Manent observes that the EEC and then EU were the work of political



Afri protesters making a mark for peace, food and climate.



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.



Neutral Ireland was marked off in WWII by signs visible to planes overhead.

elites. Whatever their intentions (I am inclined to think that on the whole they were good, certainly in the early phases when 'peace and friendly cooperation among nations' were prominent) they sought neither to share them with, or explain their implications, to their electorates.

### Example

Prof. Maguire shows that Ireland is a prime example.

Joining together with others in a joint enterprise can bring great benefits. These come at a cost. Our sovereignty as an independent nation-state is diminished now that it must, in important aspects, be exercised in concert with 26 other states.

**“Ireland affirms its devotion to the ideal of peace and friendly cooperation”**

So, our understanding of ourselves as a nation-state that underpinned our democracy has been undermined. Our partners, rightly, expect us to pay our dues to ensure the security of the collective endeavour. While we hear praise for the 'European Project', where do we find discussion or debate on the transformation of our political culture and its implications for democracy? Our politicians and their academic minions are silent.

Prof. Maguire points out

how they have obfuscated, distracted attention from, failed to inform, or debate, what our obligations to EU security entail. Perhaps they suspect we would not be willing to pay this cost.

On St Patrick's day 2019 two United States army veterans, broke through the fences protecting the runway at Shannon airport. They were arrested as they walked towards a plane they suspected carried US troops with their arms, so breaking the law and violating Irish neutrality.

After 13 days in Limerick prison, they were granted bail, after nine months they were permitted to leave the country on condition they returned for their trial. Tarak Kauff writes of their time in Ireland. They travelled around the country explaining their actions to crowds in pubs and other gatherings; their message was well received everywhere. The elites' suspicions are well-grounded.

### Elite

Perhaps, the elite believe that they have no adequate answers to the case against Irish participation in NATO and in favour of neutrality that Carol Fox makes in the conclusion. What compelling reasons could bring us into an alliance armed with nuclear weapons and dominated by powers whose records gives us every reason to doubt their intentions?

Micheál Martin says we need an honest debate on

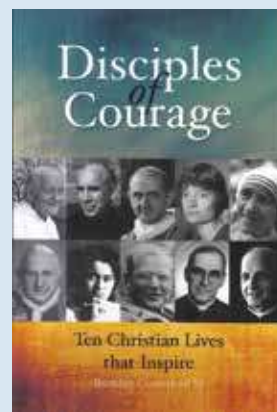


**Advent & Christmas 2022-2023**  
by the editors of *Sacred Space*  
(Messenger Publications, €7.95/£6.95)

The season of Advent begins at the end of next week, so now is the time to acquire this little seasonal volume, from a long familiar source. Through the prayers and meditations readers will be reminded of the synodal journey on which the people of God are engaged. With so much disturbing the world and its communities these pages have never been more important, the promise of the Nativity more important to Christians everywhere.

neutrality. Let us hope he was talking to himself. Whatever, thanks to Afri, we now have a measure of that honesty. An honest contribution will attend to the powerful points in this valuable contribution to public discourse on vital issues.

# Inspiring examples of courage and humanity



**Disciples of Courage: Ten Christian Lives that Inspire**  
by Brendan Comerford SJ  
(Messenger Publications, €19.95/£18.95)

### Peter Costello

November has long been a month devoted to recalling the dead and to celebrating their achievements. With the constant pursuit of novelty and celebrity these

days, such as Halloween and the commercialisation of the *Dia de los Muertos* (the Mexican Day of the Dead), too many people worthy of recollection and of their so very varied achievements, are all too easily forgotten.

In writing his new book Brendan Comerford, a Jesuit spiritual director of great experience, must have had something like this in mind. Many of those he writes about are famous, having had media celebrity forced upon them. Other are less well known. But all are exemplary figures, well worth thinking about as the days darken into mid-winter.

His selection runs from Edith Stein to Roger of Taizé. Every reader will find things of value here, but my own choice would be Dorothy Day. She was a person who stands out as a North American Catholic, an apostle of peace and patience, who emerged in an era that has

not been forgotten by many Catholics across the States. I recall too well though that the effort to establish her movement in Ireland failed, as "traditional Ireland" saw no value in her aims.

### Courage

Courage comes in many forms, and often the greatest examples of physical and moral courage may well be, like sainthood itself, quite unknown to many in the wider world.

However from his own experiences as a pastoral teacher Brendan Comerford has selected, not medieval saints or the Irish favourites from post-Trent, but from the 20th century, a period familiar to us all, from painful experiences of our own families, countries and continents. These heroes are our contemporaries, and therefore all the more relevant to us all.



Dorothy Day is depicted in a still from the *Revolution of the Heart: The Dorothy Day Story*, a film by Martin Doblmeier. Photo: CNS.



