

The Irish Catholic

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NI Government freeloading off parishioners' charity

EXCLUSIVE
Colm Fitzpatrick

The government is relying on charities to help the most vulnerable citizens in the North because the social welfare system can't cope, *The Irish Catholic* can reveal. Government offices are increasingly referring hard-pressed welfare recipients who are struggling to the Society of St Vincent de Paul to meet a shortfall caused by welfare reform.

Now the charity – which is largely funded by the contributions of Mass-goers – is warning that delays to welfare payments under a controversial new scheme aimed at streamlining the system could push people in the direction of loan-sharks or so-called pay-day lenders with huge rates of interest.

Urgent need

A spokesperson for the SVP Northern region confirmed to *The Irish Catholic* that there have been instances of social security offices referring benefit recipients to the charity in urgent need of assistance. This is due to a new mandatory five-week waiting period to receive the new streamlined benefit known as Universal Credit.

The spokesperson said that the

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Miles more fun in the Park



Luke, Rian and Aaron Slavin from Dublin celebrate taking part in the 'Miles for Mission' 5km run in the Phoenix Park which helped raise funds to support the children of Atse primary school in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as part of World Mission Sunday.

Primate accuses Viganò of 'hijacking' WMOF

Staff reporter

The World Meeting of Families was "overshadowed" and "hijacked" by claims that Pope Francis had long been aware of sexual misconduct concerns about former US Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, Armagh's Archbishop Eamon Martin has said.

Speaking to *Cruxnow.com*, the Primate of All-Ireland praised the event as a Church event of "great joy and participation", and said it was only while those travelling with the Pope were on their way to Knock, ahead of the WMOF 2018 closing Mass, that they learned of Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò's allegations.

"I have to say, personally, I was very saddened," Dr Martin said. "I was saddened that this was overshadowing what was otherwise a really important celebration of family and the importance of families in the new evangelization of the Faith."

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Visiting the 'living stones' of the Holy Land

The Holy Land – that place where God chose to be born amongst us – can be said to be a 'fifth Gospel' of sorts. It was in that land where the dramatic moments of salvation history were played out right from God's Covenant with the ancient Israelites to the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of the God-made-man Jesus.

I was privileged to lead a group of pilgrims to the Holy Land last week on what has become known as *The Irish Catholic* Christian Solidarity Pilgrimage. It is an annual event that sees people from all over the country come together for a special journey to walk in the footsteps of Christ. Like any other pilgrimage to the Holy Land there are stops at the Sea of Galilee, Bethlehem, Nazareth and Jerusalem.

There we see things that date from the time of Jesus – some of them now little more than rubble and stones. But, what makes this pilgrimage different is the special focus on the 'living stones' in that place – the Christian community in the Holy Land. While they make up just around 2% of the overall population today,



Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

Christians are a vital part of the day-to-day life of the Holy Land.

We were reminded during our trip, that without the Christian presence, the Holy Land is little more than a museum for Christians.

“Christians are a vital part of the day-to-day life of the Holy Land”

We heard from Bishop Marcuzzo stories of the struggles that the Christians face in the Holy Land being such a small minority. He told us about how many would like to leave and that the Church has to work hard to ensure that they can have a viable future and can hold on to their identity. A vital part in this is education: every parish in the Holy Land puts huge emphasis on their local Catholic school which helps parents to pass on their faith. It's an extraordinarily moving experience to

visit the schools and hear the children praying in Aramaic, the language of Jesus. One cannot help but be filled with the profound sense that these children are the direct descendants of those who were the first to hear the message of Jesus.

The Christian Solidarity Pilgrimage is about concrete material and spiritual support for the Christians so that they can remain there as symbols of a living faith (see pages 14 and 15).

If you would like more information on how to support the Christians of the Holy Land or would like to register your interest in joining next year's Christian Solidarity Pilgrimage, email me on michael@irishcatholic.ie and I will be happy to keep you up to date.

Michael Kelly is co-author of a new book with Austen Ivereigh *How to Defend the Faith – Without Raising Your Voice* – from Columba Press www.columba.ie



A note from the Editor...

We were all energised by the World Meeting of Families and the historic visit of Pope Francis to our country. Like many people, I was delighted to welcome the Pontiff and hear his encouraging message that Irish Catholics should be proud of their Faith and continue to share the lifegiving message with those around them.

It has been a challenging time for Catholics and many people were rightly disappointed with the negative reaction to the Pope and our Faith in some sections of the media.

Combined with the bitter disappointment at the result of the referendum on the Eighth Amendment and the lack of fairness

during the campaign, I have been encouraged by the many people who have told me that they passionately believe that the Church in Ireland needs a voice like *The Irish Catholic* more than ever.

Support

We want to continue to be that voice and continue to develop the newspaper as an authentic tool of the New Evangelisation where Catholics can read about the Good News of the Gospel and continue to deepen their Faith. We couldn't do this without your generous support and encouragement. Many people give of their time with huge generosity because they believe in *The Irish Catholic* and

this is humbling and deeply appreciated.

We do our level best to keep production, staff and distribution costs to an absolute minimum. Unfortunately, however, due to increasing costs around printing, packaging and distribution and ensuring that the newspaper can continue to develop a broader audience we will be forced to introduce a modest price increase. From the issue of November 1, the cost of the newspaper will rise to €2 and £1.70 respectively.

This is the first price increase in a number of years and we held it off as long as possible.

However, rising costs have made it impossible

to delay the increase any further.

I hope that you know and understand the enormous appreciation that I and all the team here have for your invaluable assistance. *The Irish Catholic* celebrates 130 years in circulation this year and while the times have changed, the challenge remains the same: how can we continue to grow in our Faith and pass that Faith onto future generations.

We are determined to play our part, and I thank you most sincerely for your assistance in this.

Your sincerely,
Michael Kelly,
Managing Editor.

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Border parishes face anxious Brexit wait

Greg Daly and Colm Fitzpatrick

As the deadline for a deal on Britain's controversial exit from the European Union looms, border parishioners are anxious about the uncertainty, priests have warned.

Clones-based Msgr Richard Mohan told *The Irish Catholic* this week that there was "concern" in the parish, which is on the border between Co. Monaghan and Co. Fermanagh. He said people are keen that movement

across the border would continue to be smooth.

"I'm concerned about that fact that our parish is divided by the border and the ease with which we can move from North to South. People have to cross many times throughout the day," Fr Mohan said, adding that he also needs to cross the border to get from one church to another.

He added that the absence of a deal means that there is a "huge amount of speculation" about how Brexit will impact border counties, and that whatever problems arise, he

is confident people will face the challenge. He said the issues are "not huge, they're not insurmountable. We don't want a border where we have to present passports or anything like that," Fr Mohan said.

Services

In Roslea, Co. Fermanagh, Fr John Chester said that people still remember difficulties before the peace process. "To some extent the border dictated a lot of life during the Troubles here. So, for example, the services that you'd

put on in the chapel here in Roslea in Co. Fermanagh, you'd have to also put them on in the chapel in Smithboro, Co. Monaghan, which is the southern end of the parish.

"You would also find that neither side really gelled in a way, because the border did keep them apart. The checkpoints that were there during the Troubles made life very, very difficult," he said.

He said that amongst parishioners "there is concern, but on the other hand we don't know. We don't know what the implications

are; will there be a hard border or will it be a soft border?"

Brain drain

"The other aspect of border life here is that a lot of border towns and villages, both North and South, are spiralling downwards demographically and economically as well.

"There's a bit of a brain drain, because the young, if they go to college, it's going to be the cities where they'll tend to find jobs, so the border's certainly a very struggling area."

Parish give support to boy facing deportation

Staff reporter

Parish communities in Bray have offered their support for a young boy and mother who are facing imminent deportation to China.

Parishioners in Co. Wicklow have said that nine-year-old Eric Zhi Ying Xue, who hit news headlines earlier this week, should not be deported to China.

Although Eric was born in Ireland he is not an Irish citizen, because of a rule implemented following the passing of a 2004 referendum which provided that children who were born in Ireland to foreign national parents would no longer have a constitutional right to Irish citizenship.

According to Fr Larry Behan, priest in Bray's St Fergal's church, parishioners have been "supportive" of the young boy and were positive about the fact he shouldn't be deported.

Echoing these remarks, Fr Dan Nguyen of Bray's Holy Redeemer Church told this paper he "feels sorry" that Eric may be deported and wondered if there were "any special circumstances" for him to stay in Ireland.

Around 30,000 people have signed an online petition organised by his school, St Cronan's, to prevent the deportation.

Mass experience boosted by tighter timetable

Greg Daly

Dramatic changes to Mass times in Clogher diocese are already starting to pay dividends in terms of worshippers' experience, diocesan administrator Msgr Joseph McGuinness has said.

Noting that the changes, rolled out across the diocese earlier this month in response to declining numbers of clergy have been generally well received, Msgr McGuinness said it is clear that the great majority of people understand the reality of the situation facing the diocese.

This involves both challenge and opportunity, he told *The Irish Catholic*.

"We are beginning to see enhanced liturgical celebrations, due to fuller churches and a renewed sense that we come together as a Christian people at Mass, wherever it is celebrated,"

he said.

"Furthermore, we look forward to engaging with priests and laity over the coming months concerning the development of lay-led prayer and liturgies for a variety of occasions in our churches," he added. "We pray that this spirit of collaboration will continue to grow in all our parishes."

Msgr McGuinness's comments come against the background of a petition having been signed by over 400 people to reinstate Masses in the Church of the Sacred Heart in Boho, Co. Fermanagh. Under the new diocesan arrangements, Masses in the parish of Botha alternate on a weekly basis between Boho and the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Monea, 11km away. Masses at the parish's third church in Derrygonnelly have not been affected by the changes.



The Franciscan friars in Killarney are pictured at the blessing of the horses used by the jarvies over the weekend.

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Hopes synod can renew Ireland youth ministry with resources and training

Chai Brady

There are hopes the Synod of Bishops will give fresh impetus to resource youth ministry and mirror international youth movements, according to Church youth workers.

Following a meeting with Archbishop Eamon Martin and Bishop Donal McKeown in the Vatican, 11 youth ministers discussed the progress of the synod on youth.

"One of the big things of the synod will be a renewed energy and passion coming out of it," said Pauline Dowd from Living Youth in the Diocese of Down and Connor.

However, she said, there needs to be better training and investments in youth ministers.

"We need trained personnel, people to help manage the whole movement of youth ministry in Ireland, it is happening but we hope there'll be a renewed energy.

"Paid, trained youth ministers, we have thousands and

thousands of volunteers and it would not work without them, but you also need people who are full time on the job helping to manage, and support and nourish those people."

This comes as Catholic Youth Ministry Ireland, a national body for youth ministry, will re-launch on December 3 with the aim of integrating Ireland's youth evangelisation.

Initiative

The Catholic Youth Ministry Federation of England and Wales would be a similar initiative which organises large events for young people, such as 'Flame', and accommodates meetings with youth ministers on a national level.

"The collaborative bit we need to improve on so we're not all individually reinventing our own wheel, so that we're all sharing, there is no other way. Each individual diocese might be great at something but every sin-

gle diocese have so much to learn from other dioceses," she added.

Dermot Kelly, Youth Director for the Archdiocese of Armagh, said there was a lack of youth ministers, but there should also be a focus on how to "demonstrate a spiritual accompaniment".

"I pray that we be actionable to the synod afterwards. I always love the story of the Road to Emmaus, to me that demonstrates Jesus was listening and he was also teaching, and that's key.

"Our young people are yearning for that but they may not get the places, atmospheres and the opportunities to do that – and that's our fear.

"If we meet young people where they're at, if we get the opportunities to listen and to teach, that's a very simple model, but that's the model that Jesus brought."



Mary Ward stands with Fr Kieran McDermott, administrator of the Pro Cathedral, and previous administrator Canon John Flaherty, after she received a Benemerenti Medal for over 40 years of service to the Pro Cathedral in Dublin. Photo: John McElroy

Blasphemy ban bolsters social harmony – claim

Greg Daly

Ireland should keep its constitutional ban on blasphemy for the sake of social cohesion, especially at a time when Ireland's demographic and religious landscape is changing, a leading priest-sociologist has said.

Arguing that blasphemy, if not legally prohibited, "can be a serious source of disintegration in our society", Mayo-based Jesuit Fr Micheál MacGréil, says that this fact means that many have been "surprised, if not perplexed" by the Government's proposal to remove the ban.

Fr MacGréil, author of 2011's *Pluralism and Diversity in Ireland*, notes in a letter to *The Irish Catholic* that agnostics find it difficult to understand how hurtful believers can find it when God is publicly treated with contempt, and that Christians, Jews, Muslims

and others believe that God deserves true respect.

"Because of the recent immigrants welcomed into the Republic of Ireland, our country is in fact becoming a religiously pluralist society," he continues. "This makes the prohibition of blasphemy in our Constitution even more relevant today. It also defends us against the scourge of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia or any other prejudice against religious congregations in the years ahead."

Maintaining that respect for others' religions is necessary in a true democracy, Fr MacGréil says that retaining the constitutional ban is "especially important for young voters because they still have many years to enjoy the freedoms which our current Constitution has succeeded to preserve in good times and bad".

NI govt freeloading off charity

» Continued from Page 1

organisation is increasingly concerned that people forced to live without benefits for such a long period of time "could be tempted to seek the advice of doorstep lenders or pay-day lenders". They also cited examples of when welfare offices had advised people to approach SVP foodbanks in desperate need for daily essentials that the state claims it is unable to provide.

Although committed to providing financial and material support for people in need, the SVP is increasingly stretched providing basic essentials and a spokesperson said it they find it "surprising that a government department should appear to promote dependency on charities as an acceptable pol-

icy for social security claimants, some of whom are in [low-paid] employment".

The charity also added that they are "frequently approached" to provide furniture for people moving into oftentimes unfurnished rented accommodation, including Housing Executive premises. This is becoming an increasing trend given that financial contribution for furniture from the Northern Region for 2017 was £396,117 compared to £362,184 for 2016 – an increase of almost 10%.

"SVP will respond as necessary to need in our community; however, we do expect that, where statutory public sector provision is available, it should be provided before reference to SVP or any other

charity," it said.

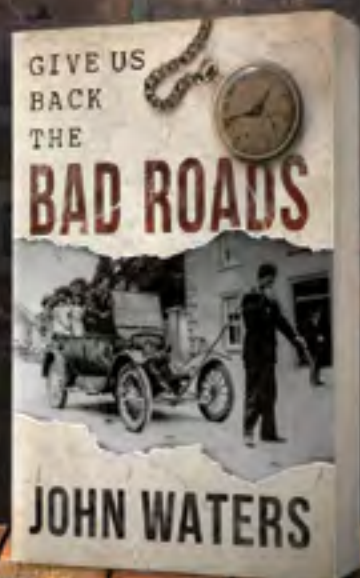
Speaking about this practice of supplying furniture, Michael Deehan, who is based in one of Omagh's SVP shops, told this newspaper it happens every week across the Omagh district, and that he even once received a phone call directly from a Housing Executive employee asking for furnishing for a new house.

He stressed this is placing a strain on SVP's resources and that the charity doesn't exist to replace benefits, noting that "the government is using us to fill in for them".

"It's not right that the government should be relying on charitable organisations to pull them out of a hole when they're not looking after people."

JOHN WATERS DIAGNOSES MODERN IRELAND

Three decades after his arrival in the capital, with the dust settling on his departure from Irish journalism, John Waters finds himself back in the parish in Sligo where his father grew up a century before. In this book, Waters seeks to outline the facts of his departure from the Dublin media, while looking back over the arc of his life, and giving his take on modern Ireland in his own inimitable style.



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Everyone, it seemed, deplored Peter Casey's rather unkind remarks about Travelling people being essentially a community which camps on other people's land and has no genuine claim to a separate 'ethnic identity'.

Whether Travellers are a separate ethnic group is a matter of dispute. But it is certain that they are a disadvantaged group, and have been since at least the Famine time. Some Travellers may be descendants of settled Irish people made homeless by the Great Famine.

It's interesting that mainstream Ireland is so pro-Traveller now. Fifty years ago, who supported the Travelling people? The Catholic Church (and the admirable Victor Bewley, of Dublin's famed cafeteria).

Most specifically, too, the much-disparaged Archbishop of Dublin, Dr John Charles McQuaid.

I have personal experience of this. Soon after I joined the *Irish Press*, as Woman's Editor, in 1969, my colleague Anne Harris, encouraged by our editor Tim Pat Coogan, spent a

The Travelling folk and a secret donation



Mary Kenny



week with the Travelling people in Dublin, including begging for alms with them.

She then wrote a series of articles about life with the Travelling people. It was compelling reportage – a day-to-day description of their lives, neither disparaging nor

sentimental – but telling it like it is.

Soon after the articles were published, an envelope landed on Tim Pat's desk, containing £100 in notes: this was a lot of money in 1969, when, if I recall right, a nice flat in Dublin 4 could be rented for about £8 a week.

The donation came from John Charles, with a discreet note that it was an anonymous gift, "for the poor travelling people".

With Tim Pat's blessing, I think we were allowed a few quid to go off and have celebratory drinks at Mulligans pub. The rest duly went to the Travelling people, as directed.

Firebrand

Anne, of course, later became the ground-breaking editor of the *Sunday Independent* (and her first husband Eoghan, the leftwing firebrand of RTÉ, now a more reflective columnist therein).

I don't suppose any of our contemporaries would have a good word to say about the late Dr McQuaid today: but he did have a compassionate feeling for the Travellers, and, as the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* notes, was, all his life, a discreet, even secret, donor to the poor.



Senator Joan Freeman.

A conservative – Heaven forbid!

● It was reported that Joan Freeman's daughter felt obliged to come out as a lesbian to counteract rumours that Ms Freeman might be a conservative.

Heaven forbid that anyone in public life in Ireland should bear such a stigma – a conservative!

Poor old Edmund Burke. His conservative philosophy – that we should value traditions, family, history, community, religion, "the little platoons" of local life over big government – wouldn't get much of a hearing today.

One Milkman which may not deliver

Anna Burns, the Belfast writer, won the Man Booker Prize this year, and on a humanitarian level, hers was a deserving cause. She had been so low in funds that she sometimes didn't have enough to eat. But the prize money of £50,000 enables her to clear her debts, and when her victory was announced, her publisher, Faber's, printed 100,000 more copies of the book, which promises more again in royalties.

The book, *Milkman*, is described as perfectly in tune with the times – evoking a claustrophobic period of the Troubles in the North, with feelings of menace and violence in the air. It has also been called "challenging", which is literary-speak for "difficult".

I've started to read it and got to page 50 – I feel you should always give a book at least 50 pages – and I quite see the critics' point of view. It is indeed evocative of



Anna Burns.

that atmosphere of threat, violence and foreboding, and it is also "challenging": the characters have no proper names and the stream-of-consciousness style is favoured.

Narrative

Passages of sociology sometimes interweave with the narrative, and the sectarian identity of Christian names is described in a list of allegedly banned forenames in the narrator's community: "Nigel, Jason, Jasper, Lance, Percival, Wilbur, Wilfred, Peregrine, Norman, Alf, Reginald, Cedric, Ernest, George,

Harvey, Arnold, Wilberine, Tristram, Clive, Eustace, Auberon, Felix, Peverill, Winston, Godfrey, Hector with Hubert...also not allowed."

More prohibited names followed included Keith, Rodney, Roger, Harold and Eric. She is perhaps conjuring up the restrictive element of Belfast (though it remains anonymous) culture.

Fair play to Anna Burns – whose win, it is said, has also whetted an appetite for more novels set in Northern Ireland.

But whether I shall get to page 348 is still in the balance.

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IC journalist elected to FEJS executive board

The *Irish Catholic's* own Chai Brady [pictured] has been elected to the executive board of an international forum for European journalists following a General Assembly in Zwolle, the Netherlands, over the weekend.

The Forum for European Journalism Students (FEJS) aims to bring together journalism students and young professionals in order



for them to exchange information and experience.

FEJS is a non-profit organisation that was created in 1985.

In two events organised each year in different countries in Europe, those attending are encouraged to network while being provided educational tools and a framework to improve their knowledge and professional skills.

Top Muslim calls for Asia Bibi's release

Greg Daly

One of Ireland's leading Islamic clerics has called for the release of Asia Bibi, a Pakistani Christian who has been tried for blasphemy.

"I call for her release and I believe that she should be released. This is the right thing to do according to Islamic teaching," Shayk Dr Umar Al-Qadri told *The Irish Catholic*.

Asia Bibi was first sentenced to death for blasphemy in 2010, and her case has been on appeal since. Pakistan's Supreme Court reached a final verdict on the case earlier this month, but the court

has reserved its verdict.

Dr Al-Qadri, a member of a Pakistani Muslim family and chair of the Irish Muslim Peace and Integration Council, criticised Pakistan's blasphemy law as against Islamic teaching.

Blasphemy

"When it comes to Asia Bibi's case, I have personally and publicly spoken for her release, I have called for her release, and I have in fact written an article a year or so ago that says there is no death penalty in Islam for someone who is not a Muslim," he said.

"Asia Bibi is a case where the lady is denying that she committed blasphemy, and

based on that it would be sufficient for the court to release her, but unfortunately that particular law, the blasphemy law in Pakistan, does not represent the true Islamic teaching," he continued, adding that the law had originally been introduced under pressure from extremist groups.

He offered his support to any organisations calling for Ms Bibi's release, saying that he would be involved in any events calling for this.

His comments come against the background of an appeal from Aid to the Church in Need for Pakistani Muslims in Britain and Ireland to speak out about Ms Bibi's plight, and to call for Pakistan to offer

religious freedoms comparable to those enjoyed by Muslims in the west.

Moral leverage

The organisation also called for the Government to apply moral leverage through the European Union to persuade Pakistan to protect Christians in the country. Asked what the Government is currently doing about her case, however, a spokesperson for the Department of Foreign Affairs merely said that "the Department, including through Embassy Ankara which is accredited to Pakistan, continues to monitor the case of Ms Asia Bibi".



