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Dublin Archbishop accuses minister of using liturgy to push agenda

Josepha Madigan urged to listen to 'distressed' parishioners

Greg Daly

Dublin's Archbishop Diarmuid Martin has accused Minister Josepha Madigan of having exploited a mix-up at a parish to advocate that the Church should change core teachings.

The Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, who led Fine Gael's campaign to repeal the constitutional protections for unborn children, has been described across various media outlets as having "said Mass" when she took a lead role in an impromptu Communion service at St Thérèse's Church in Mount Merrion after a priest scheduled to celebrate Mass

there on the evening of Saturday June 23 did not arrive.

Ms Madigan subsequently claimed on RTÉ's *Today with Seán O'Rourke* that the Church should tackle clerical shortages by ordaining women and married men.

Misunderstanding

Archbishop Martin, however, has said that the Archdiocese of Dublin does not lack priests to celebrate Sunday Mass, and that it was through a misunderstanding that the priest assigned to celebrate Mass in Mount Merrion on Saturday evening failed to turn up.

"It is in no way correct to say that the Minister 'said Mass'," Dr Martin said, con-

tinuing: "It is regrettable that Minister Madigan used this occasion to push a particular agenda. Her expressed view that a mix-up in a Dublin parish on one particular Saturday evening should lead to the universal Church changing core teachings is bizarre."

Claiming that the minister's comments had caused "considerable distress" to parishioners at Mount Merrion and further afield, Dr Martin suggested that Ms Madigan "consider listening to the voices of those people who disagree with her public comments", and consider too "the hurt she has

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There's a mouse in the house...



The arrival of Mickey Mouse brought a flurry of excitement to children enjoying a Family Fun Day organised by the Diocese of Ferns at Innovate Wexford Park on June 17. See Pages 12 & 13. Photo: Tomás Hayes

DAVID QUINN

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Michael Kelly's Editor's Comment returns on July 19

Vatican warns against Church doing State's 'dirty work' on abortion

Greg Daly

The Vatican has given its strongest indication yet that the Irish Church in Ireland should act to prevent abortions from taking place in hospitals owned by religious orders.

"The Church cannot be a party to the dirty work of others [abortion] and I don't think that it is right that the law [in Ireland] now enables Pontius Pilate to wash his hands of the affair," Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, President of the Pontifical Academy for Life, has told the *Sunday Independent's* Paddy Agnew.

The academy is a Vatican body dedicated to studying and informing on major problems in the fields of biomedicine and of law, related to the promotion and defence of life, especially in relation to Christian morality and Church

teaching.

"I will never accept to be complicit in the cold-blooded aiding of the dirty work of death," Archbishop Paglia continued.

The archbishop's comments come against the background of Taoiseach Leo Varadkar having told the Dáil that hospitals with a Catholic ethos will be required to perform abortions after new legislation on abortion comes into effect.

Waterford and Lismore's Bishop Phonsie Cullinan has said that in a genuinely open and tolerant society, a Catholic hospital should be respected and allowed to uphold its ethos in full.

Canon law and Church teaching forbid Catholic hospitals from facilitating abortions, and effectively bar religious bodies from selling their hospitals so that abortions could be performed

there by others.

The Church has strict rules on the 'alienation of temporal goods' – the transfer of property by sale or by gift – with goods being valued at market rates and all goods taking place above a certain 'maximum' value needing Vatican approval to be handed over.

In the late 1980s the Irish hierarchy decided that the relevant figure should be stg€1,000,000, approximately equivalent to €3.5m today. Religious bodies would typically need approval from the Vatican's Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, which has hitherto tended to act on the advice of the local bishop in whose diocese the property is located.

Dr Paglia's comments suggest, however, that the Vatican may have its own ideas this time.



(L-r) Administrator of Westport Parish Fr Charlie McDonnell, Fr John Regan and Archbishop Michael Neary celebrate the ordination of Fr John Regan to the Pallottine order in Westport on Sunday June 24. Archbishop Neary said Fr John "assumes this responsibility at a time of rapid change in our country and in our Church". He added that the sociological props in Ireland have been "battered away" which can lead to a temptation to make compromises in the Faith, but is also an opportunity to "deepen our Faith and respond in a courageous way..."

'Using liturgy to push agenda'

» Continued from Page 1

caused by parishioners who deem her actions deeply disrespectful".

Dr Mary McCaughey, an Irish theologian currently working at the Institute of Priestly Formation in Omaha, Nebraska said "it seems that the same politicians who want a separation of Church and State, are now calling to try to recreate the Church in their own image and likeness with ordained women, married priests and the right to choose abortion or to be okay with others choosing it," she told *The Irish Catholic*, adding that Ms Madigan "also seems to want a type of spirituality and liturgy that has no connection to the Church or its norms".

Observing how the recent abortion referendum has pointed to serious confusion in the Church here, Dublin City University theology lecturer Dr John Murray said that clarity need to be established around Ms Madigan's actions.

"It's a definite source of confusion, a source of misinforming conscience," he told this newspaper, adding that it could also be contributing to a sense of despair. "The whole idea of morale – people are at a low ebb, and the idea that the Church could look like its assimilating or caving in, that I think is also scandalous in its own way."

Dr Vincent Twomey, Professor emeritus of Moral Theology at Maynooth, described Ms Madigan's actions as "absolutely disgraceful" and "incredibly presumptuous".

He said it is now "quite clear" that Archbishop Diarmuid Martin should act to clarify the mind of the Church on such actions.

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WMOF team ready to foil 'Nope to the Pope' spoiling scheme

Greg Daly

Organisers of this August's World Meeting of Families (WMOF) are confident that they have robust mechanisms in place to prevent efforts to sabotage attendance at the gathering's two final papal events.

A Facebook page protesting against Pope Francis' visit is encouraging people to book but not use large numbers of free tickets to ensure a low turnout when the Pontiff leads the Angelus at Knock Shrine on the morning of Sunday August 26 and later that day for the WMOF2018 closing Mass in Dublin's Phoenix Park.

However, while 'Say Nope to the Pope' group members and others have boasted online of booking large numbers of tickets with the aim of depriving others of the opportunity of attending the papal Mass in particular, *The Irish Catholic* understands that WMOF organisers believe their mechanisms will be able to cope with false demands.

Free events

"This is something that happens with free events," a source familiar with the event's security procedures said. Explaining that typically about 10% of tickets for free events are booked with no intention of avail-

ing of them, the source said "there are a number of different ways that things can be washed out of the system".

Although it has been possible to book tickets through worldmeeting2018.ie since the morning of Monday June 25, tickets will not be issued for some weeks, with organ-

isers saying that allocations will be made ahead of July 31, with ticket allocation decisions being final and not subject to appeal.

Applications

The coming weeks will allow organisers to vet suspicious ticket applications, it is

understood, with one member of staff specially tasked with vetting all purported coach bookings, while various algorithms will be used to help identify other fraudulent bookings.

Tickets for the Pope's Angelus at Knock ran out just over four hours after

they became available, while more than half the tickets for the Phoenix Park Mass had been applied for within 12 hours, but it is understood that vetting of applications should allow for further allocations of tickets ahead of the July 31 deadline.

Huge demand for Papal tickets

Staff reporter

There has been huge demand for tickets to participate at events with Pope Francis with tickets for Knock being snapped up in just over four hours.

Organisers of the World Meeting of Families confirmed that the Dublin-based pastoral congress is also booked out with some 37,000 pilgrims registered from 114 countries.

As of lunchtime on Tuesday organisers said that around 400,000 tickets (or 80% of those available) had been reserved by people to see Pope Francis during his short trip to Ireland. There are now no seats available at Croke Park for the Festival of Families presided over by the Holy Father on the evening of August 25.

Commenting on the reaction, Fr Tim Bartlett, Secretary General of the WMOF2018 said that he is hugely encouraged by the response to all of the WMOF2018 events – those with Pope Francis and those that will take place before the Pope arrives to Ireland.

He said: "It is clear that what Pope Francis is saying about family, faith and society, is connecting with a wide range of people. We are working hard to make the WMOF2018 a joyful, welcoming and comfortable event for all those who wish to attend."

"While I know that many people will be disappointed that they have not managed to get tickets for Knock Shrine or the RDS, I would encourage them to come to the Mass in Phoenix Park for a joyful celebration of Faith."

i Tickets for the WMOF2018 Closing Mass and are still available to book on www.worldmeeting2018.ie.

Ecumenism on the football field



Belgium's Romelu Lukaku (right) praying with Panama defender Fidel Escobar (left) after Belgium defeated Panama 3-0 in the countries' opening game of the 2018 World Cup.

The Belgian Catholic striker, who looks set to be one of the top scorers in the 2018 World Cup with four goals in his first two games in the competition, scored two goals against Panama and a further two in Belgium's 5-2 victory over Tunisia, making him the first man since Argentina's Diego Maradona to score twice in consecutive World Cup matches.

Spectators were struck after the Belgium-Panama match by how the two players knelt in prayer together on the field, with Lukaku being a Catholic who has spoken of his Faith on a number of occasions, and has shared his devotion on social media and Escobar being an Evangelical Christian.

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'God wants the best for you' says Hollywood star



Colm Fitzpatrick

A prominent American celebrity has advised that young people recognise the existence of a loving God and has encouraged them to pray often as it's good for your "souls".

Actor Chris Pratt, best known for film roles in *Guardians of the Galaxy* and *Jurassic World*, spoke about the power of faith after receiving the Generation Award on June 18 at the MTV Movie and TV awards. The recipient of the award is celebrated for great achievement in movies.

Offering nine pieces of advice for the next generation, the Hollywood actor said that the soul is real and this should move people to be compassionate to one another. "You have a soul. Be careful

with it...reach out to someone in pain. Be of service, it feels good and it's good for your soul," he said.

Indirectly referencing the concept of original sin, the actor spoke about God's love and the power of grace.

"Nobody is perfect. People are going to tell you you're perfect just the way you are – you're not! You are imperfect. You always will be. But, there is a powerful force that designed you that way. And if you're willing to accept that, you will have grace. And grace is a gift."

The actor has frequently been open about his faith and started to become public about his relationship with God after his son was in the intensive care unit for the first month of his life after being born nine weeks premature.



Chris Pratt as Peter 'Starlord' Quill in *Guardians of the Galaxy*.



The scene outside the Mary Immaculate Church following Monday's accident.

Priest who anointed injured at the scene of Clondalkin church crash calls for prayer

Chai Brady

A parish priest who anointed injured mourners immediately after they were struck by a car driven by a visiting priest has called for prayer for those recovering.

Several people were injured, some severely, in the incident which occurred at about 10.20am on Monday at

Mary Immaculate Church in Clondalkin, Co. Dublin.

People were gathered from across Ireland to attend a funeral Mass when PP Fr Damian Farnon "heard a commotion outside".

"A lady came in to say that one of the people was quite sick and would I come to anoint the person. So I did," Fr Damian told *The Irish Catholic*. He anointed several people at the scene adding "there was no unnecessary panic, so from that point of view it was good".

He added that the incident was compounded because it was a warm day and people were standing outside.

Retired curate Fr Denis Foley (89) is believed to have fallen ill at the wheel, which led to six people including the priest being seriously injured and brought to hospitals across the capital. He hailed from Walkinstown parish, where the late David Breach – whose funeral people were attending – grew up.

Witnesses at the scene said a number of men tried to lift the car off people who were trapped underneath, but were not able to.

Maurice McNulty, who was a few metres away, said: "The place was littered with people on the ground. I said you'd want to send down about half a dozen ambulances, it was frightening."

The injuries include broken bones and a suspected punctured lung.

Shock

Fr Damian praised the parish team for inviting people into the church and offering tea and coffee to those who were "in shock", but particularly congratulated the emergency services.

"We're remembering all the injured in our Mass and prayer during the week and also praying for the emergency services who attended and cared for the injured on Monday, and I suppose never take them or their work for granted, to appreciate all they do in what can be for them challenging situations as well," he said.

The church was closed immediately after the funeral Mass, but was re-opened the following day.

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Role-reversal politics...?

Some people are stropky and rebellious when they are young. They proclaim themselves red-hot socialists and challenge the inherited traditions of their society.

Then, as time goes by and they gain experience in life, they begin to revise or modify some of their youthful opinions. Shouting "property is theft" – the famous anti-capitalist slogan coined by Proud'hon – seems a little contradictory when you're desperate to obtain a mortgage.

You may begin to perceive that sex and drugs and rock 'n roll more often cause havoc in personal lives than deliver fulfilment.

Byron might have said "Wedlock's the devil!", but the statistics couldn't be more emphatic: children growing up do better if their parents are in a faithful and loving marriage.

Wisdom

Quite of lot, generally, of what might have been dismissed as "old hat" often turns out to be the wisdom of centuries based on human experience.

Yet for some individuals, the trajectory goes in the opposite direction: they are prudent and sensible when young, working diligently to build their careers



Mary Kenny



Mary McAleese.

and their family lives. They may succeed because they thus accumulate a flawless record of integrity and steady judgement.

Then, in later middle age, or even in the pensioner years, when freed from the responsibilities of career and office, they suddenly go all radical and rebellious, living out the bolshie adolescent years they didn't indulge in as teenagers. They start saying things that sound shocking, at least to their own ears.

William Hague, sometime

Conservative leader, a serious-minded teenager and a committed Tory since the age of 16, suddenly came out recently urging the liberalisation of cannabis.

I'm tempted to suggest that Mary McAleese belongs to this second category, too (and perhaps I myself belong to the first), of role-reversal rebels. This year alone, Mary has given out yards about the Catholic Church being a carrier of the noxious virus of misogyny – while vociferously taunting

elderly cardinals for having hearing aids – voted "with a heart-and-a-half" to legislate for abortion rights, marched in a Gay Pride parade and now, says that the Catholic (and Anglican) churches "breach fundamental rights" with the practice of infant baptism. Such babies, she has declared, are "infant conscripts who are held to lifelong obligation of obedience".

“Why not send a reprimanding note to her former cohort, Queen Elizabeth?”

Really? Why not send a reprimanding note to her former cohort, Queen Elizabeth to this effect? The 92-year-old Queen will shortly be presiding over the infant baptism of her great-grandchild, Prince Louis. Shouldn't she be told that she is breaching human rights by recruiting "infant conscripts" to early baptism?

Alternatively, perhaps Mrs McAleese should consider joining the Baptist Church, which doesn't practice infant baptism. Mind you, there could be a problem: the Baptists are strongly opposed to abortion rights.



Prof. Brigid Laffan.

MacGill still leaning towards the left

After some vociferous feminists complained that women have too often been excluded or marginalised from the well-established MacGill Summer School, which takes place annually towards the end of July at Glenties, Co. Donegal, the organisers have quickly shuffled the cards to allow for discussion on such subjects as "Why are organisations such as the MacGill school still trapped in a world of Gender Stereotypes?" (Speakers: Fintan O'Toole, Gerard Howlin.)

Anyway, there seem to be quite a few women featured now, including Prof. Brigid Laffan, Mairead McGuinness MEP, Aziliz Gouez (the President's speechwriter) and Susan Mitchell – and at least ten others.

I'm all for diversity and why shouldn't women be just as involved in the public realm of political discourse as are men?

But diversity is a cake that can be cut many ways: gender alone does not guarantee variation. With the possible exception of David Quinn, I couldn't swear there was a single name on the MacGill prospectus who would not be part of the left-liberal consensus of 'official Ireland' today.

Great effort but former First Lady didn't get it quite right...



Hillary Clinton.

Ryan Tubridy had a lively broadcast conversation with Hillary Clinton last Monday on the importance of history.

Mrs Clinton was evidently referring to the general odiousness of President Trump when she expatiated on the imperilled nature of democracy today – and the injustices that can arise towards minorities when bad men are in power.

She quoted the well-known warning that arose from Nazi persecutions in the 1930s, saying: "First they came for the Gypsies...then they came for the Jews... then they came for the Communists... then they came for the Trade Unionists."

The moral is – if we don't identify with persecuted minorities, from the beginning, we will all eventually be

picked off.

The narrative wasn't accurately recounted, however. It should begin with: "First they came for the handicapped children..." – because the first victims of Nazi extermination were children considered "unworthy of living", young people with Down Syndrome, and adults categorised as mentally retarded.

And who protested against this first exterminating policy of the Third Reich? The Catholic Church.

Ryan could have interjected this information, if he had known it. But perhaps not a lot of people do know it...

“The first victims of the Nazis were those considered ‘unworthy of living’”

NEWS IN BRIEF

Vocations depend on community – bishop

It takes more than a family to help someone discern a vocation to the priesthood or religious life, but also a "whole parish and many more", Kildare and Leighlin's bishop has said.

Speaking at the Basilica of Our Lady of Knock on June 23, Dr Denis Nulty said: "Mother Teresa didn't become Mother Teresa (and later St Teresa) by herself. She had someone who preached the Word of God to her. None of us know who we are influenc-

ing, who we are prompting to drill deeper into God's word, and the profound affect that preaching will have on our world."

Dr Nulty concluded with a call for prayer for young priests as well as young men in seminary formation.

Faith music school opens doors

Over 100 singers and musicians from around the country are attending the 49th Annual Irish Church Music Association's Summer School in St Patrick's College, Maynooth from Wednesday, June 27 to Saturday, June 30.

The theme of this year's summer school is Faith, Hope and Love and will reflect the events planned for each of the three days of the congress of the upcoming World Meeting of Families in the RDS from August 22 to 24.

Bishop Donal McKeown of Derry will celebrate Mass on Friday evening at 5pm and afterwards will launch a collection of Mass settings in Irish by Irish composers.

Decriminalise drugs in Ireland – priest

Renowned homelessness campaigner Fr Peter McVerry has called for the decriminalisation of drugs

for personal use "as quickly as possible". He made the comment at a press conference for the CityWide Drug Crisis Campaign, saying the Government needs "to abolish the distinction between illegal and legal drugs".

The campaign is urging the public to support the decriminalisation of the possession of drugs for personal use by submitting their views to the Department of Health's public consultation on the issue. More than 14,000 submissions have already been made to the Department to date, with the deadline for submissions extended to July 13.



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Mary McAleese criticised over 'incendiary' remarks on baptism

Colm Fitzpatrick

A leading theologian in the forefront of calling for liberal reforms in the Church has criticised what he has described as "incendiary" remarks by former president Mary McAleese. US-based Prof. Massimo Faggioli, an expert on Vatican II, said Mrs McAleese's comments that infant baptism breaches human rights are unhelpful. "Making incendiary remarks has usually the effect of delaying Church reform," he told *The Irish Catholic*.

Complex

On the issue of infant baptism, Prof. Faggioli – who teaches theology at Villanova University – said "it is obviously a very complex historical-theological issue and I do not think that calling baptism a way to make infant conscripts is going to help us address the very important issue of children's rights in the Church or human rights of Church members".

On Mrs McAleese's criticism of the World Meeting of Families due to be held in Dublin in August, Prof. Faggioli said he admires the "courage and passion of Mary

McAleese.

"I know that she is admired for her fight for a new kind of relationship between the Church and LGBT persons. That is why I am surprised by the fact that she does not perceive that the World Meeting of Families taking place in Dublin will be important for this.

"I do not think that the former President of Ireland calling the World Meeting of Families taking place in Ireland 'a political rally' helps her cause. Also, because it is not just 'her' cause: it is an important cause and her voice could be spent in a more constructive way," he said.

Mrs McAleese said that by baptising children before they have reached the age of reason, the Church is creating "infant conscripts who are held to lifelong obligations of obedience."