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Image: Roge Wavio (29) of Kalacha, Marsabit, Kenya holds produce she has grown with support from Concern. Photographer: Jennifer Nolan / Concern Worldwide

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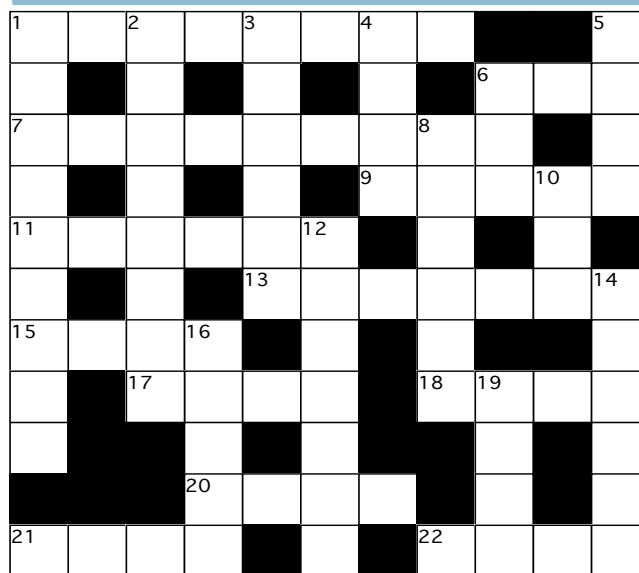
It's easy to get started, and we'll help you every step of the way. Call Grace Kelly on 01 629 3333, email [grace.kelly@trocaire.org](mailto:grace.kelly@trocaire.org) or write to me at Trócaire, Maynooth, Co Kildare.

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.

# Leisure time

## Crossword Junior

Children's 459



### Across

- 1 If you have this, the pollen in plants may make you sneeze (3,5)
- 6 Concealed (3)
- 7 Hair over a man's lip (9)
- 9 A person can be called a \_\_\_\_\_ being (5)
- 11 This is \_\_\_\_\_ - I can't allow any delay! (6)
- 13 Laughs (7)
- 15 Nasty wound (4)
- 17 People often buy this fish tinned (4)
- 18 Three feet, or a playspace at school (4)
- 20 Water falling from the sky (4)
- 21 This 'picture' lets a doctor look at your bones (1-3)
- 22 You wear it on your foot (4)

### Down

- 1 This item of fast food could be a quarter-pounder (9)
- 2 I'm the \_\_\_\_\_ - everyone else is older than me' (8)
- 3 Having food (6)
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ and every one (4)
- 5 Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of \_\_\_\_\_ (4)
- 6 Line of stitching at the edge of a piece of clothing (3)
- 8 In need of food (6)
- 10 How old you are (3)
- 12 Ship that is famous because it hit an iceberg (7)
- 14 Seat you'll find on a bicycle or put on a horse (6)
- 16 Move very quickly (5)
- 19 This has a curved shape (4)

## SOLUTIONS, NOVEMBER 10

GORDIUS NO. 584

**Across** — 1 Light opera 6 Aged 10 Kenny 11 Sanctuary 12 Flat cap 15 Rider 17 Rita 18 Home 19 Costa Verde 21 Convent 23 Pinto 24 Tree 25 Nori 26 Trout 28 Lengthy 33 Consulate 35 Surf 36 Passengers

**Down** — 1 Lake Como 2 Gentleman 3 Tryst 4 Pasta 5 Rink 7 Gland 8 Daydreamer 9 Attract 14 Prevail 16 Chopsticks 20 Surcharge 21 Contour 22 Noun 27 Owner 29 Ewers 30 Given 31 Saga 32 Bees

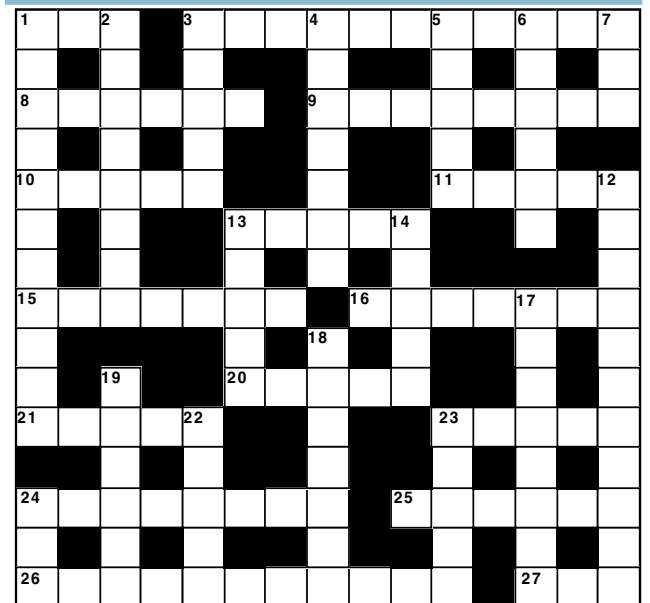
CHILDREN'S No. 458

**Across** — 1 Flippers 6 Ease 7 Rocket 8 Her 10 Hay 11 Teacher 12 Sty 13 Urge 16 May 18 Amazed 20 Ewan 21 Blarney 22 Path