Kathy Zhu.

Anti-papal mockery 'like 1970s throwback' – MLA

Staff reporter

DUP members of the Stormont Assembly have been accused of mocking a fellow party member for attending the civic reception for Pope

Francis in Dublin Castle.

A senior member of the party criticised Lagan Valley MLA Robbie Butler for attending the August 25 event, referring to the Pope as "the Antichrist", while another

MLA mockingly blessed himself while passing Mr Butler in a Stormont corridor, Mr Butler has told *The Irish News*.

Mr Butler attended the event in a personal capacity, and although it was attended by representatives from Stormont's other main parties, the DUP did not formally send anyone to the reception.

He described how he was subsequently confronted by a colleague near his Stormont office: "He wagged his finger at me and told me I was doing the wrong thing by agreeing to go to the civic reception, before saying: 'Don't you

know he's the Antichrist?'"

This episode left him "stunned", he said, while he said the second incident, where an MLA mockingly blessed himself, "was a throwback to the 1970s".

Declining to identify either MLA, he said that while their behaviour had "disappointed" him, it had also this "validated" his decision to go to Dublin.

"I felt it was the right thing to do – if you can't be a good neighbour you can't expect to have good neighbours," he said.

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Abortion movie is changing minds

Staff Reporter

A well-known social media influencer has become pro-life after watching a movie which details the gruesome reality of late-term abortions.

Gosnell: The Trial of America's Biggest Serial Killer, which was released this month, is an American drama film about Kermit Gosnell, an abortion doctor who killed at least seven infants born alive during abortion procedures.

Speaking about the effect the movie had on her, political commentator

Kathy Zhu tweeted to her almost 50,000 followers: "Yesterday, I was pro-choice. I believed that women should have a say & the gov shouldn't be interfering w/ our lives. "Today, I'm pro-life. After watching #Gosnell & doing in-depth research, I finally understand the horrors of loopholes in late term abortions," she said, urging her followers to watch the film.

The movie was written by Irish filmmakers Ann McElhinney and Phelim McAleer, and finance for its production was raised through crowdfunding.



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Papal ignorance on Tuam expected by Govt

Staff reporter

Governmental advisers did not believe Pope Francis had been fully briefed on key hot-button issues ahead of his trip to Ireland, it has been revealed.

Documents received by the *Sunday Independent* have shown that while crafting her brief message to the Pope about the Tuam Mother and Babies home, Children's Minister Katherine Zappone was advised that the Pontiff had probably never even been told about the issue.

"Even raising it with him is meaningful. It will, no doubt, be the first time that it has been raised with him," one adviser wrote.

Several survivors of institutional and clerical sexual abuse who met the Pope during his visit have testified to Pope Francis apparently knowing little or nothing about Mother and Baby homes, Magdalene laundries or industrial schools, and needing to be told about them.

After meeting these survivors, Pope Francis told a group of Jesuits, "I didn't know that in Ireland there were also cases where unmarried women had their children taken away from them."

Primate accuses Viganò of 'hijacking' WMOF

» Continued from Page 1

In some ways, I felt our World Meeting of Families had been hijacked in a way by this particular letter."

Pope Francis dealt with the allegations "very quietly and with great serenity", he said, noting how the first thing the Pope did on arriving in Knock was to enter the shrine chapel to spend five minutes in silence there.

"No doubt within his mind was all of this stuff swirling around about the Viganò letter, but perhaps he was placing it all at the feet of Our Lady, the Queen of Ireland and asking for her protection and her intercession," he said.

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'Shellshock' for parishes as refugees face homelessness

Greg Daly

West Dublin parishes have described as "shocking" the decision to close the capital's largest direct provision centre, which could leave as many as 80 people homeless, and have urged the Government to reverse the decision.

The 225 residents of Clondalkin Towers were told this month that the centre's management company Fazyard Ltd., is pulling out on December 3 following a breakdown in discussions with the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA). It is understood that 145 of the residents will be distributed among other direct provision centres, while 80 with refugee sta-

tus will need to find private accommodation.

"Eighty people in families will be left homeless and told "go and find a landlord that will take you in", Frank Brown, a Clondalkin parish pastoral worker, told *The Irish Catholic*.

Contract

Writing to David Stanton TD, the Minister of State for Equality, Immigration and Integration, Fr Damian Farnon, Moderator of the Combined Catholic Parishes of Clondalkin, urged that a contract between the hotel and the RIA "must be renewed without delay".

He described the residents as "very frightened and highly concerned about their immediate future and rightly so", noting that many of those at the centre are children attending local schools, while others are in training or involved in various groups in the community.

"They have built up close and fruitful relationships over their time here and these relationships need to be taken into consideration also," he said, detailing how residents of the centre are in groups as diverse as Clondalkin Tidy Towns, women's groups, and GAA clubs.

"The families would be known and active throughout the Combined Catholic Parishes of Clondalkin and also within their own Churches.

The 80 who have their papers reside at the centre only because there is nowhere for them to get a home, there is no alternative available," he said, continuing: "This is shocking news and must not be allowed to happen."

Mr Brown said local schools are "fuming" about the decision, with community groups shocked at the lack of consultation.

"The initial thing is shellshock," he said. "That none of these groups have been brought into the conversation on this. There's anger and confusion but also a fear to move because no one's giving the full information on this."

Rally calls for protection of freedom of conscience



Up to 1,000 people attended the 'Doctors for Freedom of Conscience' rally last week outside the Dáil focussing on the fact that freedom of conscience for doctors and healthcare workers is not adequately protected in the abortion bill which currently is before the Dáil. Speakers warned that freedom of conscience is set to become a major election issue if the Government refuses to enshrine proper protections for conscientious objection in its new abortion law.

NI pro-life sentiment jars with proposed abortion law

Chai Brady

A new poll has revealed 93% of people in the North of Ireland believe both the life of the mother and the unborn child are important.

The polling, conducted by ComRes, comes as a bank-bench bill aimed to introduce abortion legislation in the North was read in the House of Commons this week.

Diana Johnson MP called

for the repeal of the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act which criminalises abortion, despite criticism that the issue should be dealt with in Stormont and not Westminster.

Dawn McAvoy, co-founder of Both Lives Matter said: "Their campaign goes far beyond the hard cases in the context of Great Britain where 98% of abortions involved physically healthy

women aborting physically healthy babies."

"This poll shows that most people in Northern Ireland believe that both lives matter when it comes to pregnancy. Together we can find a more human way ahead which gives dignity and value to both."

Commenting on the proposed legislation British-born Professor John Keown of Georgetown University in Washington DC said that, if implemented, the bill would "make the law regulating abortion radically more permissive, especially but by no means only in relation to abortion up to the end of the 24th week of pregnancy".

Johnson said she hopes the bill will win enough support to force Theresa May to act, although there is no chance it will become law because the government will not give it parliamentary time.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Famous ship disaster remembered

The victims of Ireland's greatest maritime disaster were remembered during Mass on October 21 in the Pro Cathedral – the same place where, a century ago, Requiem Mass was offered for the 564 people who died in the sinking of the RMS *Leinster*.

The ship was struck by a German U-boat torpedo on its way from Dun Laoghaire to Holyhead on October 10, 1918, killing over two-thirds of its 771 passengers.

In his homily, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin described World War I as "a history of noble idealism but also a history of horrific barbarities". He added that the day was an opportunity to commit to fostering peace for generations to come.

Cervical cancer campaigner receives award

Irish Cervical Cancer campaigner Vicky Phelan has been tapped to receive the Fitzgerald Bible Award for her role in the CervicalCheck scandal.

Ms Phelan settled a High Court action against a US lab after her cancer was missed in a smear test.

Chairman of the Fitzgerald Bible Bruff Award group Paul Dennehy said the award "represents the legacy of John F. Kennedy who inspired people to accept responsibility by taking political and social action".

"He fought for equal rights and opportunities for everyone. I think it is very appropriate that this year the award is going to Vicky Phelan."

The award was established in 2015 and promotes the link between Bruff and the Fitzgerald family bible. Former US President JFK's family is originally from Bruff, in Limerick.

What do you think?

Let us know by writing to: Letters to the Editor, The Irish Catholic, 23 Merrion Square North, Dublin 2, or email: letters@irishcatholic.ie

Deacons offer fresh hope for vocation crisis

Colm Fitzpatrick

The diaconate in Ireland could help encourage vocations to the priesthood, a newly-ordained deacon has said.

Prominent lawyer Brett Lockhart QC, who with eight other men was ordained a deacon earlier this month in Belfast's St Peter's Cathedral told *The Irish Catholic* that as the diaconate flourishes in Ireland, there will be a "better environment for vocations generally", adding that it's up to parents to encourage children to become priests.

"The crisis will be over when the parents of Ireland decide they want their children to be priests again. And that's something that at this stage is lacking. Vocations

have really dwindled," Mr Lockhart said.

His comments come in the wake of new annual Church statistics published by *Fides*, which show that while the total number of priests has decreased globally, the number of permanent deacons in the Church has increased by 1,057 to 46,312.

Big impact

Mr Lockhart, who converted to Catholicism 20 years ago, said he thinks the diaconate has been "very successful" and that it's had "a big impact" in dioceses across Ireland, but that it will take time before it becomes normalised in parishes. This is partly because, he said, Ireland only introduced perma-

nent deacons in 2011, which is quite late in comparison to countries like Germany who introduced it in 1969.

"I think it's going to take longer in Ireland than people think, but invariably it will happen," he said, stressing that the model of the diaconate is unique and distinct from the ministry of priests.

He added that the diaconate offers parishioners the chance to serve the Church at time of religious disillusionment in Ireland. "...I think it's another way people who are serious about their Faith can serve the Church. I think a lot of people in particular want to seize this as an opportunity to be involved at a time when the Church is in crisis in the west."

'Many youth' attracted to Church teaching rather than 'angry' politics

Chai Brady

Bishop Donal McKeown has likened Brexit to radical nationalist movements in Germany, France and the US under Donald Trump's administration, saying the Church's message is more appealing to "many young people".

The Church's message focuses "very strongly on the whole idea of reconciliation and healing, it certainly has a huge contribution to make," he told *The Irish Catholic* in Rome.

He said there are many young people who want to be involved in something constructive rather than "just be angry at immigration" or other issues stemming from fragmentary politics.

Bishop Donal is currently attending the Synod of Bishops on 'Young People, the

Faith and Vocational Discernment' which runs from October 3-28 and has discussed issues relating to populism and radicalism in societies around the world.

Fragmentation

"So fragmentation is currently the 'in thing' and people will use it to A: express anger, very often in a destructive way and B: to get themselves to the top of the tree where they can proclaim their message, with recognition that politics can be very good at instrumentalising popular dissatisfaction, and actually encouraging it, rather than assuaging it," he said.

Dr McKeown said that this anger rarely leads to positive change, but there's an opportunity for the Church to be a prophetic voice in calling for forgiveness and healing.

No evidence for minister's blasphemy claim

Staff reporter

Government spokespeople have been unable to support a claim by Justice minister Charlie Flanagan that some countries at the United Nations "have quoted Ireland's blasphemy laws in defence of their own repressive regimes".

Mr Flanagan made the claim on Twitter on Sunday, October 21, calling for people to vote this Friday to remove Ireland's constitutional ban on blasphemy.

Asked by *The Irish Catholic* to give instances of this happening, however, the

Department of Justice could not comment, and a Fine Gael spokesperson cited one instance in 2009 when Pakistan, speaking on behalf of the 57-member Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, made a proposal to justify a stance on blasphemy which used part of the definition of blasphemy in Ireland's Defamation Act 2009.

Pakistan made no mention of Ireland when proposing the definition, and omitted how under Irish law matter is not blasphemous unless it is intended to cause outrage.

The spokesperson did not cite any other episodes.



Archbishop Eamon Martin, center, gestures during a working group at the Synod of Bishops on 'Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment' at the Vatican.

Primate hopes Dublin archbishop can help Rome summit

Staff reporter

Primate of All-Ireland Archbishop Eamon Martin has expressed the hope that his counterpart in Dublin Diarmuid Martin could give input to a key Rome meeting on abuse next year.

Speaking to Crux at the Synod of Bishops, Archbishop Eamon said that the Dublin archbishop "has a knowledge and understanding of this issue which I think is second to none."

"I think that his presence at the meeting

in February would be hugely positive, as well as others, no doubt, who are not presidents of their episcopal conference but who have gained an awful lot of experience and know how to deal with this issue. I think we really need to hear from them as experts in this field," he said.

Pope Francis has summoned the presidents of the world's bishops' conferences to Rome for the meeting in February in a bid to co-ordinate greater accountability on the issue of the handling of abuse allegations.

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The View



Making voting count

In recent years, the people have been called to the polls with increasing frequency, both to vote in elections and in constitutional referendums. For the health of democracy and the encouragement of civic duty, people should only be called to the polls when really necessary.

The biggest argument against the referendum to take the reference to blasphemy out of Article 40.6.1 of the Constitution is that it is unnecessary and not a pressing priority. Whether it is in or out will probably make little difference to the real world.

Respect for religion, whether one agrees with it or not, is an important value

for the peace, happiness and good order of society. Unfortunately, an ill-defined law against blasphemy does not prevent sporadic vandalism of church property, nor intolerance in some quarters of any public manifestation of religious values that might impinge on secular life.

The British Supreme Court decision in the Ashers Bakery case in Northern Ireland puts limits on attempts to override and make illegal the expression of religious conscience in that instance, where the right to refuse to bake a cake carrying a strong campaign message was upheld. The proposed conscience clause in the abortion legislation needs to be revisited.

One has to be conscious, however, of a wider context. In some societies, blasphemy is punishable, sometimes by death. Equally, behaving recklessly and irresponsibly in a way that is deemed to be grossly insulting to religion in other societies can lead to violent protest that claims lives and destroys property.

That undoubtedly lay behind the insertion in the Defamation Act (2009) of a clause defining blasphemy, as intentionally publishing or saying something "grossly abusive or insulting in matters held sacred by any religion, thereby causing outrage among a substantial number of the adherents of that religion".

Fortunately in Ireland so far, there is little disposition to engage in high profile provocative activity of that kind, and, though I was one of the TDs voting for it, it was strange to frame blasphemy laws mainly to protect religions beyond our shores, and that may have only recently become indigenous to Ireland.

Confidence

In both Ireland and Britain there are minority governments, dependent on confidence and supply agreements with an opposition party, in Ireland's case the main opposition party Fianna Fáil, in Britain's case a small opposition party though large in Northern Ireland, the DUP.

With three budgets passed, the confidence and supply agreement in Dublin has effectively expired, and needs to be renegotiated and extended, if a general election is to be avoided. In Britain, confidence and supply is threatened by disagreements over the Irish backstop in relation to Brexit, which might lead to the DUP withdrawing their support.

In the Republic, there is no obvious need or public desire for an election or any confidence that it would result in a clearer mandate for whichever is the lead party.

As with the Tallaght strategy of 1987-9, when Fine Gael in Opposition under Alan Dukes supported a Fianna Fáil minority Government, the political understanding between the



two main centre parties has been accompanied by rapid economic recovery, which creates the wherewithal to tackle major problems, such as housing and health.

It is also argued that with Brexit negotiations reaching their climax, with the Irish border centre-stage, this is not a good time for a general election and a possibly prolonged *interregnum* as parties and others try and form a government.

“There is no evidence that President Mary McAleese’s authority was any way diminished by the absence of an election in her second term”

A UK general election could prolong political and economic uncertainty without necessarily providing a solution to Brexit problems. If precipitated by those problems, it could be very heated and divisive. During the Brexit referendum, a recently elected and strongly pro-remain Labour MP, Jo Cox, was murdered in the last days of the campaign.

From an Irish point of view, a British rethink on a second referendum about whether to leave the EU at

all would be wonderful, but the prospects for it, despite a massive demonstration in London last weekend, still look slim.

This week sees a Presidential election, mainly brought about by media pressure rather than public demand. Three of the mainstream parties, representing about 63% of the electorate in the 2016 election, support the incumbent President, and clearly saw no necessity for an election. The result will show whether or not that view is vindicated.

Many possible high-profile candidates decided on reflection not to enter the lists, so, despite there being six candidates, the choice is quite limited. There is no evidence that President Mary McAleese's authority was any way diminished by the absence of an election in her second term, the highlight of which was the visit of Queen Elizabeth in 2011.

Excluding monarchies, most heads of state are public figures of long-standing, well-known not only to the public but at least by reputation abroad. Given that one of the functions of the President is to receive ambassadors, other heads of state and government, and to make State visits abroad, political and ministerial experience can be an advantage, but not of course essential.

A lot of coverage in the early part of the campaign was nit-picking at the record and credentials of the various candidates. Inevitably, a good deal of worthy aspirations are expressed, many of which stray into areas that are the responsibility of government.

“Three of the mainstream parties...clearly saw no necessity for an election”

One area that will be vitally important over the next few years, where the President as well as the Taoiseach has a central role, is the second part of the decade of centenaries. The current President has been outstanding in showing historical understanding, empathy and sensitivity during the 1916 centenary and other events of the decade.

The person elected President on Friday will need even more of those qualities in the challenging commemorative period ahead, which will cover the war of independence, the civil war, and partition, as well as the establishment of the State. The inauguration takes place on or around November 11, Armistice Day, which brought the First World War to an end without preventing a sequel.

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The good and bad of the #MeToo movement



The sexual revolution was the wrong answer to historical repression, writes **David Quinn**

One year ago, the #MeToo movement erupted across much of the Western world, starting in the United States. The Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein was accused by a number of women of sexually assaulting and even raping them (charges he denies), and then other women came forward to say that they had also experienced sexual assault by other men, often powerful men, in the past and present.

The actress Asia Argento popularised the term #MeToo and soon huge numbers of women used the term to share their experiences via social media and elsewhere. (On Twitter the hashtag symbol '#' is used to allow a conversation to be found more easily in an internet search.)

An often very angry debate began about the behaviour of men in general and especially powerful men. Why did they feel entitled to believe that women were at their sexual beck and call, and why did they so often act on this sense of entitlement? Why did they use their power to force women to have sex with them? Where was their sense of basic decency?

Classic example

Weinstein was the classic example of the type accused. He was one of the most powerful men in Hollywood, the producer of many famous movies, feted within the industry by everyone who counted, and with the power to make or break careers.

He does not deny that he has had sex with plenty of women, including aspiring actresses, but he insists it was all consensual. His accusers say he used his power over them to force



them into having sex with him against their will; rape in other words. Weinstein has now been charged with multiple counts of sexual assault and rape.

In the weeks and months following the Weinstein revelations, other powerful men have been accused of sexual misconduct and been forced to resign, including famous American TV presenters such as Matt Lauer and Charlie Rose. Other careers are now under a cloud, all but destroyed, including that of the actor Kevin Spacey.

“If a man could have his career destroyed for a clumsy pass that was going too far”

Almost exactly one year ago, the British Defence Minister Michael Fallon resigned because of 'inappropriate' behaviour. Some years previously he repeatedly put his hand on the knee of a radio journalist.

Already questions started to be asked of the #MeToo movement. Should a man really have his career destroyed for that? Fallon's offence seemed of an altogether different order to the alleged offences committed by the likes of Weinstein.

Asia Argento herself has now been accused of sexually assaulting a young actor when he was 17, just under the Californian age of

consent of 18, a charge she denies.

Within feminism, a split occurred. An older generation of feminists who were young in the 1960s when the sex revolution started, wondered if there was a strong whiff of puritanism about the #MeToo movement. Genuine sexual assault was one thing, but if a man could have his career destroyed for a clumsy pass that was going too far.

What should a Christian make of the #MeToo phenomenon? Christians have been critical of the sex revolution from the beginning. The revolution's aim was, and is, to separate sex from genuine emotional intimacy, never mind marriage, if that is what the two people want. Sex between any two people, including two people who have just met, was to be potentially available at all times, on the sole condition of consent.

Christians have always believed that sex cannot be so easily separated from an emotional setting without causing problems.

We also believed, and believe, that if men came to think women were always potentially sexually available it would lead to a consequent decline in respect for women, which is what happened in many cases, and which the #MeToo movement is now shining a spotlight on. In fact, back in 1968 the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae*

predicted exactly this.

Critics of Christian sexual morality will, of course, attack it as repressive and point out that it often bore down more heavily on women, especially those who became pregnant outside of marriage. And it is true that traditional societies in general (not just Christian ones) were inclined to make female sexuality the bigger problem, not male sexuality.

But it should be apparent now that the sexual

revolution was not the answer. Making consent alone the be-all and end-all of sexual relations is not enough. When you rip sex from a context of emotional intimacy problems will mount. Two people who don't really know each other, who are not properly acquainted, who do not trust each other fully, are much more likely to feel disrespected, used or abused by a sexual encounter than two people who know, like

and trust each other. And dare we whisper it, who might even love each other and wish to marry?

The fact that women are the ones coming forward to tell of stories of sexual abuse, and few men are, indicates in itself that women and men respond differently to sexual encounters. It seems that women are far more likely than men to feel used or abused.

“The movement overall shows that not all is well with the sexual revolution”

The #MeToo movement is a good thing if it raises the standard of basic decency among those men who need their standards raised. On the other hand, when the movement starts attacking the presumption of innocence, and leads us to believe that once a man is accused of sexual misconduct, he must be guilty, then that is a very bad thing.

But the movement overall shows that not all is well with the sexual revolution and it is in need of reform. A feminism that does not destroy the presumption of innocence in its desire to improve the behaviour of the sexes towards each other might well lead that reform.

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Modern alienation is the fruit of liberal thinking, a leading scholar tells **Greg Daly**



If liberalism is in trouble nowadays, it's not because it's failed but because it's succeeded. That, at any rate is the theory of US academic Patrick Deneen, whose latest book, *Why Liberalism Failed*, has been making ripples since it was published early this year and who spoke last week in Dublin's Notre Dame-Newman Centre for Faith and Reason.