"You can't impose, really, obligations on people who are only two weeks old and you can't say to them at seven or eight or 14 or 19 'here is what you contracted, here is what you signed up to' because the truth is they didn't," she said.

See David Quinn, Page 9.

Papal visit pressure shows scandal of families in hotels – Archbishop

Greg Daly

Speculation that homeless families would be moved out of temporary accommodation in Dublin hotels around the time of the papal visit highlights the scandal of families having to live in such conditions, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin has said.

"Archbishop Martin says that the fact that large numbers of people have to be accommodated in hotels in the first instance is a scandalous situation and hotels are totally unsuitable for families," a spokesperson for Dr Martin told *The Irish Catholic*, responding to claims that an influx of tourists would see demand for hotel rooms spiking and hotels seeking to profit from the situation.

"The problem has existed for many years and does not arise just from the forthcoming visit of Pope Francis," the spokesperson continued, saying that the diocesan home-

less charity Crosscare has been working closely with the Dublin Regional Homeless Executive (DRHE) on how to address similar spikes in demand, such as around concerts, for some time.

"While of course it is far from ideal, in their experience, the DRHE have been really good at taking the lead, monitoring the demand for emergency accommodation and putting plans in place to provide additional beds when required," the spokesperson added.

Bro. Kevin Crowley, whose Capuchin Day Centre will be visited by Pope Francis this August, told this newspaper he would be "absolutely and utterly disgusted to think the hotels are putting the homeless people out".

Any such profiteering, he stressed, should not be blamed on Pope Francis, who is adamant that everybody be treated with dignity and respect.

Eight ordained for Missions



On Saturday, June 23 Archbishop Eamon Martin ordained eight priests for the Missionary Society of Saint Paul in Nigeria. The open-air ordination Mass, attended by thousands of family and friends of the ordinands, was celebrated at the National Missionary Seminary of Saint Paul outside Abuja, the

capital city of Nigeria.

Writing on twitter, the archbishop said: At Mass of #Thanksgiving the eight new missionaries bless their brother seminarians. Please God, some of these young men will come on mission to #Ireland just as Irish missionaries went to #Nigeria @msp_nigeria

Latest edition of celebrated Catholic ethos publication is on its way to schools in the North

Issue 29 of the biannual publication *Le Chéile: A Catholic School Ethos Journal* has just been published and circulated to schools in the North of Ireland.

The journal, a publication of St Mary's University College in Belfast, aims to celebrate and promote the vision of Catholic education locally by identifying, exploring and promoting

ways in which this vision can be lived in Catholic schools; by seeking to empower teachers with a renewed and revitalised sense of the spirituality and vocational nature of teaching; and by aiming to encourage and inform practitioners in Catholic education locally. To find out more about its editor, Dr Niall Coll, see Page 34.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Pro-life 'feedback meetings' being held

A leading pro-life group will be running 'feedback meetings' to listen to ideas and strategies that will go towards helping to protect Ireland's unborn children and their mothers following the repeal of the Eighth Amendment.

LoveBoth, who have been instrumental in the Irish pro-life movement, are running surveys to hear peoples' thoughts on how to move forward. They have organised meetings across Ireland for people's ideas and concerns to be raised.

Areas range from Limerick and Athlone to Galway and Kilkenny. For more information about the meetings, including where and when they will be taking place, see: <https://loveboth.ie/>

Irish home care is a priority says Minister

Home care must be improved to meet the changing needs of our citizens and they must be put on statute to ensure every citizen has equal access to the services, the Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People has said.

Following the launch of the report on the findings of the Department of Health's public consultation on home care services, Jim Daly, TD, said that because home care provides crucial support, the development of a new statutory home care scheme and associated system of regulation will be implemented in Ireland.

"This proposed scheme will allow older people to live longer happier lives in their own homes," the minister said.

Bastion of 'hope and meaning' rededicated in Knock

Following the completion of renovation works at the Parish Church and Apparition Chapel in Knock, a rededication Mass was celebrated in June 23 by the Archbishop of Tuam.

Dr Michael Neary said: "If the walls of this parish church could speak then they would tell the story of the struggles of those who have gone before us, who worshipped here and who held on to God in days far more challenging than our own."

He said that since 1989 the church has welcomed pilgrims from around the country and "across the world as they come in search of hope and meaning".

What do you think?



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Martin Mansergh

The View



Restoring a Church to the poor from the powerful

An Irish Independent headline earlier this month on an article about Pope Francis' forthcoming visit to Ireland for the World Meeting of Families declared: 'Pope will find no tales of princes of the Church in his choice of venues'. The focus would be on the poor, the homeless, and the marginalised, on those left out or behind, and on family ideals valuable to most people, in other words the original mission of Christianity and indeed of St Francis, whose name Pope Francis has taken.

For much of the 20th Century, powerful prelates, even in Ireland, were sometimes metaphorically described as 'princes of the Church', not here because of any ostentation that they displayed, but because of the immense unquestioned authority that they wielded over many spheres of life.

On a visit to England a couple of weeks ago that took in a number of religious sites and buildings, crossing the Pennines I was faintly startled to see a road sign announcing entry into Co. Durham, sub-titled 'Home of the Prince Bishops'.

Enquiry

On further enquiry, I learnt that the mediaeval bishops of Durham exercised secular jurisdiction that included a Palatine court that survived till 1836.

The 2nd Duke of Ormonde on two occasions lost his Palatine court in Tipperary, latterly housed in the Main Guard, Clonmel, recently restored. The first time in 1689 was at the hands of the Patriot Parliament after he deserted James II for William of Orange. The second and final time was when he turned Jacobite in 1715, soon after the Whigs took over with the accession of the Hanoverian George I. Such were the vicissitudes of politics, when it was so easy to lose one's footing.

To revert to the Bishop of Durham, who had a fine cathedral, he lived in a castle, and in 1832 the incumbent founded the university there.

Of course, the real Prince Bishops belonged to the Holy Roman Empire. Three of the seven electors fixed since 1237 were Elector Archbishops, of Cologne,



The tomb of Richard III.

Mainz and Trier. In the 18th Century, Clemens August of Cologne built a magnificent rococo-style Schloss Brühl with park modelled on Versailles, though not on the same scale, which we visited as a family several times, when I was posted to the Irish Embassy in Bonn in the mid-1970s.

Another Prince Archbishop but not an elector Hieronymus von Colloredo of Salzburg features in the life of Mozart, whom he dismissed from his service for insolence. Mozart's behaviour was part of growing impatience with the social rigidity of the ancien régime that classified a court composer, even if he were a genius, as a servant. Colloredo got his final come-uppance from another upstart, Napoleon Bonaparte.

“The increasingly materialist age of the Enlightenment ended up badly”

The principality was secularized in 1803 as part of the impending dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire. As French-convent-educated Eleanor Butler from Kilkenny Castle, one of the ostensibly reclusive Ladies of Llangollen, complained: “Fatally spreads the pestilential taint of insubordinate principles.”

Some clergy are apt to maintain at times that church buildings are not the essence of Christianity. At one level, that is true, and at times of persecution worship had to move underground

or be improvised, as, for example, at Mass rocks in penal times. Yet churches of all types and ages, simple or elaborate, have helped to provide a setting and focus for religious devotion and loyalty, and are often inspirational in their own right.

Often, they have also conveyed a political message. An illustrated guide, *The Story of Norwich Cathedral*, says about its construction in the 12th Century: “The Cathedral was intended to overwhelm the English with the power and divine favour enjoyed by their Norman conquerors.”

Nearby in Norfolk, the towering remaining archway of Walsingham Abbey, in the Middle Ages a place of pilgrimage second only to Canterbury, is today associated with all denominations, even Muslims, but in particular with a High Church Anglicanism that celebrates Mass.

Henry VIII in his Defender of the Faith days pilgrimed there, but then, despite the Abbey's prompt acceptance of his supremacy, had it destroyed in the dissolution of the monasteries, because this did meet with resistance. Peterborough Cathedral, previously an abbey, was luckier. Henry's unjustly discarded wife Katharine of Aragon is buried there, with the resonant words “humble and loyal” written on her tomb.

A new royal tomb has been created in Leicester Cathedral for the recently rediscovered and identified remains of Richard III killed in battle, following masterly interdisciplinary forensic

work by the University. The extensive plinth of the tomb is Kilkenny marble, Leicestershire being twinned with Kilkenny.

Though a famous Shakespearean villain for disappearing rival members of his family, unlike the Tudors, he did not subordinate the Irish Parliament with Poynings Law, dissolve the monasteries, or in attempting to impose a settler faith lay waste to much of the land and the people. The charter he granted to Galway in 1484 was celebrated 500 years on in 1984.

Other rulers, up to today, were involved in the disappearance of family,

notably Catherine the Great, who, because she courted progressive philosophical opinion, suffered little opprobrium.

The increasingly materialist age of the Enlightenment ended up badly, discredited by the Terror during the French revolution and the ‘reason of state’ behind three cynical partitions of Poland, which saw its disappearance in 1795 from the map till 1918. Catholicism did much to sustain Poland and Ireland through long dark periods and to help them regain real independence and national dignity.

A remarkable Polish

exhibition on the story of Consul Dobrzynski was shown recently in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. He represented in Dublin a government that fell victim, first to Nazi and then to Soviet occupation.

He saw the necessity for the fragmented states created post-1918 to come together for their survival. Despite neutrality, de Valera deeply sympathised with countries being crushed by bigger neighbours, which is why he held that the international rule of law was so important for smaller countries. Other times other values.

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Catholics need closure on historic sectarian killings – priest

Colm Fitzpatrick

The British government needs to be held more accountable for the killing of Catholic nationalists during the Troubles if there is going to be “any kind of closure”, a prominent Northern Irish priest has said.

Fermanagh priest and well-known civil rights advocate, Fr Joe McVeigh, said that there have been “many killings by the security forces throughout the whole of the Troubles and all of these need to be reopened”, adding that there should at least be an inquest into each of them.

Checkpoint

The comments come after news that a British soldier is to be prosecuted for the February 1988 killing of Co. Tyrone man Aidan McAnespie, who was shot dead as he walked through a British army checkpoint on his way to a Gaelic football match.

“I knew the family very well at that time, they were very, very upset. Obviously about his killing but also about the lies that were told, excuses that were made and all the rest of it, because Aidan had been harassed constantly before that, before he was shot dead,” Fr McVeigh said.

The priest, who lives in the mainly Protestant village of Lisbellaw, also said that the targeting of Catholic nationalists was very “deliberate” and focused on “intimidation” and keeping Catholics in their “place”.

“It was a whole policy, it wasn’t just an incidental one here and there, it was deliberate policy, we had it in Fermanagh. We had it in Tyrone and Derry and all throughout the six counties at various times and it was very deliberate.”

Consequence

He added that the British government aren’t highly motivated, and prosecutions resulting from historical cases such as Mr Anespie’s were probably the consequence of pressure from human rights groups, rather than “high motives”.

“But it is, it is important that it’s done and there’s seen to be justice done. It’s very important, but I don’t credit the British government with any kind of high motives or high values.”



A group of young people at a Rally For Life meeting in Dublin last year. Photo: John McElroy

Call for people to be a voice for unborn in North

Matthew Carlson

A prominent pro-life group has said that the ‘Rally for Life’ in Belfast will show the world that support for protecting unborn children “remains strong” in Ireland.

Organisers of the rally, which is taking place by the Stormont Parliament Buildings on July 7 at 2pm, said that despite the ‘Yes’ vote in the Irish referendum on the repeal of the Eighth Amendment, the fact remains that every unborn child still has

the right to life.

“The Irish State no longer acknowledges the right to life of those who are ‘alive but not yet born’ but the Constitution did not ‘give’ this right to unborn children – every person’s right to life is inherent.

Protection

“We will continue our work to protect mothers and babies from abortion,” event organisers said. They added that that the result of the Referendum is also deeply worrying for the

North of Ireland, with the threat to unborn children becoming more intensified.

“Pro-abortion organisations are calling for the abortion of the North’s unborn babies with the ominous threat – ‘The North is Next’.

“The same tactics of lies and false information used by the ‘Yes to Abortion’ side in the Republic’s Referendum, are now being used in Northern Ireland. “But we must continue to be a voice for unborn children when and wherever their lives are in danger.”

Documentary following the Pope to release in Ireland during August

Staff reporter

A documentary following Pope Francis is set to release just days before the Pope’s visit to Dublin in August. *Pope Francis: A Man of His Word* will focus on the Pope’s thoughts and views on social issues facing society instead of a biographical documentary about the Pope’s life and rise through the Church.

The documentary will focus on some of the most pertinent topics of today such as social justice, immigration, materialism and several others.

The director, Wim Wenders, says that he interviewed the Pope over a span of two years and was given hundreds of hours of footage from the Vatican.

The documentary is set for a wide release by Universal

Pictures in about 40 cinemas across Ireland.

Although the film’s release was not intended to fall just before the Papal visit, Dave Burke, the general manager of Universal Pictures Ireland, and Brenda Drumm, the communications manager for the World Meeting of Families, agree that the release of the film will increase anticipation for the Pope’s visit.

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Hollowing out Ireland's Church from within

Even the right to baptise your child is now being questioned, writes **David Quinn**

We are definitely in a radically new cultural moment when even the practice of infant baptism is called into question and by no less a person than our former president, Mary McAleese. If the right of Catholics to baptise their children is questioned, then what is left?

Our former first citizen has previously criticised baptism for creating "mainly infant conscripts who are held to lifelong obligations of obedience".

In comments to the *Irish Times* at the weekend she elaborated that if parents have their baby baptised, "that baby becomes a member for life – according to the teaching of the Church – of the Church and it has rights and obligations".

She said that at some point, as they mature, children need to have an opportunity to accept or repudiate their baptism. She claimed that this would be more in line with rights of freedom of conscience and religion.

But comments like this badly misunderstand baptism. Baptism, as such, cannot be undone. In Catholic theology it brings about a change to your state of being in the same way sacramental marriage does, or the sacrament of Holy Orders. A man might leave priestly ministry, but he will always be a priest. A woman might leave her husband, but in the eyes of the Church she will always be married to him so long as he lives.

Critics

Of course, the fact that baptism cannot be undone only makes things worse in the eyes of its critics, but when one of those

critics is a self-professed practicing Catholic, then we're dealing with a whole different ballgame because infant baptism goes back to the very early days of Christianity and is practiced to this day by almost every Christian Church.

So, when Mary McAleese criticises infant baptism she is taking on something that goes to the very heart of the Christian faith.

Why is infant baptism so old and so venerable a practice? A big reason is that Christians believe baptism cleanses us of Original Sin. This is another notion many people today find offensive. How can a baby be guilty of sin? But Original Sin describes a state, not an act. The state of human nature is

The McAleese attack on infant baptism is based on a very radical notion of personal autonomy, in this case the autonomy of the child. But it is wildly unrealistic because no-one, and in particular no child, is so autonomous that they are not radically influenced by the time, place and community into which they are born.

We are all born into a particular family. We are born in a particular locality and a particular country. We will be citizens of that country, often by simple right of birth. That country will demand a certain amount of loyalty in return for the benefits of citizenship and will try and make us 'good citizens' through

also represent the most enormous, swingeing attack on religious freedom.

In a similar vein, there are growing calls to ban religiously-motivated circumcision. In 2012, a German court tried to do precisely that until the German parliament overturned the ban after a huge Jewish backlash.

“There is something deep inside human nature that demands ceremonies to mark the major occasions in our lives”

As the former British Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks said at the time: "By ruling that religious Jews performing their most ancient sacred ritual are abusing the rights of the child, a German court has just invented a new form of Blood Libel perfectly designed for the 21st Century."

On the other hand, we also see that non-religious people still want to have their children baptised – despite the McAleese objections – because there is something deep inside human nature that demands ceremonies to mark the major occasions in our lives.

In the *Irish Times* last week, journalist Conor Pope in a much-discussed article wrote that he and his wife

again the extent to which the cultural in 'cultural Catholicism' is taking over the Catholic part of that equation. The answer seems to be: very much.

We had another very powerful example of this last Sunday when Fine Gael TD Josepha Madigan led a Communion service in her local parish in Dublin despite being the leader of her party's 'Yes' campaign in the recent abortion referendum. (There was no Mass because the priest was absent.)

This represents a further erosion of the belief that being a member of the Catholic community carries certain obligations. A leading member of a parish can be openly pro-choice, but Madigan's own party in 2013 expelled

some of its members for being pro-life. Being a member of Fine Gael, therefore, carries stronger obligations than being a member of the Catholic Church.

We can thus see the extent to which the surrounding culture is bearing down hard on the Catholic Church and indeed, on all of Christianity. Openly, proudly pro-choice politicians lead Communion services.

People who are openly non-practicing wish to avail of Catholic sacraments they don't really believe in, a former president of Ireland calls into question the very basis of infant baptism, and Catholic hospitals are told they must perform abortions.

And from most of the leaders of the Church, we have nothing but silence.



that we are all capable of sinning. This is why we need a Saviour, Jesus Christ.

But even if you reject the doctrine of Original Sin, baptism has another purpose, which is to make

a combination of formal education and social norms. Is this also an attack on the child's autonomy?

We can eventually repudiate the country of our birth and we can reject

“A leading member of a parish can be openly pro-choice, but Madigan's own party in 2013 expelled some of its members for being pro-life. Being a member of Fine Gael, therefore, carries stronger obligations than being a member of the Catholic Church”

us members of the Christian community. It is also a naming ceremony and a rite of passage and all cultures have rites of passage that mark the entry of a child into the world, and into their particular community. Is this aspect of baptism to be rejected too?

our family, just as we can repudiate our religion, but there is no such thing as freedom from the community of our birth and upbringing, or its influences. Such a thing is absolutely impossible.

Stopping or discouraging infant baptism would

had their baby baptised despite being non-practicing themselves. The reason they did so is because Catholicism is the religion they are culturally most familiar with, and they wanted a major event to mark the birth of their child.

This, of course, raises once

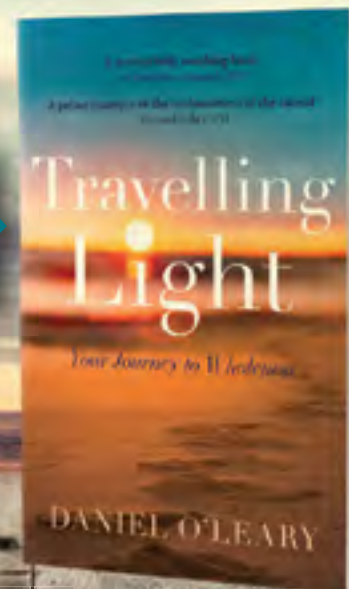
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St Louis (Ballymena) students on their pilgrimage at Lough Derg and, left, Bishop Donal McKeown and the Derry diocese group which visited the island earlier this month.

Young people want more out of life than just a wild weekend, says bishop



Colm Fitzpatrick

Derry's bishop, Donal McKeown, has set a new challenge to the youth across the island of Ireland to follow in the bare-footsteps of the young people he encountered on Lough Derg over the weekend who are leading the way for a National Youth Pilgrimage on the ancient place of Christian Pilgrimage.

Over the weekend a number of pilgrimage organisers made it possible for groups of people of all ages to travel together to Lough Derg from Derry and Elphin Diocese as well as other groups from Birmingham, England and a youth group from St Louis School, Ballymena.

A couple of months ago Bishop McKeown had the idea of a National Youth Pilgrimage to Lough Derg and has set the wheels in motion to make this a regular event in July every year from 2019. Commenting on the new initiative Bishop Donal said: "All I can say is, I'm going – come with me. That's really what Jesus did, 'come follow me'. All I can do is ask people to come do what I am doing – come with me to do something I'm not afraid to do myself.