**Down** — 1 Farmhouse 2 Itchy 3 Plenty 4 Select 5 Destroy 8 Has 9 Rhyme 14 Giant 15 Smile 17 Added 19 Zero

## Crossword

Gordius 585



### Across

- 1 Insane (3)
- 3 Sconce (11)
- 8 Convivial, affable (6)
- 9 In a canny manner (8)
- 10 One picture placed inside another (5)
- 11 Remain on one's feet (5)
- 13 Long seat (5)
- 15 Drape (7)
- 16 Strictly's Ms Winkleman has written about the 'Lucia' ad (7)
- 20 Tremendous, fantastic (5)
- 21 Confidence or faith in someone (5)
- 23 Make cloth on a loom (5)
- 24 Continent - or a Sunday service that's not at sea? (4,4)
- 25 Murderer (6)
- 26 Toy gun that squirts (5-6)
- 27 Islamic feast at the end of Ramadan (3)

### Down

- 1 Fantastic, hugely impres-

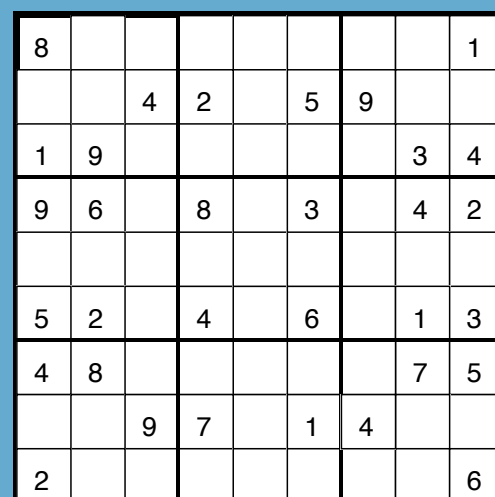
sive (11)

- 2 Prehistoric creature (8)
- 3 Shoreline (5)
- 4 Fate (7)
- 5 Slang word for glasses (5)
- 6 Relating to the Asian Sub-continent (6)
- 7 Lock-opener, or type of island off the coast of Florida (3)
- 12 Vanished (11)
- 13 Fetch (5)
- 14 Gustav, English composer of 'The Planets' suite (5)
- 17 Charles dominated French politics for much of the twentieth century (2,6)
- 18 The first book of the Bible (7)
- 19 Container of berries (6)
- 22 Stopwatch (5)
- 23 Spin, gyrate (5)
- 24 Statute (3)

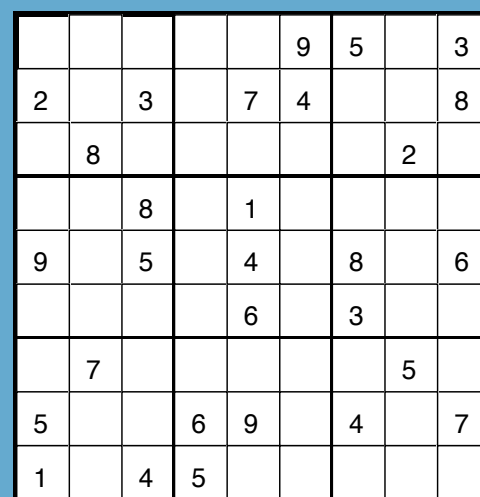
## Sudoku Corner

459

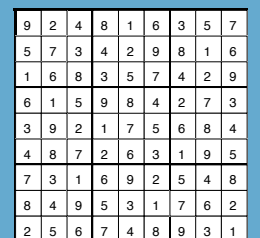
Easy



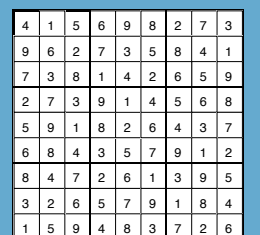
Hard



Last week's Easy 458



Last week's Hard 458





## Notebook

Fr Bernard Cotter



# Too many churches, too many Masses

**T**o be or not to be", cogitated Hamlet. Our dilemma as a 'Family of Parishes' was slightly different: "To grasp the nettle, or not to grasp the nettle?" The nettle in question would be understood by rural parishes everywhere and is summed up in six words: "Too many churches, too many Masses."