"This latest book is the culmination of about a decade of thinking about liberalism as a political regime, which means more than merely a form of political organisation and a distribution of offices but as a kind of way of life, shaping the whole social – in addition to political – order," Prof. Deneen tells *The Irish Catholic*.

Prof. Deneen says that the attention that surrounded the book when it was published in January was surprising to him at some level, "but I guess given what we're seeing happening across the US and Europe today, maybe not as surprising as one would have initially thought".

Originally from Connecticut, Prof. Deneen is a professor of political science at the University of Notre Dame, and has taught in academia for 23 years all told, including stints at Princeton and Georgetown.

"My work has been kind of at the intersection of political philosophy and moral philosophy, with interest in theology and literature," he says, adding that in the 1980s he spent a year as a student in Dublin's Trinity College, studying English and some Irish literature.

Convergence

The convergence of political and moral philosophy has seen him following in the footsteps of such ancient writers as Plato, Aristotle, and Polybius, as well as the 19th-Century French thinker Alexis de Tocqueville, author of *Democracy in America*.

It is, he says, "the kind of regime analysis that asks what is the logic, the internal logic, of a political regime", adding that the themes of his book entail mapping out "how the crisis of modern liberalism is not in spite of liberalism but because in some ways of its very successes and becoming fully itself".

In this it sounds not unlike the work of such scholars as

the English philosopher Philip Blond, whose *Red Tory* identified Britain's main political parties as two sides of the same coin, tending in one case to social liberalism, in another to economic liberalism, and in both towards a individualism that weakens community. Similarly, it seems to echo or at least rhyme with the ideas of American psychologist Jonathan Haidt, who has analysed how wealthy and educated western societies' ethics of sanctity and community have been displaced by an 'ethic of autonomy'.

"That's fair-ish," says Prof. Deneen. "But it's not only in some ways the ethic of autonomy. It's what's needed to create human beings who experience autonomy, so it's the actual replacement – and I don't mean to romanticise anything from the past – of forms of solidarity with structures that reify autonomy."

Liberalism's success, he observes, has entailed its capacity to liberate people from forms of reliance and cooperation, replacing these with impersonal mechanisms like 'the market' and 'the state'.

"And so it's not simply an ethics of autonomy, it's the systemic realisation of a kind of autonomy that I think ultimately undermines the capacity to be a sort of self-governing civic and political order but also a functioning social order in a lot of ways," he says, with today's political and social crises stemming from this root.

"We tend to account and attribute the gains as positive aspects without seeing those kinds of deleterious consequences as following from the very sources of those gains," he adds, noting that there is plenty of data that points to growing forms of autonomy, which should be seen as pluses to a liberal mind, but also a corresponding decline in social bonds and relationships as highlighted in the work of Robert Putnam, most famously in his book *Bowling Alone* which mapped out a breakdown of associational life over recent decades.

Declines in religious association and practice, family breakdown, and the rise of the so-called 'nones' – those with no religious affiliation – all point to this too, he says.

"In the book I argue that these kind of statistics are an

A victim of its own success



indication of what I call an anti-culture – that what liberalism in many ways aims to do is not merely liberate the individual from the shackles of an overweening political power," he says, but that the emphasis on autonomy seeps into every aspect of life.

“As the buffers between individual and state are gradually eroded or abandoned, there is simultaneously an experience of liberation”

This has two obvious effects, he argues.

"First of all it requires the expansion of the legal realm so that the liberation of the self actually entails the strengthening of the central state," he says. "In the United States we tend to think of these things as opposites, that our conservatives are individualists and our liberals are more statist, but in fact these two phenomena sort of reinforce each other because of the kind of strengthening of this anti-culture and the loosening of the capacity of

society to order a kind of way of life that doesn't require now a kind of legal regime."

Secondly, he says, the omnipresence of a liberal mindset creates the conditions for a new kind of aristocracy that in the US is typically seen as a meritocracy.

"I've taught at schools that create this meritocracy and I would say its key feature is to prepare people to live in the anti-culture, in other words a place without signposts and sort of ways of understanding how we function in this world of new-found liberation," he says.

"There are some people who do that and are able to negotiate that very well, and are prepared to do that, and then there are others who aren't prepared to do that very well. I think in part this explains the collapse in our working class – the inability to form families, to have stable social lives, that you see so much characteristic of what has given rise to the phenomenon of Trump and the kind of populist resurgence in the United States today."

The paradox of this is that as the buffers between individual and state are gradually eroded or abandoned, there is simultaneously an experience of liberation and a felt sense of

a loss of control, with a risk of a backlash driven by the fear that as liberated selves we no longer control the institutions that are source and protectors of our liberation.

"And I think to the extent that this book is touching on a lot of anxieties today, I think it's the sense that liberalism has been generating the sources of its own crisis. It's not external," Prof. Deneen says, adding: "I think it's generated from internal dynamics, and the question right now is is it self-corrective? Does liberalism have the capacity to be self-correcting, in ways that may require to be less liberal, if I can put it that way?"

* * * * *

The obvious question, then, is what can be done about this, and Prof. Deneen admits that his book's conclusions have left a lot of people unsatisfied, since people understandably want answers more systemic than a call for families and communities to try to live differently.

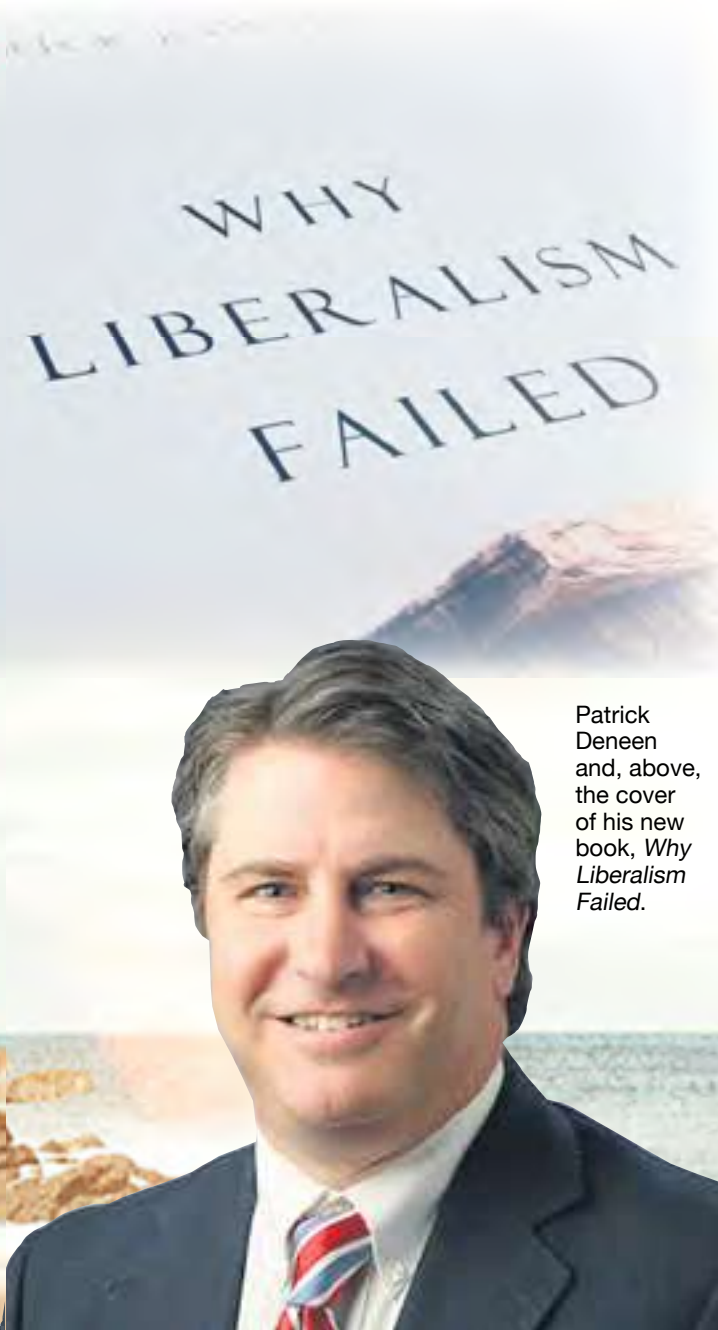
"At the same time I'm wary of calling for some kind of revolutionary overthrow or overturning of a political order, knowing that's rarely a happy experience," he says, adding that recent political

developments may nonetheless be providing an opportunity for a serious rethink of how our political structures may need to be less overarching and more inclined towards what Catholic social teaching describes as subsidiarity.

"If those who are now in charge of the liberal order don't want to be swamped and in some ways overturned, they're going to have to make some concessions to what I would think of as an understanding of the human person that is not defined by 19th-Century social contract theory as the autonomous liberated self," he says.

Describing American politics nowadays as "a source of great pain and anxiety", he nonetheless says that it is providing important feedback to those in academia.

"For those who are kind of in my class at the universities, the powerful cultural centres, what I think they're coming to realise is that they're increasingly losing the politics, because the people are not with those who are in the leadership positions, and how you begin to close that gap is going to require I think some rethinking of the direction of contemporary liberalism," he says.



Patrick Deneen and, above, the cover of his new book, *Why Liberalism Failed*.

order as part of a broad order of the common good," he says, pointing out that this is certainly not how things should be thought of in a classic liberal way with its reliance on the market's 'invisible hand' and so forth.

Universities have a key part to play in how we rethink society, Prof. Deneen ventures, noting how his own university is a Catholic institution that prides itself on trying to ensure financial burdens don't become an obstacle for those who are not in a position to pay for their college education. He's long thought, however, that a different approach might be even better.

"Why don't we as an institution, rather than trying to incentivise people to come in by decreasing their debt load or eliminating a potential debt load at the outset of their education, consider instead what it is they'll become, what it is they're going to do with their degree?"

* * * * *

Students set for careers on Wall Street and in consulting will be in a position to pay off debts quickly, but those who want to be teachers, priests, social workers, and others who society does not financially reward don't have that option, and students may indeed be dissuaded from such vocational paths because of educational debts.

A wealthy Catholic institution like Notre Dame ought to be able to financially help people based not merely on their background, but on where they want to go, and how their futures might serve the common good, he says.

"At least at a Catholic university we should have a high regard for these positions. Couldn't we blaze a very different path than our secular peers? Couldn't we offer a different way of thinking about vocation than is kind of the norm today? Institutions like ours could really begin to articulate a very different way of thinking than just saying we're going to subject ourselves to these market forces, to these inevitable kinds of forces," he says.

"These are only inevitable to the extent that we accept their first premises and if we present alternative premises, maybe we could begin to offer an alternative to a world that very much needs an alternative way of thinking and understanding."

Change

The Catholic underpinnings of Prof. Deneen's thinking are something he's not shy about, and he expresses a hope that his book will appeal to future generations of students in Catholic institutions

in America and elsewhere. He adds that looking at how Irish society is changing, "I think there will be a growing interest in a much more intellectual Catholic faith, and one that's going to require some pretty powerful institutions, including in education and possibly a higher education institution."

"I think I can be frank that while this book is written from the perspective of political theory and doesn't articulate a theological vision that I come at this very much from a Catholic perspective, which is to say that I think what liberalism needs is a healthy dose of Catholic social teaching and Catholic understanding of the human person," he says.

"I for one would say we should be thinking of the economic order as part of a broad order of the common good"

In this, he says, he is "in pretty substantial agreement" with his colleague Brad Gregory, author of *The Unintended Reformation* and who was interviewed about this in last year's 'Reformation 500' issue of *The Irish Catholic*, who has argued that "many of the kind of results we see today are in many ways logical outcomes of really core commitments of Protestantism."

Not, he stresses, that liberalism's achievements should be denied.

"By its own accounting there have been gains. The problem is that not only does it generate these costs, but I think every system has a difficult time being an accountant about its costs, seeing them for what they are," he says.

"At the end of the day," he concludes, "my argument isn't that we have to go back to 1950 or 1980 or whatever. It's not about going back – I don't buy that argument and too many conservatives are nostalgists and write out the part of the history they don't like."

Rather, he says: "It is a recognition that unless we're conscious about counteracting these forces and trajectories and inevitable outcomes, and thinking about and imagining alternative models, then I do think we're in a condition where things could go very badly, either to a kind of illiberal liberalism, which I think we're seeing around the world, or an illiberal anti-liberalism, which is I think also a very real prospect in some places around the globe."

While an understanding of liberalism that sees it as about "lifting obstacles to the fulfilment of the individual human" might well be contributing to contemporary social fragmentation and alienation, an obvious question is whether less theoretical factors might be at work instead – such things as mechanisation, urbanisation, potentially robotisation.

"We have an economy where it's no longer clear that the economy is actually functioning for the good of human beings anymore"

"We have an economy where it's no longer clear that the economy is actually functioning for the good of human beings anymore," Prof. Deneen concedes. "It has its own logic – you can understand that logic and I can explain that logic, and I can explain why automation makes a lot of sense, but at some level you ask what is this economy for, what is it doing? Is it for human beings? Is it helping human beings?

At some level as consumers, yes, but as full-blown human beings for whom there's a certain dignity in work, one might have a question."

Stakeholder capitalist models, as are common in Germany and the Netherlands and as worked to at least create Ireland's Celtic Tiger economy in the 1990s, do point to different ways of doing things, however, and it could be possible to go further to head off threats that would worsen a sense of alienation, Prof. Deneen suggests.

"If you're going to have some form of a market order, that's able to take into account these kinds of considerations of the common good or the communitarian, you have to begin by rejecting the idea that any of these processes are inevitable. They're inevitable if you accept the first premises of the liberal order – then they're inevitable!"

Although they may seem inevitable, he says, they shouldn't be seen as such.

"They're not inevitable if we believe in human freedom and the capacity of human beings to order their society according to different commitments and different conceptions of the good. So I for one would say we should be thinking of the economic

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Pilgrims with Bishop Marcuzzo, Fr Carroll and Michael Kelly at the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Bringing solidarity to Christians of the Holy

Staff reporter

"Without the Christians, the Holy Land is no more than a museum". This was the stark message from Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo to a group of participants in *The Irish Catholic* annual Christian Solidarity Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in Jerusalem last week. Bishop Marcuzzo – who is an auxiliary bishop to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem – thanked the pilgrims for their support during a meeting at the headquarters of the Catholic Church in the Holy Land in Jerusalem.

Pilgrims had come from all four corners in Ireland to visit the holy sites associated with the earthly life of Christ

and offer concrete support to local Christian communities. Bishop Marcuzzo reflected on the fact that many of the Holy Land's tiny Christian community want to leave due to the hardship they experience.

He outlined how the Church with help from Catholics around the world is working hard to ensure that Arab Christians in the Holy Land can stay and prosper. However, he warned that many Christians there feel an acute sense of insecurity which is forcing many of them to emigrate to the West.

First led by Archbishop Eamon Martin in 2016, the pilgrimage organised by *The Irish Catholic* and Marian Pilgrimages aims to help people

experience the beauty of the Holy Land while also learning more about the Christian community there. Described by Pope Benedict XVI as the "living stones of the Holy Land", Christians make up just 2% of the population.

As well as Jerusalem, pilgrims visited the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, Bethlehem and Nazareth. Pilgrims were accompanied by Spiritual Director Fr John Carroll of the Ferns Diocese and Managing Editor of *The Irish Catholic* Michael Kelly.

If you would be interested in participating in next year's pilgrimage, please send an email to michael@irishcatholic.ie for further details.



Back row: Garret Hayes, Ciaran O'Rourke, Aidan Gately, Susan Gately Front row: Breda Hayes, Marian O'Rourke, Cathy Young and Eugene Murphy.



Paul and Noreen Sheehy.



Above: John Boland, Elizabeth Boland, Eddie Breen and Pauline Breen.



Left: Maria Brennan, Teresa McGowan and Catherine O'Carroll.

the Land



Fr Carroll, Bishop Marcuzzo and Michael Kelly, Managing Editor of *The Irish Catholic*.



Yvonne Mooney and Patricia Mooney.



David Campbell and Helen Campbell.

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— IN IRELAND —

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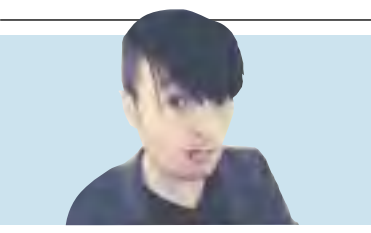
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The Irish Catholic and Columba Books are proud to present a collaborative souvenir coffee-table book of Pope Francis' visit to Ireland and the events of World Meeting of Families. This once-in-a-lifetime photographic record feature WMOF events from around the country and reports from the award-winning journalists of *The Irish Catholic*.

Looking to November: how death can help keep the Church alive



Science and technology cannot meet needs rooted in spiritual belief, writes **Dr Kevin Myers**

Hallowe'en is on the horizon and with it we find many of our friends and neighbours preparing to meet the macabre. In this mist of the seasonal jovial ghoul, however, we also take time to reflect on our lives and, rather importantly remember our dead. In many ways, Christianity is a religious tradition built upon death. After all, a central theological pillar of the Christian faith rests on salvation, that is the belief that death is not the end of life but a rather a point of transition. Importantly, Catholic theology then offers the living a means to further engage with their dead, to assist them in their journey into the hereafter.

This is done by carrying out various rites, Masses for the dead, months minds, anniversary memorials and or prayers to saints. While many of these practices take place throughout the year, the Church does designate one month to the attention of the deceased. That is, of course, the month of November.

“All Souls’ day is invariably linked to belief in purgatory, a day when the living can further assist their deceased”

Perhaps the two most popular days in the November liturgical calendar occurs on the first two days of the month.

On November 1, the Church celebrates All Saints’ Day (or All Hallows’ Day), followed by All Souls’ day on November 2. Throughout these two days, Catholics are invited to pray for both saints and the dead, to engage the Divine in search of solace and redemption. Within Catholicism, All Souls’ day is invariably linked to belief in purgatory, a day when the living can further assist their deceased in their journey towards Heaven.



Interestingly, November 2 is also an important date in the Mexican calendar, a time when the faithful bring their dead back to life by means of symbolic, commemorative practice. While *Día de Muertos*, the ‘Day of the Dead’ is largely a Hispanic cultural practice, much of the rite contains strong Catholic representation.

Returning to Ireland, how do Irish people engage with Church death rituals throughout the month of November and what can this tell us about the place of the Church within wider Irish society? Evidence suggests that Irish people continue to resource Catholic belief and practice in relation to death.

The clearest example of this is the continued popularity of the Catholic funeral service. Irish weddings have become

increasingly secular, but Irish funerals have not. It is right to point out that these funeral services are often contested events, where the family of the deceased comes into disagreement with clergy regarding the appropriateness of secular music or personalised eulogies at the service. But such disagreements are relatively rare and limited. What is more important to remember is that Irish people still overwhelmingly wish to hold funeral services within the church, even when there are plenty of alternatives available to them.

While traditional funeral services remain popular, newer Catholic remembrance services are also building in popularity. In recent years, Light up a Memory Masses, which typically take place at the end of November,

have become quite popular. These services, developed principally by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, draw together members of the community who have lost a loved one in the previous year. Those gathered at the service are given a lit candle, often representing the lives of their loved ones who have passed on. While data on attitudes towards these Masses are extremely limited, anecdotally, these services seem quite popular. In my own research examining Irish grief and mourning practices, I found that a significant number of interviewees referenced these services as being both meaningful and helpful when facing grief.

Interviewees seemed to focus their attention on three key themes: candle imagery, time of

the year and support networks. Many compared the use of candles in the service to that of other bereavement-based initiatives, particularly the annual Darkness into Light walks organised by Pieta House.

While these church services take place in November, other organisations, such as Milford Hospice, Limerick, have adopted them for use in their annual Christmas fundraising drives. Such a move further speaks to the popularity of these November rituals.

“Psychology and medical science can improve quality of life but it cannot fully speak to the human search of meaning”

What does this mean for the Church? It is a cliché to point out that Catholic Church in Ireland is in decline. The reasons for this are largely understood; the development of a modern, liberal and globalised society, processes heavily influenced by technological innovations and the expansion of the media have undermined traditional religious narratives, decoupling faith-based worldviews from everyday social and cultural life. In this manner, Church decline is a side effect, a consequence of other changes.

However, this is not to say that the Church has no future; it most certainly does. The issue of death will likely be with us for some time, and with it, many will look to create meaning.

Psychology and medical science can improve quality of life but it cannot fully speak to the human search of meaning, a meaning which is often rooted in religious and spiritual belief.

This is the Achilles heel of rationalism: its core principles of evidence-based understandings speak only to the moments leading up to death, not after it. The evidence of this can be seen in the continued popular engagement with Catholic post-death ritual, practices on full display throughout the month of November. It can be seen in the popular engagement with contemporary religious rituals, such as the Light up a Memory services.

In this sense, death can be a catalyst to keep the Church alive.

i Dr Kevin Myers is a writer and a sociologist, currently working as a Research Associate at Hibernia College, Dublin. His research interests include examining issues surrounding culture, religion, meaning, death, dying and bereavement.

“Irish weddings have become increasingly secular, but Irish funerals have not. It is right to point out that these funeral services are often contested events”

The pages of *The Irish Catholic* for Saturday, October 26, 1918, contained an eclectic assortment of items. No one topic dominated, in comparison to the recent extensive coverage of the sinking of the *Leinster*, but two themes were common to nearly all stories: the growing belief that the end of the war was nigh, and a gnawing uncertainty as to whether peace would bring good news or bad, for Ireland and the world.

One small paragraph on page one alluded to the ongoing tragedy inside Russia. It referred to the efforts being made by Pope Benedict XV to facilitate the departure from that country of the ex-Czarina Alexandra and her daughters, the Grand Duchesses Olga, Tatiana, Maria and Anastasia. Of course the Pope's efforts were doomed to failure, as the Tsar's entire family had all been executed on the same day, some months before, on the orders of the Bolshevik regime – although the official *communiqué* issue at the time had suggested that only the Tsar himself had been killed.