"I think people are ready for a challenge in an



Students from St Louis (Ballymena) school group at Lough Derg and, below, Bishop Donal with James from the Derry Diocese on a three-day pilgrimage.



excessively comfortable time we live in and I think we are looking for heroes nowadays who will be the prophetic voice, who will be fools for Christ's sake.

"Right down the centuries fools for Christ's sake have always drawn the attention towards God."

The bishop stressed that Lough Derg provides a place for self-reflection and maturation, which can often be difficult to do in a society

which is pushing opposing values.

“It actually invites you into a space that helps you to mature rather than keep one infantile”

"Young people are full of dreams and they want to do

great things with their lives and so often culture tells them all you can expect is a wild weekend and a bit of a party or go to a fancy concert and then you forget about it.

"I think Lough Derg offers, not only an experience, but an opportunity to go into your own story, to be at peace with silence, to not be afraid of pushing the barriers out in terms

of hunger, sleeplessness and bare feet and so on... it actually invites you into a space that helps you to mature rather than keep one infantile as so often the modern culture suggests you want to be," the bishop said.

"Yet, I find young people like to do something big – they like to take on a challenge and particularly to do it along with other young people."

He added that over the weekend young people supported one another and took the time to "chatter away with each other", which was time they don't very often have when they are living their everyday life at home.

i For more information about Lough Derg's three-day pilgrimage, see: <https://www.loughderg.org/>



Josepha Madigan's decision to run a Eucharistic service in a priest's absence invites serious questions, writes Greg Daly

The decision by Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Josepha Madigan to conduct an impromptu Eucharistic service with two other readers on a Saturday evening when the priest scheduled to say Mass failed to turn up has, predictably, invited a host of questions.

In fairness, one can understand how those with whom the priest would normally work in celebrating the liturgy would be confused by his unexplained absence, but why would they think they had the authority to hold an *ad hoc* Eucharistic liturgy instead?

Why not simply tell those gathered that the priest was unexpectedly unavailable, apologise and remind them of Mass times for the following day – Sunday proper – in that church, St Thérèse's in Dublin's Mount Merrion, and in other nearby churches?

Ritual

After all, Catholics cannot fulfil their obligation to attend Sunday Mass by attending a Eucharistic service. Was this pointed out? It's not as though the 6pm Saturday evening service at St Thérèse's was the only Mass for miles around and parishioners would miss their obligation if they just went home.

Ritual is important, obviously, but is there anyone who thinks the Mass is a less important ritual than sitting in the same spot at the same time each week?

To what extent did Ms Madigan understand what was going on in the service she apparently led? "I wouldn't quite say 'saying the Mass', we obviously didn't do any of the Sacrament of Transubstantiation or anything like that," she said on RTÉ's *Today with Seán O'Rourke* the following day, observing of the distribution of the Eucharist: "I believe the bread was

Spiritual hypocrisy or practical intercession?



"I wouldn't quite say 'saying the Mass', we obviously didn't do any of the Sacrament of Transubstantiation or anything like that..."

Minister Josepha Madigan.

blessed, obviously – again, there was no sacrament."

And finally, of course, there's the key question: how on earth could someone who led Fine Gael's campaign to legalise abortion in Ireland feel entitled to stand up and preside over a Church liturgy?

It's hard not to wonder how Ms Madigan squares her views with Church teaching, and especially what she thought during the readings that Saturday evening, set as they would have been for the Solemnity of the Nativity of John the Baptist.

There can hardly be a Massgoer who is not familiar with the story of the unborn John leaping in his mother's womb as she was greeted by Mary, which should have been in the mind of anyone hearing, for example, the first reading.

From Isaiah, it featured such lines as "the Lord called me before I was born, from my mother's womb he pronounced my name" and "now the Lord has spoken, he who formed me in the womb to be his servant".

Responding to this, lest anyone miss the point about how even in the womb we are individuals, created and

known by God with our own special tasks, the Psalm addressed God with the words "for it was you who created my being, knit me together in my mother's womb", and goes on to say: "Already you knew my soul, my body held no secret from you when I was being fashioned in secret and moulded in the depths of the earth."

It is not for nothing, after all, that the Church has always opposed abortion.

"Your communion is ruptured if you support abortion. You are excommunicating yourself"

We have, in ways, been here before, with Archbishop Eamon Martin, then the Coadjutor Archbishop of Armagh, warning in October 2013 that politicians who knowingly introduced legislation "aiding and abetting abortion" should not come forward for Communion.

"You cannot regard your-

self as a person of Faith and support abortion," he told the *Sunday Times*.

"If a legislator comes to me and says, 'Can I be a faithful Catholic and support abortion?' I would say no," he continued. "Your communion is ruptured if you support abortion. You are excommunicating yourself. Any legislator who clearly and publicly states this should not approach looking for Communion."

Dublin's Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, it's worth pointing out, responded to requests for comments on this by stressing that excommunication should not be seen as a life sentence, and saying that Communion "should not become a place of debate and contrast and be used for publicity reasons by anybody".

Certainly, debates around this general issue have been common in recent decades, notably in the US where the issue has been a recurring one especially since 2004, when the then Archbishop of St Louis, Missouri, Raymond – now Cardinal – Burke, said he would deny Communion to presidential candidate Senator John Kerry, in part because of his position on abortion.

Sacrament

Three years later, then-Archbishop Burke also said that he would deny Communion to Republican presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani because of his views on abortion, and that Giuliani should not seek the Sacrament. When Joe Biden was nominated as the Democrats' vice-presidential candidate in the 2008 election, Bishop Joseph Martino of Biden's hometown of Scranton, Pennsylvania, said he would refuse Mr Biden Communion in that diocese because of his support for abortion.

In general, however, American bishops have preferred to take the line that while they would not politicise the Eucharist by barring pro-abortion legislators from it, they would urge such politicians to refrain from coming forward. Support for legalising abortion, they have said time and again, is incompatible with receiving Communion.

St John Paul II, it's worth noting, gave Communion to such pro-choice figures as Tony Blair, and in 2008, noted pro-choice Catholic politicians Nancy Pelosi, John Kerry and Rudy Giuliani all received Communion at a New York

Mass celebrated by Pope Benedict XVI, though there has never been any suggestion that the then Pope condoned their actions.

The previous year, after all, when asked whether he agreed with a proposed excommunication of Mexican legislators who voted to legalise abortion, he had said such an action would be based on Church teaching. "It is based simply on the principle that the killing of an innocent human child is incompatible with going in Communion with the body of Christ," he said.

Judgment

Indeed, in 2004, as head of the Church's doctrinal watchdog, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, he had issued the US bishops with a document entitled 'Worthiness to Receive Holy Communion: General Principles' in which he said the decision to present for Communion should be based on a reasoned judgment regarding one's worthiness to do so, according to the Church's objective criteria.

Catholic politicians who formally cooperate in the grave sin of abortion, by, for instance, consistently campaigning and voting for permissive abortion laws, should be instructed that they are not to present for Communion

until "the objective situation of sin" is brought to an end, he said, adding that the Eucharist should be denied to them if they present for Communion after such instruction.

Pope Francis, it's worth noting, has presided over but not personally distributed Communion at Masses where pro-choice Catholic politicians have been present and received Communion. A pointer to why can be found in his 2010 book *On Heaven and Earth*, speaking of his unwillingness to give Communion at Masses where those known to be living contrary to Church teaching might come forward.

"I stay back and I let the ministers give it because I do not want those people to come to me for the photo op," he said, noting his reluctance to be lured into giving scandal by seeming to condone the "spiritual hypocrisy" of those who defy God's justice and do not seek repentance.

If Popes and bishops are, then, united in holding that those politicians who support legal abortion should at the very least hold back from receiving Communion, what then of politicians who would preside over Church services while advocating a supposed right to abortion?

The answer to this question, at least, should be obvious.

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Priest creates June tune after Ossory's icon sojourn

Gemma Mulligan

A lot can be said for the inspirational nature of the Icon of the Holy Family, as it travels from diocese to diocese and parish to parish, but for one priest in the Diocese of Ossory it led to the creation of a "reflective" piece of music.

During the icon's travels this month to the diocese's northern deanery, it arrived in Ballyragget parish. The presence of the icon not only called people to pray, but for Fr Eamon O'Gorman PP of Ballyragget parish, it led to the composition of a piece of music used as part of the prayer service.

The piece is called 'Where There is Love, There is Family'.

Reflecting on the experience of writing the prayerful music, Fr Eamon told those gathered that: "When I wrote it initially it was a bit fast, then we slowed it down into a meditation – a reflection, especially looking at the icon and the space at the table."

"There is a welcome at the table with the Holy Family, and to be at peace with them and to relax with them". The visit of the icon to Ossory helped focus attention on family once more. Taking place from June 11-16, people gathered together from all across the diocese.

An icon is an invitation to prayer, and when it visited Ossory this invitation was, in a real way, graciously accepted and welcomed by all. During the week the icon visited the three deaneries of Ossory. It started in St Mary's Cathedral, in the heart of Kilkenny city, where families from parishes of the middle



deanery came to pray, as well as school children from the city schools.

The icon then moved to Ferrybank parish where parishioners from the very south of the diocese had an opportunity to see the icon and bring their prayers and petitions as they too gathered in prayer.

Finally, the icon visit was concluded in St Fiacre's Church, Loughboy, again at the heart of Kilkenny city. On this last leg of the journey a great number of young people gathered on the Friday evening in song and prayer as they placed their petitions before the icon in the diocesan prayer box. It was wonderful to see the energy and life that accompanied the icon around our diocese.

For any important occasion preparation must begin well in advance. In Ossory we began our diocesan preparation for the World Meeting of Families 2018 over a year ago.

The launch of our programme of preparation took place in May 2017 at a family fun day in the grounds of St Kieran's College where hundreds of families gather for what is now the annual diocesan Under-9 Camogie and Hurling Blitz. People from all across our Diocese, every parish and every club, enjoyed a



great variety of family entertainment on what turned out to be a glorious sunshine-filled day. As part of the festivities, each family took home with them an information 'goody-bag' about our ongoing preparations for the WMOF.

This was the beginning of that journey – it was a chance to connect with families from across the diocese and to invite them to be part of this unique journey too. The visit of the icon has, in many ways, done what it claims to do – it has called us to pray and to reflect, it has drawn us in.

At each part of its journey in Ossory the icon created a stillness, a quietness, a prayerfulness and allowed us to continue our preparations for WMOF2018, not only by praying for families everywhere, including our own, but by remembering and praying with the Holy Family of Nazareth.



Sick and those lacking in Faith prayed for during Raphoe icon visit

The Icon of the Holy Family was received at the Cathedral of Ss Eunan and Columba, Letterkenny on June 7 by Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ, which led to visits and events attended by proactive parishioners.

The bishop was assisted by the parish clergy and a large gathering of the faithful.

The doors of the sacred image were solemnly opened by the servers of the parish and two families then took a light from the Paschal Candle and lit the candles before the icon, which was then incensed by Bishop McGuckian.

First Vespers of the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus followed, presided by Bishop McGuckian.

Over the following days, many people came to vener-

ate the icon and to pray for their families.

On Friday afternoon, June 8, a group of parishioners visited the places associated with St Colmcille in nearby Gartan.

After evening Mass of the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart, families and parish groups held an all-night vigil of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament exposed, praying for the needs of families.

Vigil

The vigil concluded on Saturday June 9 with Lauds and Benediction, followed by Mass for the Feast of St Colmcille, principal patron of the diocese of Raphoe and of the cathedral.

On Saturday evening, the Dominican Fathers began the

parish mission for the WMOF, which ran until Sunday, June 17. Many took the opportunity to pray before the icon for their families and loved ones, especially those with sickness and those lacking in Faith.

It proved to be an occasion of great prayer and devotion, with many petitions being placed in the petition box. The icon departed on Monday, June 11 after the celebration of Mass and the recitation of the Rosary.

The presence of the original icon allowed the faithful to be drawn into the beauty and significance of the image they have been venerating in their homes and in the Cathedral since last year, and to make their contemplation a real opportunity of prayer for their own families.



The Dominican Fathers begin the parish mission for the World Meeting of Families in the Cathedral of Ss Eunan and Columba in Letterkenny, which ran until Sunday June 17.

All roads lead

Maria Colfer

All roads led to Innovate Wexford Park on Sunday, June 17 for the Diocese of Ferns World Meeting of Families (WMOF) Diocesan Fun Day. What started as a rather overcast day turned bright and warm as the crowd arrived in the park to the sound of the Ballindaggin Pipe Band playing 'Kelly the Boy from Killane'.

Bishop Denis Brennan opened the event and spoke of the meaning of family and our efforts to create a loving family, before then blessing the crowd.

The children were treated to a variety of amusements. There was penalty taking against Lee Chin and Mark Fanning (Wexford hurlers), 'Hanging Tough', a fitness test for adults and children designed by Davy Fitzgerald, Bricks 4 kidz, story-telling and face painting were all in the mix, while adults had tours of the dressing rooms and had demonstrations in flower arranging.

The arrival of Mickey and Minnie Mouse led to a flurry of selfies being taken and energy and spirits were kept high after free ice cream was given to every child.

Atmosphere

All the while music was supplied by the Ballindaggin Pipe Band, Cumas, a band from New Ross, the Mustard Seeds and Danescastle – the County Scór winning band – who all added greatly to the atmosphere.

Everyone agreed it was a pleasant and enjoyable day where families of the diocese came together to celebrate all that is good about our community.

Fr Jim Fegan and his committee organised the day's events in conjunction with Wexford GAA and strongly supported by South East Radio. Great credit is due to all concerned.

Maria Colfer is on the WMOF organising committee for the Diocese of Ferns.

Please contact World Meeting of Families correspondent Chai Brady with photos, news or articles relating to your parish or diocese's WMOF2018 preparations and events for inclusion in the weekly update:

email chai@irishcatholic.ie • 01 6874020

Twitter @ChaiBradyIC



to Ferns for WMOF Fun Day!



Bishop Denis Brennan was in great company at the event.

Out&About

Retreat for Jubilarians



DUBLIN: Jubilarians marking milestones since their ordination enjoy the retreat/assembly of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts held at Emmaus in Swords, pictured are Fr Jerry White, 60 years, Sr Elizabeth Smith, 60 years, Fr Mike Foley, 50 years, Fr Fergal Maguire, 25 years, and Fr Pearse Mullen, 40 years.



MEATH: Some members of the National Committee of Eucharistic Adoration and some members of the Meath Diocesan Adoration committee on a day retreat with the Benedictine Monks of Perpetual Adoration in Silverstream, Stamullen.



FRANCE: Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly leads the Cashel and Emly Pilgrimage to Lourdes.



◀ **DUBLIN:** A group receives their certificates at the Faith for Life Awards in Holy Cross Diocesan Centre. Faith for Life is an adult Faith course designed to help discover more energising and empowering ways to live out Faith in the reality of today's world. Photo: John McElroy

▶ **LIMERICK:** First Communion boys from Doon CBS attended the children's Mass at Solemn Novena in the Redemptorists Church, pictured with Fr Seamus Enright CSSR. Photo: James Dormer



Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



▲ **WEXFORD:** Those involved in creating the Angel Garden 'Cuan Aingeal' visit it on the outskirts of Wexford Town. It was erected in memory of those young people who died in tragic circumstances. Photo: Patrick Hogan

◀ **ITALY:** Transplant Team Ireland winning swimming team (l-r) Sheila Gregan, Orla Hogan, Peter Heffernan and Deirdre Faul at the 10th European Transplant & Dialysis Sports Championships in Cagliari, Sardinia acquiring in total of 12 medals including three gold, five silver and four bronze.

▼ **CORK:** Sr Mary Deane, Congregational Leader of the Presentation Sisters speaks at the Tercentenary of Nano Nagle at her birthplace at Ballygriffin, near Mallow.



IN SHORT

Franciscan Sisters Celebrate 50 and 80 years of religious profession

More than 200 people attended the Sisters of St Francis 2018 Jubilee Celebration which was held on June 10 at Our Lady of Angels Convent in Aston, Pennsylvania.

This included sisters, members of the Franciscan Companions in Mission (associates), members of the Franciscan Volunteers: No Risk No Gain Program, and former members gathered for the Eucharistic Liturgy in the motherhouse chapel to share the 'Good News' of the 2018 jubilarians.

The liturgy was presided over by the motherhouse chaplain, Fr Cyprian Rosen, OFM Cap., Sr Andrea Likovich, OSF, coordinator of music and liturgy, directed the choir.

During the liturgy the jubilarians renewed the vows of poverty, celibacy, and obedience – vows they had first professed many years ago and

which they continue to live out daily. Following liturgy the jubilarians and their guests joined in a celebratory luncheon.

Collectively the 19 jubilarians – individually celebrating 50, 70, or 80 years of religious life – represent 1,130 years of collective service in multiple ministries, including healthcare, child care, social services, prayer ministry, parish ministry, diocesan ministry, congregational ministry, and eldercare. Their ministries have taken them to 27 dioceses in the US as well as to Antigua and Ireland.

Two of this year's jubilarians come originally from Ireland. Ruby jubilarian, Sr Angela Patrice Power, OSF, celebrates 80 years of religious profession and recently celebrated her 100th birthday. She was born in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford.

Her ministry in the US has taken Sr Angela to various parts of the country, primarily on the east coast, where she ministered in elementary education as both teacher and principal and, in later

years, in parish ministry.

From 1948-1956 she ministered at Mt Alvernia Convent in Mallow, Co. Cork, with young women who were entering the Srs of St Francis. Currently Sister Angela serves in prayer and hospitality ministry at Assisi House, the congregation's retirement residence in Aston, Pennsylvania.

Golden jubilarian, Sr Kathleen O'Donnell, OSF, is celebrating 50 years of religious profession. She was born in New Inn, Co. Tipperary. Her ministries in the US have taken her to California, Wyoming, and Washington where she ministered in elementary education.

She also spent time working in Antigua in the West Indies and, from 1997-2004, served as a caregiver for a family member in Cahir in Co. Tipperary.

Since 2006 Sr Kathleen has worked in social services with the Ministry of Caring in Wilmington, Delaware, where she has served as coordinator of the meal program at two of the ministry's Emmanuel Dining Rooms.

CARLOW

Family Barbecue Day in Graiguecullen church, Castlecomer Road on July 1 at 11.30am in preparation for the World Meeting of Families, organised by Graiguecullen/Killeslin Parish.

CLARE

Annual Killaloe Diocesan Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine will take place on Sunday July 29, led by Bishop Fintan Monahan. Ceremonies begin at 2.30pm. For bus transport please contact: Glynn's Coaches at 065 6828234.

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

The Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes is from July 1-6 and is led by Bishop Donal McKeown. This year marks the 160th anniversary of the apparitions at Lourdes. For booking and information contact Mr Charlie Glenn and Mrs Julia McIvor at the Pilgrimage Office, 164 Bishop St. Derry, BT48 6 UJ. Telephone: (028) 71260293. Email: derry-pilgrim@outlook.com

DUBLIN

Our Lady of Knock prayer meetings take place on the last Thursday of every month in St Gabriel's Nursing Home, Glenayle Road, Raheny, D5, from 8pm-9pm.

Ewe Thina: We Walk God's Way. Join other young adults, 20s and 30s, for reflective hikes around Dublin Area. Monthly event. The next hike will be Sunday, July 1 at 12 noon around Glendalough. Contact for lift to Glendalough st.pauls@dublindiocese.ie and <https://www.facebook.com/wewalkgodsway>

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.