The simplest way to illustrate the dilemma is to introduce you to the fictional parish of Ballymac. Ballymac has two medium-sized churches, Ballymac-east and Ballymac-west. Each of its two churches holds the affection and loyalty of parishioners living nearby. Rarely would those in Ballymac-east travel to the west for Mass, or vice versa - apart from funerals or weddings. Parishioners' loyalty is to their church rather than their parish.

## Cancelled

The times of Masses rarely matters, as long as Mass is in their local church each weekend. Indeed, if there was an occasion when Mass had to be cancelled, people living nearby might as easily travel to a neighbouring parish or to the town



for Mass as travel to the other side of their parish.

All was sweetness and light in Ballymac before Covid. Mass was celebrated in each church each Sunday and each was at least half full, fuller on days of months minds or anniversaries, emptier on days of matches or in winter. The combined attendance at the two churches would be greater than either could accommodate.

Covid changed all that. People lost the habit of weekly Mass and didn't re-start, some for fear of infection, others because fear of the consequences of staying away had

vanished. Post-Covid, each church is about a quarter full for Sunday Mass, maybe a third full on special occasions. There is no longer any doubt that the combined attendance of the two venues would not fill either church. That being the case, in a time of dwindling priest numbers, what is a parish to decide to do?

## Options

There are three options, none pleasant. A parish could decide to continue as at present. The result would be two poorly attended Masses, with the priest covering both, and probably others as well.

The second option is simply to close one church, or both. Close one and put all the resources into making the liturgy beautiful in the other, hoping all parishioners will

gather there. Or close both and centralise at a large building locally, or in the nearest town.

The third option involves alternation - Mass in Ballymac-east one Sunday, and in Ballymac-west the next. Or Mass in Ballymac-east in January, March, May etc, and in Ballymac-west in February, April, June etc, with major feasts like Christmas alternated annually.

No option is without difficulties, so you will understand why we couldn't grasp the nettle, this time. Cutting the numbers of Masses to the bare minimum, we will manage to cover every church, for now. What the future holds, we do not know - any more than we can imagine what will convince the people of Ballymac-east and Ballymac-west to gather for one single Sunday Mass. Can you?

## Seeking a name

Our 'Family of Parishes' in southwest Cork is struggling to find a name for our unit: 'Aughadown, Castlehaven, Kilmacabea, Rath and the Islands, and Skibbereen' is quite a mouthful. One line of enquiry involves historians seeking an ancient name shared by people of this territory. Students in a local secondary school have risen to the challenge too, seeking a title and an icon. The Irish saints attract us also, since seven of our ten churches have an Irish titular: Patrick, Brigid, Fachtna, Comghall, Barahane, Mona and Ciarán (who is credited with bringing the faith to our area even before Patrick!).

## You won't be able to go to bed at all!

The priests of Cork and Ross are fortunate to have had two marvellous retreats since Covid. We gather in a place outside the diocese, where we socialise together as well as praying. Last year's retreat challenged me to do more of my praying in the morning: a rising time of 7am resulted. This year the challenge was to fit in spiritual reading, 20 or 30 minutes daily. So rising time has gone back to 6.30am. As one colleague said to me: "If you go to any more retreats, you won't be able to go to bed at all!"



## WILL YOU HELP RELIEVE THE PAIN OF HUNGRY AFRICANS AND SAVE LIVES?

Millions of people in many parts of Africa are suffering from hunger now. Somalia's situation is currently the most publicised but Ethiopia, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, South

Sudan and the Sahel region are very badly affected also. One of the main causes is violence and civil strife which destroys crops. The war in Ukraine, climate change and the pandemic have caused food prices to skyrocket. Droughts have caused the death of livestock, the failure of crops and made water more scarce.

The Little Way Association is receiving many requests from missionary priests and Sisters urgently needing funds to purchase sacks of wheat flour, sorghum, maize and beans for their people and for medical needs of their clinics such as intravenous feeding of children and babies. Our Lord says, "I was hungry and you fed me."

**Please send The Little Way Association whatever you can. Your donation, added to others, will be sent with no deduction for the relieving of hunger and malnutrition in Africa. Thank you.**



*"Our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, but at the love at which we do them."*

~ St Therese

## REMEMBER THE HOLY SOULS IN NOVEMBER

Remember the Holy Souls in November. The Little Way Association will be pleased to send your Mass intentions to missionaries.

In these fraught times, missionary priests rely more than ever on stipends for their daily subsistence and for helping the poorest of their communities.

**A minimum stipend of €6 or more is recommended for each Mass.**

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Our benefactors will be glad to know that in addition to the daily Mass offered for their intentions, Mass is offered each day for all deceased Little Way benefactors and friends.



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