The report noted the response from the Bolshevik government to the Pope's request, to the effect that it had no knowledge of the whereabouts of the family – a denial both palpably false and undeniably true, given the fact that the mutilated remains had, at the behest of local officials, been interred in shallow graves in a wooded area near Yekaterinburg, the precise location of which it took many decades to find.

The story was a grim reminder of the sheer enormity of the change that had been visited upon the *ancien régime* in Europe over the four years of the war, and of the fact that this process of revolutionary change was far from exhausted.

Captured

Change of a different, more hopeful, sort was also on the minds of many at home. This spirit was well captured in the report of an address delivered a few days before by the Bishop of Cork, Daniel Cohalan to the city's Dr Young Men's Society. Bishop Cohalan, was at this stage only two years into a 36-year term, although in his previous role as auxiliary bishop he had already had some experience of the demanding subtleties of the national question.

This has occurred when facilitating the peaceful surrender of both men and weapons of the Cork brigade of the Irish Volunteers at the end of the 1916 Rising, which had proved abortive in the rebel city and county.

The theme of his address was the object of the war as far as it related to Ireland, and

Making the national question an international issue



The former Czarina Alexandra.

100 years on

Hope was in the air as the war's end looked in sight, writes **Gabriel Doherty**



it is indicative of just how far the terms of the debate on this question had changed that the once-ubiquitous phrase 'home rule' was conspicuous by its absence, with the words 'Peace Conference' punctuating his talk at several places.

“The speech placed him close to, if not actually in, the Sinn Féin camp on this crucial question”

Recalling the coalition of forces that had come together six months before to resist the proposed extension of conscription to the country, he argued that a similar national gathering should assemble to consider and agree the political demands that could be presented to the conference as the authentic expression of the nation's right to self-determination.

This apparently anodyne

demand, of course, was anything but. It placed the bishop firmly in the ranks of those who demanded the 'internationalisation' of the Irish Question, and was a repudiation of the type of internal settlement offered by the British Government with the passage of the Government of Ireland Act back in the Autumn of 1914.

Whether the bishop would have accepted, or appreciated, the description or not, the speech placed him close to, if not actually in, the Sinn Féin camp on this crucial question, which, in his own words was “of greater import to them than all other questions put together”. Given his subsequent relations with republicans in his diocese, the speech has more than a passing interest to the historian.

The paper's editorial also addressed the potential of diplomacy to solve contested demands for self-government elsewhere in the continent of Europe. Entitled 'Germany's extremity', it surveyed the

most recent developments in the conflict, and concluded that both the external military, and domestic political, environment facing Germany was nothing short of catastrophic.

It welcomed the certainty of Germany's defeat and hoped that it come much sooner rather than any later, both to spare the affected civilian population unnecessary suffering, and also to forestall the boost to socialism that would be facilitated by any continuation of the fighting.



Bishop Daniel Cohalan.

With more than one eye on developments at home it said that all Catholics “contemplating the new world order that is about to be established” would rejoice at the fact that one of the first items on the agenda of the Peace Conference would be “the reconstitution in its entirety of the ancient kingdom of Poland”.

As it turned out, the new Poland would have a republican, not monarchical, form of government, and would come into being less as a result of diplomacy and more as a consequence of the vacuum of power created by the near-simultaneous collapse of the three partitioning powers – Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary. Whether the Polish path to independence offered a suitable model for Ireland to follow was therefore by no means certain.

■ Gabriel Doherty teaches in the Department of History, UCC, and is a member of the Government's expert advisory group on the Decade of Commemorations.

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Out&About

Celebrating youth in Clare

CLARE: Bishop Fintan Monahan is pictured with the Mid-Clare Youth Council and the new Diocesan Youth Officer Joanne O'Brien.



FRANCE: Fr James Grace PP from the Diocese of Killaloe celebrates Mass in the Grotto in Lourdes.



ROSCOMMON: Staff and the chairperson of the College of the Immaculate Conception in Sligo enjoy Elphin Diocese's Parish Development and Renewal Gathering 2018 in conjunction with Elphin Youth and Young Adult Ministry at St Joseph's Hall in Boyle. Pictured are Ms Aileen Cawley, Mr Paul Keogh, Fr Gerard Cryan, Ms Rachel Ward, Fr Michael Duignan and Ms Denise McCann.



FRANCE: Frs Tom Ryan, James Grace, Gerry Neylon, Michael McLoughlin, John Malloy and Brendan O'Donoghue attend the Diocese of Killaloe's pilgrimage to Lourdes.



ROSCOMMON: Ronan Hegarty, Maura Garvey, Marian Roycroft, Kevin McGeeney, Fr Declan Boyce and Justin Harkin attend Elphin Diocese's Parish Development and Renewal Gathering in Boyle. The theme was 'faith development and evangelisation of youth and young adults in our homes, schools and parishes'.

Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



DUBLIN: Pictured are participants of the Aquinas Institute of Ireland's 2018 summer school.



WESTMEATH: A presentation was made to Bernadette Whelehan on behalf of the Mullingar Deanery Pioneer group for her continued support. Back row (l-r): Tom Monaghan, Chairman, Peter Fagan, Secretary, Christy Wright, David Colgan, PJ Egan, Joe Riggs and Joe Connaire. Front row (l-r): Rita Clarke, Mary Riggs, Bernadette Whelehan, Sr Sacret Heart Beirne, Rose Carey and Peter McCrum.



FRANCE: Al and Noreen Hayes from Portumna enjoyed the Diocese of Killaloe's Autumn Pilgrimage to Lourdes. They travelled with 300 other pilgrims from October 7-12.



WICKLOW: Denis (Din) Doran receives his Benemerenti Medal from Bishop Denis Brennan, Bishop of Ferns, with his family and Carnew church choir members at the Church of the Holy Rosary, Carnew.

IN SHORT

Killaloe appoints new youth officer

The Diocese of Killaloe has announced the appointment of an experienced school chaplain as the new diocesan Youth Officer.

Joanne O'Brien worked as a school chaplain for 13 years. In the last ten years

she worked as chaplain of St John Bosco Community College, Kildysart.

She is member of the Beyond Belief team on Clare FM and has produced and published three books, *The People's Prayer's* (2007), *Dyslexic Brains Learn Differently* (2013) and *Where I Find God* (2016).

Ms O'Brien is an active member of her parish

pastoral council and set up the 'Pray and Play' group in St Mary's Church, Quin, which has existed for 15 years and attracts over 40 children every Sunday morning.

The Diocese of Killaloe regularly organise events for young people including pilgrimages to Lourdes, Taizé, Knock, Ballintubber, The Burren, Holy Island, Scattery Island along with

Youth 2000 events, the John Paul II awards, various youth choirs, residential faith events in St Flannan's College and more.

According to the diocesan website: "It is hoped that Joanne will be a link person between many of the different groups along with many new and fresh ideas she brings to the role from her vast experience."

CLARE

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

Mothers' Prayers in Cloughleigh Church every Tuesday evening from 7-7.45pm. During Mothers' Prayers we pray for our children and all who need our prayers. New members are always welcome. Info contact Noreen at 085 1530051.

CORK

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

DERRY

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

DUBLIN

Life to the Full (Jn 10: 10) Book Club on Thursdays in St Paul's Church, Arran Quay 7-8.30pm. Join other 20-30 year olds to meditate, share and discuss life, faith, purpose and how to live life to the full. Info: st.pauls@dublin-diocese.ie or www.facebook.com/lifetothefullbookclub

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

Afternoon of Prayer at Holy Cross College Clonliffe Sunday October 31 commencing with Holy Hour at 2pm followed by tea/coffee break. Talk by Fr James Daly, ordained this year and posted to St Patrick's parish in Swords, concluding with Mass. Organised by St Joseph's Young Priests Society.

FERMANAGH

A Mass to St Peregrine for all the sick is prayed each Wednesday evening in St Patrick's Church, Derrygonnelly at 7.30pm. www.churchservices.tv/derrygonnelly

GALWAY

Healing services at Emmanuel House, Clonfert, led by Eddie Stones and team weekly on Wednesday from 12-2pm and Thursday 7-9pm and a healing day every first Saturday from 10.30am-5pm with Confessions available and Mass. Bring lunch.

KILDARE

Family Cell Meeting: A cell meeting for parents/carers/expectant parents and babies/toddlers in Our Lady's Parish Centre on Tuesday afternoons 1-2pm. Volunteers will lead the meeting, prepare refreshments and help with the toddlers. For meeting dates and information: Kate 086 4132511. Email: leixlipparishcells@gmail.com

Website: www.parishcellsireland.ie

A group of parishoners in Kilcock are hosting a Coffee Morning in the Scouts Hall on Friday October 26 from 10.30am to 1.00pm to raise funds to help the relief effort in Kerala, India, which has been devastated by flooding. Cakes, knitwear and a brac will be on sale.

LIMERICK

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

Young adults ages 18-35 are invited on a pilgrimage with the Dominicans to Bracciano and Rome from October 25-29. Please email limerick@op-tn.org for more information or to request an application.

LOUTH

The 28th Anniversary of Eucharistic Adoration in St Mary's James Street Drogheda will be celebrated with Mass at 7pm on Sunday October 28.

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

A Holy Hour with music and reflections will be held in St Mary's Church, James Street in Drogheda on Wednesday October 10 at 8pm.

MAYO

Holy Souls Day on November 2 in Knock Blessed Sacrament Chapel at 1pm. Confession and Chaplet before Mass. Mass is at 2pm.

MEATH

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

ROSCOMMON

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at St Croan's Church, Ballymoe, every Monday, 10-11am and Thursday, 8-10pm. Also at St Bride's Church, Ballintubber, every Wednesday, 7.30-8.30pm.

WATERFORD

A Monastic Experience Weekend takes place from October 26-28 at Glencainn Abbey for women interested in finding out more about Cistercian life. Please contact vocations@glencainnabbey.org for details.

WICKLOW

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

St Patrick's Prayer Meeting, Tuesdays, 7.30pm in the De La Salle Pastoral Centre beside St Patrick's Church, Wicklow Town.



World Report

IN BRIEF

Barcelona's Sagrada Família finally has its building permit

● Barcelona's iconic Sagrada Família basilica has agreed to pay €36 million in back payments after going without a building permit for more than 130 years.

The church, designed by architect Antoni Gaudí, has been under construction since 1882, but without any official permit.

Until now, the building has only been marked on property registries as an empty plot belonging to the Archdiocese of Barcelona.

Barcelona mayor Ana Colau has been negotiating with the construction board to regulate the building since 2015.

South Africa Catholic youth give up phones

● Members of South Africa's Young Christian Students (YCS) movement attending a workshop gave up using their mobile phones for three days to show solidarity with the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Wars in the DRC are fought to control mineral-rich areas, which include natural resources such as coltan and cobalt, used to make phones.

At the workshop, held at Christ the King church in Orlando East, Soweto, YCS organiser Fr Mokesh Morar recommended the film *Mercy Congo* by Paul Freedman on the DRC wars, and asked students to raise awareness among their peers.

Nepal bans online pornography

● Nepal has introduced a ban on pornography as part of a government initiative to stem the country's high rate of sexual assault.

By halfway through October, internet providers in Nepal had already blocked more than 25,000 pornographic websites. Unlike the country's attempt to ban X-rated material in 2010, this ban will instil fines and prison sentences for

violators.

Internet providers who do not comply with pornography ban could be fined up to €3,650 or lose their licenses. Under the ban, pornography cannot be broadcasted or publicised; violators could face one year in prison.

Nepal has 115 internet service providers, all of which have reportedly been contacted about law enforcement.

Malaysia stops child marriage

● Child marriage, a recurring phenomenon in Malaysia that permits parents to marry their children with the consent of authorities, is no longer to be allowed under any circumstances, the government has ruled.

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad [pictured] has issued a directive to all state authorities that the legal minimum marriage age is now set at 18 for Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

It comes after a national outcry following the exposure of a marriage between a 41-year-old Malaysian Muslim man and an 11-year-old Thai girl in June.

Until now, the minimum legal marriage age for Muslims was 18 for men and 16 for women. For non-Muslims, it was 18 for both men and women.

Vietnam frees then exiles Catholic blogger

● Vietnam has freed a well-known Catholic blogger and rights activist jailed two years ago for posting anti-government material on social media, and then immediately forced her into exile in the US.

Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh, known as 'Mother Mushroom', was driven from Prison Camp No.5 in Vietnam's northern province of Thanh Hoa to Noi Bai International Airport in Hanoi, the Network of Vietnamese Bloggers said.

"Security officers only allowed Quynh to speak to officials from the US embassy in Hanoi at the airport for five minutes before putting her on a flight at noon," the network said in a statement.



Museum finds five Dead Sea Scroll fragments are forgeries

The Museum of the Bible has announced that five of its most prized artefacts – valuable fragments in its collection of Dead Sea Scrolls – are forgeries that will no longer be displayed at the museum in Washington DC.

Researchers in Germany tested five of the museum's 16 fragments, bought by the billionaire businessman and museum founder Steve Green, and determining they showed "characteristics inconsistent with ancient origin".

The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered by Bedouin shepherds in the Qumran Caves in the West Bank in the 1940s and revolutionised the study of the early Bible.

The scrolls, which total over 100,000 fragments, include passages from the Old Testament transcribed more than 2,000 years ago.

"Though we had hoped the testing would render different results, this is an opportunity to educate the public on the importance of verifying the authenticity of rare biblical artifacts, the elaborate testing process undertaken and



One of the Dead Sea Scrolls now deemed a forgery.

our commitment to transparency," said Dr Jeffrey Kloha, the chief curatorial officer for Museum of the Bible.

The Museum of the Bible's opening was mired in controversy over its display of the fragments and its association with Mr Green, an evangelical Christian who is president of the arts and craft supply group Hobby Lobby.

Following a federal investigation, Hobby Lobby agreed in July of last year to forfeit over 5,500 artefacts smuggled out of Iraq.

In a statement the Museum of the Bible said it had sent the five fragments to Bundesanstalt für Materialforschung und -prüfung (BAM) for a series of advanced tests, including material analysis and X-ray exams, which compounded previous research that drew the fragment's authenticity into question.

Collection

Researchers are continuing to examine the rest of the museum's collection of Dead Sea

Scrolls, with one academic, Dr Kipp Davis of Trinity Western University, stating he has concluded at least seven of the museum's fragments are fake.

"My studies to date have managed to confirm upon a preponderance of different streams of evidence the high probability that at least seven fragments in the museum's Dead Sea Scrolls collection are modern forgeries, but conclusions on the status of the remaining fragments are still forthcoming," Davis said in a statement.

Online Arabic catechetical classes unite Middle East Catholics

A bishop from Lebanon shared at the Synod of Bishops how his online catechesis program in Arabic has helped him unite young Catholics across the Middle East.

"Thanks to the web I am able to connect many young people from the Middle East. We've also had conversions of young people who have recognised Jesus through our social presence," Bishop Joseph Naffah said at a Vatican press conference.

Synod fathers from Africa, South America, and the Middle East spoke Friday about their hopes for the future of evangelisation and catechesis in a digital age.

Bishop Naffah is the auxiliary bishop

of the Maronite Catholic eparchy of Joubbé, Sarba, and Jounieh in Lebanon.

For five years Dr Naffah has been running an online catechetical program that connects over 500 Arabic-speaking Catholic students in conversations about the faith.

Students in the online programme include youth in prison, as well as young people with disabilities.

Potential

While positive about the potential of online catechesis, the Maronite bishop also expressed concern that there are websites that contain false Catholic teaching.

Dr Naffah said he sees a need for

a mechanism for Vatican approval of catechesis and teaching shared online, such as a special office to monitor Catholic webpages and then certify sites that accurately reflect the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Bishop Kofi Fianu of Ho, Ghana, said he has also found success connecting with young people in Africa through the daily online Bible reflections that he shares with them.

"From this apostolate of digital reflections I have been in contact with many of the youth," said Bishop Fianu. "They interact with me. They ask questions about what I have written in the reflection."

Indian priest linked to bishop's rape case found dead

A senior Catholic priest considered a prime witness against an Indian bishop accused of rape has been found dead, with his family suspecting foul play.

Fr Kuriakose Kattuthara (67) was found dead inside his room in Jalandhar on the morning of October 22, a week after Bishop Franco

Mulakkal of Jalandhar was bailed by the state court in Kerala and went back to his diocese.

Diocesan spokesman Fr Peter Kavumpuram told media that some nuns went looking for the priest when he had not woken by 10am at St Mary's Church complex in Dasuya town.

"When he didn't open the door, they [the nuns] called for help. The door was then broken and Kuriakose was found unconscious and there was vomit in the room. We took him to the hospital, where he was declared dead," he said.

However, the priest's brother Joy Kattuthara

said the family believe the priest was killed for his strong stand against the bishop. The priest was also a witness in the case as he gave testimony against the bishop, he said.

"He was under tremendous pressure" to retract his statements against the bishop, Joy said.



Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie

Nuns take the Word to the streets



Supporters of the Nuns on the Bus nationwide tour in the US sign the bus during a stop at Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries headquarters in Cleveland. Photo: CNS

Viganò claims vindication after cardinal dubs accusations 'false'

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò said he is convinced he was right to accuse Pope Francis and Church officials of failing to act on accusations that then-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick engaged in sexual misconduct and sexual harassment.

Archbishop Viganò, the former nuncio to the US, said an open letter released on October 7 by Cardinal Marc Ouellet confirmed many of the allegations he first made in late August, when he called on Francis to resign.

The archbishop's response to Cardinal Ouellet was published on October 19 by Italian blogger Marco Tosatti.

"Cardinal Ouellet has written to rebuke me for my temerity in breaking silence and levelling such grave accusations against my brothers and superiors, but in truth his remonstrance confirms me in my decision and, even more, serves to vindicate my claims," Archbishop

Viganò said.

The archbishop had issued an open letter to Cardinal Ouellet in late September urging him to tell what he knew about now-Archbishop McCarrick.

Sanctions

Archbishop Viganò's letter followed a massive statement in mid-August calling on Pope Francis to resign because, he claimed, Pope Francis had known there were sanctions on Cardinal McCarrick and not only did he lift them, he allegedly made Cardinal McCarrick a trusted confidante and adviser on bishops' appointments in the United States.

Cardinal Ouellet's responded saying there were only rumours and no proof of Cardinal McCarrick's impropriety, and that then-Pope Benedict XVI never imposed formal sanctions on the retired Washington prelate, which meant Pope

Francis never lifted them.

Cardinal McCarrick "was strongly exhorted not to travel and not to appear in public so as not to provoke further rumors," Cardinal Ouellet said, but "it is false to present these measures taken in his regard as 'sanctions' decreed by Pope Benedict XVI and annulled by Pope Francis".

"After re-examining the archives, I certify that there are no such documents signed by either Pope."

Archbishop Viganò's latest letter said the measures were "not technically 'sanctions' but provisions, 'conditions and restrictions'. To quibble whether they were sanctions or provisions or something else is pure legalism. From a pastoral point of view, they are exactly the same thing".

Science proves life starts at conception is theme of 2019 US march

The US 'March for Life' plans to fortify its pro-life message next year by pointing out that science proves life begins at conception with a specific focus on stem-cell research.

'Unique From Day One: Pro-Life Is Pro-Science' is the theme announced by Jeanne Mancini, president of the March for Life Education and Defence Fund.

The annual march is scheduled for January 18 to

mark the anniversary of the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, which legalised abortion nationwide.

Fertilisation

"Our DNA is present at the moment of fertilisation," Mancini said at the Capitol Hill announcement. "Sadly, society tries to ignore or block these facts. When President Obama was asked, 'When does life begin?' he replied

that was above his pay grade."

She was referring to Barack Obama when he was running for president and was asked in 2008 during a Dallas forum with evangelical pastor Rick Warren: "When does a baby get human rights?" Obama replied: "Whether you're looking at it from a theological perspective or a scientific perspective, answering that question with specificity...is above my pay grade."

"Science should always be at the service of life, not the reverse," Mancini said. She called for the passage of H.R. 2918, known as the Patients First Act, sponsored by Republican Rep. Jim Banks of Indiana.

The bill would require the Department of Health and Human Services to support research on adult stem cells, not those taken from aborted babies.

Vatican roundup

Hypocrisy will impede spiritual growth says Pope

Hypocrisy is the leaven that causes men and women to be self-centred and indifferent to the world around them, according to the Pope.

"This leaven is dangerous," the Pope said in his homily during Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae. "It is a leaven that grows inward, a leaven that grows without a future because in selfishness, in looking inward, there is no future."

The Pope reflected on the day's Gospel reading from St Luke in which Jesus warns his disciples to "beware of the leaven – that is, the hypocrisy – of the Pharisees".

"There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known. Therefore, whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be proclaimed on the housetops," Jesus said.

The Pharisees of the time, the Pope explained, were those who were "closed in on themselves" and whose only concern was their own selfishness and security.

However, the Pope noted, the day's first reading from St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians presents a different leaven for Christians, a leaven that allows for an outward growth.

North Korea visit considered

Pope Francis, at a meeting with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, said he is willing to visit North Korea.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un had asked Moon to tell the Pope of the invitation. According to Yonhap, the Korean news agency, Mr Moon's press secretary told reporters the Pope said he would accept "if an [official] invitation arrives and I can go".

Meeting the South Korean president last week, the Pope praised Moon's efforts to promote peace in the Korean peninsula.

"Move forward

without stopping. Do not be afraid," Francis told Mr Moon.

In a statement released after the meeting, the Vatican said Pope Francis and Moon discussed the Church's role in promoting "dialogue and reconciliation between Koreans".

"Strong appreciation was expressed for the common commitment to fostering all useful initiatives to overcome the tensions that still exist in the Korean Peninsula, in order to usher in a new season of peace and development," the Vatican said.