KERRY

Family and Mission Day in Dalgan Park celebrating 100 years of Columban mission. The train from Tralee at 7.10am will be met by a special bus to Dalgan Park at Heuston Station. Phone: 087 6030285 for more info.

KILKENNY

First Saturday Devotions, Adoration, Rosary, Divine Mercy and Prayer for Healing from 7-9pm in St Fiacre's Church, Loughboy.

LIMERICK

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

days, from 10am to 12noon.

LOUTH

A Centre Prayer Meeting is held at Mount Oliver (near Ballymascanlon, Dundalk) every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm. Contact 00353 863623361 from NI or 086 3623361 from RoI.

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.

The Annual National Pilgrimage to St Brigid's Shrine, Faughart, will take place on Sunday, July 1 at 3pm. It has been held every year since 1934. Ceremonies consist of Pilgrimage Prayers, Procession with relic along the banks of St Brigid's Stream, Mass and Blessing of the Sick.

MAYO

Cloyne Diocese Chaplaincy to the Traveller Community and Travellers of North Cork invite men from the Traveller community to take part in a pilgrimage to climb Croagh Patrick on Tuesday, July 4. Mass offered in the summit chapel. Contact Jason, Pauline or Theresa: 022-71035.

MEATH

Christ the King Prayer Group, Enfield, meeting every Monday evening, 7.30-8.30pm, Enfield 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.

TIPPERARY

Music Ministry Together 2018 will be held July 3-8 in Cistercian College Roscrea. 'Come to Me' is the theme of this year's course and is based on Matthew 11: "Come to me all you who are burdened and I will give you rest". Details available on www.musicministry.ie

WATERFORD

Joy of Faith Summer Camp from July 2-6 at St Mary's Primary School, Dungarvan. Contact: Shauna 087 1378364

WEXFORD

Camolin Homecoming Mass: Bishop Denis Brennan will celebrate a homecoming Mass in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Camolin, to mark the year of the Family at 7pm on July 6.

WICKLOW

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

Baltinglass Parish Fun Day will take place on Sunday, July 22 from 2-5pm on St Joseph's Parish Centre grounds with entertainment, face painting, fun activities and more. Bring a picnic.

10 years on...

– remembering the death of the Celtic Tiger

If we take a moment to recall what it is to remember, we quickly realise that memory is one of the great gifts of life. Consider the stories we love to read, films we constantly re-watch and the music we commonly dance to; they often deal with how we recollect the past. Scientists have studied memory at length and have concluded that smell is the sense that evokes the past most forcefully. I know this is true for me. The fragrance of my mother's brown bread recipe baking in the oven viscerally brings me back to my childhood home, regardless of where I am making it.

Our memories are woven into the fabric of who we are. Who I am is wrapped up in where I came from and who I grew up with. My past makes my present. My story is embedded in my parent's stories, and their parent's and on to the horizon of our collective memory. When memory evaporates, as often happens later in life, the sense of self can be lost as well. The tragedy of Alzheimer's and similar conditions is often most keenly felt at the beginning, when there are enough memories left for the sufferer to know they are losing their place in their own story.

Memory in the Bible

It is no surprise, then, that when we turn to the Scriptures we find memory to be a major theme. Right at the beginning, in Genesis, after God encounters him, Abraham immediately builds an altar to commemorate the place where it happened (Genesis 12:6-7).

This becomes a standard practice for his descendants, who use architecture to keep important memo-

Unless we remember how painfully the promises of economic growth were shown to be hollow we may have much more misery in store, writes **Kevin Hargaden**



ries alive. When the nation of Israel finally reaches the land promised through Abraham, the Law that they receive has festivals of commemoration built into it.

In the centre of the Ten Commandments is the directive to set aside a day for rest and the reason given is that this break would allow people to remember that before God saved them, they were worked to death as slaves in Egypt (Deuteronomy 5:15).

Every day, faithful Israelites were to recite a prayer which became very important in the ministry of Jesus: Israel, remember this! The Lord – and the Lord alone – is our God. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. Never forget these commands that I am giving you today. (Deuteronomy 6:4-6)

We can most clearly see how important memory is in the Bible when we consider that the central festival of Israel's calendar – Passover – is all about remembering the dramatic events that led to the

liberation of the slaves from Egypt (Exodus 12-13).

Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, over and over in different ways, we see how memory is at the heart of knowing the truth about yourself, your people, and your world.

Memory in the present

This year marks a decade since the period of prosperity known as the Celtic Tiger came to an end. What followed was almost a decade of punishing austerity in the public finances and the devastation of many families through unemployment, underemployment, and debt.

The country has at long last come out of the turmoil, and for that we should be thankful. But many do not feel like the rising tide has come anywhere their boats, which are still full of holes unpatched since they last took a battering.

Today our newspapers are full with articles about rising property prices, our radios broadcast reports about vanishing unemployment,

and all around us the billboards and magazine spreads and Google ads tempt us to engage in retail therapy. In such a setting, it is important to remember what life was like for us 10 years ago.

In the summer of 2008 we were riding high. Ireland was in the middle of an economic boom that promised to go on forever. We found our identity in how much money we had and spent our time working on making that money grow.

“Today our newspapers are full with articles about rising property prices, our radios broadcast reports about vanishing unemployment”

This summer it is important to remember that the boom did not go on forever. When it ended, it was sudden and shocking. Collective remembering is not something we should leave in the pages of the Bible.

Our present national mood is very much in favour of ‘keeping the recovering going’. But if we do not maintain our memory of how abruptly and painfully the promises of economic growth were shown to be hollow, we may have much more misery in store. There are many who are homeless, who are on unending waiting lists for medical care, who

are in debt they cannot conceive of repaying, who do not have the luxury of forgetting the hard lessons of the past decade.

At the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice we have been trying to wrestle with the memory of the end of the Celtic Tiger. We cannot develop a vision for the future of Ireland that is just and fair without a clear recollection of the past. The Celtic Tiger did not roar for everyone. It was deeply unequal, the consequences of which we can now see in the numbers of families who are homeless. Remembering rightly is not just about crafting good policy.

We can see from the Scriptures it is a spiritual issue. We cannot know ourselves, if we cannot own what we have done. Taking the time to reflect on the last decade is a profound opportunity to imagine the possibilities of the next decade.

Instead of hopeless resignation that we are bound to return to the cycle of boom and bust, it is within our power to have hope to do things differently.

Our present is shaped by our past; but our future is not determined by it. If we remember that, anything is possible.

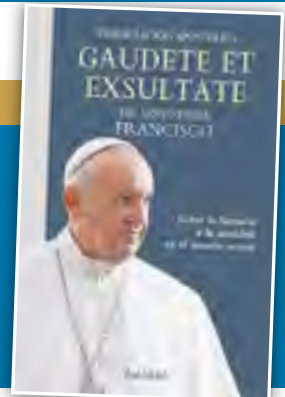
① Kevin Hargaden is a social theologian at the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice. The latest issue of their journal, Working Notes, deals with the issue of remembering the last 10 years and is available for free at www.workingnotes.ie

“The Celtic Tiger did not roar for everyone. It was deeply unequal, the consequences of which we can now see in the numbers of families who are homeless...remembering rightly is not just about crafting good policy”

STUDY GUIDE

Gaudete et Exsultate

'Rejoice and Be Glad'



With less than eight weeks until Pope Francis visits Ireland, attention is focusing on his teachings and what his message will be to the Church in Ireland. Here we publish a study guide to the Pope's most recent document *Gaudete et Exsultate* prepared by **Prof. Eamonn Conway** of Mary Immaculate College, Limerick and **Greg Daly**, Assistant Editor of *The Irish Catholic*

Introduction

Pope Francis begins his new exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* – 'Rejoice and be glad' – by recalling how Jesus wants us to be saints, giving him everything and receiving the happiness for which we are created. The document, the Pope says, is not an academic text but is an attempt to express the call to holiness in a practical way for today.

COMMENTARY

Increasingly Catholics are asking themselves what exactly Pope Francis is up to in his efforts to renew the Church. For some, he is moving too quickly, for others, not quickly enough.

Just over five years ago then-Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio, having reached the age of 75, had already submitted his resignation to Pope Benedict XVI. The next call he was expecting from the Holy See was to tell him that his successor as Archbishop of Buenos Aires had been selected and that he could retire in peace.

Instead, here we are busily preparing to welcome him to our country as our Pope.

“More important still is implementing the Council's understanding of the kind of life and vocation each of us Christians is called to by virtue of our baptism”

So, what has he been up to? In short, he has been systematically implementing the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) both by his words and his actions, and the more he does this the more we realise that in many respects we are still only in the early stages of embracing what the Holy Spirit has been beckoning us towards these past 50 years.

Unlike all the other Popes since Vatican II Pope Francis wasn't actually at the Council. Yet he has very much taken its continuing implementation to heart.

For instance, he has been working

hard to transform the leadership and governance structures of the Church by strengthening the World Synod of Bishops. Since Pope Francis' election we have had two synods on marriage and the family in rapid succession and this Autumn we will have another on the vocation of young people.

Synods are meant to ensure that the voices of bishops from all over the world are heard, listened and responded to by the Holy See. In turn, diocesan bishops are meant to listen to and ensure that they are attuned to the Holy Spirit at work in the hopes and aspirations of Christ's faithful who are struggling to respond to God's will in their daily lives.

Pope Francis has also created new leadership bodies in the Holy See and we await a major document on the restructuring of the Curia to be published in a couple of months' These changes in governance and leadership are not knee-jerk reactions to crises in the Church: they are reforms that the Second Vatican



Council foresaw as indispensable if the Church was going to be able to be truly a global Christian community at the service of God's reign,

capable of meeting the challenges of modern life.

As important as structural reform is to Pope Francis, however, more

important still is implementing the Council's understanding of the kind of life and vocation each of us Christians is called to by virtue of our baptism. This is the call to holiness.

The call to holiness is at the heart of Pope Francis' efforts to renew the Church. He has repeatedly upbraided bishops and curial officials on the need to ensure that they themselves are living authentically Christian lives.

The key message of the Synod on Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment, to take place next October, is that young people are also called to holiness. Pope Francis wants young people to see holiness as their mission. He knows that most of them seek to live a life of value, meaning and purpose but often they do not know how to see this as a gift, invitation and calling from God, in other words, as a vocation to holiness. Similarly, the synods on marriage and the family, and the post-synodal exhortation *The Joy of Love* invites married people to understand their lives and that of their families as vocations at the service of the Joy of the Gospel.

Gaudete et Exultate is a call to each of us to rediscover and deepen our own vocation to holiness.



Chapter 1

The call to holiness

We are surrounded by a great number of saints, Pope Francis says, ranging from the heroes of the Bible, the saints recognised by the Church, and martyrs of all Christian denominations who intercede for us before God, to our own family members and other loved ones.

God saves no one in isolation, the Pope adds, but takes into account the complex fabric of human community. The holiness of the Church can be found in parents who raise their children with love, in men and women who work hard to support their families, in the sick, and in elderly religious who reflect God's happiness. Real history is made not just by dramatic figures but by the "souls who no history book ever mentions".

We are all called to holiness in our own distinct and special ways, women as much as men, and ordinary people as much as clergy and religious. People called to the consecrated life can be holy by living their commitments joyfully, married people by loving and caring for their spouses, workers by labouring honestly and skilfully in the service of others, parents and grandparents by patiently teaching children to follow Jesus, and people in authority by working for the common good and renouncing personal gain.

In the Scriptures, the Sacraments, holy places, living communities, the witness of the saints and its many types of beauty, the Church contains all that is needed to help us grow towards holiness, and God can always work the miracle of helping us become better. We should always turn to God, with the help of the Holy Spirit, and remember that all holiness is ultimately the fruit of the Spirit.

“When we consider saints, we shouldn't expect them to be perfect all the time, but should contemplate the totality of their life and their growth in holiness”

Holiness grows through small gestures. Refusing to engage in gossip, listening patiently to the cares of others, turning to Mary and praying the Rosary at a time of anxiety, and speaking kindly with a poor person in the street are all the kind of small steps that help make us holy. Holiness can be achieved through living in the moment, and trying to make ordinary moments occasions of extraordinary love.

Our individual missions on earth as Christians are our particular and distinctive paths to holiness. They come to have their fullest expression in Christ and can only be understood through him, with our holiness entailing experiencing with Christ the mysteries of his life. This means dying and rising anew with him, but can also mean reproducing, for example, his hidden life, his life in community, his poverty, or his closeness to outcasts. Contemplat-



ing these mysteries can lead us to reflect them in our own choices and attitudes, and we grow in holiness as we model our lives on that of Jesus.

When we consider saints, we shouldn't expect them to be perfect all the time, but should contemplate the totality of their life and their growth in holiness. Similarly, we should see our own lives as missions where we grow in holiness, learning to listen to God and discern what Jesus wants of us, and allowing ourselves to be transformed.

Our personal missions shouldn't be understood apart from the call to build up Christ's kingdom of love, justice and peace. Silence, peace and prayer are important and necessary but should not be negative expressions of fleeing interaction, activity, and service. We are called to be contemplatives in the midst of action; life should not distract us from holiness, and should not be disdained as a distraction from holiness. "Sooner or later, we have to face our true selves and let the Lord enter," the

Pope says, maintaining that "we need a spirit of holiness capable of filling both our solitude and our service".

Holiness is not something to fear, but is how we become who God intended us to be when he created us.

COMMENTARY

Pope Francis often reminds us that in the past we had some "adulterated", that is, seriously distorted, forms of Christianity. *Gaudete et Exsultate* sets

out to address a particular distortion Vatican II sought to correct in regard to how we understand holiness.

Let's face it: those of us who grew up in the Church long after the Council still imbibed the notion that holiness was for other people, people we viewed to be better than ourselves. To this day many of us still tend to think only of named saints as holy, perhaps also of popes, maybe some missionaries, and the occasional priest or religious we have met and admired. This tendency persists even though sadly we have had to face the fact that many of those we tended to look up to turned out to have had 'clay feet'.

“Prayer and the sacraments nourish us. They are the food for our journey into holiness. They unite us with a praying community”

The least holy person, we were led to believe, is likely to be the ordinary man, woman or child who didn't seem to have much time to do "holy things" because they were too busy making a living, looking after each other and their families and would be lucky to "scrape into Heaven" by going to Mass and confession as often as they could.

Even though we celebrate the Feast of All Saints of Ireland on November 6, we would still hesitate to include among those saints ordinary people, people like our parents or grandparents, people whom we know loved us as best they could but who at times were also frail, and, like ourselves, sinners.

We would hardly dare to hope that one day All Saints of Ireland





might even be our own Feast Day too. Yet, the most important history is written, Pope Francis tells us, by people “no history book ever mentions” (*Gaudete et Exultate*, hereafter *GE*, n. 8).

Last week while working on Lough Derg, I met a woman who spoke to me along the following lines: “I am really sorry I don’t seem to be able to pray any more. I have three children under the age of four and my husband and I struggle to make ends meet. We have to work whenever we can. My mother is sick a lot of the time and whatever time I have left over is spent caring for her. I used to be great at praying. I am really sorry, but God doesn’t get much of a ‘look in’ in my life nowadays.”

I was reminded of what Pope Francis has to say in *Gaudete et Exultate* as I tried to respond to her. What he says is this: for that woman, as for so many wonderful parents and other ordinary men and women, God is very much getting a ‘look in’ in her life but she does not realise it.

God is being encountered, met, responded to and loved in every gesture of care and kindness she shows to her family, in every struggling effort she makes to be faithful to her many responsibilities, in the joys that those moments bring her. God is getting a ‘look in’ also the way she faces the inevitable moments of sorrow and loss that will come her way with courage and perseverance.

Paraphrasing Pope Francis in *Gaudete et Exultate*, I said to her: “caring for your family and those you love is the particular path to holiness that God has laid out for you”. I was deeply moved when

tears of relief came into her eyes as she heard these words. She had felt that somehow doing the right thing by God, on the one hand, and caring for her loved ones, on the other, were in competition, and she couldn’t fulfill her responsibilities to both. It was a tremendous relief and source of joy to her to know that this was not the case.

“There is no “priority” or “fast-track” lane to holiness. We are all on an equal footing before God with equal opportunity...”

In a key paragraph Pope Francis writes: “Are you married? Be holy by caring for your husband or wife, as Christ does for the Church. Do you work for a living? Be holy by laboring with integrity and skill in the service of your brothers and sisters. Are you a parent or godparent? Be holy by patiently teaching the little ones how to follow Jesus” (*GE* n.14).

It’s not, of course, as though saying prayers and going to Mass are unimportant. Prayer and the sacraments nourish us. They are the food for our journey into holiness. They unite us with a praying community that supports and at times carries us. “No one is saved alone” (n. 6), Pope Francis says. We need to be alert to how the ‘rat-race’ can distract us from the need “to carry on a heart-felt dialogue with God” (n. 29). Holiness involves both prayer and action.

The universal call to holiness in the midst of our daily circumstances is the message of Pope Francis and it

is the message of Vatican II. In one of the key Vatican documents (*Lumen Gentium*, 40), we read: “All the faithful of Christ, of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity; by this holiness as such a more human manner of living is promoted in this earthly society.”

Vatican II levels the playing pitch when it comes to holiness while telling us that we all must get on the pitch, so to speak. There is no “priority” or “fast-track” lane to holiness. We are all on an equal footing before God with equal opportunity and responsibility to respond to the call to holiness in the unique manner and way God has planned for each one of us. “The important thing is that each believer discern his or her own path” (*GE*, n. 11).

The call to holiness is also a call to happiness. The title of the Exhortation, in Latin, *Gaudete et Exultate*, “Rejoice and be glad”, reminds us of this. It comes from Matthew 5:12 and is part of the Sermon on the Mount in which we find the Beatitudes.

Chapter 2 Two subtle enemies of holiness

Having mapped out how we are all called to holiness in our own special and unique ways, Pope Francis then cautions against two false ideas of holiness that can lead us away, which he identifies as the ancient heresies of Gnosticism and Pelagianism, still with us today in new forms.

In ancient times Gnosticism

[see panel on Page 20] was a type of religious approach that tended to emphase secret knowledge, and which understood God in an abstract way, as though pure spirit, rather than as having become incarnate – flesh and blood – among us, like us in all things but sin. When Gnosticism influenced Christianity in the ancient world, it led to Christians underplaying the humanity of Christ. In turn, this led people to misunderstand their own humanity and that holiness was to be found within the human condition, that is, within the ordinary events of our daily lives, mostly low-key, ordinary and uneventful, rather than by attempting to run away from or escape from these.

Pope Francis says that Gnosticism presumes a subjective faith based on knowledge that is meant to console us but ultimately keeps us locked into our own thoughts and feelings. Gnostics, he says, tend to think of the intellect as something abstract, separate from the flesh, with the effect that they disembodify God and do not understand the depths of his charity. They can reduce Christianity to a kind of system, where people measure perfection not by charity but by knowledge.

This kind of rationalism, that is, seeing everything in terms of reason alone, is not utterly contrary to Christianity, the Pope warns, but instead can be found throughout it in the temptation to think that the entirety of the Faith can be neatly packaged and explained; he warns that when somebody has an answer for every question it may be a sign that they are on the wrong road, unaware of how God can surprise us

or be present where we least expect, even in lives devastated by vices and addictions.

We need to be careful to avoid mistaking our understandings of Christ’s teachings for the teaching itself, he says, or thinking that we somehow feel superior to people because we know or can explain things that are beyond others.

“A healthy and humble use of reason in order to reflect on the theological and moral teaching of the Gospel is one thing,” Pope Francis says. “It is another to reduce Jesus’ teaching to a cold and hard logic that seeks to dominate everything.”

Pelagianism [see panel on Page 21] had its roots in the recognition that Christian knowledge is not enough, but simply transformed that error by attributing holiness to personal effort and human will. This forgets how all holiness comes from God, and excludes the workings of divine mercy and grace in our lives.

There is a danger in speaking warmly of God’s grace while ultimately trusting in observance of rules of fidelity to styles of Catholicism, and forgetting how grace does not heal our weaknesses once and for all in this life. In this, it ignores how God can help people grow by building on their nature, with holiness being a journey in which grace works through time by transforming us progressively. It is crucial, the Pontiff says, to learn to walk in union with God, recognising that we dwell in him.

The Church has repeatedly taught, he says, that we are justified by God’s grace, not by our own efforts, with even our cooperation

Gnosticism

Gnosticism, which derives from the Greek word ‘knowledge’, is the modern name for a variety of sects and religious beliefs that became prominent against the background of the flowering of Christianity in the 2nd Century.

At the heart of Gnosticism is the belief that the material world is bad and the spiritual realm is good. Contradicting the Genesis account of Creation where God describes the material world as ‘very good’, Gnostics viewed the material world as irredeemable, and sought to focus solely on things of the spirit.

This hatred of the material world didn’t just apply to objects but also to our own bodies. They held that our souls are trapped inside our bodies, much like gold in mud. Theologians and philosophers often refer to this idea as ‘dualism’.

The goal for the Gnostics then was to escape our inferior bodies and reach new spiritual heights, which was only possible through a special secret knowledge given to a few select people. This knowledge, Gnostics believed, was given by Jesus and through learning

and living it, you would receive salvation.

Of course, given that Gnostics hated all things physical, they maintained that Christ wasn’t really incarnate, but purely a spiritual being. It may have looked like he had a body, but this was just an illusion. He actually came to save people from their bodies.

Often in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries, Gnostics would try to promote their ideas as true forms of Christianity by writing false gospels and attributing them to the disciples of Jesus. The 2nd Century Gospel of Judas for example, recounts how Judas Iscariot was really Jesus’ true disciple, as Jesus had taught him the real secrets of his divine message.

Belief

The Church, however, has routinely condemned Gnosticism for a number of reasons, mainly because it suggests that salvation is based on how much you know, and secondly, because it espouses the belief that our bodies are separate from our souls.

Catholics believe that we are ‘body-soul composites’, which is to say, there is intimate unity between our bodies and souls. The body, rather than a mere appendage, is conjoined to the soul, and it is this relationship that constitutes the human person. This theological belief is primarily rooted in the Incarnation, where Jesus truly became flesh, and in the Resurrection where it was not just Jesus’ spirit that rose again, but also his body.

Often, we have the misbelief that in Heaven we will be disembodied spirits, but Catholics hold that in Heaven we also have bodies. We’re not entirely sure what they will look like but following the example of Jesus who had a transformed body after he rose from the dead, we can gain an insight as to what it might be like.

As a reminder of the heresy of Gnosticism and the true character of Catholicism, simply remember the words we pray during the Nicene Creed: “I look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come”.

with God’s grace itself being the fruit of that same grace. This should be grounds for gratitude and humility, and something to be accepted with joy: our lives and our freedom are gifts from God, freely given, and never earned.

We should remember this, and avoid the temptation towards an unloving complacency which can entail obsessions with law, with social and political advantages, with the minutiae of Church liturgy and practice, with vanity over practical concerns, or with programmes of self-help and personal fulfilment.

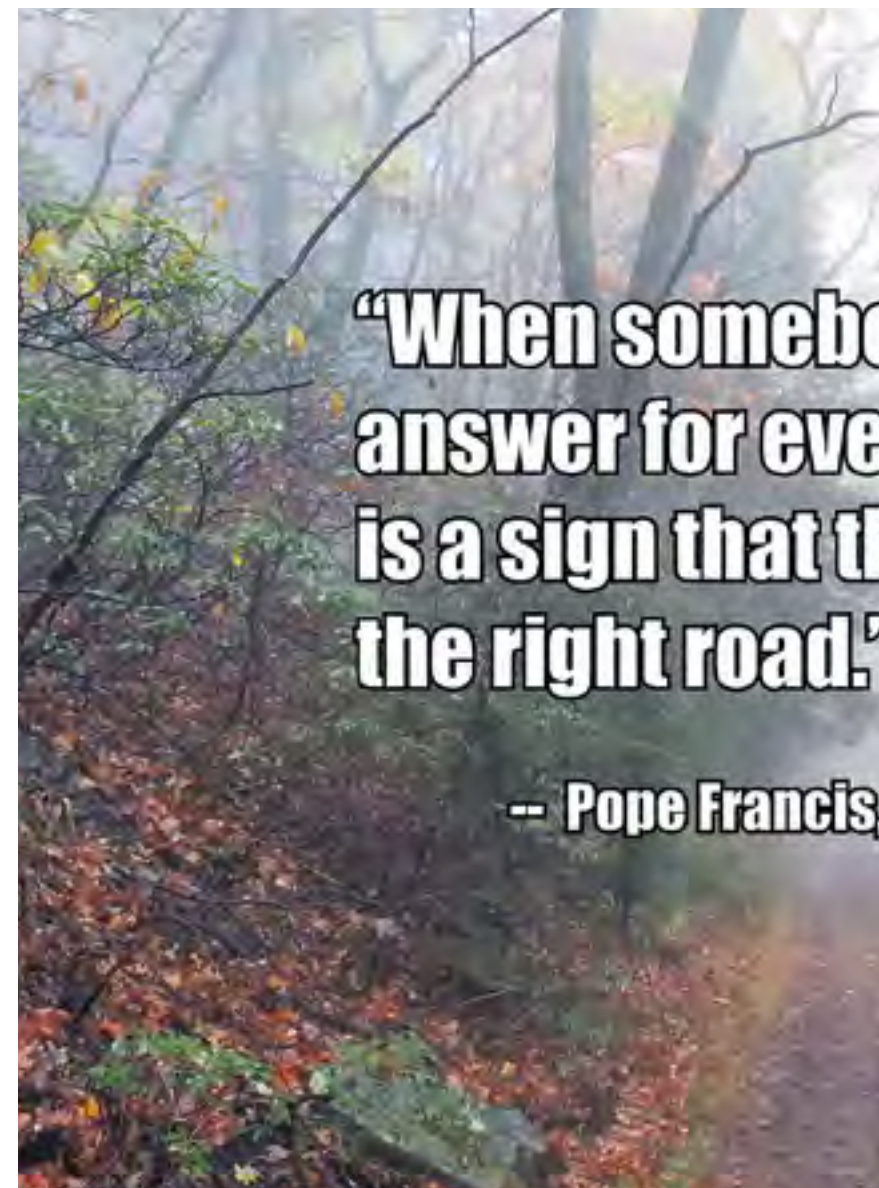
Obsessions with these things can prevent Christians from being led by the Spirit in the way of love, communicating the beauty and joy of the Gospel, and seeking out the lost amongst those who thirst for Christ. Too often, the Pope cautions, obsessions with rules or customs can make the Church seem a museum piece or an elitist club, causing whole communities or movements to “end up fossilised...or corrupt”, and with human strictures and structures complicating the Gospel in a way that leaves openings for the workings of grace.

To avoid this, Pope Francis says, we should all remind ourselves of the hierarchy of virtues with charity at the very centre, and with Jesus calling us to see the faces of God and each other – and God, he says, is reflected in the faces of our brothers and sisters, especially those who are most vulnerable.

COMMENTARY

Many contrasting pathways for living our lives are held before us in contemporary society. They all promise prosperity and wellbeing but they generally prove illusory or, at best, transient. Pope Francis takes some time to deal with these illusory pathways.

He dwells especially on those that are counterfeiting, that is, that



**“When someone
answers for ever
is a sign that they
the right road.”**
-- Pope Francis

look like authentic Christian pathways to holiness but in reality are subtle yet fatally misleading cul-de-sacs. When he refers to concepts such as Pelagianism and Gnosticism (see Chapter 2) he is using language we struggle to understand at first. Here he is referring to heresies that are as old as Christianity itself and that tend to recur in every age. A heresy is a belief that may in part be true but is not the whole truth and in fact, on its own, distorts and misrepresents the truth.

“Nothing expresses holiness in our daily lives more simply than the Beatitudes, which Pope Francis refers to as ‘a Christian’s identity card’”

We have taken some time to explain these terms because what the Pope has to say here is very important. Regarding Gnosticism, in a nutshell, Pope Francis is saying that we won’t talk our way into Heaven or get there by seeking to impress others with all the clever things we think we know about God that no one else knows.

Regarding Pelagianism, named after the monk Pelagius (ca 360 to 420 AD), we sometimes mistakenly believe we can “earn our own eternal keep”, so to speak. Rather than seeing eternal life with God as ultimately God’s gift to us, Pelagius felt we could attain heaven solely by personal effort. In this case heaven would be like a reward we could claim if along the pathway of life we ‘gathered enough coupons’, so to

speak, for being good. Many people still see getting to heaven in these terms. It has been forgotten, as Pope Francis writes, “that everything ‘depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who shows mercy’ (Rom. 9:16) and that ‘he first loved us’ (cf 1 Jn 4:19)” (GE, n. 48).

We see Pelagianism showing itself today in many self-help programmes that create the illusion that somehow we can manufacture happiness or bestow upon our own lives, by our own efforts, ultimate fulfillment.

Chapter 3 In the light of the Master

Nothing expresses holiness in our daily lives more simply than the Beatitudes, which Pope Francis refers to as “a Christian’s identity card”. The words ‘happy’ and ‘blessed’ in the Beatitudes are synonyms for ‘holy’, with the Beatitudes expressing how “those faithful to God and his word, by their self-giving, gain true happiness”.

The Beatitudes are challenging, running against how the world does things, and can only be achieved if the Spirit empowers us to do so.

● Wealth ensures nothing, the Pope says, and wealth can lead to a self-satisfaction that leaves no room for God, other people, or the enjoyment of life’s most important things. We should cultivate an indifference to created things so we do not set our hearts on them, he says, noting how according to Luke’s Gospel Jesus invites us to a plain and austere life.



situations, but someone who sees things as they are and sympathises with pain and sorrow can touch life's depths and find true happiness, consoled by Jesus. Such a person can share in the suffering of others, helping them to deal with loss and grow closer to God and others.

● Those who yearn for righteousness will be satisfied eventually, the Pope says, pointing out that Jesus offers a perfect justice that is not of this world and unmarred by petty interests and manipulation. True justice in our lives requires us to be just in our decisions and especially in the pursuit of justice for the poor and weak.

“If we meet others’ faults and limitations with tenderness and meekness, we can help them without in a way that nourishes and sustains both them and us...”

● Mercy entails giving, helping and serving others but also includes forgiveness and understanding. The golden rule is “in everything, do to others as you would have them do to you”, with this rule applied in every case, especially ones where situations make decisions difficult. We are called to be merciful always, to refrain from judging and condemning people, and to forgive. We need, Pope Francis says, to think of ourselves “as an army of the forgiven” and to show others the mercy we have been shown.

● Nothing stained by falsehood has any real worth to God, the Pope says, noting that God sees all, and knows what is impure and insincere. Our love is called to be pure, with our commitment to our brothers and

● The world can be a place of pride and vanity where people pigeonhole others based on ideas or customs, and even how they speak or dress and where it's normal to seek to dominate others. Constant anger and impatience with others can leave us drained and weary, though if we meet others faults and limitations with tenderness and meekness, we

can help them without in a way that nourishes and sustains both them and us. Meekness is an expression of interior poverty that helps us place our trust in the Lord and see God's promises accomplished in our lives.

● The world says entertainment and pleasure make for the good life, and disregards sickness and sorrow, avoiding or concealing painful

Pelagianism

Pelagianism, sometimes called the Pelagian Heresy, is a 5th Century heresy believed to have been taught by a British monk called Pelagius. He was born around 360AD and died in the 420s. Against the teachings of the Church, Pelagianism holds that Original Sin did not taint human nature and that humans can will themselves to salvation without the grace of God.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes it like this: “man could, by the natural power of free will and without the necessary help of God's grace, lead a morally good life” (CCC, 406).

Pelagius held that the Fall in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve disobeyed God was simply an example of humans behaving badly, and consequently there is no Original Sin from which Adam's descendants need to be redeemed.

In others words, every single person is born as a blank slate with no inherent bent toward sinning. In this way, people can freely choose between good and evil without the help of God – holiness

can be attained entirely through one's unaided free will by being good. Having ceased from sin, the Christian would be acceptable to God through their own merit or achievement.

This belief didn't go unnoticed by the Church because it markedly undermined orthodox teaching on concepts such as original sin and grace.

Serious issue

Pelagius, for example, had a serious issue with infant baptism – it wasn't needed as there was no original sin from which to be cleansed! He also thought that grace didn't affect or prompt good works even in the slightest. In order to dispel confusion over these beliefs, the Council of Carthage in 418 provided corrections on the errors of early Pelagians. The council stated that new-born infants must be baptised on account of Original Sin, and that without God's grace it is absolutely impossible to perform good works.

Thus, the Church reaffirmed its long-held position that it is only

through the grace of God that we can perform good works, and also that it is grace that creates the possibility for salvation.

Although Pelagius died 16 centuries ago, the beliefs that he created have not yet been forgotten and routinely show up from time to time. Nowadays, when most people talk about Pelagianism, they aren't really referring to this sophisticated but incorrect historical idea, but rather a mentality of self-centredness, individualism and a false notion of autonomy.

This has become a problem common in today's much more secular society where the notion of God's sustenance and direction is rejected. Instead, it has been replaced with a focus on worldly pursuits based on the belief that true happiness can be reached by concentrating on oneself without recognising the power and presence of God in the world. Often, we can all be guilty of this, but always keep in mind: we can't be good or be saved without God.



sisters coming from the heart. A pure heart is one that loves God and neighbour genuinely and not simply in words.

● Gossip is the enemy of peace, which we are called to build in society; peace, friendship, and unity are preferable to conflict, the Pontiff says, even though this can be difficult to achieve. Peacemaking is hard work, calling for openness of mind and heart, since it is not about creating a paper consensus but about facing and resolving conflict head-on.

“Helping individuals, he adds, is not enough; social and economic justice are needed too, so there is no longer exclusion”

● Jesus' Gospel path may make us challenge and annoy society through how we live, and may lead us to be ridiculed and persecuted, but we ought not to long for an easy life “unless we wish to sink into an obscure mediocrity”. Persecutions for the sake of the Gospel are inevitable, and should not be confused with persecution brought upon our-

selves in response to the mistreatment of others. The Cross, through all genuine persecution, remains the source of our growth and sanctification, and it is holiness to continue to follow the Gospel path even if it causes us problems.

Jesus expands on the Beatitude about mercy at Matthew 31-46, Pope Francis says, mapping out a clear criterion by which our holiness will be judged by God when he calls on us to recognise him in the poor and suffering. Holiness cannot be understood or lived apart from these demands, he says, saying how a Christian who encounters a homeless person on a cold night, for example, must see this person as “a human being with a dignity identical to my own, a creature infinitely loved by the Father, an image of God, a brother or sister redeemed by Jesus Christ”.

Helping individuals, he adds, is not enough; social and economic justice are needed too, so there is no longer exclusion.

Misleading ideologies can lead us to two harmful errors, he cautions. Warning of working to help others as though our actions stand apart from our personal relationship with Jesus, he points to great saints whose

mental prayer, Gospel reading, and love of God fuelled their passionate and effective commitment to others. The other key error is to dismiss the social engagement of Christians as superficial, secular, communist or populist, or to relativise it as though the only thing that matters is the one particular ethical issue or cause they themselves defend.

Prayer is essential to our love of God, he says, and the best way to judge its authenticity is the extent to which we are transformed by mercy, with the ultimate criterion on which we are judged being what we have done for others.

COMMENTARY

Front and centre of the map guiding us along the authentic path to happiness are the Beatitudes, which Pope Francis refers to as the Christian's identity card (*GE*, n.63) and upon which he invites us to meditate in Chapter 3 of the Exhortation.

The kind of life-style to which they invite us, if only we could adopt it, is a sure guarantee of deep joy both in this life and in the next. Mercy, is the key; both showing mercy to others and becoming willing and able recipients of God's mercy and the mercy of others ourselves. This is the message that lies at the heart of *Gaudete et Exultate*.

In each of Pope Francis' documents to date he has provided a biblical text for our reflection. For instance, as we saw last week, in *The Joy of Love* he provides us with a beautiful reflection in Chapter 4 on 1 Corinthians 13: "Love is always patient and kind..."

With each of these texts we could make a very worthwhile retreat for ourselves reflecting patiently on the passage and the Pope's commentary in the context of our everyday lives.

Chapter 4 Signs of holiness in today's world

Having shown how the Beatitudes and Matthew 25:31-46 map out a kind of blueprint for living a holy life, Pope Francis then turns to describe what he sees as five great expressions of love for God and neighbour of particular importance in today's world given certain dangers and limitations present in modern society.

First, he says, a solid grounding in God can give us an inner strength and peace that enables us to persevere amid life's ups and downs, to endure hostility, betrayal and failings on the part of others, and to give a witness of holiness through patience and constancy in doing good.

Along with accompanying others in bad times, this should entail us recognising our aggressive and selfish inclinations, without letting them take root and without being drawn into networks of verbal violence such as on the internet and the media, including the Catholic media, where the commandment against bearing false witness is sometimes completely ignored.

Looking down on others and always trying to teach them lessons can be a subtle form of violence, he says, with the path to holy humility entailing humiliations that we must learn to suffer and offer up. Daily



humiliations, he says, can include keeping silent to save our families, praising others rather than boasting of ourselves, or choosing unwelcome tasks, even bearing injustices so they can be offered up. This humility and freedom from selfishness can help us dare to demand justice or defend the weak, regardless of what it will cost our reputations.

The second sign of holiness today, the Pontiff says, is joy and a sense of humour. The saints, he says, are joyful and full of good humour, radiating a positive and hopeful spirit, even in times of affliction. Though hard times come, the supernatural joy born of trust in God's love for us endures, bringing "deep security, serene hope and a spiritual fulfilment that the world cannot understand or appreciate".

In contrast, he cautions, sadness can be a sign of ingratitude and an inability to recognise God's gifts, and while passing pleasures can be got from today's individualistic and consumerist culture, this is not to be confused with true joy.

A bold and passionate impulse to speak out, to share the Good News and leave a mark in the world, is a third sign of holiness, Pope Francis says. Jesus' assurance that he is with us to the end of the world should enable us to go forth and serve with the same courage that the Spirit stirred up in the Apostles.

The true courage of a life lived in a way that is open to God should lead us to spend our lives in Christ's service and not fear reaching out, leaving safe havens and the shores and closed spaces we know. God, he says, impels us constantly to set out anew to the fringes and beyond, to where humanity is most wounded, and where men and women, even

beneath the appearance of a shallow conformity, continue to seek an answer to the question of life's meaning.

We must not fear to let the Lord shake us from our complacency, to rethink our usual way of doing things, and to be inspired by those missionaries who have been and are enthusiastic about sharing true life, challenging us to abandon a dull and dreary mediocrity.

A fourth sign of holiness, the Pontiff reminds us, is community – in isolation we can lose our sense of reality and inner clarity, but growth in holiness is a journey in community. Monasteries and other religious communities are obvious examples of this, and Pope Francis reminds us too that families are communities, with spouses in holy marriages being means for each other's sanctification. Living and working alongside others is a path of spiritual growth.