Prelate says Ukraine's war is forming Catholic leaders

The horror of ongoing war in Eastern Ukraine is shaping the moral compass of a generation of young Ukrainians and preparing them to be heroic Christian leaders, the head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church has said.

"Frequently, a young person that has suffered, that has gazed into the eyes of death on the field of battle or who has braved bombs to save the life of civilians – learning to preserve life in extreme conditions – understands the value of human life better than an arrogant priest or kleptocratic politician," Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk told the Synod of Bishops.

Confronted by Russian "military aggression" young Ukrainians especially "are dying for our country", thus becoming the "principal protagonists of the transformation of our society" the archbishop told the synod.

The Ukrainian Catholic Church, headed by Archbishop Shevchuk, survived almost total destruction by the Soviet Union in the 20th Century and has since risen to an increasingly prominent role in national life and politics.

Letter from Rome



Cindy Wooden

Pope shares his thinking on key synod themes

Having some doubts is definitely better than having no doubts at all, Pope Francis told a group of seminarians. As the Synod of Bishops on 'young people, the faith and vocational discernment' was continuing at the Vatican, the Pope tackled some of the synod's key questions when he met on October 13 with seminarians from the Lombardy region of northern Italy.

Doubt came first. A young man named Daniele from the Diocese of Mantova told Pope Francis that while his year of preparation before beginning seminary studies is mostly one of joy, "sometimes, behind this enthusiasm, there hide seeds of doubt and struggle with the idea of following Jesus through the priesthood in today's society".

Pope Francis has attended most of the general sessions of the synod and, according to the Vatican press office, has requested the floor at least twice to give his input during the 'open discussion' that ends each evening. The Vatican did not, however, say what the Pope said.

But his talk to the Lombardy seminarians gives an indication of his approach to the topic of vocational discernment; his long question-and-answer session with them included both long-standing ideas and new insights that may have been motivated by listening at the synod to bishops, priests, religious and laypeople, including 34 observers under the age of 30.

Fruitful cross

Daniele, the seminarian, had referred to doubt as a cross. The Pope said it may be, but it is a fruitful cross. "I don't trust people who never doubt," the Pope said. "Doubt puts us in crisis. Doubt makes us ask ourselves, 'Is this good or not?'"

Of course, Pope Francis said, too much doubt is not healthy, but if there's some doubt and it makes a Christian stop and ask, "does this come from God or not? Is this positive or not?" then it is actually a motivation for discernment.

The concrete step to take when doubt comes along, he said, is "dialogue. Dialogue with the one who accompanies you. Dialogue with your superior. Dialogue with your classmates. But open dialogue, sincere dialogue, about concrete things. And, especially, dialogue with the Lord: 'Lord, what are you trying to tell me with what I'm feeling, with this desolation or this doubt?'"

Another big theme at the



Pope Francis greets a participant in a meeting with seminarians from Italy's Lombardy region at the Vatican. Photos: CNS

synod that was echoed in the question of a seminarian had to do with evangelisation in a time of increased secularisation.

“Doubt puts us in crisis. Doubt makes us ask ourselves, ‘Is this good or not?’”

While some of the synod members seemed to view secularisation as a huge obstacle for the Church, Fr Arturo Sosa, superior general of the Jesuits, asked synod members to try to

think – discern – what God is trying to tell the Church through secularisation. Perhaps, he said, part of it has to do with challenging people to make a clear choice to be a Christian, rather than belonging to the Church just because their parents and grandparents did.

But Pope Francis took a slightly different tack with the seminarians. "You say, 'this increasingly secularised world,' but I say, which world was more secularised: ours or that of Jesus?"

While some Christians may be tempted to throw up their hands faced with such a challenge, Jesus'

mandate to Christians today is the same as it was then, the Pope said: "Go out," get close to people and share the good news.

A seminary staff member from Cremona asked Pope Francis for suggestions on how those in charge of formation can prepare young men to be ministers in a Church that is a "field hospital" and how they can help the young prudently try new things to bring God's love and mercy to people.

First of all, the Pope said, get them moving because "a priest who is not on the move thinks of stupid things, says stupid things

and does stupid things".

"But it's risky," Pope Francis said he could hear his audience thinking.

While someone may slip while on the move, making mistakes teaches humility, he said, even admitting that he has prayed for God to "toss a banana peel" in the path of a certain priest to help the man be humbler.

“A priest who is not on the move thinks of stupid things, says stupid things and does stupid things”

Everything in life involves a process, the Pope reminded the group of seminarians and seminary staff members. "Babies aren't born adults; it's all a process of becoming, a process of maturation or corruption," of growing in virtue or growing in vice.

To help young people mature in their faith and commitment to the Gospel, look to how Jesus was with his disciples, the Pope said.

Jesus "knew how to tolerate mistakes" and did not give up even when Peter denied him or the other disciples ran away, the Pope said. "Jesus placed his bet on time, on the development of the disciples."

i Cindy Wooden is a reporter with Crux.com



A participant attends Pope Francis' meeting with seminarians.



John L. Allen Jr

Virtually everyone taking part in the October 3-28 Synod of Bishops on young people has said that the presence of more than 30 young delegates inside the hall has altered the chemistry – it's looser, more informal, more pumped-up, and above all, more raucous.

The young people, participants say, let you know immediately which speeches they like by cheering, applauding, even hooting like a studio audience at the filming of a reality television show.

Back in the day, such behaviour would have been frowned upon, if not actively discouraged. In previous synods, officials have sometimes reprimanded participants for applause, considering it indecorous and unfair to those who don't get it. This time around, however, such restraint has basically gone out the window, making audience reaction one useful gauge for which messages really resonate.

By that standard, one topic above all stands out, which may be no surprise given that synods are always an education in the realities of the global Church: anti-Christian persecution.

The two most sustained ovations so far have been for an Iraqi youth and an Indian archbishop, both of whom recounted direct stories of suffering and persecution on account of the Faith in the 21st Century.

“It's very important to pay attention that there is not only persecution by killing, there is a persecution by psychology”

Safa Al Alqoshy, a Chaldean Catholic from Baghdad, spoke during the synod's second week, describing the suffering of Christians in his country at the hands of the Islamic State and other forms of jihadi radicalism.

“It's very important to pay attention that there is not only persecution by killing, there is a persecution by psychology, by feelings. You feel that you are alone, that you are not supported,” he said in an interview with *Crux* shortly after his speech on the synod floor.

Horrors

Last Thursday, Archbishop John Barwa of Cuttack-Bhubaneswa described the horrors of an anti-Christian pogrom that unfolded in the district of Kandhamal in 2008, which left more than 100 people dead.

He told the story of Rajesh Digal, a young catechist who was murdered by Hindu



Bishops' Synod stirred by persecution of Christians



Sr Briana Santiago, a member of the Apostles of the Interior Life from San Antonio, talks with Archbishop Eamon Martin before a session of the Synod of Bishops in Rome this week. Photo: CNS

fundamentalists on August 26, 2008. The mob tried to force Digal to convert, Barwa said, and, when he was buried in mud up to his neck, asked if he'd give up Jesus Christ.

“He closed his eyes, looked up at him and said ‘no!’ And the man dumped the stone on his head,” Barwa said. “He silently gave witness of the God of life. And this is only one story. There are so many powerful stories of faith.”

Barwa also spoke to *Crux* in an interview shortly after his talk

on the synod floor. A member of India's long-oppressed tribal minority, Barwa's own niece, a Catholic nun, was gang-raped during the violence.

What do we make of the fact that these are the two speeches so far that seemed to stir people and generate the loudest expressions of solidarity and appreciation?

First, that in this sense the Synod of Bishops probably is akin to any other random collection of people these days, in that what I once called the “global war on

Christians” remains not only the most dramatic Christian story of our time, but the most untold.

In the wake of ISIS in Iraq and Syria, the idea of Christians as victims of persecution there has become depressingly familiar. However, the unawareness of the global scale of the scourge is likely what made Barwa's account from India so compelling – despite the fact that, statistically speaking, India is among the most dangerous places on earth to be a Christian these days, with an average of one physical assault every other day.

“These stories are also a sobering reminder for the synod against becoming exclusively bogged down with the problems of affluence”

Overall, the low-end estimate for the number of new Christian martyrs every year in the early 21st Century is about 7,000 to 8,000, while the high end is close to 100,000. (Precision is notoriously elusive due to the difficulty of obtaining counts in conflict zones, and also debate over what counts as “anti-Christian” violence.)

Either way, that works to one new martyr every hour or one every five minutes. Even aside

from Christian concern, that's a human rights crisis of staggering proportions.

If ignorance is the bad news, here's the good: Once people become aware of what's happening, they want to help.

Bishop Frank Caggiano of Bridgeport, for instance, one of the American prelates taking part in the synod, said that he was inspired to think about ways in which his fairly affluent diocese could help – perhaps by twinning relationships with parishes in parts of the world where Christians are targets, for instance, or opportunities to involve his young people in direct service projects for suffering churches.

That's just one bishop's response, but it suggests a broader movement of hearts and minds in the synod in response to the stories of the new martyrs of the day.

Finally, these stories are also a sobering reminder for the synod against becoming exclusively bogged down with the problems of affluence, meaning the sorts of debates that are a luxury churches facing more existential threats can't afford.

Such perspective is part of the price of admission for membership in a global Church – one in which, though you'd often never realise it from media coverage or professional society meetings, the affluent West represents an ever-shrinking share.

“The low-end estimate for the number of new Christian martyrs every year in the early 21st Century is about 7,000 to 8,000, while the high end is close to 100,000”

Letters

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

Letter of the week

Why we must vote 'No' in referendum

Dear Editor, According to *Collin's Dictionary* to blaspheme is to "show contempt for God, especially, in speech". One may add to Collin's definition the personal and social implications of gratuitously insulting and offending our fellow citizens who conscientiously believe in God. Blasphemy, therefore, if not prohibited in the Constitution or by law, can be a serious source of disintegration in our society. Because of this many are surprised, if not perplexed, by the current proposal to remove its prohibition by referendum. I would hope that the people of Ireland will vote Nil/No on Friday, October 26.

For the metaphysical agnostic, it is difficult to appreciate the level of

offence, hurt and anger a believer feels when her or his God is publically treated with contempt, as happens in the case of blasphemy. To the believer God is a person to be loved and adored. He is real and all life depends on Him. For instance, in the case in Christians, Jews and Muslims, God is a person with whom we can dialogue in prayer and deserves true respect. The Deity of other religions must also be respected in a true democracy.

Because of the recent immigrants welcomed into the Republic of Ireland, our country is in fact becoming a religiously pluralist society. This makes the prohibition of blasphemy in our Constitution even more relevant today. It also defends us

against the scourge of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia or any other prejudice against religious congregations in the years ahead.

I trust that my reasons to preserve blasphemy in article 40.6.1 are sufficient to encourage readers to consider voting Nil/No on October 26. The keeping of the *status quo* is especially important for young voters because they still have many years to enjoy the freedoms which our current Constitution has succeeded to preserve in good times and bad. Let us enable it to continue to do so in the future.

Yours etc.,
Micheal MacGreil, S.J.,
Westport, Co. Mayo.

How can abortion be deemed as 'healthcare'?

Dear Editor, How we use language can be either telling or misleading. What is abortion? What is healthcare? And is abortion healthcare?

The minister for health's bill to legalise abortion defines termination of pregnancy as "a medical procedure which is intended to end the life of a foetus". The death of the preborn child is not an unfortunate consequence of a necessary medical procedure: it is "intended".

Healthcare is (in my mind at least) about saving and protecting people's lives and

health. Abortion does none of these: on the contrary, it is intended to end life, and also leaves many mothers mentally and emotionally scarred.

Abortion is not healthcare – but the minister for health not only counts it as such but prioritises it above the myriad of chronic health service problems he is paid to address.

Is it not problematic to try to force doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and others to assist against their will in intentionally ending the life of another human being? This is not even needed to

make abortion available; instead, the government could establish an opt-in system where medical professionals who do wish to participate in abortions can be included.

These issues are still a problem if doctors are expected to refer women to other doctors for abortion, in spite of their professional judgement or ethical position that abortion is harmful and not necessary. (If a doctor had a patient who wanted a healthy hand removed due to mental illness, and refused to operate, but referred her to

another doctor willing to do it, is the referring doctor not still partly responsible?)

The bill also creates resource issues: there is already a serious shortage of GPs, and of nursing staff in Irish hospitals, yet the Minister would force many out of healthcare and deter others from entering it, by insisting that they act against their conscience on abortion or face serious penalties.

This bill is not about healthcare: it is a grotesque distortion of it.

Yours etc.,
Dr Ruth Foley,
Clondalkin, Dublin 22.

Organisation for papal visit fell short

Dear Editor, Greg Daly sets out some good reasons for the low turnout at the papal Mass, particularly the various pieces of "advice" from organs of the State (IC 4/10/2018). Two other reasons were the fact the tickets were free – a nominal €5 would have discouraged those disinterested from applying. Secondly there was too much duplication of tickets through individuals applying and then getting tickets through their parish. My parish couldn't give them away in the end! Given the vast improvement in technology the overall organisation fell far short of that for the 1979 visit of John Paul II.

Yours etc.,
Pat Conneely,
Glasnevin,
Dublin 11.

After all the debate it's still women who suffer

Dear Editor, Apart from all the other points that can be made for and against the recent budgetary announcement, do the proponents of the idea of free contraception not realise that it is pregnant women who bear the physical brunt not only of childbirth but also more so of abortion.

As to men, there are those who care for their wives and partners, who love and respect them. And there are those who knowing full well that the State will take over the cost of abortion, will not be bothered one way or the other and will use abortion as a cheap form of contraception. I do not see this as

respect of any kind but doubtless there are those in the feminist lobby who will mistakenly see this as a signal of a woman's equality. More fool them you might say but it is women who suffer.

Yours etc.,
Gerald Murphy,
Rathfarnham, Dublin 16.

There's far more to 'yoga' than eastern promise...

Dear Editor, From time to time articles appear in the media, which suggest that an aspect of what is often called the New Age is dangerous. Research suggests that all practices, whose origins are in Eastern religions, including those that have been 'Christianised' (given a Christian veneer and language), are inherently dangerous partly because they are practiced in isolation from their original base and don't have the necessary protections.

They usually come under the heading 'yoga' and include particular exercises, breath control techniques, healing/energy movement in the body and meditation/mindfulness that works on closing down the faculties of the mind. Those practices often go together in the West and are available to everyone.

Historically, in the East this dangerous path towards self-realisation, or union with the cosmos, is not available to everyone. Dangers are minimised by a foundation involving years of purification in accordance with the religious and ethical practices of the tradition and the strict guidance of an advanced yogi or teacher in controlled slowly advancing stages.

Some leaders and scholars in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions have been very critical of the way meditation and mindfulness have been introduced in the West, using marketing strategy, without a base of asceticism, abandoning traditional concepts of suffering and potentially reinforcing harmful habits of practitioners.

In the East the relevant practices are not done to relax or relieve stress.

Yours etc.,
Eileen Gaughan,
Strandhill,
Co. Sligo.

The royal family is as pro death as so much of British society

Dear Editor, The oohs and aahs over the news that Meghan Windsor is expecting does not negate the fact on her visit to Ireland earlier this year, she gave approval for the abortion referendum result according to the now notorious tweet of Senator Noonan.

In truth, the Royals are as pro death as the rest of British society, with Prince William recent advocating for smaller families in order to save the planet. But all is not doom and gloom given that their relative Lord Windsor, a Catholic convert, has consistently advocated for the unborn. But he is just the exception!

Yours etc.,
Fr John McCallion,
Clonoe, Co. Tyrone.

Letters to the Editor

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

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

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



Around the world



USA: US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley delivers the keynote address during the 73rd annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner in New York City.



VATICAN: Bishops and observers attend a session of the Synod of Bishops on 'Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment'.



VATICAN: Pope Francis exchanges gifts with Truong How Binh, vice prime minister of Vietnam, during a private audience.



UKRAINE: Young Ukrainian Marine recruits are seen on the obstacle course during their training at a shooting range near Mariupol. The horror of war in Eastern Ukraine is shaping the moral compass of young Ukrainians and preparing them to be heroic Christian leaders, according to the head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.



SUDAN: A boy cares for cattle in Gidel, a village in the Nuba Mountains.



HONDURAS: Migrants scuffle with police in Ocotepeque blocking access to the border with Guatemala as they try to join a caravan heading to the US.



Faith and levity



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

Shusaku Endo, the Japanese author of the classic novel *Silence* (upon which Martin Scorsese based his movie) was a Catholic who didn't always find his native land, Japan, sympathetic to his faith. He was misunderstood but kept his balance and good heart by placing a high value on levity. It was his way of integrating his faith with his own experience of occasional personal failure and his way of keeping his perspective on a culture which misunderstood him. Levity, he believed, makes faith liveable.

He's right. Levity is what makes faith liveable because humour and irony give us the perspective we need to forgive ourselves and others for our weaknesses and mistakes. When we're too serious there's no forgiveness, least of all for ourselves.

Purges

What is humour? What's its meaning? A generation ago, Peter Berger wrote a book, *A Rumour of Angels*, in which he looked at the question of humour philosophically. I like his conclusion. In humour, he submits, we touch the transcendent. To be able to laugh at a situation, no matter how dire or tragic, shows that we're in some way above that situation, that there's something in us that's not imprisoned by that situation, or any situation.

There's a wonderful example of this in the writings of the Russian poet, Anna Akhmatova.

During the purges of Stalin, her husband had been arrested, as had many others. She occasionally tried to visit the prison he was in to leave letters and packages for him. Standing in long lines outside of that prison in St Petersburg, she waited alongside other women whose husbands or sons had also been arrested.

The situation bordered on the absurd. None of them even knew whether their loved ones were even alive and the guards made them wait for hours without explanation, often in the cold of winter. One day, as she was standing in line waiting, another woman recognised her, approached her, and asked: "Can you describe this?" Akhmatova replied: "I can," and when she said this something like a smile passed between them.

A smile passed between them. That smile contained some levity and that allowed them both to

realise, however unconsciously, that they were transcendent to that situation.

The smile that passed between them alerted them both to the fact that they were more than what they were in that moment. Awful as it was, they weren't ultimately prisoners to that moment. Moreover that smile was a prophetic and political act of defiance, based upon faith. Levity is subversive.

This is true too not just for how we live inside our faith lives; it's true too for how we live, healthily, inside our families. A family that's too serious will not allow for forgiveness. Its heaviness will eventually drive its members either into depression or away from the family.

Moreover it will make an idol out of itself.

Conversely, a family that can take itself seriously but still laughs at itself will be a family where there is forgiveness because levity will give them a healthy perspective on their foibles. A family that's healthy will

sometimes look at itself honestly and with the kind of smile that passed between Anna Akhmatova and her friend, say of itself: "Aren't we pathetic!"

That's true too of nationalism. We need to take our nation seriously, even as a certain kind levity keeps this seriousness in perspective.

“Our lives often are pathetic. But it's okay. We can still laugh with each other! We're in good hands. The God who made us obviously has a sense of humour”

I'm a Canadian. As Canadians, we love our country, are proud of it, and would, if push came to shove, die for it.

But we have a wonderful levity about our patriotism. We make jokes about it and enjoy it when others make jokes about us. Consequently we don't have any bitter controversies regarding who loves the country and who doesn't. Our lightness keeps us in unity.

All of this, of course, is doubly true of faith and spirituality. Real faith is deep, an indelible brand

inside the soul, a DNA that dictates behavior. Moreover, real faith does not sidestep the tragic within our lives but equips us to face the heaviness in life where we meet disappointment, personal failure, heartbreak, injustice, betrayal, the breakdown of cherished relationships, the death of loved ones, sickness, the diminishment of our own health, and ultimately our own death.

This is not to be confused with any natural or contrived optimism that refuses to see the dark. Rather real faith, precisely because it is real and therefore keeps us inchoately aware of our identity and transcendence, will always allow us a discreet, knowing, smile, no matter the situation. Like the English martyr, Thomas More, we will be able to joke a bit with our executioner and we will also be able to forgive others and ourselves for not being perfect.

Our lives often are pathetic. But it's okay. We can still laugh with each other! We're in good hands. The God who made obviously has a sense of humour – and therefore understanding and forgiveness.

Too many books on Christian spirituality might more aptly be entitled: *The Unbearable Heaviness of Faith*.

“Levity is what makes faith liveable because humour and irony give us the perspective we need to forgive ourselves and others for our weaknesses and mistakes”

Cornerstone

Building tomorrow's parish today

**A Family
of Families:**

All the input from
Elphin Diocese Faith
Development Day

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Parish Development and Renewal Gathering 2018

Frank McGuinness, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry in the Diocese of Elphin, opened the spirit-filled gathering themed 'Faith Development and Evangelisation of Youth and Young Adults in our Homes, Schools and Parishes.' Frank set the context for the day by giving an overview of how youth and young adults in Ireland view the Church, its teachings and also what they believe and how they practice. The data underpinning this presentation was primarily based on the pre-synod working document (instrumentum laboris), December 2017, for the Synod on Young People, The Faith and Vocational Discernment, which took place at this month in Rome, and also the Barna Group Research into the "State of Faith among Irish Youth in the Republic of Ireland", October 2017.

Here are some of the main points: Youth and young

adults who participate in Church say that the Church is a place of solace, guidance and support. Pope Francis is a popular and inspirational figure who seems to speak a different language that appeals to young people. Liturgy needs to be more alive and proximate, whereas very often it doesn't lead to an experience of community or family as the body of Christ.

Homilies are inadequate to accompany them in the discernment of their situation in the light of the Gospel. Young people are attracted to Joy which should be the hallmark of our faith but Christian communities often seem unable to convey the Joy of the Gospel and therefore are not attractive. Lived example has a huge influence on young people but 55% of youth do not know an adult who regularly talks to them about their faith.