Sharing the word and celebrating the Eucharist together fosters friendship and solidarity and makes us holy and missionary communities, giving rise to authentic and shared mystical experiences that, though important, are less frequent and less important than the sort of small everyday things to which Jesus asked the disciples to pay attention.

Far from a growing consumerist individualism that tends to isolate us in a quest for a selfish well-being, a community "that cherishes the little details of love", he says, is a place where the risen Lord is present and where we can be granted consoling experiences of God.

Finally, he says, outlining the fifth sign, holiness consists of a habitual openness to God, expressed in prayer and adoration. While prayer need



not be lengthy or intense, it is essential to holiness, the Pope believes. Our attitude should be prayerful, he says, attentive as much as possible to the presence of God, and some moments spent alone before God is necessary.

“Trust-filled prayer is a response of a heart open to encountering God face to face, where all is peaceful and the quiet voice of the Lord can be heard,” the Pope says, explaining that the paths of holiness to which the Lord calls us can be discerned in that silence. For each disciple, he says, it is necessary to listen to the Master’s words and learn from him always. Prayerful silence, he stresses, must never be regarded as an escape from or rejection of the world, but must instead be an opportunity to allow ourselves to be healed and transformed by God.

God entered into our history, the Pope adds, and so our prayer is interwoven with memories; we should think of our own history when we pray, asking God to shed his light on it and reveal his mercy. Prayers of supplication, petition, and intercession, where we ask God for things, are expressions of our faith in God, our perseverance in hope, and our love for our neighbours.

Reading of the Scriptures, he concludes, enable us to listen to Jesus’ voice, and leads us to the Eucharist where God is truly present and where we renew our covenant with him and allow him to transform us.

COMMENTARY

In this chapter Pope Francis offers us five signs of holiness, what he calls “great expressions of love of God and neighbor that I consider of particular importance in the light of certain dangers and limitations in today’s culture” (GE, n. 111).

People will be struck by how ordinary the attributes he asks us to cultivate actually are: perseverance,

patience, meekness, joy, humour, passion, courage, prayerfulness and valuing community. Yet in the ‘rat-race’ of life, in what he called in *Laudato Si’*, “the age of rapidification”, it can be very difficult to develop and sustain these attributes in our daily lives. We can be easily distracted, indeed paralysed in patterns of behavior that have us only half-living our lives.

As Pope Francis says, “no one is saved alone as an isolated individual” (GE, n. 6). So here’s a suggestion. We need companions along our path to holiness. We need spiritual guides. Could we consider availing of the Sacrament of Penance as an aid to our growth in these “great expressions of love”?

We talk a lot today about adult faith formation but as a Church we have done too little to help adult Christians make a genuinely adult confession.

Too often confession consists in simply listing our sinful shortcomings, much the same as we did in our first confession as children, saying we are sorry, receiving absolution and performing a simple penance, usually a prayer. I have had men and women in their 70s confessing to me that, along with “the odd curse” and “missing their morning and evening prayers”, they were also “disobedient to their parents”, parents long deceased!

As a priest working in Germany, I learned that children in that country seemed to have been better prepared for confession than back at home in Ireland.

Generally, they didn’t come in with ‘the usual shopping list’ learned off as a formula. Instead, they were guided to keep an eye on a particular aspect of their lives in need of growth and reform. It could be laziness at home, selfishness in regard to caring for others, not making enough time to pray or to learn about God, and so on. During confes-



sion they would report on how they had been getting on, express sorrow if they hadn’t been doing well and renew their commitment to growth before God.

If things had been going well then the confessor might invite them to identify another area of their life in need of attention, like a gardener finding a new patch in need of tilling and planting. “When, in God’s presence, we examine our life’s journey”, Pope Francis says, “no areas can be off limits” (GE, n. 175)

The Sacrament of Penance isn’t meant to be just a sporadic wiping clean of the slate but rather a regular encounter with the mercy of Christ guiding our personal spiritual growth in a programmatic way. In the Sacrament of Penance the confessor can also be experienced as a supportive and at times challenging “soul-friend”, *Anam Cara*, as was commonplace in early Irish Christianity.

Over the years I have invited penitents to consider the Sacrament of Penance in these terms and they have found it helpful as I have myself.

As Pope Francis, following St Ignatius, reminds us, we only ever grow in small incremental steps. Holiness is forged not so much through our successes in living the Christian life but by our perseverance and commitment, our fidelity and our passion. In contrast, sin is the stubborn refusal to grow especially where God is calling forth new life in us (see GE, n.169).

So, imagine going to confession and with the confessor’s help we recognise and acknowledge certain ‘Stop Signs’ to spiritual growth in our lives. We discern divine ‘No Go Areas’ where God is not really welcome: a pattern of selfishness, a neglected relationship, an addiction, or a gift that could be put at the service of the community or the Gospel but is lying unused. It might be a stubborn refusal to forgive or accept forgiveness.

We can be overwhelmed and even paralysed by how much and how miserably we fall short of what God asks of us.

To avoid this, and bearing in mind that we only grow and change in small, careful, deliberate steps, would it be helpful during confession to focus in particular on one or two areas in need of growth and have the confessor help us to make a plan to get out of whatever rut our life might be in and grow a little more into the person God has planned for us to be?

Chapter 4 of this exhortation is a very helpful Examination of Conscience for a truly adult confession. Note in particular how holiness is not just about ‘me and God’ but relates to my contribution to the life of the Christian community and the society in which I live. Perhaps in Ireland we have over-emphasised holiness as something private ‘between me and my God’ and therefore also sin as something that only affects ourselves before God. “Growth in holiness is a journey in community, side by side with others”, Pope Francis reminds us (GE, n. 141).

Chapter 5: Spiritual combat, vigilance and discernment

The Christian life is a constant battle, Pope Francis says, not merely against the world, worldly mentalities and our own weaknesses and inclinations, but against the devil, who Jesus warned against and in whose defeats Jesus rejoices.

The devil, the Pope says, is not simply a myth or figure of speech, and from earliest times his supernatural reality has been recognised, with him being present from the very first pages of the Scriptures.

It is not for nothing that Jesus concluded the Our Father with a petition that we be delivered from evil – a precise translation of that would ask that we be delivered from “the evil one”.

Dismissing the reality of the devil, and thinking of him only as a symbol causes us to lower our guards and exposes ourselves to his threats. “The devil does not need to possess us,” the Pontiff warns. “He poisons us with the venom of hatred, desolation, envy and vice. When we let down our guard, he takes advantage of it to destroy our lives, our families and our communities.”

Those who do not realise how our path to holiness is a constant struggle will be prey to failure or mediocrity, Pope Francis says, explaining that God has given us powerful weapons in faith-filled prayer, meditation on the Scriptures, the celebration of Mass, Eucharistic adoration, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, works of charity, community life, and missionary outreach.

“Mary lived Jesus’ Beatitudes like none other: she teaches us the ways of holiness, and walks by our sides, consoling us, not judging us, and never needing to be told what is happening in our lives”

The path to holiness is a source of peace and joy, given by the Spirit, but we must be attentive to our temptations and failures, the Pope continues, warning that the spiritual corruption that arises from a lack of attention is a comfortable and self-satisfied form of blindness where deception, slander, and egotism become acceptable.

Discernment, then, is vital to help us see whether things come from the Holy Spirit or from the spirit of the world, or from the devil. This is a gift of the Holy Spirit, cultivated through prayer, reflection, reading and good counsel.

Distinct from intelligence and common sense, and all the more necessary in a world filled with distractions, discernment requires us to listen to God and to what is within us and around us.

This is needed at all times, the Pope says, not merely when facing crucial decisions. It is a weapon in spiritual combat that empowers us



Pope Francis celebrates Mass at the Palexpo Convention Center in Geneva this month. Photos: CNS

to follow the Lord more faithfully and is often exercised in small everyday things that might mistakenly be dismissed as irrelevant. He urges all Christians to engage in a daily examination of conscience in dialogue with the Lord, and stresses that all Christians need the silence of prolonged prayer to help us better to understand how God is speaking to us.

Even in prayer we can close ourselves to God’s will, so prayerful

discernment must be born of a readiness to listen, the Pope says, with our attitude of listening entailing obedience to the Gospel and to the Church’s teaching authority, as we seek in the treasury of the Church for whatever is most fruitful for addressing the problems of today.

A key condition for progress in discernment, the Pope says, is an understanding that God’s timetable is different to ours and that he

has patience with people and does not act rashly. Happiness is experienced, he says, when we accept that God’s ways are mysterious.

In all aspects of our life we can continue to grow in holiness, Pope Francis stresses, and we should not fear to open up even the most difficult parts of our lives to God who wishes to bring us to fulfilment.

Finally, he says, Mary lived Jesus’ Beatitudes like none other: she

teaches us the ways of holiness, and walks by our sides, consoling us, not judging us, and never needing to be told what is happening in our lives. She is, the Pope says, always there for us to turn to when we pray the Hail Mary.

COMMENTARY

Every time we pray the Our Father we ask to be delivered from evil yet do we believe that we are in any real danger of succumbing to evil? This short chapter will be difficult for many because it confronts us with the reality of evil in our world, a reality we often seek to deny. Yet evil affects us all, often in subtle ways.

False and deceiving gods wear familiar and friendly faces and Pope Francis has named these for us not only here but also in *Laudato Si’* in terms of the degradation of our common home and lack of respect for the rhythm both of human nature and of ecology. Here, he invites us to be mature and adult in discerning how evil is present and active in our lives and in our communities and to be clever and committed in combatting it.

At the same time he reminds us that Christ triumphs over evil through the cross, which is “borne with combative tenderness against the assaults of evil” (*GE*, n. 163). The path to holiness involves embracing the cross that is given to us, confident that we do not carry it alone or in vain.





World Report



Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie

Sex abuse allegations against senior cleric found credible

Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington, said last week he will no longer exercise any public ministry "in obedience" to the Vatican after an allegation he abused a teenager 47 years ago was found credible.

Bishop James Checchio of Metuchen, New Jersey, where Cardinal McCarrick served as its first bishop, said in a statement the same day that he had been advised that "Cardinal McCarrick himself has disputed this allegation and is appealing this matter through the canonical process".

"While shocked by the report, and while maintaining my innocence", Cardinal McCarrick said in his statement, "I considered it essential that the charges be reported to the police, thoroughly investigated by an independent agency and given to the Review Board of the Archdiocese of New York. I fully cooperated in the process."

Cardinal McCarrick said that "some months ago" he was informed of the allegation



Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington.

tion by New York Cardinal Timothy Dolan.

"My sadness was deepened when I was informed that the allegations had been determined credible and substantiated," Cardinal McCarrick said.

Cardinal Dolan, in a June 20 statement, said it was "the first such report of a violation" against Cardinal McCarrick "of which the arch-

diocese was aware".

In separate statements, Bishop Checchio and Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark, New Jersey – where Cardinal McCarrick served in between his appointments to Metuchen and Washington – said this was their first notice that Cardinal McCarrick had been accused of sexual abuse of a minor.

"In the past, there have

been allegations that he engaged in sexual behaviour with adults," Cardinal Tobin said. "This archdiocese and the Diocese of Metuchen received three allegations of sexual misconduct with adults decades ago; two of these allegations resulted in settlements."

Several news accounts quoted the lawyer for the accuser, a New York-area businessman now in his early 60s, who said his client was a 16-year-old altar boy being fitted for a cassock to wear during Mass when then-Msgr McCarrick fondled him. Patrick Noaker, the lawyer, said a similar incident happened a year later.

Noaker told reporters that his client met in April with the New York Archdiocesan Review Board, which verified his claims. Going to the board was his client's only recourse, Noaker said, because of criminal and civil statutes of limitations on an almost 50-year-old incident.

Ex Vatican diplomat guilty of sending images of child sex abuse

A Vatican court has found Msgr Carlo Alberto Capella, a former staff member at the Vatican nunciature in Washington, guilty of possessing and distributing child pornography.

Judge Giuseppe Della Torre, head of the tribunal of the Vatican City State sentenced Msgr Capella to five years in prison and fined him €5,000.

The Vatican press office said he would serve his sentence in a Vatican cell located in the building of the Gendarme Corps of Vatican City State, as the Vatican police force is formally known.

It is presumed to be the same cell prepared for Paolo Gabriele, the former papal butler who leaked reserved papal

correspondence in 2012, and Msgr Lucio Vallejo Balda, former secretary of the Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See, who was found guilty of leaking confidential documents about the Vatican's financial reform in 2016.

Both Gabriele and Vallejo Balda were pardoned after serving a few months of their sentences.

Msgr Capella was accused of having and exchanging with others "a large quantity" of child pornography; the quantity is such that the charges are considered "aggravated" by the Vatican City court.

Prior to verdict, the judges presiding over the case listened to Vatican

prosecutor Roberto Zanotti who recommended the court sentence the Italian prelate to five years and nine months and fine him €10,000.

Roberto Borgogno, Msgr Capella's lawyer, pleaded with the court to give the monsignor a reduced sentence and referred to his client's crimes as "a problem" that required intense therapy and not a heavy sentence.

Before adjourning in the morning, Msgr Capella addressed the court, saying that the "mistakes I have made are evident as well as this period of weakness. I am sorry that my weakness has hurt the Church, the Holy See and my diocese. I also hurt my family and I am repentant."

Ecumenical Communion to be decided by each bishop – Pope

The question of allowing Protestants married to Catholics to receive Communion at Mass in special cases has to be decided by each individual bishop and cannot be decided by a bishops' conference, Pope Francis told reporters after a one-day ecumenical journey to Geneva.

During an inflight news

conference the Pope was asked about his recent decision requesting the Catholic bishops' conference of Germany not publish nationwide guidelines for allowing Communion for such couples.

He said the guidelines went beyond what is foreseen by the Code of Canon law "and there is the problem".

Cardinal-designate Luis Ladaria, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, had written to bishops that "the Holy Father has reached the conclusion that the document has not matured enough to be published".

Pope Francis expanded on that by saying it will have to be studied more. He said he believed what could

be done is an "illustrative" type of document "so that each diocesan bishop could oversee what the Code of Canon Law permits. There was no stepping on the brakes," he said.

The bishops' conference can study the issue and offer guidelines that help each bishop handle each individual case, he said.

IN BRIEF

Clergy join protests against Philippines labour abuses

● Catholic nuns and Protestant pastors are leading religious groups who have fanned out across the Philippine capital and nearby provinces to show support for striking workers.

A series of strikes have erupted over the last week in opposition to the so-called labour-only contracting scheme, which has been blamed for the lack of employment tenure among many workers.

Labour-only contracting is the practice of using agents or manpower agencies to recruit casual workers on behalf of a bigger business, so the latter can circumvent labour rules and avoid hiring regular employees, consequently making it easier to sack people.

Church fights Bangladesh death penalty for drugs

● Bangladeshi authorities are planning to introduce the death penalty for drug dealers and their patrons, sparking opposition from rights activists and church officials.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of the ruling Awami League said in parliament that her government is devising a tougher law to curb the narcotics.

The Narcotics Bill 2018 aims to take strong action against drug dealers, users and drug syndicates.

In the absence of sufficient scope to take punitive action "the masterminds of the drug trade escape easily", the premier said in defence of the death penalty.

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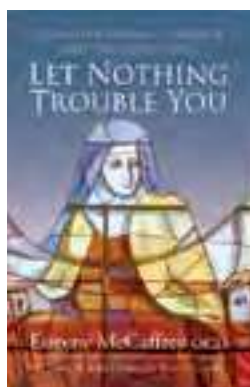
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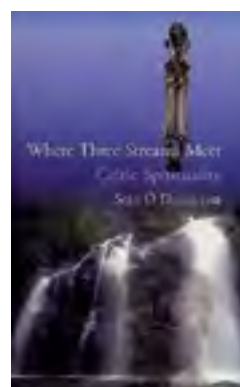


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Medjugorje and Me

Louise Hall

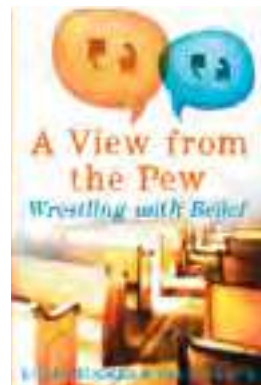


Medjugorje and Me is the second book of deeply personal stories of people from all over the world visiting this holy place, their experiences and encounters with God and the impact it has had on their lives today.

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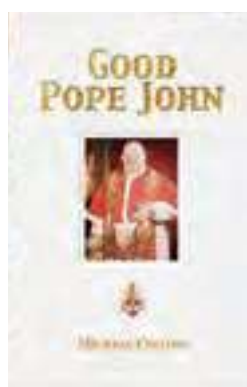


Free at Last! shows that prayer is as essential to all of us as the food we eat. It is an adventure, a response to someone who has called our name, a journey into relationship that will bring us our deepest heart's desire.

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Michael Collins traces the life and times of Pope John XXII, one of the most popular pontiffs of all time. The reader travels with Angelo Roncalli from his birthplace in Sotto il Monte to the Vatican, gaining an insight into the mind and soul of Good Pope John.

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Becoming the Presence of God

Michael Ford

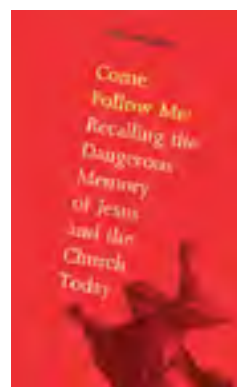


Not all of us can be monks or nuns but many of us still yearn to deepen our relationship with God while supporting others through the vicissitudes of life. *Becoming the Presence of God* encourages us to become contemplatives in the world at large.

was €14.99 **€7.49**

Come Follow Me

Dr Aidan Donaldson

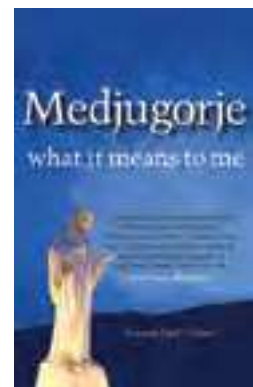


At a time when the Church throughout the world and especially in Ireland finds itself under question and criticism from a wide range of sources, this work urges the Church to reflect on the original message of Jesus and live out the radical discipleship of that message.

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Medjugorje What it Means to Me

Louise Hall



Medjugorje – What It Means to Me is a collection of testimonies from Irish people – some well known, some not so well known – about how they came to find out about the village of Medjugorje in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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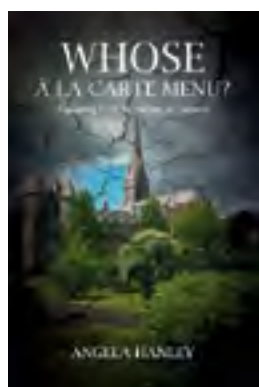


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Letters

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Letter of the week

Are we better off being a minority?

Dear Editor, Oh! To be a minority! This seems to be the cry of many Catholics since the referendum in relation to the Church pulling back from education.

They could then prioritise Faith formation in the remaining schools the respondents opined. This echoes what Archbishop Diarmuid Martin has been saying for some time. It highlights the disquiet about the type of religious programmes that have been taught in Ireland for approximately half a century. Those programmes have been imbalanced, with excessive emphasis on personal experience and too little on the essential foundation of relationship with God and knowledge

of objective morality, which is God's choice of how we should behave. Another factor is that information about other religions is being taught in a relativist way.

In England, Catholicism is a minority Faith and schools are in the minority. They don't seem to have the problems that Ireland has in producing balanced Catholic programmes. This does not mean that they exclude children of other religions or input on those religions. Those schools are in great demand and not just by Catholics.

There are injustices on all sides in relation to school patronage in Ireland. There is not sufficient choice

for parents, for various reasons so-called Catholic schools are becoming less Catholic and children are being deprived. The Government is caught in the middle. In proposing that minority faith schools can preserve their ethos but not Catholic schools they seem to be moving towards a situation where they effectively don't want any Catholic schools.

Is it any wonder that concerned Catholics are wondering if they would be better off being a 'minority'? Lets hope that at the end of a process justice will prevail for all.

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

Getting to grips with seismic change in Ireland

Dear Editor, May 26 was one of my worst days in 61 years of priesthood. I listened intently and eagerly as the votes came in on the Referendum on the Eight Amendment. I was shocked, utterly disappointed and ever since find it hard to believe. In other countries abortion has been introduced by politicians, not by Referendum. The litany of past 'evils' has confirmed the disdain for Catholicism. The sins of our predecessors and the triumphal behaviour of many in church authority were in part responsible.

The Ireland of Saints

and Scholars is no longer a Catholic country. Associating the 'Yes' campaign with concepts of care, compassion and equality and the 'No' side with cruelty, torture and oppression, played on people's need to be accepted by many so called cultured Catholics.

We who believe in the sacredness of all human life continue to believe that direct killing of an innocent baby in the womb is morally wrong. The ¾ of a million who were the voices of the unborn and by their 'No's' affirmed the sanctity of both lives. Having an abortion in

any of the 26 counties will be no different from one in England.

We are now living a seismic change so we must come to grips with it. The pre-Referendum debates and discussions with memorable contributions from convinced Catholics were mostly confined to their legalities but I was immensely impressed by many on the 'No' side.

An election seems to be in the offing so those who shamelessly pushed the abortion agenda and claimed to be pro-life or those who changed their first

conviction should be held to account. It is now necessary for all of us to make practical supports provided to women to ensure that as few as possible feel forced to "choose" abortion. Maternal healthcare needs to be improved with effective supports for both mothers and babies.

Meanwhile let us continue to work towards providing constitutional protection for the unborn babies.

*Yours etc,
Canon Patrick Marron P.E.,
Fintona,
Co. Tyrone.*

Representative body for Pastoral Council is a necessity

Dear Editor, Whilst the 'Church' and clergy continue to be pilloried in political and media circles where are the Pastoral Councils whose representation consists of 90% lay people in all of this?

It is well past time for a Pastoral Council Representative Body be established consisting of every Council throughout Ireland, and both women and men lay spokespeople be appointed to defend our 'Church', clergy and Faith.

*Yours etc.,
John Burke,
Clontarf, Dublin 3.*



An approach that may be too literal

Dear Editor, Fr Joe McVeigh (Letters IC 14/6/2018) in his call for the Catholic Church "to start recognising women as human beings..." appears to misunderstand the Church's position on the matter he raises. Perhaps his linguistic world is too anglo-centric and his approach too literalist.

When I say the Creed at Mass each Sunday there

is no mention of 'men' or 'man'. Instead, in Irish, we say "an cine daonna" and "nádúr daonna" and in the Lectionary the words 'duine', 'té' and other gender neutral terms abound where 'man' and 'men' appear in English. If the Church did not recognise women as human beings, as Fr.

McVeigh asserts, she would hardly have permitted Irish

speakers to use terms in the liturgy which clearly include both male and female!

The use of 'man' and 'men' in the liturgy in English and their equivalents in many other languages, including Latin, follows the linguistic norms of these languages where the male form is often used to include both male and female. I would have no difficulty with the use

of suitable gender-neutral terms in the liturgy in English as already occurs in Irish. However, I would have expected that Fr McVeigh might at least understand how the present terms arose and be aware of the meaning the Church gives them when used in the liturgy.

*Yours etc.,
Rónán Ó Dúinín,
Belfield, Dublin 4.*

The current level of negativity towards the Church is insulting

Dear Editor, For those of us in this country who are still practising Catholics and who cherish their Faith dearly (and there are many of us who do), I find the constant negativity towards the Catholic Church, both on air and in print, excessive and insulting.

Yes there have been several regrettable flaws and misdemeanours with tragic outcomes committed within the Church over many years, but there now seems to be an active rebuttal of God in Irish society. Between the lifting of the baptism barrier in primary schools, to the passing of the abortion legislation, to removing saints' names from hospital wards and a proposed referendum to remove the blasphemy law in the autumn, it appears that we are trying to completely de-Christianise our country. A country in which our forefathers battled pagan traditions, and several were martyred in the process, in order to introduce Christianity to Ireland.

There are a significant number of people, including myself, that still value their Catholic faith, and take offence to it being constantly derided and belittled on a regular basis. It's time to put a halt to this and instead to respect every citizen's views, including those that appear to some, to be in the minority.

We live in a democracy – or do we?

*Yours etc.,
Aisling Bastible,
Clontarf, Dublin 3.*

Keen interest in representations of the 'Marriage of the Virgin'

Dear Editor, I am looking for depictions of the betrothal of Joseph and Mary in churches in Ireland and wondered if your readers might know of any. The scene, sometimes called the Marriage of the Virgin, usually features Joseph and Mary facing each other, presided over by a priest, with Mary's hand placed in Joseph's as they exchange marital vows. I am interested in any kind of representation whether in stained glass, marble, murals or paintings, and I would hope to find at least one example from each diocese in the country. My aim is to publish a collection of images of these artworks to coincide with the World Meeting of Families so as to show the long-held devotion in the Church in Ireland to the marriage of the Virgin Mary with her beloved protector, St Joseph.

I can be contacted by email at paraicmaher@yahoo.com or at the address below.

Thank you for your help,

*Yours etc.,
Paraic Maher,
Smerla Bridge,
Listowel, Co. Kerry.*

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



▲ **ITALY:** Callista Gingrich, US ambassador to the Vatican, talks with Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, at the conclusion of a symposium on religious freedom presented by the US Embassy to the Holy See in Rome.

◀ **SWITZERLAND:** A woman prays as Pope Francis celebrates Mass at the Palexpo convention centre in Geneva. Photos: CNS



VATICAN: Msgr Carlo Alberto Capella, a former Vatican diplomat who served in Washington, is pictured during his sentencing in a Vatican court on June 23. Msgr Capella was found guilty of possessing and distributing child pornography and sentenced to five years in a Vatican prison and fined €5,000.



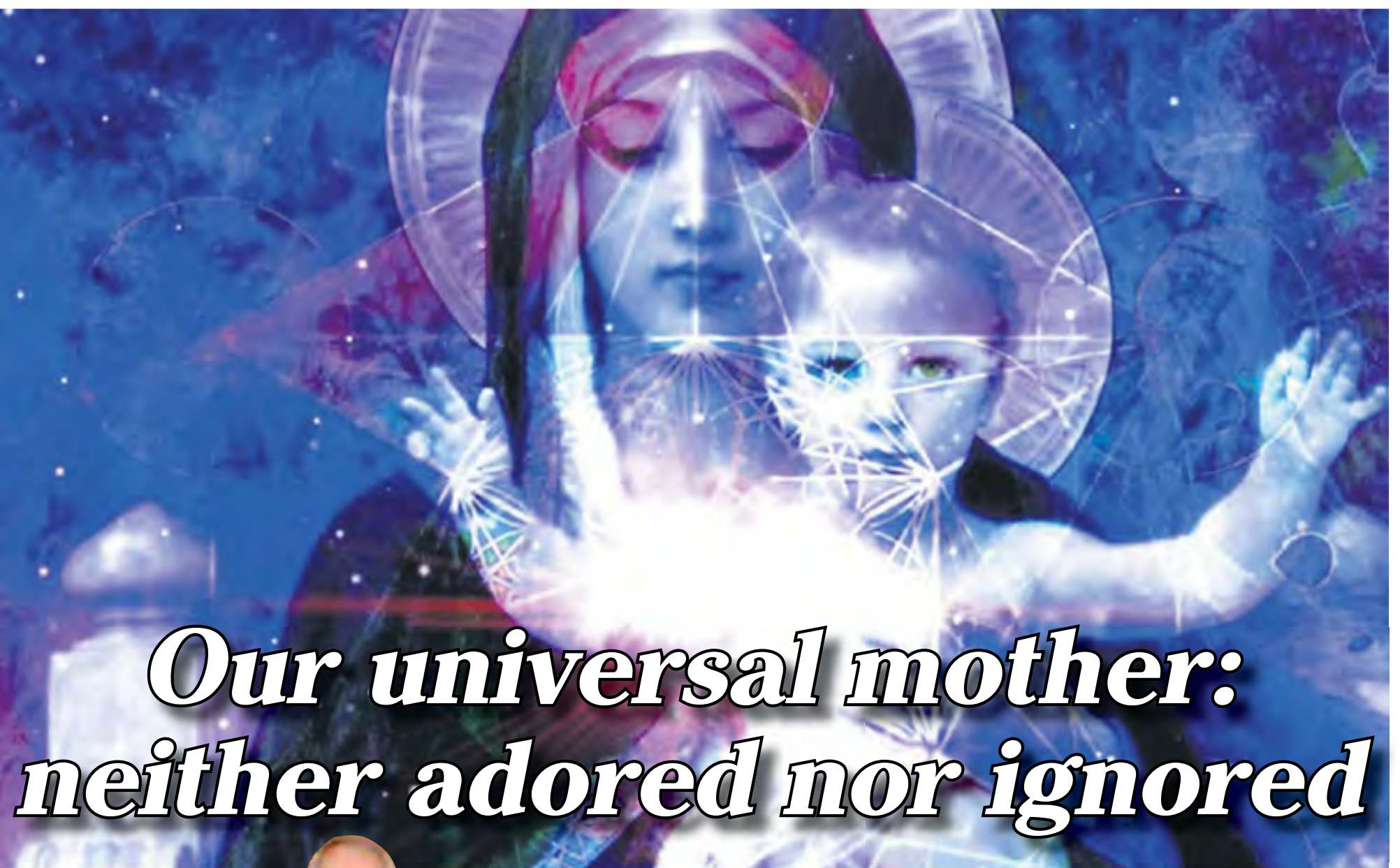
INDIA: Workers sharpen scissors inside a workshop in Kolkata.



NICARAGUA: A woman reacts during the arrival of Catholic leaders as anti-government protests continue in Masaya.



USA: People watch sailboats and windsurfers on the Charles River in Boston.



Our universal mother: neither adored nor ignored



Fr Rolheiser

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The Mary of Scripture and the Mary of Devotions. There's an axiom that says: Roman Catholics tend to adore Mary while Protestants and Evangelicals tend to ignore Mary. Neither is ideal.

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, has, in effect, two histories within Christian tradition. We have the Mary of Scripture and we have the Mary of Devotions, and both offer something special for our Christian journey.

The Mary of Devotions is the more well-known, though mostly within Roman Catholic circles. This is the Mary invoked in the rosary, the Mary of popular shrines, the Sorrowful Mother of our litanies, the Mother with the soft heart through whom we can get the ear of God, the Mary of purity and chastity, the Mother who understands human suffering, the Mother who can soften the hearts of murderers, and the Mother we can always turn to.

Apparitions

And this Mary is pre-eminently the Mother of the poor. Karl Rahner once pointed out that when you look at all the apparitions of Mary that have been officially approved by the Church you will notice that she has always appeared to a poor person – a child, an illiterate peasant, a group of children, someone without social standing. She's never appeared to a theologian in his study, to a Pope

or to a millionaire banker. She's always been the person to whom the poor look. Marian devotion is a mysticism of the poor.

We see this, for example, very powerfully in the effect that Our Lady of Guadalupe has had on much of Latin America. In all of the Americas, most of the indigenous peoples are now Christian. However, in North America, while most of the indigenous peoples are Christian, Christianity itself is not seen as a native religion, but rather as a religion brought to the

native peoples from elsewhere. In Latin America, in every place where Our Lady of Guadalupe is popular, Christianity is seen to be a native religion.

But piety and devotions also run the risk of theological sloppiness and unhealthy sentimentality. That's the case too with the Mary of Devotions. We've tended to elevate Mary to divine status (which is simply wrong) and we have far too often encrusted her in so much piety that she, the Mary of Devotions, cannot possibly be

the same person who wrote the Magnificat.

The Mary of Devotions is often so enshrined in piety, over-simplicity and asexuality that she needs to be protected from human complexity. Still, the Mary of Devotions offers us a lot *vis-à-vis* our spiritual journey.

Much more ignored is the Mary of Scripture and the role the various Gospels assign to her.

“She stands in helplessness under human pain and within human pain when she stands under the cross”

In the Synoptic Gospels, Mary is presented as a model of discipleship. More simply, she's shown to us as the one person who gets it right from the beginning. But that isn't immediately evident. On the surface, the opposite sometimes seems to be the case. For example, on a couple of occasions as Jesus is speaking to a crowd he is interrupted and told that his mother and his family are outside wanting to speak to him. His response: “Who are my mother and who are my brothers and sisters? It's those who hear the word of God and keep it.”

In saying this, Jesus isn't distancing his mother from himself and his message, the opposite. Before this incident is recorded in the Gospels, the evangelists have been very careful to point out that Mary was the first person to hear the word of God and keep it.

What happens here is that Jesus singles out his mother first of all for her Faith, not for her biology. In the Synoptic Gospels, Mary is the paradigm for discipleship. She's the first to hear the word of God and keep it.

John's Gospel gives her a different role. Here she's not the paradigm of discipleship (a role John gives to the Beloved disciple and to Mary Magdala) but is presented as Eve, the mother of humanity and the mother of each of us. Interestingly, John never gives us Mary's name, in his Gospel she is always referred to as “the Mother of Jesus”.

In this role she does two things: first, she gives voice to human finitude, as she does at the wedding feast of Cana when she tells her son (who is always divine in John's Gospel) that “they have no wine”. In John's Gospel, this is not just a conversation between Mary and Jesus; but also a conversation between the Mother of Humanity and God.

Secondly, as Eve, as universal mother and as our mother, she stands in helplessness under human pain and within human pain when she stands under the cross. In this, she shows herself as universal mother but also as an example of how injustice must be handled, namely, by standing within it in a way that does not replicate its hatred and violence so as to give it back in kind.

Mary offers us a wonderful example, not to be adored or ignored.



Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, June 28, 2018

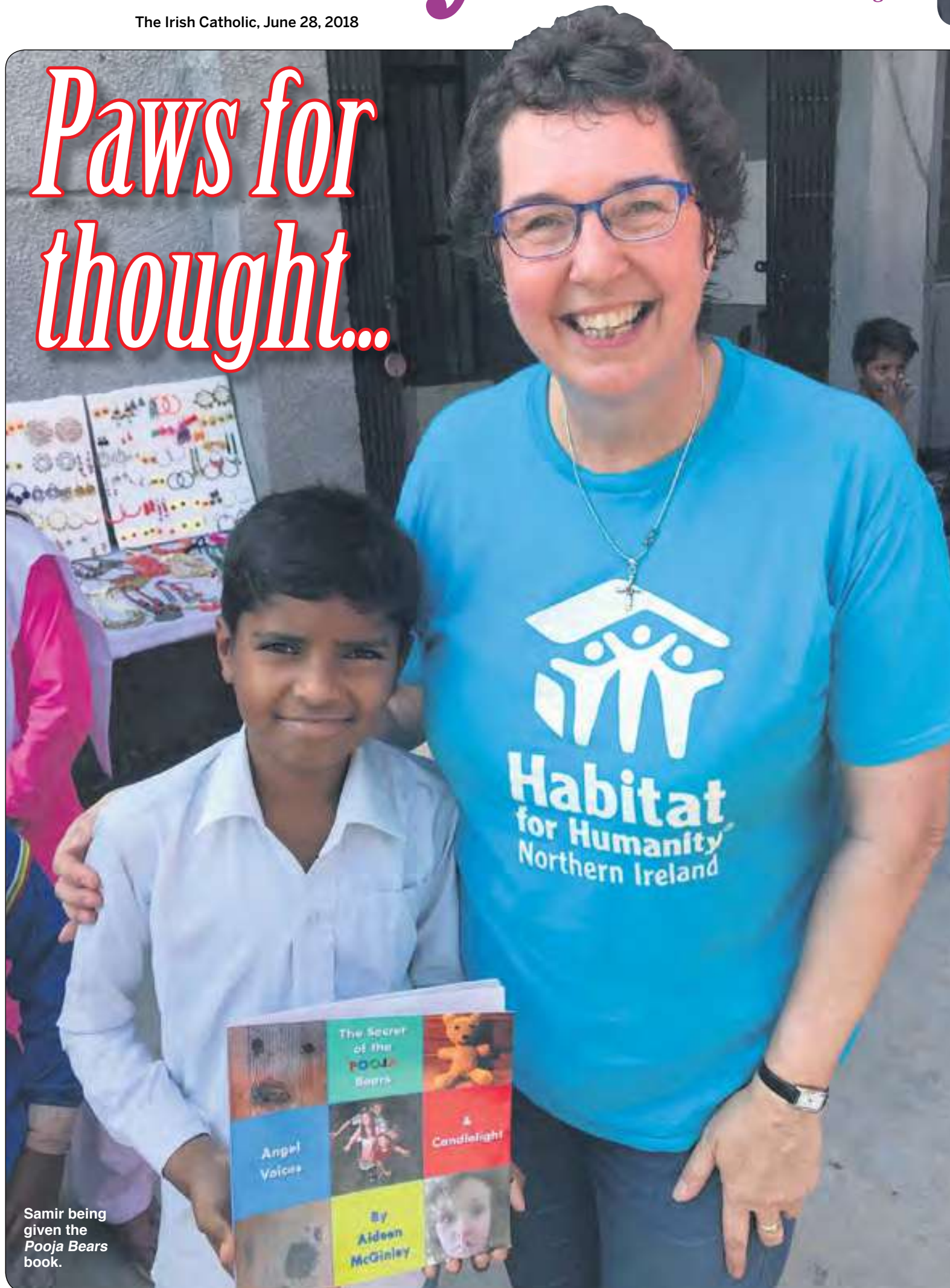
Personal Profile

Making the
choice of
Faith

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Paws for thought...



Samir being
given the
Pooja Bears
book.



Colm Fitzpatrick learns about the secrets of the Pooja Bears

Some children's books find their origins in mythical stories where good overcomes evil, or perhaps in the endearing antics of an animated cartoon character, but a new book that is captivating children throughout Ireland and afar has found its inspiration from the floors of a local Church.

The Secret of the Pooja Bears is a short, colourful book sharing the story of the Pooja Bears who have lived in St Michael's Church, Enniskillen since 1875. Don't fret too much, as the bears are ingrained into the floorboards of the Church, composed of three black marks creating two eyes and one nose.

The book is the brainchild of the Chair of Galway European Capital of Culture 2020 and a Trustee of the Carnegie UK Trust Aileen McGinley and her youngest granddaughter Lucia, who initially came up with the idea while attending Mass.

"I used to bring her to Mass... and one day I looked down and I thought what's that there on the floor and I said to Lucia 'What's that?' and she said 'Nana, it's a bear', as if to say 'How could you not know it was a bear?'" Aileen says, describing the origins of the book.

Revelation

Following this revelation, Aileen rounded up her family members, went to the Church and counted 221 bears on the floorboards, subsequently asking Msgr Peter O'Reilly for permission to write the book.

Using these creative bears to string a narrative, Aileen also wanted to dedicate the book to two charities of personal importance to her, The Aisling Centre and Habitat for Humanity.

The Aisling Centre promotes positive mental health and

» Continued on Page 33

Family News

AND EVENTS

Entertainers on the streets of Cork

Laya's Healthcare City Spectacular in Cork on July 14 and 15 is going to be one of the most entertaining family weekends of the summer. The event is taking place in Fitzgerald's Park in Cork and will feature some of the world's best street performers.