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Editor's Note by Eoin Walshe



The Holy Trinity of Home, School and Parish

Welcome to this week's Cornerstone – a special edition bringing you some of the highlights from the Diocese of Elphin's 'Parish Development and Renewal Gathering 2018.' The theme of the gathering was 'Faith Development and Evangelisation of Youth and Young Adults in our Homes, Schools and Parishes.' I am confident of the importance and relevance to dioceses and parishes around the country. These themes are reflective of the needs in parishes in Ireland today, and so we spend some

time hearing about what was said, and receiving some key insights. Special thanks goes to Frank McGuinness for contributing so generously to this week's edition of Cornerstone with reports and pictures from the gathering itself.

As we look to turn our parishes into places of mission, we are aware of the central importance of creating a strong connection between the home, school and parish. There is a real need to focus on an intentional dialogue between these three, ensuring that our young people receive a consistent message of evan-

gelisation and faith formation. It is no use to have a parish that is on fire, if the family lives of the young people does not echo the central vitality of faith, and vice versa. Equally, if the Gospel truths preached in the parish and at home are also echoed in the classroom, young people suddenly see that Faith is not just a once-a-week thing, but something that touches every aspect of their lives. There is plenty to learn from this gathering, and hopefully you will be inspired by these articles. Also this week: a 'fish and tips' which concentrates on help-

ing women live their everyday faith, a People of God profile meeting another of our brethren in Christ, we have next's Sunday's Second Reading and Dr Fainche Ryan continues her series on the sacraments.

Join us on the journey of the building tomorrow's parish today! If your parish is engaged in something exciting or innovative, contact us and let us know! Email me on eoine@irishcatholic.ie

What is Cornerstone?

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

actively involved in parish ministry, feeling disconnected from your parish or both; Cornerstone is for you. A cornerstone is the first stone set in the construction of a building from which all other stones will be set in reference to, thus determining the entire structure. The Irish parish of tomorrow should be built "in reference to" the Church's cornerstone: Jesus (Ephesians 20-22).

Parish Development and Renewal Gathering 2018

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Future strategy

Frank also concluded the day with a session entitled 'Parish: Church in the Midst of Homes and Families – Future Strategy.' Here are some of the main points Parishes are the customary place for evangelisation, faith development and pastoral care, however for many reasons they do not seem to be adequate places of encounter for young people who are turning to other sources and experiences that are more in tune with their mobility; life places and spiritual search. Alternative experiences such as pilgrimages, new movements and associations, prayer meetings; international events and conference, communities of faith etc. offer:

- Fraternal Life
- Spirituality
- Experiences of Service
- Space for Accompaniment and Discernment
- Community
- Prayer
- Enhancement of the Word of God
- Option for the Poor
- Joyful Membership
- Active Involvement

Challenge

The challenge is to transform our Parishes so that they become places where these experiences become the Ordinary Experience for young people as they grow in faith. Christian Communities grow by ATTRACTING people through their authentic witness to Holiness. "Holiness is the most attractive face of the Church ... The Lord wants us to be Saints and not settle for bland mediocre existence" Pope Francis – Apostolic Exhortation

Gaudete & Exultate – March 2018. Parishes must ask the question "Why are we not attractive anymore?"

Frank highlighted an apparent predominant unspoken strategy in handing on the faith in Ireland: The faith is caught not taught and sacramental preparation and provision continues to be the dominant method supported by parishes, but how can you catch the faith from a non-practicing generation? If sacramental preparation and provision could, of itself, form missionary disciples, every parish would be experiencing the joy of raising up and forming people who are joyfully living out the mission of Jesus Christ just by doing what they are currently doing. (Fr. James Mallon, Divine Renovation)

What's the alternative?

Pope Francis when he was Cardinal Bergoglio was lead writer of the Aparecida Document which was the final document of the V General Conference of the Episcopate of Latin America and the Caribbean. It outlined 5 Fundamental Aspects in the process of Evangelisation and Faith Development. They are as follows:

- 1.KERYGMA – Proclamation of Jesus Christ to each person that is distinctively heard and leads to a personal encounter with him.
- 2.CONVERSION – This leads to a transformed life and a DECISION to follow Jesus as Lord
- 3.DISCIPLESHIP – The believer constantly matures in the knowledge and love of Jesus

4. COMMUNION – The believer experiences meaningful community, encouragement, support and encounter with others

5. MISSION – The believer proclaims Jesus to others with JOY, builds the Kingdom in his/her context and serves the community

Future of the faith in Ireland depends on moving from maintenance to mission

Sacramentalisation of our young people does not necessarily lead to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Parishes must seriously review how we approach evangelisation and faith

development in the light of the 5 aspects outlined and look at new ways of proclaiming Jesus Christ that will lead to conversion, discipleship, communion and

mission. Plans are currently underway to provide leadership training for Parish Youth Ministry Leaders. This will be a 2 year part-time course in conjunction with St. Angela's

College. Those who complete the training will be awarded a Level 7 Certificate in Leadership and Management in Faith Contexts, with particular focus on Youth Ministry. The objective is to ensure that every parish has at least two people who are trained in youth ministry to support the mission of their parish into the future. Their role will be to support our Priests and Parishes to connect with youth and young adults at a local level, encouraging participation in parish and diocesan evangelisation and faith development experiences and continue with the help of families, schools and parishes to accompany young people as mature in their faith.



Young adults who shared their youth ministry experience at the gathering.

Scripture

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

Hebrews 5:1-6

Every high priest has been taken out of mankind and is appointed to act for men in their relations with God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins; and so he can sympathise with those who are ignorant or uncertain because he too lives in the limitations of weakness. That is why he has to make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. No one takes this honour on himself, but each one is called by God, as Aaron was. Nor did Christ give himself the glory of becoming high priest, but he had it from the one who said to him: *You are my son, today I have become your father, and in another text: You are a priest of the order of Melchizedek, and for ever.*

Spend some time in prayer with the reading.

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



PARISH INITIATIVES

The family is the first school



Bishop Kevin Doran
(Bishop of Elphin)

Bishop Kevin outlined in his presentation that the family is first and primary place in which the faith is handed on to the next generation. He emphasised that while school and parish has its role to play, they exist to support parents who are the first and the best of teachers. Bishop Kevin began by sharing some of his personal experience of faith practice growing up and the positive example shown by his parents. Some of these experiences include: Night Prayers, October Devotions, The Death of a Pope, Getting Close to the Altar, Family Rosary, Telling the Truth, Work Ethic, Option for the Poor. His input was supported by the following documents: 'Handing on the Faith in the Home. Irish Episcopal Conference Pastoral Letter, March 1980', and 'Amoris Laetitia – Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation on Love in the Family, March 2016.'

Here are some of the main points:

Handing on the Faith in the Home

Parents have always been the ones to share faith with their children: "When your children ask you 'What does this ritual mean?', You will tell them." (Exodus 12:27). In Baptism, we hear "You have asked to have your child recognized. In doing so, you are accepting the responsibility of training him/her in the practice of the faith. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?" A Church building is easily recognised. A Christian home should also be easily recognised.

1980: If ever one generation is lost to the Faith, it is difficult and rare for the next generation to return once more to the faith of their grandparents. The believing and praying hands must be kept linked across the generations, and the link must not be broken. HOFH #5.

2016: Very often it is grandparents who ensure that the most important values are passed down to their grandchildren, and many people can testify that they owe their initiation into the Christian life to their grandparents. AL #192.

Parents either hand on faith to their children or they hand on unbelief. They can't just take a neutral stance and leave the child "to decide for himself or herself" when he or she grows up. Such a parent has already taken a decision for the child; and that decision is that religion isn't really

important. HOFH #5. Parents always influence the moral development of their children, for better or for worse. It follows that they should take up this essential role and carry it out consciously, enthusiastically, reasonably and appropriately. AL #259. Our Catholic schools do such an excellent job that some parents might decide that the school alone can make good Catholics of their children. Sad experience the whole world over shows that Catholic schools on their own, just cannot and will not make children good young Catholics. Unless there is religion in the home, even the most perfect school religion programme will be a total failure. Unless there is prayer in the home even the most beautiful forms of school prayer will be dropped when school days are over. (HOFH #7).

Pope Francis suggests: Only if we devote time to our children ... will we be able to shield them from harm. It is more important to start processes than to dominate spaces. What is important is the ability to help them grow in freedom, maturity, overall discipline and real autonomy. Parents, as educators, are responsible, by their affection and example, for instilling in their children trust and loving respect. Parents are also responsible for shaping the will of their children, fostering good habits and a natural inclination to goodness.

The real question, then, is not where our children are physically, or whom they are with at any given time, but rather where they are existentially, where they stand in terms of their convictions, goals, desires and dreams (AL #261). The questions I would put to parents are these: "Do we seek to understand 'where' our children really are in their journey? Where is their soul, do we really know? And above all, do we want to know?" (AL #261). Moral education entails asking of a child or a young person only those things that do not involve a disproportionate sacrifice, and demanding only a degree of effort that will not lead to resentment or coercion. Ordinarily this is done by proposing small steps that can be understood, accepted and appreciated, while including a proportionate sacrifice. Otherwise, by demanding too much, we gain nothing. (AL # 271)

New Wine, New Wineskins

The question we may need to ask ourselves as parents and as parish is: Are we trying to put new wine into old wind-skins? In the past, the model was conformity, which led all too easily to conformism (outward observance without inner commitment). The model for today is joyful witness, which leads – eventually – to discipleship.

Fish & Tips

Daily Ideas for Disciples



Blessed is She is a Catholic women's community committed to deepening a life of prayer starting with daily Scripture devotionals and supportive sisterhood – www.blessedissheshe.net. Here's what the website says:

"We begin with the Word of God and grow as sisters as we share our hearts. We believe in beauty pointing toward the Divine, and we strive to live a Eucharistic life. We are women who deeply want to dive into community and improve our prayer lives. And you want that, too. As a fellow sister in Christ, we want to pray

alongside you. We write daily devotions based off of the daily readings send to your email inbox every single day. We have forty writers from all walks of life, writing a reflection based on the Word, inspiring you to do the same in your own life. Let's dive in to the Word together every single day. We are women, just like you. We are single, married, mamas, and grandmamas too. Here at Blessed is She, we help foster community, through daily devotions straight to your email inbox. We walk with you on this crazy journey as a daughter of the King. Enter into a community full of women just like you. Join the thousands of Blessed is She ladies. We promise: no spam and you can unsubscribe any time." There are also some other great ideas such 'Blessed Brunches', the Blessed is She blog, a great Instagram account: @blessedissheshe_ and a special Advent calendar.

People of God

Andrew Hickey

Parish: Glashule, Co. Dublin

Occupation: Presentation Brother

Describe your faith in 7 words: 'Together, we are the Body of Christ'

What ministry/ service/ role do you have in your parish? I lived in the parish of Glashule, Dun Laoghaire, where I coordinated the Alpha course for six years and the follow-on Connect Groups. With the Presentation Associates, we organised the 'Monday at the Monastery' talks during Advent, Lent and May.

How / why did you get involved? Through being a Presentation Brother. The mission of the Brothers is 'forming Christ in the young', so this ministry is an expression of who I am.

What is your favourite thing about it? It developed a community of faith in the parish. Pope Francis calls the parish 'a family of families' and 'a community of communities'. I got a glimpse of his vision of parish while living in Glashule.

What helps keep you connected with your parish? The parish is fortunate to have a beautiful Parish Pastoral Centre which is an excellent resource that enables people to socialise. People come to Mass in the church but many go to the Centre after Mass to meet their neighbours. This is a good start in forming a community of faith.



Favourite scripture quote? 'When Christ freed us, he meant us to stay free' (Galatians 5,1)

Why? Faith in the risen Christ is meant to be liberating. St Paul personified this inspirational faith. It is a faith that gives direction to a person's life. I am grateful to have experienced this faith.

Favourite ways to nourish your faith? I keep my faith alive through prayer and reading but especially through sharing faith with groups of people.

Tell us more? I am encouraged by people who talk about their faith. This is basically what attracted me to a Religious community. It is the reason I encourage people, particularly young adults, to meet and talk about life. The Alpha course caters well for this need.

Challenges to your faith, tell us more? I am challenged to share my faith enthusiastically but my weaknesses often curtail my voice and my actions.

EVANGELISATION

Partnership: Handing on the faith

Very Rev. Dr Michael Duignan – Episcopal Vicar for Education

Catholic Schools do not propose to relieve parents of their duty to be the “first and best of teachers in the faith” but rather to create a school environment which might assist parents in this great work. Now if we take the amount of time children spend at school and add to that the fact that this happens at some of the most important formative years in their young lives – we cannot but conclude that school or schools are a very important factor in the lives of children and a key player in shaping future generations.

“Given the massive influence those school years can have on children – it is important to put thought into what type of school we want our children to be formed in.”

Given the massive influence those school years can have on children – it is important to put thought into what type of school we want our

children to be formed in. And for parents who want to nourish their children in the Catholic faith, it is very important to consider how well the school they send their children to will support and assist them with this task.

“Pope Francis said: ‘You must not only teach content, but the values and customs of life.’”

The Congregation for Catholic Education (1977) describes a Catholic School as: ‘a genuine community bent on imparting, over and above an academic education, all the help it can to its members to adopt a Christian way of life.’ (60). Emphasising that Catholic Schools are at the same time inclusive schools, that respect the value of religious freedom and are open to all who wish to avail of the best that they have to offer, it adds that: ‘in the certainty that the Spirit is at work in every person, the Catholic school offers itself to all, non-Christians included, with all its distinctive aims and means [...]’ (85). Reflecting on the mission of Catholic Schools when speaking to the Italian Union of Catholic School Teachers, Managers, Educators, and Trainers (2015), Pope Francis said: ‘You

must not only teach content, but the values and customs of life.’ Authentic Catholic Schools offer parents an invaluable aid to nurturing young people’s development as human beings and as people of faith. However, I suspect the very existence of Catholic Schools and their authentic functioning – will not continue unless Catholic parents who wish their son or daughter to spend that 48% of those most formative 14 years of their early lives in an enriching faith environment find their voice. The current situation is changing and will change. In the future the nearest school may not be a Catholic primary school. Already at second level the nearest secondary school for many parents is not necessarily a Catholic secondary school. In the future, and

like in other countries, this might mean having to travel beyond the nearest school to find a school that authentically supports their children’s faith journey. If Catholic parents are to continue to enjoy the additional support that a faith inspired School can bring to gifting their children with a faith inspired vision of life, Catholic parents need to begin to find a voice to support catholic educational environments.”

“Catholic parents need to begin to find a voice to support catholic educational environments.”

Fr Michael was joined by a team from the Diocesan College of the Immaculate

Conception, Sligo: Mr Paul Keogh (Principal), Ms Denise McCann (Chaplain) and Ms Aileen Cawley (RE Teacher). Mr Paul Keogh gave a practical overview of how the College of the Immaculate Conception in Sligo endeavours to live out its mission statement “In partnership with parents the College strives to educate their children in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ and his Church. It aims to foster students spiritual, moral, intellectual, physical and creative development and thereby develop their full potential.” The school has 960 boys. Mr Keogh spoke about

the positives and challenges faced in the Catholic School context and encouraged parents and families to support the work of the school as it endeavours to support them

in their role as parents. Ms Denise McCann outlined the role of the Chaplain in the Catholic school context which it’s focus on the three pillars of Education (about faith, from faith for faith), Encounter (person, prayer, worship, ritual) and Relationship (self, others, God). Finally, Ms Aileen Cawley Outlined the Junior and Senior Religious Education Syllabi with its aims which are available www.curriculumonline.ie.



Summerhill College
Chairperson, Principal and
Staff



Sacraments



Celebrations of a community

Dr Fáinche Ryan

The sacraments are essentially encounters with the extraordinary through the ordinary. The seven sacraments are sacraments of the Church, celebrations of a priestly people, a people of faith. They are encounters with a God who claims to love us for ever, who will never reject us although we are always free to reject God. We can choose to become unloving; we are free to reject the goodness in which we have been created. The God whom we encounter is so awe-inspiring, described by one theologian as a *mysterium tremendum*, that were we to encounter this God ‘face to face’ we would be overcome at this rather terrifying and tremendous mystery that God became human. God became human

and walked among us, now our invitation is to encounter God the Second Person of the Trinity, the one who became flesh and blood like us. In each sacrament we enter into the story of Jesus – Jesus’ life and even more profoundly his death and resurrection. Although we may receive the consecrated elements individually at the Eucharist, or go to the sacrament of reconciliation alone, all the sacraments are best understood as celebrations of a people, and so are best celebrated in that community called Church, and celebrated as a community. Sacraments are efficacious (effective) because through them God is acting, they are not dependent on the holiness of the person ministering the sacraments, God has always acted through frail and vulnerable human vessels. God acts in the sac-

raments forming a people into God’s image and likeness. When a person is baptised they begin the story of their encounter with God in a visible way, they become visibly part of the Church community. Baptism, confirmation and ordination are sacraments that are received only once. The sacrament of reconciliation and the sacrament of the sick have come to be understood as sacraments of healing, and can be received more than once, whenever there is need. Sacraments are signs which also instruct, and the Eucharist is the sacrament where most of the instruction can take place. It really is the key sacrament involved in the making of a people, as it is celebrated so regularly, and recalls so clearly the story of Christ. Like all the sacraments it is forming us for life everlasting with God.

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, October 25, 2018

Personal Profile

The digital age of Faith

Page 34



We can be ill, yet whole

Through the pain and suffering of hardship and illness, there can emerge a beam of light. Over time, that light can become increasingly brighter until, eventually, it can illuminate your life in a wholly new way. Illness does not have to define us. We can be ill, yet whole.

When I was a child, I asked my mother, Mary Redmond, what the meaning of life was. She answered: "To Live, To Love and to Leave a Legacy," words of advice that her father had also given to her when she was young.

Her legacy has been far-reaching and includes her extensive legal and academic work in employment law. In early 2018, a new edition of



For Breast Cancer Awareness month, Patrick Ussher reflects on his mother's journey with cancer

one of her legal works was updated by Dr Desmond Ryan and published, in tribute to my mother, as *Redmond on Dismissal* (Bloomsbury). Outside of her legal work, my mother was actively involved in the charity sector in Ireland. In 1999, she instigated a national charity called The Wheel, which brings together the community and voluntary sectors. The Wheel has promoted the idea of 'active

citizenship' and has played a key role in encouraging a more participatory democracy in Ireland.

But her father's advice to her ultimately led my mother to fulfil another far-reaching aspect of her legacy and from the most personal possible circumstances. Indeed, it was the careful and kind hospice care that her father, Sean Redmond, received at the end of his life which led

my mother to found, in 1986, The Irish Hospice Foundation, a charity which campaigns for best practice at end of life care.

Hospice care

The Irish Hospice Foundation has played a huge role in bringing hospice care forward in Ireland over the last three decades. In 1986, there were only three hospices in Ireland, today there are nine. Whereas then only one specific area in Dublin had access to hospice home care services, now this is a national service which anyone at end of life can avail of. My mother's work in The Irish Hospice Foundation was part of a dream, a vision, that no one in Ireland should go without dignified end of life care. My

mother had a special capacity to envision change. As she once said: "As anyone with a dream will tell you, not only does it never go away, you see it, you can touch it and you talk about it at every opportunity."

Those achievements represent the core of my mother's legacy and, in 2014, she received an honorary doctorate from Trinity College Dublin for these contributions. As her son, however, I witnessed what was, for me, a different kind of legacy and a much more personal one. And that legacy came from how she lived and how she loved, those two other aspects of her father's advice, over the six years of her breast cancer. Over

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Family News

AND EVENTS

Mayo – give it a go!

For those who have haven't explored the beautiful county of Mayo, the three-day Mayo Dark Sky Festival is your opportunity to discover the hidden treasures of the area. This is the third year of the festival which provides ample opportunities to learn about astronomy, and the all the wonders of our solar system.

The event is centred around the Hotel Newport in Newport but is also in the nearby towns of Mulranny and Ballycroy. Running from November 2-4, there will be plenty of events including talks and workshops on astronomy, environmental matters, astronomical heritage and art, science shows, photography, rocket workshops, planetarium shows and much more.

Evening events will explore local heritage to complement the night-time theme, including stargazing walks and observations, storytelling, magic and music.

This is something that all the family will enjoy and will allow you to see Ireland in a whole new light.



BLADDER PROBLEMS? Bladder infections are extremely common among women and older people, but a new study has shown that drinking more water can actually curb the risk of catching them. The research, which was led by Dr Yair Lotan from the Simmons Cancer Center at the University of Texas Southwestern found that bladder infection incidence reduces by drinking an additional 1.5 litres of water each day.

Overall, those in the water group were about half as likely to experience a bladder infection than those in the control group. "That's a significant difference," noted Dr Lotan, the chief of urologic oncology at the UT Southwestern Medical Center. "These findings are important because more than half of all women report having bladder infections, which are one of the most common infections in women."

The study has confirmed previous research that drinking water is good for the bladder – in women especially.

The perfect winter shoes

Winter elicits imagery of Christmas and festive fun, but it also helpful to remember that during this season, we experience the harshest weather. Snow, wind and heavy rainfall are all too common at this time of year so it's important to wear appropriate clothing to combat this.

Often ignored is making sure to use proper footwear so that you don't fall while walking or running. However, this doesn't mean you have to go and buy a new pair of shoes fit for the occasion, but simply add an accessory to boots you already have. Yaxtrax, for example, are light-weight ice grips worn over your regular walking shoes, winter boots, jogging or running shoes when walking on packed snow and ice in winter.

They're unisex, and ideal for those who enjoy winter sports or simply want to take their dog for a walk without the fear of slipping.



The World Health Organisation (WHO) recently reported a sharp increase in the incidence of measles in the WHO European region in the first half of 2018 compared to 2017. This increase also occurred in Ireland.

The ironic thing is that measles is a disease preventable by simple vaccination and the current resurgence of the disease is entirely due to inadequate uptake of vaccination. Paradoxically, the brilliant success of mass vaccination programs over the years in eliminating the scourge of many diseases has bred complacency and foolishness in many people.

Probably the two greatest advances in the history of medicine are vaccination and antibiotics. The human body has a natural defence mechanism against dangerous agents such as viruses and bacteria that invade the body. This defence mechanism is called the immune system. It recognises potentially dangerous foreign agents and prepares antibodies against them that attach themselves to the foreign agents and render them harmless.

Having been successfully activated in this manner, the immune system retains a memory of the infectious agent and the next time it senses this agent it immediately mounts a massive antibody response.

Disease

Sometimes a particularly infectious and fast-acting toxic agent that has not been encountered before can overwhelm the immune system before it can effectively activate itself and disease, e.g. measles, now sets in. Fortunately the immune system can be trained in advance to mount an immediate robust defence against newly encountered toxic agents. This training is called vaccination.

Vaccination involves injecting a harmless version of the toxic agent in question, the 'flu virus for example, into the patient. This activates the immune system without causing the 'flu disease, antibodies are raised against the 'flu virus and memory cells in the immune system remember this particular virus in future. Now when the real active 'flu virus comes around, the immune system mounts an immediate and massive defense and, in almost all cases, successfully fights off the 'flu.

Mumps, measles and rubella are highly infectious diseases

caused by viruses. These are dangerous diseases – if 1000 people get measles, one or two will die, more than 40 will get pneumonia or bronchitis, more than five will have convulsions and more than one will develop swelling of the brain which may be fatal.

“The simple medical truth is that MMR vaccination is safe for most people and it does not induce autism”

These three diseases are preventable by vaccination with the well-known mumps-measles-rubella (MMR) vaccine which contains attenuated forms of the mumps, measles and rubella viruses. The MMR vaccine is given to babies at 12 months of age and a second dose at four-five years of age. The two doses are necessary to give the best protection.

When the measles vaccine was introduced in Ireland in 1985 it reduced the incidence of measles from 10,000 cases in that year to 201 cases in 1987. However, measles is highly infectious and the number of cases increases rapidly if the uptake of MMR by children declines significantly. And this is what is happening now.

Over 41,000 cases of measles were reported in the EU in the six months to June 2018 – about twice the number for the whole of 2017 – and 37 people died. In Ireland in 2018, 76 cases of measles were recorded up through August 2018 compared to one case for the same period in 2017. Low MMR vaccination rates are to blame.

MMR vaccination has never recovered fully from the scare it suffered in 1998 when Dr

Andrew Wakefield published a paper in *The Lancet* suggesting that the vaccine can cause autism in children. Although this paper was later retracted by the journal and Wakefield was struck off the medical register for unethical conduct and it has been comprehensively demonstrated that there is no link between MMR and autism, Wakefield's claim alarmed, and continues to alarm, some parents, making them reluctant to have their children vaccinated with MMR. This is a classical demonstration of how much easier it is to scare people than to reassure them.



The simple medical truth is that MMR vaccination is safe for most people and it does not induce autism. Of course, if you are already on certain other medications or suffering from certain conditions you should delay vaccination – your GP will advise. Avoiding the MMR puts your child at risk of contracting diseases that can be severely debilitating or even fatal.

WHO recommends 95% coverage of children with MMR at the one-year and the pre-school booster stages to ensure measles outbreaks don't occur. But, coverage is currently not up to this standard. For example in England 92% of children receive the first MMR vaccine by their second birthday and 88% receive the second vaccine by their fifth birthday.

Irish statistics are similar. We need to do better. Between 10% and 30% of the Irish population are not vaccinated. But it is never too late to catch up. If you have not had your two doses of MMR, go to your GP and get

vaccinated.

Vaccination is a victim of its own success. Public vaccination programs have been so successful that we tend to forget what a wonderful boon they have been. Vaccination prevents 2–3 million deaths annually worldwide. Diseases that once ravaged Europe have been eliminated by mass vaccination programs e.g. smallpox, rinderpest and polio.

“Parents tend to forget how severe measles can be when they never see it”

WHO aims to eliminate measles from Europe by 2020. And current diseases preventable by vaccination include diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, measles, mumps, rubella (German measles) and more.

Little measles is evident nowadays because of MMR. Parents tend to forget how severe measles can be when they never see it and feel they can indulge fears about vaccine safety promoted by irresponsible scaremongers. An outbreak of measles quickly changes minds but then it is too late.

Scientific medicine has been spectacularly successful and deserves huge public respect and support. When it declares something is safe it should be believed.

To reject mainline evidence-based medical advice in favour of contrary opinion proposed by mavericks and based on the flimsiest of grounds is literally biting the hand that feeds you.

i William Reville is an Emeritus Professor of Biochemistry at UCC.



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Connor McDonnell, partner with Arthur Cox (launch hosts), Patrick Ussher and former President Mary McAleese at the launch of *Following the Pink Ribbon Path*. Photo: Alba Esteban

those years up until her passing in April 2015, I saw her truly live to the fullest. Not in the sense of packing a whirlwind of activities into every day but rather by living out fully the 'quiet miracle of the ordinary'.

I could see clearly how a sense of the deep preciousness of each moment took root in my mother, despite the physical pain of illness. As she wrote: "Help me to accept my everyday / just as it is, / the quirky pains and aches all over, / tenderness in hands and feet. / This, my everyday / I lay before you as it is."

Acceptance

This acceptance freed her heart, allowing it not just to accept, but to love, her everyday. It also allowed her to be fully present in sharing a cup of tea with a loved one, in taking in the sunlight of spring, in gardening and in painting. And, most strikingly, this acceptance freed her to be fully present for friends and family, to be the kind and listening ear, to leave others feeling better than before they met her, and to be a loving sister, wife and mum.

My mother called the strength to live in this way the 'Pink Ribbon Path', and it stemmed from her own experience, from her practice of meditation and from a wide range of inspiring authors whom she read in the early years of her illness. After some years, she drew together her own writings and these different sources of inspiration and, in 2013, the *Pink Ribbon Path* was first published under my mother's married name, Ussher.

“Early on, my mother made a decision not to ‘participate in her illness’”

My mother passed away, surrounded by family, on April 6, 2015. Two days before that, I had my last conversation with her. On that day, I told her how beautifully she had walked the *Pink Ribbon Path*, and I promised her that I would do my best to ensure that it would live on, which is why we have published a revised version of the book called *Following the Pink Ribbon Path*.

"Today more than any other day I see myself taking up the Cross of Christ and carrying it. I will do so

with a smile." – June 10, 2009.

These words, written by my mother on her first day of chemotherapy, became symbolic of how she came to live in the years that followed. I will never forget how intensely beautiful and radiant her smile remained, often in the face of great suffering.

Early into her treatment, I remember her learning to smile at the grey, wispy hairs that had started to grow on her head and, later, proudly displaying her new 'hair-style', something that entailed being in the world with great vulnerability. For me, that new hair-style, in time, became the most beautiful hair, representing the inherent strength that living with vulnerability necessarily involves.

That vulnerability also focuses the mind on what really matters though, and that is the very business of living and the quiet miracle of the everyday. Early on, my mother made a decision not to "participate in her illness". By this she meant that she decided not to let the 'narrative of illness' take over her life, choosing not to get caught up in a reality where 'being sick' was the predominant output. Instead, she wrote to herself: "Decide to fill your world with joy. Anticipate joyful events each day and ponder them in the evening."

This is not to deny the reality of illness or the need for careful consideration of treatment and management of symptoms. Rather, this is about making the conscious decision that our daily lives need

not, as far as we are able, be weighed down by the burden of illness.

“To leave all in God's hands relieves us of a large psychological burden”

That this was possible was also because she surrendered to God. She wrote: "When a diagnosis of serious illness arrives, we are challenged in what we believe. God's face seems hidden. As a lawyer, I was used to solving problems no matter how difficult. This was a problem I knew I could not solve. And so I placed my hands in God's. It was 'over to Him'."

To leave all in God's hands relieves us of a large psychological burden, that of trying to solve what we cannot solve, and frees us to focus on positivity and on love, both of which are key. This way of approaching life also still allows for playfulness and humour. Illness cannot deny the right of both to be in our lives.

Early on in my mother's treatment, she came across an anonymous poem in the oratory of the hospital. It was called 'The Tandem Bike Ride':

'...it seemed as though life was rather like a bike ride, but it was a tandem bike, and I noticed that Christ was in the back helping me pedal. I don't know just when it was That he suggested we change places, But life has not been the same since.'

My mother said of this poem: "I found exactly that happening to me, that at a certain stage, particularly when I felt I have no answers to this anymore, somehow, imperceptibly, I changed places in the same way."

Illness can teach us to let go of trying to control our lives and instead let the Spirit guide us, and this can take us to places we would never otherwise have gone.

1 Following the *Pink Ribbon Path* by Mary Redmond Ussher is published by Columba Books (€14.99, www.columbabooks.com). Royalties go to the Irish Hospice Foundation.



Faith — IN THE — family

Bairbre Cahill



You know it is a good homily when your 22-year-old daughter leans over and comments on it in the middle of Mass. We made a point of stopping to talk to our new curate, Fr Brendan, afterwards.

What had struck Deirbhile was that Fr Brendan was connecting the readings to issues here and now. It was the day that Pope Paul VI and Oscar Romero were canonised and Brendan had drawn our attention to the commitment of both men to social justice.

In fact, I would suggest to anyone that it is worthwhile googling quotes from *Populorum Progressio*, Paul VI's encyclical on the Development of Peoples. Written in 1967 it is a challenging word of truth that we need to hear today and it fits seamlessly with the writings of Pope Francis on inequality, economic systems, how we treat the environment and how we respect the humanity of every person. Equally I would suggest that we should read and reflect on the homily delivered by Oscar Romero [pictured] shortly before he was shot and killed by government forces during his celebration of the Eucharist.

Paul VI and Oscar Romero spoke up for justice. Oscar Romero forfeited his life because he would not remain silent about the killing and torture being inflicted on the people of El Salvador. Fr Brendan urged us to be people who speak up for justice and truth. He noted the scandal of €12 million being made available in the budget for abortion services. He spoke about Emma Mhic Mhathúna and her courage to speak out about her own diagnosis of terminal cancer following a misread cervical smear.

“The important thing is that each believer discern his or her own path”

The first reading that Sunday was about the priceless riches of wisdom – the Holy Spirit. The second reading reminded us that "the word of God is something alive and active" (Heb 4:12). The Gospel introduced us to the young man who is so wrapped up in his own wealth

and security that he found himself unable to follow Jesus. The homily put all of this in the context of today and the challenges that we face if we are to follow Jesus.

This is the call to holiness and I have been thinking about it a lot recently because I have been preparing and delivering two evenings in the Thornhill Centre in Derry on 'Pope Francis and the call to holiness in today's world'. Pope Francis makes it absolutely clear that there is no point talking about holiness unless it is lived out in love for our sisters and brothers. He talks about the holiness we encounter (and we won't notice it unless we pay attention) in our family, our neighbours and the community around us.



You and I are unlikely to face the challenges that confronted Oscar Romero. We are unlikely to be asked to lay down our lives for our faith. Pope Francis makes it clear that the path of holiness is not about imitating what someone else has done but discovering what God is asking us to do.

As he says: "The important thing is that each believer discern his or her own path, that they bring out the very best of themselves, the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts rather than hopelessly trying to imitate something not meant for them. We are all called to be witnesses, but there are many actual ways of bearing witness." *Gaudete Exsultate* 11

Inspired by Oscar Romero, Paul VI and many others we are invited to move out of our comfort zone and allow faith to shape and direct our lives. With the Synod on Young People happening in Rome I am very aware that it is this type of holiness – incarnate, living, authentic, Spirit inspired – that makes sense to our young people, as Deirbhile made quite clear.



The internet offers incredible opportunities to share the Gospel, writes Colm Fitzpatrick

While the Christian message has traditionally been spread at Mass and passed on from generation to generation, one priest has decided to open up new evangelical frontiers.

Dublin-based priest Fr Justin Gillespie is making leaps and bounds in proclaiming the Faith to young adults both in Ireland and across international waters through the power of the internet. Inspired by the works of St Josemaría Escrivá, he has created an online podcast called 'Spiritual Batteries' which attracts over 10,000 listeners weekly, and attempts to "guide people through a prayerful contemplation of the life of Jesus" for 30 minutes.

Reaching out to young adults specifically personally resonates with Fr Justin, given that it was during this period in his own life that he began to encounter Christ in a much deeper way.

Prayer

"I would have come from a Catholic family and we would have been Sunday Massgoers. My mother would have been very much involved in the pro-life movement in the US," he says adding that when he attended the University of Dallas in his home state of Texas, he was inspired by "friends who took

The digital age of Faith



Fr Justin Gillespie.

their Faith seriously" and began to understand prayer in a new way.

During this time, Fr Justin became involved in the activities of Opus Dei and, while teaching in a secondary school for a couple of years after college, realised there was a need for more vocations, and decided to become a priest.

"I had become part of the culture of Opus Dei at that point and there was a need – plus my desire to take my teaching and my talents of teaching and make that available in a different way through the ministry of priesthood. It's a different way of serving basically," he explains.

In 2001, he joined seminary and studied in Rome until 2007 where he completed his doctorate in Old Testament theology. While there, Fr Justin says his decision to join the priesthood was "solidified" following interactions with priests

he "knew, admired and respected", alongside a maturing of his own Faith as well. In 2007, he was ordained for the prelature of Opus Dei, and in 2011 he travelled to Ireland to minister.

“We started recording and posting them and then it just took on a life of its own”

"It was definitely a new challenge. First of all, it was great to speak English again, and at the same time to learn a different kind of English. It was coming to something that was very familiar in some ways but in a lot of ways was quite new, challenging to understand, and get on top of – but it has been very rewarding," Fr Justin says.

While doing chaplaincy work

at some of the residencies of Opus Dei in Dublin and Galway, Fr Justin decided to record the guided contemplation he was offering, leading to what is now 'Spiritual Batteries'.

"So, someone suggested to me, one of the people who worked with me that we could start recording them. She actually gave me a little microphone and said why don't you record these and then some of the people who aren't there can listen to it on their own," he says.

"So, we started doing that and we started posting them and then it just took on a life of its own in a sense. More and more people started using them. More and more people started finding them helpful."

Reaching thousands of people every week, Fr Justin says the podcast allows people to deeply contemplate Christ wherever they

are, whether "they're driving or when they're on the train or when they're on their own".

"It's an opportunity for them to pray and be guided in that through different considerations. The other thing that I find interesting about the digital format is people telling me it's been a helpful way for them to share things with their friends – maybe friends who would be reticent to come to a church or come to some kind of prayer meeting."

While it's certainly true that the internet can have harmful effects on young people, Fr Justin believes given how interwoven it is into society, it would be "naive" not to use it in a productive way.

"I think the internet and social media in particular have some really dark sides to it but I think at the same time it's part of the fabric of our culture. It is part of the way, especially young people, understand themselves and relate to one another and I think to not engage with that and to help people discover Christ and pray through it would be silly – naive in a sense. Like anything it is a means that can be used for good, but it can also be a source of other problems," he says.

Success

Following the success of the podcast, Fr Justin runs a 'Spiritual Batteries Live' event in Merrion Road's Our Lady Queen of Peace Church where attendees can experience an evening of adoration, guided prayer, reconciliation and philosophical discussion. Through initiatives like these, Fr Justin hopes to bring young adults closer to the Faith and a "deeper thirst for who God is and who Jesus Christ is", without being dissuaded by more complex teachings of the Church.

In this way 'digital proselytisation' becomes much more than just a verbose phrase, but a concrete reality that people can encounter.

Sweet Treats

Laura Anderson



Spiced toffee apple loaf... perfect for Hallowe'en!

To get your mouth watering this Halloween, try out this alternative take on the festive classic that will fill your kitchen with the sweet scent of autumnal spices. And don't be scared off by the toffee sauce: this version simply involves melting down some shop-bought toffees for drizzling over the top of the loaf. Although it spends a long time in the oven this mixture is fast to make and the loaf even more satisfying to eat. Enjoy!

Ingredients

- 175g butter, softened, plus extra for greasing
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 175g golden caster sugar
- Two large eggs
- ¼ tsp baking powder
- 225g self-raising flour
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp ginger
- ¼ tsp mixed spice
- Four tbsp Greek yoghurt
- Three red eating apples
- 100g soft dairy toffees
- Two tbsp milk

Method

Pre-heat your oven to 160°C/140°C Fan/Gas Mark 3. Begin by lightly greasing the bottom and sides of a 2lb loaf tin then line with baking paper. Beat together the butter, sugar and vanilla with a wooden spoon or electric whisk on low speed until light and creamy.

Then add the eggs into the butter mixture one at a time ensuring that each is well whisked before adding the next. The mixture may look lumpy at this stage.

Next, sieve the flour, spices and baking powder into the mixture. Add the Greek yoghurt and mix gently until everything is just combined. Be careful at this point not to over mix. Peel, core and grate two of the apples. Be sure not to grate too finely or else they will become too mushy. Use a paper towel to

pat excess moisture from the grated apple before folding softly into the mixture.

Spoon the mixture into the loaf tin, leaving space for the loaf to rise. Peel, core and slice the remaining apple and arrange the slices in a line down the middle of the loaf. Bake in the oven for 1hr 25-35 minutes. To check that the loaf is cooked stick a skewer into the middle of the loaf and if it comes out clean it's cooked, if it's sticky it needs a few minutes more.

Leave to cool slightly and firm up in the tin then turn out onto a wire rack until completely cooled.

To make the toffee sauce simply melt the toffees in a small saucepan over a low heat with the milk, constantly stirring until a smooth sauce is formed. If the sauce is too thick add a drop more milk. Drizzle over the top of the loaf and leave to set slightly for 10 minutes before serving in slices.

This loaf is delicious served with a cup of tea or a scoop of vanilla ice cream.



TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Sparks rare in dull presidential campaign

I find it hard to get enthused about the presidential election or the blasphemy referendum.

In the case of the election I suppose it's because the incumbent is so far ahead that he seems a shoo-in and predictability is always a drama killer. It certainly would be more engaging if only the new candidates were competing, but I haven't been inspired by the challengers. It may be just me, but words like 'lacklustre' and 'underwhelming' spring to mind as I reflect on the whole campaign. For me the media debates have failed to ignite, and sometimes I just watch or listen largely out of a sense of duty – as a voting citizen and as a media columnist.

Pat Kenny's **Big Debate** on Virgin Media One on Wednesday of last week kicked up a few sparks. Presenter Kenny asked some searching questions, e.g. probing Michael D. Higgins on his arguably extravagant expenses and expenditure – especially the use of a jet to get to Belfast. That issue gained some traction – on **Morning Ireland** (RTÉ Radio 1) last Monday morning this was one of the major focuses of the campaign coverage, with apparent contradictions between Mr Higgins' explanations about security requirements and a PSNI statement issued over the weekend.

Also on that 'big debate',



Presidential candidates pictured with Pat Kenny on Virgin Media's Big Date show: (l-r) Peter Casey, Seán Gallagher, Liadh Ní Riada, Pat Kenny, President Michael D. Higgins, Sen. Joan Freeman and Gavin Duffy. Photo: Virgin Media

Pat Kenny put it to Joan Freeman that as she supported the 'No' vote in the abortion referendum she did not reflect modern Ireland. In doing so he did a rather dubious rounding up exercise, inflating the 'Yes vote' from 66% to 70%, and downgrading the 'No' vote from 34% to 30%. Freeman's vote (she is the only candidate to declare a 'No' vote) has been made into a weapon against her throughout the campaign, though more by commentators than fellow candidates. Her answer that night was similar to how she answered previously. Responding to the "out of step" charge she said she did represent Irish families, who were divided on the issue, and said this was a

matter of personal conviction (strong) and that it had nothing to do with her public duty (weak!).

Fellow candidate Gavan Duffy stood up for her, saying it was "shocking" to suggest she couldn't be a representative of the people because of her 'No' vote. She thanked him but said she didn't need rescuing, which came across as ungracious, but presumably she was setting out her stall as an independent woman.

Curious

I was reminded of this during an item on last Sunday's **This Week** programme on RTÉ Radio 1, when the topic was actress Keira Knightley's statement that she wouldn't

let her daughter watch certain Disney movies because of the typical princess narrative – young ladies getting rescued by their prince! I wondered how such a fluffy item got space on one of RTÉ's flagship news programmes.

This was especially curious when they didn't have an item on the upcoming blasphemy referendum, another issue that has failed to ignite, partly because it's a referendum the public wasn't looking for, partly because there are no concerted campaigns for either side and maybe also because the media are not giving it much attention.

In one useful debate, on **Drivetime** (RTÉ Radio 1) last Thursday, Emeritus Professor of Communications at

PICK OF THE WEEK

HUMAN ZOOS

EWTN, Sunday, October 28, 4pm, also Thursday, 9am

The dehumanising exhibit that presented indigenous people as 'missing links' of evolution, and the courageous group of African-American ministers who worked to stop it.

DAPHNE: A PEN TOO SHARP

RTÉ1, Monday, October 29, 11.15pm

The story of Maltese investigative journalist Daphné Caruana Galizia who was assassinated in a car bomb attack.

UNREPORTED WORLD

Channel 4, Friday, November 2, 7.30pm

Exploring the plight of some of the one million children caught up in the world's biggest migration as they flee poverty, hunger and medical shortages in Venezuela.

DCU, Colum Kenny, argued in favour of a 'No' vote – the present measure acted as a deterrent to rancorous and acrimonious discourse, including online. Leaving it there would do no harm, but removing it would send a signal, would be seen as a permission for and encouragement to hate speech. Minister Charlie Flanagan thought a 'Yes' vote would show we were a modern constitutional democracy that valued free speech.

Another debate was on that night's **Prime Time** (RTÉ 1) between Senators Ronán Mullen and Ivana Bacik. It was a worthwhile, though hardly comprehensive treatment of the issue. Sen. Bacik argued that blasphemy laws were outdated, were used in some countries to oppress

religious minorities, and that such issues are better dealt with nowadays by incitement to hatred legislation. Sen. Mullen had a two-pronged approach – he thought the referendum was unnecessary and wasteful – if we voted 'No' we'd be sending the Government a message that they shouldn't be asking silly questions. He thought that deliberately insulting people's religion was not good for social harmony and that our current law was a wise balance between respect for people's faith and rights to free speech.

So now, over to the wise voters.

boregan@hotmail.com

Music

Pat O'Kelly



Magnificent celebration of the work of AJ Potter

In a timely commemoration at the NCH earlier this month the RTÉ NSO, under the assiduous direction of Belfast-born Kenneth Montgomery, celebrated the centenary of composer AJ Potter.

In a riveting performance of his *sinfonia de Profundis* in a new edition by his amanuensis Sarah Burn, the work refocused attention on someone whom the late RTÉ music producer Venetia O'Sullivan called "an extraordinary man of versatility and imagination".

AJ (Archibald James but more affectionately known as Archie) Potter was born into a Belfast musical Presbyterian family on September 22, 1918. His blind father was a church



AJ Potter.

organist and piano tuner but the family had its own problems leading to Archie being reared by relatives in Kent.

Scholarships took him into the prestigious choir school of All Saints' Church in London and to Clifton College, Bristol as an organ scholar. Another took him to London's Royal College of Music where his

composition teacher was the revered Ralph Vaughan Williams and where he won a coveted Cobbett prize for chamber music.

World War II interfered with Potter's studies and he served in the army in the Far East. On being demobbed he worked for the United Africa Company, a subsidiary of Unilever, in Nigeria. However, the call to music prevailed and Potter came to Dublin. Appointed a Lay Vicar Choral in St Patrick's Cathedral in 1951, he studied at TCD receiving his doctorate in 1953.

By this time Potter's compositions were coming under critical scrutiny and he was awarded Radio Éireann's

Carolan Prize in both 1952 and 1953 for his *Rhapsody under a High Sky: Overture to a Kitchen Comedy* and *Concerto da Chiesa* – a work for piano and orchestra. A superb theorist and academician, he taught composition at the RIAM for many years from 1955.

But Potter was himself a prolific composer with his music "direct and entertaining, however serious and profound his thought". His interest in theatre led to a number of ballet scores including *Careless Love* – a collaboration with writer Donagh MacDonagh. Highly regarded, it was also one of Potter's own favourite works. There are also two operas;

the first Patrick (nothing to do with our national saint) was another partnership with Donagh MacDonagh. An RTÉ commission, it was screened on Telefís Éireann on March 17, 1965, with Edwin Fitzgibbon and Bernadette Greevy. The second, and far more successful, *The Wedding* had its Abbey Theatre première in June 1981, almost a year after the composer's death on July 5, 1980.

Sacred music

Among his sacred music Potter's setting of the Hail Mary honoured the 21st birthday of Our Lady's Choral Society in 1966. Sarah Burn tells me it is not an intimate interpretation of the Annunciation but

rather a depiction of how the composer felt about the event and its magnitude.

The five-movement *sinfonia de Profundis*, one of Potter's most personal works, concerns his struggles with alcoholism and his thanksgiving for deliverance. The NCH performance showed the solid strength of music that can be severe and frightening as well as temperate and triumphant.

● Away from Potter, Handel's *Messiah* returns to Knock Shrine on Saturday November 3 with Our Lady's Choral Society, local choirs and RTÉCO under Proinnsias Ó Duinn. Tickets on line: www.knockmessiah.com or at the Basilica Information Office.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



The ideal model of matrimony

Betrothal: Glimpses of the Betrothal of Mary and Joseph

by Paraic Maher
(Intriguing Stories, Smerla Bridge, Listowel, Co. Kerry; tel: 089 2017 300, www.intriguingstories.ie; €14.99; €18.40 by post)

J. Anthony Gaughan

This is a splendid collection of 24 art presentations of the Betrothal of Mary and Joseph in stained-glass windows. The windows are to be found in churches throughout Ireland, but mainly in Dublin, and some from other countries, as for example the Harry Clarke window in the former convent of Notre Dame in Sussex, England.

Maher provides a brief history of the provenance of each work of art. Then he describes its various features and comments on its artistic merits. The earliest windows were created in studios abroad, mainly Mayers of Munich in Germany.

Then came the development of Irish Studios such as Earley & Company, Joshua Clarke & Sons and An Túr Gloine, the stained-glass co-operative operated under Sarah Purser and Edward Martyn. Thereafter Joshua Clarke, Harry Clarke, Richard King and artists from the Earley studio and An Túr



Close up of a mosaic in Westland Row.

Gloine produced most of the stained-glass art work.

The portrayal of the Betrothal in the Church of the Annunciation, Blackpool, Cork, has a local flavour. This church was designed by one

of Cork's most famous sculptors, Séamus Murphy, author of Stone Mad.

The stained-glass windows were made by Harry Clarke Studios but were crafted with the aesthetic

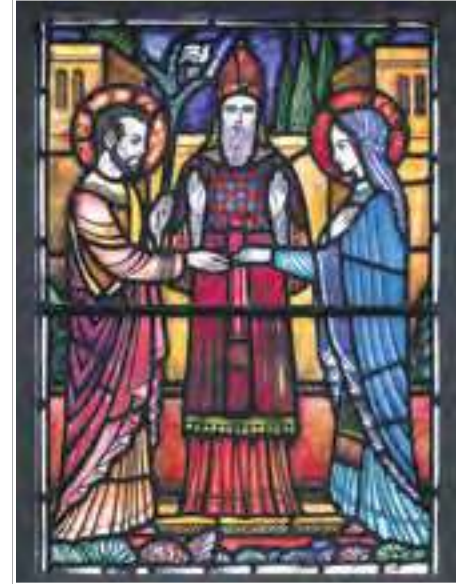
taste of Séamus Murphy.

Another eye-catching Betrothal is to be seen in Our Lady of the Rosary Church, Limerick, which was built in the 1950s. The Abbey Stained Glass Studios designed the windows under the direction of Frank Ryan and George Walsh.

Apart from a stained-glass portrayal of the Betrothal, Maher discovered a veritable Aladdin's Cave of art in the St John the Baptist Church, Blackrock, Co Dublin. No fewer than six studios decorated this church, beginning with William Wailes of Newcastle in the UK, when the church was opened in 1845, and John Casey of Dublin. This was followed by work by Joshua Clarke in 1898, by his son the renowned Harry Clarke in 1925, by Earleys of Camden Street in 1933 and by Evie Hone in 1955.

Memory

In the second half of the 19th Century the window of the Betrothal in Blackrock was crafted by an unidentified



Betrothal of the Virgin and St Joseph, Church of the Annunciation, Blackpool, Cork, created by Seamus Murphy.

artist and it was dedicated to the memory of Fr Edward Norris.

Ordained in Rome in 1845 as a priest of the archdiocese of Dublin, he volunteered to serve on the Indian Mission in the US.

He was abducted by a raiding party, tortured, scalped and near death when rescued.

After returning home and a period of recuperation he was appointed to serve as a curate in Blackrock. However,

owing to his injuries and horrific experiences, aged 28 he died in 1848.

His image, including his head injury, is featured in the window.

The author does not overlook the deep significance of the artwork on the Betrothal.

The founders and builders of churches, those who chose betrothal scenes, the donors who paid for them and the craftsmen who made them were all to a greater or lesser extent motivated by faith. Thus, those scenes are essentially works of faith.

Their aim is to enable people to see the reality of the Betrothal as St Paul would say "through a glass darkly".

The design, lay-out, colour printing, physical production and photography in this book deserve nothing less than superlatives.

Happily, the author promises a further publication with Christmas as the theme.

i The book will be launched by Maria Steen at Dublin's Newman University Church on Thursday, November 8 at 7.30pm and all are welcome.

An eminent Dublin Victorian

Raising Dublin, Raising Ireland: A Friar's Campaigns – Father John Spratt, O.Carm.

Fergus A. D'Arcy
(Carmelite Publications, €24.99)

Felix M. Larkin

Lyttton Strachey, in *Eminent Victorians*, writes of Cardinal Manning of Westminster that "he belonged to that class of eminent ecclesiastics – and that it is by no means a small class – who have been distinguished less for saintliness and learning than for practical ability".

John Spratt, born in Dublin in 1796 and associated with Whitefriar Street church in Dublin for most of his priestly life, was another such ecclesiastic.

Fergus D'Arcy, in this very comprehensive life of Spratt, describes him as "by far the most overtly political priest [in Ireland] over the course of 40 years of public life and discourse". He waged relentless campaigns against poverty, drunkenness and homelessness. As Professor D'Arcy points out, problems of similar kind have come back to plague us – which makes this a



Whitefriar Street church.

timely book.

D'Arcy considers the establishment of St Joseph's Night Refuge for Homeless Poor in Cork Street, Dublin, in 1861 to have been Fr Spratt's "most enduring charitable legacy". In its first year, the Refuge took in 29,124 destitute people, averaging 560 per week. It was still going strong a century after its foundation.

One element

The Refuge was but one element of Spratt's philanthropic work in Dublin. He also founded the Female Blind Asylum at Portobello (later transferred to Merrion) and was the guiding spirit behind the Whitefriar Street industrial schools and St

Peter's Orphanage in nearby Aungier Street. He raised funds for famine and cholera relief, and strongly supported the temperance movement – though his relationship with Fr Mathew was not always harmonious, due perhaps to a clash of egos.

In addition, he was for nearly 40 years honorary secretary to the Sick and Indigent Roomkeepers Society – Dublin's oldest charity, founded 1790.

His involvement with the Roomkeepers – a strictly non-denominational charity – points to an aspect of Spratt's life and work that D'Arcy correctly highlights. That is "how interconfessional or ecumenical he was, uniquely for his age...out of

step with his Cardinal Archbishop [Cullen] and with a Church that was now coming into its own dominance". He happily co-operated with "Protestants of all confessions" in his philanthropic work and in the temperance movement.

Spratt's philanthropy was complemented by what D'Arcy calls "his abiding commitment to political liberalism".

“He raised funds for famine and cholera relief, and strongly supported the temperance movement”

He was a staunch supporter of O'Connell and his movements for Catholic Emancipation and Repeal from the 1820s to the 1840s, and he was a leading figure in amnesty campaigns for the Young Irelanders in the late 1840s and the Fenians in

the 1860s – though not in sympathy with the extremism of the latter, which he dismissed as "the ardour and inexperience of youth".

Whitefriar Street Church is his monument. He built it in the 1820s, was its first prior and died there in 1871 – having served as provincial of the Irish Carmelites for the previous eight years. Moreover, he procured the relics of St Valentine for the church, thereby making it a place of pilgrimage for young people on February 14 each year.

The most remarkable object in the church is, however, the wooden statue of Our Lady of Dublin – dating from the early 16th Century and thought to have been originally in St Mary's Abbey, off Capel Street. Legend has it that, after the suppression of St Mary's Abbey in 1539, it was hollowed out from behind and used as a drinking trough for pigs. Spratt discovered it in an antique shop in Dublin in the 1820s, bought it and had it restored.

This is a big book, running to 620 pages – beautifully produced, with many illustrations.

It is a fitting tribute to Fr Spratt, undoubtedly one of Dublin's eminent Victorians.

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.



Seán Lemass and Eamon de Valera.

The long fellow comes to power amidst happy maidens

De Valera. Rule: 1932-1975
by David McCullagh
(Gill Books, €24.99)

Peter Hegarty

Irish memories tend to associate De Valera with the dismal drift of the 1950s rather than the dynamism and reforms of the 1930s. The man who triumphantly assumed power in March 1932 had a clear idea of the direction in which he wanted to take the country. His chosen road led towards greater national sovereignty.

De Valera set about dismantling the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. In time he would dispense with the oath of fidelity to the British monarch. He withheld payments of land annuities to Britain. His 1937 constitution, which effectively established the country as a republic, would be an important milestone in his drive towards enhanced national sovereignty. That the constitution is an Irish document, approved by Irish lawmakers, is arguably as important as its content.

“The new government increased benefits, cleared slums and built schools, hospitals and houses – tens of thousands of houses”

De Valera realised the need to bring people with him. The support of the new government for the 1932 Eucharistic Congress allayed lingering fears that it was communist-inflected. Throughout his

political life De Valera would make a point of consulting the Catholic Church, indeed all churches, on matters in which they had an interest.

Catholic social teaching influenced the new constitution, which recognised the ‘special position’ of the Catholic Church. That wasn’t enough for the Vatican though, which regarded the document as not Catholic enough.

The new government increased benefits, cleared slums and built schools, hospitals and houses – tens of thousands of houses. It prioritised the creation of jobs. Bearing no-one ill-will, De Valera avoided purges, continuing to employ supporters and servants of the previous administration. During the 1930s he improved life for most people, except female teachers and civil servants whom he forced by law to leave their professions after marriage.

An important British concession, and one that De Valera didn’t have to work too hard to win, was the handover of the treaty ports in 1938. Had Britain retained these bases in Ireland, his declaration of neutrality would not have been credible.

In his mind neutrality was a natural extension of sovereignty. Although Ireland inclined towards the Allies De Valera observed the formalities of neutrality. Having offered his sympathies to the US ambassador on the death of Roosevelt, he felt obliged to express his condolences to the German ambassador after Hitler’s suicide.

The author considers Dev’s

famous speech, delivered on St Patrick’s Day 1943, making the interesting points that he made no reference to dancing at crossroads, and that his maidens were happy, not comely.

“De Valera avoided purges, continuing to employ supporters and servants of the previous administration”

He should have called it a day in the late 1940s. His passion for abstractions such as sovereignty – he liked to relax by reading mathematical textbooks – was matched only by his lack of interest in economic questions. In such matters he tended to leave the thinking to others and accept – or reject – the proposals they brought to him.

For much of the 1950s there was nothing much for him to accept or reject, until Ken Whittaker and Seán Lemass proposed opening up the economy to foreign investment.

A generous man, he once described Michael Collins as “one of Ireland’s true heroes”. McCullagh adds that “in 1968 he caused a stir by attending a commemorative mass for Collins at Dublin Castle, and he had mass said at Aras an Uachtarain for Collins every year on the anniversary of his death”.

Such fine detail distinguishes this second volume of McCullagh’s biography of a most influential politician.

The World of Books

By the books editor

Schrödinger’s dog and the nature of life

Currently the facade of the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies is decorated with a huge image of Erwin Schrödinger. This year is the 75th anniversary of the physicist’s lecture, given under the auspices of the institute, the famous ‘What is life?’

This exposition played an influential role in the development of molecular physics and the discovery of the mechanism of DNA by which life forms are encoded.

I passed his image with a wry smile, as it recalled an incident of the 1940s. The institute was a special project for de Valera, at whose invitation Schrödinger, a refugee in Ireland from persecution in his native Austria, became the first director. Its work led to Myles an Gopaleen (who disliked Dev) to observe that in its first years the institute had achieved little beyond ‘proving that there were two Patricks and no God’.

That remark was a nice example of the often smart alec comments of Brian O’Nolan on life in general.

The first reference was to T. F. O’Rahilly’s equally notorious 1942 lecture on the ‘Two Patrick’s’. Now this is a genuine problem, and one which has not been truly solved.

The medieval sources refer to Palladius, to an ‘Old Patrick’ and a ‘Young Patrick’ – leading some to conclude that ‘old Patrick’ was in fact Palladius (sent by the Pope) and ‘young Patrick’ was the Briton Patricius, son of Calpurnius. O’Rahilly was discussing a serious unresolved problem in Irish history. It was glib to say he ‘proved’ that there were two Patricks.

“To have threatened Myles with a civil action for damages reflected badly on an institution dedicated to the search for truth, it seemed”

Deferring the matter of Schrödinger and God for a moment, I might recall an incident from 1986 when I was writing the first biography of Brian O’Nolan with my friend Dr Peter van de Kampe.

Myles’s comment greatly irritated the administration of the institute, or perhaps de Valera, and Myles was threatened with legal action. We wrote to Captain J. P. Duggan, the historian, then the secretary of the institute, about what records survived of this affair.

Duggan asked us to meet him. He explained that the institute would much prefer we made no reference to the matter which, a generation later, was a source of some embarrassment.

In the 1940s Myles was an irritant; by the time we wrote he was a recognised giant of Irish literature. To have threatened him with a civil action for damages reflected badly on an institution dedicated to the search for

truth it seemed. Naturally enough we published the details – that is what authors do.

But to return to Schrödinger on God. As I say, the idea that he ‘proved there was no God’ is also a smart remark rather than an insight. In his lecture Schrödinger did not address the matter of God at all. But in the epilogue added to his text when it was published by Cambridge University Press in 1944 he discussed the



Schrödinger (left seated) with de Valera at DIAS; behind, Dr Sheila Tinney and Dr Peng Huanwu.

question of determinism and free will.

Schrödinger’s mother had been a Lutheran, his father a Catholic. He called himself an atheist, yet he was deeply influenced by the Indian *Upanishads*. As regards denying God – whatever that may have meant to Myles na Gopaleen – he ends the epilogue with a discussion of the immortality of consciousness.

Neighbours

I suspect Myles had no real interest in the matter. Most of the information which he deploys to suggest a well educated man was derived largely from his ancient edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, consulted in the course of those Sunday afternoons, when, relatively sober for a few hours, he composed all three of his weekly articles for the *Irish Times*.

These days ‘Schrödinger’s Cat’ has passed into parlance as an illustration of the dilemmas of space and time in modern physics.

But to his neighbours out in Clontarf, it was ‘Schrödinger’s dog’ that bothered them. An odd beast, it had a settled inclination to steal items from clothes lines which the philosopher had then to return with a diffident apology.

Schrödinger may have been a protégé of de Valera, but the unusual arrangements of his private life caused those neighbours some discreet amusement. However, 1940s Ireland was in fact far more tolerant than we are often led to suppose these days.

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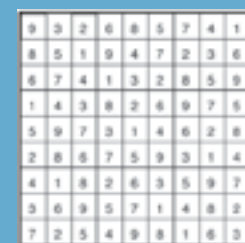
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Notebook

Fr Vincent Sherlock



IN LIFE WE MEET joy and sorrow. Recently I shared sorrow with a family whose baby died in his fourth day.

I walked into the hospital and the father came to meet me. I was amazed at the strength of character displayed. He asked me if I'd baptise their son. "Have you ever done this before?" his older sister asked me, and, in truth, I hadn't. Neither had I cried before a baptism. I told her we'd do our best.

I spoke of baptism and asked his parents: "Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?" "We do." They truly did know. They've shown it through the years – not just with their two children but also with their other little daughter and son who didn't survive beyond birth but whose memories are as real as the birth-days celebrated.

Their baby was baptised and, though none of us could hold him, the incubator was perhaps God's arms around and beneath him. I looked at him, at his brother and sister, at his parents and I looked at the two nurses (one of them being his Godmother). I told his sister that we did it well. I was proud of them. Precious memories.

Next day, I was with the parents when their son was taken from the incubator and placed in their arms.

The gifted beat of the Little Drummer Boy



His time with us grew shorter. I marvelled at his mother as she took her son in her arms, I would think for the first time. There wasn't a hint of self-pity. Instead, the cradling arms of a mother. A nurse re-arranged chairs and the

parents sat side-by-side with their son. An hour earlier, we watched his brother and sister play with him: "Round and round the garden – one step, two steps..." They accompanied him on all his steps. We sang too and, when his

brother was asked what I might sing, he said "The one you do at Christmas".

On an October Saturday we sang 'The Little Drummer Boy'. I thought of the baby as 'The Little Drummer Boy', bringing his gifts to us but later I realised we were all the Drummer Boy – desperately wanting to bring gifts to him and he, like the Christ Child, accepting all we brought.

Destination

I left the parents alone, that they be with each other and their son. When I returned, his short journey had reached its destination. Though our wish is that he'd have lived longer, he could not have been loved any more than he was during those four days.

His dad shared a short video clip with me. He took it while his wife was holding their son. In a wonderful moment, the little baby's eyes open and he looks steadily at his mother and smiles. "That's enough for me," the father said.

"Then he smiled at me...at me and my drum".

Then he smiled at them...at his dad and his mum.

The music of our future?

● I read somewhere that when Pope Francis spoke to couples in the Pro-Cathedral, a mother got up to take her crying child out of the cathedral and he said she need not do so. "That's the music of our future", I think they are the words he used. What a glorious response.

I heard once of a woman doing the same thing in a parish church and the priest told her there was no need to go, "that child is not annoying me", he assured her.

She stopped for a minute, looked up at him and said: "Well clearly you're annoying him!"



November remembrance

● There's something very special about our naming those who have died. There's a tradition of people writing lists of the dead and making an offering towards November Masses. Generally, I look at each of them, letting my eyes glance over the names. I am always pleased to see how people want to name those loved ones.

I also welcome, when included, the names of priests of the parish who might be long dead. There's something consoling in knowing that one day, a pen might scribble my name amongst family members and friends. It's good to remember. It's wonderful to pray.



PAKISTAN: CHAPEL URGENTLY NEEDS ROOF

We have recently heard from a parish in Pakistan, which serves 25 small towns whose Catholic population is increasing. The people work in brick kilns and as farmers. The community struggled to get government permission to build its church.

"People contributed land and free labour for the construction of St Joseph's chapel," writes Father to The Little Way Association, "but now we do not have enough funds to provide a roof and complete the chapel. Extremists are more likely to attack an incomplete structure. Once the building has a roof it will become safer. Although poor, my people are very committed in their Christian Faith. I humbly request your assistance so that people may gather inside and say their prayers without fear."

Will you help secure St Joseph's church?

The local people are prepared to contribute more free labour and to furnish the church, but they are begging us to help provide a roof. Please can you make a contribution to our Chapel's fund to assist the people of St Joseph's and other Catholic communities needing a place of worship?

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St Therese

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