These performers include Sara Twister, the woman who can shoot a bow and arrow with her feet, Charlie Caper, an award-winning magician from Sweden, a piano juggler and much more. Fitzgerald Park's Rose Garden is also featured as well as an array of international street food.

This is the 10th year that this event is being put on, but it is bigger and more fun than ever before. The event is free and is sure to be fun for the whole family.

FAST WEIGHT LOSS: Although some people hear "fasting" and immediately think of some religious ceremony, there may be another use for fasting besides religious reflection and practice.

A University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) study followed 23 obese volunteers with an average age of 45 over 12 weeks. One group was allowed to eat any amount of any food from 10am to 6pm but could only drink water or zero calorie drinks for the next 16 hours. This study discovered that the people who only ate during the allotted time consumed less calories, lost 3% body weight and lowered their systolic blood pressure.

Krista Varady, an Associate Professor in Kinesiology and Nutrition at UIC, says that not only has this study resembled other studies but is easier for people to follow because it doesn't require the 'cutting out' of foods, just the times that you eat them.



Portable party

Along with summer comes travelling, and along with travelling is the need for your favourite music or podcast. Whether it's going for a hike through the woods or heading to the beach, you need to be able to take your entertainment with you.

A JBL Charge 3 portable speaker provides a way to go from your car to your next activity without having to turn off your favourite song and weighs less than a kilogram. The Charge 3 has many great features including Bluetooth capability, IPX7 waterproof rating and a 20-hour battery life as well as a USB plugin to charge your device. Best of all, these speakers have a great quality sound that keep the party going wherever you go.



Science of life

Prof. William Reville

When we think of artificial contraception we think primarily of the 'contraceptive pill', easily the most common form of contraception used by women. There is no corresponding contraceptive pill for men, but efforts are underway to develop such contraception. It is predicted that if such a male pill became available the worldwide incidence of unwanted pregnancies would plummet. But developing effective male contraception is technically difficult and slow.

Conception occurs when a sperm cell from the father fuses with an egg cell from the mother to produce a zygote, a new human being and the first stage of the human embryo. This process is also known as fertilisation. The fertilised egg embeds in the wall of the mother's womb and grows and develops until ready to be born nine months later. Contraception works by preventing the sperm and the egg from interacting.

The human female releases one or two eggs, available to be fertilised by sperm, per month. This process is called ovulation. The female contraceptive pill, taken orally, contains two hormones (estrogen and progesterin) that act to prevent ovulation, i.e. the monthly release of eggs ready for fertilisation. If no eggs are released there is nothing for the sperm to fertilise and so conception is prevented. The contraceptive pill also thickens mucus in the oviduct making it difficult for sperm to swim and find the egg in any event.

“Fallopio intended his condom to protect against contracting syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases”

The traditional male contraceptive is the condom, a barrier sheath that prevents sperm from entering the woman's reproductive system.

The first recorded use of the condom was by the Italian anatomist Gabrielle Fallopio (1523-1562) one of the most important anatomists and physicians of the 16th Century. The name will sound familiar because Fallopio also discovered the female fallopian tubes.

Fallopio's condom was made of linen cloth, tied securely in place with a ribbon. Fallopio intended his condom to protect against contracting syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases and probably didn't realise it could also prevent pregnancy. Condoms have been improved several times over the years. In the early 1700s condoms made from

animal intestines were popular. In 1920 latex condoms were introduced and polyurethane was introduced in 1994.

The vasectomy is another form of male contraception where the tube (*vas deferens*) carrying the sperm from the testes to be mixed into the semen is cut. The ejaculated semen is now free of sperm.

Vasectomy can sometimes be reversed by expensive microsurgery. Vasectomy was first performed by Dr Albert Oschner in 1897 on two chronic criminals as a humane alternative to castration – eugenics was popular at the time and the aim was to eliminate 'criminal genes' from the general gene pool.

Great efforts have been made to develop a male version of the female contraceptive pill, i.e. an oral medication that a man could take that would either prevent the production of sperm or render the sperm inactive, but whose effects would disappear when ingestion of the contraceptive ceased. These efforts have yet to bear fruit in the form of a medically approved and widely available male contraceptive pill, but promising trials are underway. A topical gel that blocks sperm production is under mature development, and also a non-surgical form of vasectomy.

No male pill

Why have we had a female contraceptive pill for a long time now but no similar male pill yet? One reason is that it is more difficult to deal with male biology. A man makes hundreds of millions of sperm cells per day and a typical ejaculation contains 250 million sperm. Women on the other hand release only one or two eggs per

month, so stopping male sperm production is a much bigger task than shutting down egg release. Any male contraceptive pill also must be at least as safe and effective as the female pill. Because of these difficulties pharma companies have backed off trying to develop a male contraceptive pill. Most research and funding in this area is now left to Government.

“A non-surgical vasectomy procedure is a promising new development in the field of male contraception”

The male contraceptive pill that is most advanced in development is a gel called Nestorone-Testosterone. This gel contains two hormones that reduce the production of sperm by the testes to a level below that required to cause pregnancy. The gel is applied to arms and shoulders daily. Large trials are now underway but it is projected that it will take up to 10 years to develop a successful product.

A non-surgical vasectomy procedure is a promising new development in the field of male contraception. This development, pioneered by researchers in India, is called RISUG which stands for reversible inhibition of sperm under guidance. This involves injecting a polymer gel into the *vas deferens* tube to block sperm flow rather than cutting the *vas deferens*. The blockage can be reversed by another injection of a substance that dissolves the blocking gel.

This procedure is said to be 98% effective at preventing pregnancy (the same effectiveness as condoms if used properly) and has no significant side effects.

As readers know, the Catholic Church teaches that artificial contraception is morally wrong because every act of sexual intercourse between a husband and wife should be open to the possibility of procreation. The biological function of sexual intercourse clearly is procreation and the Church teaches that to artificially frustrate this procreative potential violates natural law. The two aspects of sexual intercourse, procreative potential and sexual pleasure, should not be artificially separated. Pope Paul VI predicted in his 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae* that if artificial contraception became widespread in society many negative consequences would follow, eg. promiscuity, where sex freed from 'risk' of pregnancy is seen as a leisure activity, and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

On the other hand, the Catholic Church approves of natural family planning. This means that a husband and wife who have good reason not to want another child born at any given time can use the natural family planning method to achieve this end. The woman monitors her monthly cycle so that she knows when she is ovulating and she and her husband abstain from sexual intercourse when she is fertile, i.e. from a period of seven days before ovulation to two days after ovulation.

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



Developing a male contraceptive pill

» Continued from Page 31



Aideen and her family.

emotional well-being. Adults and children come to the Centre at difficult times in their lives, many in distress and despair. At the Centre they can find hope and healing in a welcoming, safe and supportive environment.

Alongside being a member of the Board of Directors for the Aisling Centre, Aideen also volunteered with Habitat which partners families to build or improve their home.

"I went with Habitat for Humanity last year and I was very taken by the children and the small simple things that meant so much to them, their positive attitude despite circumstances that they were living in so when I got back I just thought to myself it was getting harder and harder for charities to fundraise", she says.

Charity

Her work with Habitat directly inspired the title of the book as the name Pooja references a little girl whose home was built by the charity.

"Where the word Pooja came from was, we were looking at names, we thought like Prayer Bears or what we would call the bears, and that was too close to Care Bears, and literally that day I received a beautiful little video on the Habitat website, and it's all about a little girl called Pooja who lived in Bwana (India) which was the camp that I was in. And Pooja is the Sanskrit for prayer," Aideen explains adding that there was a "real synchronicity" to it.

The book describes the experiences of some of the Pooja bears, be it losing and regaining a singing voice, or mischievously snuffing out the Church candles.

As Aideen wanted the book to have a moral to it, and a pause for thought, it concludes with the Pooja Bear Hugging Game which provides children with the opportunity to talk

about the "day that has been and what is to come tomorrow".

This emulates her own parenting experience where she would sit down with her daughter at the end of the day and ask her what she achieved and what she was happy about. She adds that there is also a "challenge" for adults in the book as things aren't always as they seem, referencing the difficulties parents and grandparents can have in trying to see the bears.

Following the success of the book, Aideen thought that selling a real knitted bear with the book could be another source of revenue to raise further funds for the charity, resulting in more employment in India.

"Children could buy them and have them with the book, so it's taken us a little bit of time but only last week we've seen the prototype of the bear and we've ordered our first 100. The idea is people will buy the bears and we're creating employment in India and kids will have the book and the bear. So that's for this Christmas, we'll see how those go and hopefully that will be another income stream, Aideen says.

Already the book has made an important impact in India as the Habitat team ventured back to where

Aideen was volunteering and gave one of the books to a boy called Samir, who is pictured within.

"Apparently his mother was in tears that her little boy was in a book and all the kids were just running around touching the book, because there was a story that had them in it," she says.

Families and people across Ireland are also benefitting from the message of the book,

as Aideen gives workshops talking about the how the bears are relevant to each person's life.

"I've done workshops in libraries and with primary schools and in prison – I did the open prison down in Leitrim with prisoners. So, there's a message for an awful lot of people;

because the prisoners one was really profound.

"I was saying to them if you have an idea, do it, just try it and don't always think that what you see is what's there," Aideen says, adding that there's a number of audiences but children especially "love" the book because of its picture format.

Despite her initial nervousness about producing the book, Aideen says she has been given a lot of support, through her family, friends and other media outlets.

“The idea is people will buy the bears and we’re creating employment in India”

"There's this thing about somebody coming out and writing a book about bears and floorboards. I thought they're going to think I'm absolutely mad. The response has been phenomenal. Even yesterday, somebody came over a thanked me for the book because they said I use it every night," she says.

Given the success of the book, Aideen says she won't be stopping any time soon as writing it has given her the confidence to pursue further ideas. For example, another book she is entertaining relates to a daily prayer she says and she hopes for her idea to be realised in the near future.

"It's showed me that it is something that I can do. It's started me down that track," she says.

Having already raised €7,000, Aideen hopes that the book, alongside further initiatives will allow more money to be raised, meaning that children will be securely housed in impoverished regions across the world, and Enniskillen's Aisling Centre will be able to provide it's excellent counselling, psychotherapy and well-being service.

For more information about the charities see, <http://www.theaislingcentre.com/> and <https://www.habitatni.co.uk/poojabear>. Alongside the Habitat website, a copy of the book can also be purchased on <https://www.amazon.co.uk/>

Faith — IN THE — family

Bairbre Cahill



We have decided to get the house painted. What has complicated the issue is the fact that our house is semi-detached and we knew that it would look better if our neighbours decided to get theirs painted as well.

Our neighbours have been living beside us now for a couple of years and in that time have done a huge amount of work to the house so painting the outside was certainly on their list of jobs to be done. We talked about it to Henrik and he agreed it made sense to go with one painter and one colour scheme. We left in colour books from a couple of paint companies.

The fun began when Henrik told me to go in to Violetta to discuss colours – he would continue to cut the grass outside given, he said, that he knew very little about such things.

It turned out the only word Violetta and I had in common was, 'No!'. Violetta and Henrik are Polish and while Henrik is very fluent, Violetta has only limited English and my Polish is non-existent. It became clear very quickly that we had very different ideas when it came to painting the houses but without a shared language all we could do was disagree, without being able to explain why or explore a compromise. We cut short this first attempt and I later told Henrik we would need him the next time we sat down together to help us bridge the gap!

A shared language is vital if we are to be able to communicate. I have been thinking about that a lot lately. How as people of Faith do we communicate with people who have little or no concept of Faith?

“How do we help our children to take ownership of their Faith?”

There is a need to be able to take the core concepts of Christianity and express them in words and imagery that people understand. As we now know, that is not just for people outside the Church but for people within it as well. The phrase, "The Kingdom of God" came up in a homily last weekend and while I think

it is vital that we speak about the Kingdom of God I did wonder what a lot of people make of that phrase. We need to unpack these things, not take for granted that they are understood.

That is a challenge to us as parents, to be able to talk to our children and young adults about Faith in a way that they can connect with. To be able to do that, we really need to understand Faith for ourselves.

There is a sense then in which we need all the advantages of being bilingual. We need to know the language of Faith. We need to be familiar and comfortable with ideas like incarnation, sacramental reality, paschal mystery, covenant,



transcendence, discipleship, mission and, of course, the Kingdom of God. We need to make them our own if we are to be able to talk about them in the language of everyday.

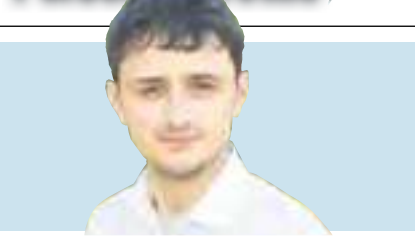
Researchers suggest that speaking more than one language brings many benefits. It helps us to understand language and how it works. It helps us to think in more creative 'outside the box' ways and improves problem solving abilities. Those are surely skills that we need.

Our children and young adults are growing up in a world that to a large extent rubbishes Faith experience. How do we help our children to take ownership of their Faith and its relevance in their lives?

We are all faced with friends and family and acquaintances whose world view and values are strikingly different than our own. How do we engage in fruitful, respectful and honest conversation unless we have the bilingual advantage of speaking the language of Faith in the language of everyday?

Communication is vital – and on that note, with the help of Henrik, Violetta and I found that we actually agreed on quite a lot. The painter is at work as I write!

Personal Profile



Colm Fitzpatrick speaks with university lecturer Fr Niall Coll

Born in 1963, East Donegal native Fr Niall Coll is no stranger to teaching having been a lecturer in Belfast's St Mary's University College since 2001, providing students with the opportunity to develop their religious education and Faith.

Fr Niall's personal interest in religion, which eventually led him to become parish priest in Raphoe, dates back to his youth, following the influence of his family and St Eunan's secondary school in Letterkenny which he attended.

"I came from a very devout family – religion was a very natural part of life, it was just the way we were brought up. From a young age I was an altar server and I had a very close familiarity with the liturgy and the sacraments. It all seemed a very natural part of life," he explains, adding that in his school two or three men usually went to the priesthood, so it wasn't as "big a step" to follow in their footsteps.

Degree

After completely his leaving certificate, Fr Niall studied history and geography for his degree, and then did a further undergraduate Theology degree in Maynooth, subsequently being ordained a deacon. In 1988, he was ordained a priest, soon afterwards becoming a chaplain and teacher in his past secondary school. Still keen about

the academy, he did a PGCE in Trinity College, and further doctoral studies in Rome on the topic of Christology. After two teaching posts in Carlow and Donegal, he moved to Belfast in 2001 to take up a position in St. Mary's.

His role as priest and teacher complement one another, as both entail serving, giving and forming so that the message of the Gospel can be heard.

"The priesthood is a gift that you live for other people. So, it's in serving the people of God that you're a priest. The priesthood isn't a gift for yourself, so it's always in terms of service. The priesthood only makes sense in that context for me, so that you serve the people by sharing the Word and breaking the bread with them," he says.

One way Fr Niall is able to share the Faith is through his lecturing post in St Marys, where he teaches Religious Education to trainee teachers. Founded in 1900, the university prides itself on its distinctive contribution to service and excellence, in the Catholic tradition, to higher education in

Northern Ireland.

"There is a sense that in many ways, that it has been a great privilege working for them because they are going to be so important to the education of young people in Ireland for the upcoming generations. And in many ways too, I often think that many of the young people I teach, a proportion of them are going to be really central figures in the life of the Church in Ireland over the next 50 years," Fr Niall says.

“Fr Niall believes that it's important to help people to develop the ability to make the choice of Faith”

He adds that many of his students will become teachers, members of parishes and parents, noting that in an Ireland with a marked shortfall of priests they will be called more upon into leadership roles be it theological, scriptural, liturgical or educational.

"It's very important for them to

be teachers and go into schools and meet the needs of the curriculum but also I like to think there's a wider vision that these teachers – these people – will be important to the life of the Church in a changing and changed Ireland."

Having been teaching religion for 17 years, Fr Niall finds his students "very open", noting that Faith in Ireland must be bolstered by reason, as opposed to the "old structures" of the past that made belief almost "tribal" and "automatic".

As personal Faith today is a matter of choice, Fr Niall believes that it's important to help people to develop the ability to make the choice of Faith.

"The whole Catholic way of life, it's very important to bring your reason, bring your intelligence because intelligence and reason are God-given gifts. You don't find God by running away from reason or Faith. Reason alone is insufficient because we have to be open to the surprise of God, of God's grace," he explains.

One notable way Fr Niall tries

to promote Faith and education is through editing the Catholic biannual magazine *Le Chéile*, now in its 29th edition, which tries to nourish teachers and principals in schools, inform them about the distinctive nature of Catholic education, and help people to realise the good that Catholic education offers.

This term's magazine addresses topics such as climate change and *Laudato Si'*, the power of sacred music, and the intrigue of everyone's personal life journey, all of which offer an insight into theology and the role of Faith in our world today. For Fr Niall, initiatives like these, alongside ministering and teaching allow people to discern what Faith really means to them.

"I think that's the big challenge into the future for the Church in general: How do we help people? How do we make the choice of Faith?"

i For a digital edition of *Le Chéile*, see: <https://www.stmarys-belfast.ac.uk/mission/lecheile.asp>

Making the choice of Faith



Fr Niall Coll.

Sweet Treats

Emma Louise Murphy



The chocoholic's dream...Nutella sponge cake!

If you love chocolate, this Nutella sponge cake is perfect for you. The soft vanilla sponge and nutella buttercream compliment each other and leave you feeling happy and warm after every bite. Perfect to throw together for any party, wow your guests with this chocolate dream.

Ingredients

Vanilla sponge

300g plain flour
2 teaspoons of baking powder
Pinch of salt
227g butter, softened
450g caster sugar
2 teaspoons of vanilla extract
4 eggs at room temperature
250ml milk

Buttercream icing

200g softened butter
250g icing sugar
Nutella, about 60g or so
Milk, to soften

Chocolate ganache

250g dark chocolate

250ml double cream

Method

A hand mixer or stand mixer would be best for this recipe, although you can take on the challenge of mixing it by hand if you see fit!

To make the vanilla sponge, first butter and line two 8 inch round cake pans. Preheat your oven to 160° Fan / 180° / Gas Mark 4.

In a clean bowl, combine your flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside for later. In another bowl, whisk together your butter, sugar and vanilla until creamy and well combined.

Add your four eggs to the mixture, one at a time, mixing between each addition. Start to add your dry ingredients in, little by little, alternating with the milk.

Spread the mixture into your two lined cake pans, and place in the oven for 45 minutes, or until a skewer comes out of your sponge clean.

To make the chocolate ganache for the centre



of your cake, heat your cream over a hob. Do not boil, just hot enough to touch, but not burn. Break up your chocolate into squares and place into a bowl. Pour the hot cream over the chocolate and cover with a plate or a bowl to trap the heat inside.

Set aside for two to three minutes to melt the chocolate in the cream.

Use a wooden spoon to mix the cream and chocolate well until a shiny chocolate ganache forms. Place this in the fridge if it is too liquid to spread and it will thicken up. You can also whisk using a mixer to thicken into a spreadable icing.

To make the Nutella buttercream, cream together your butter and icing sugar until a spreadable icing forms. Add Nutella, little by little until you reach desired taste and colour. If the icing is too stiff, add milk to make it more spreadable.

When the sponge is out of the oven and cooled, sandwich them together using the chocolate ganache.

Using a piping bag, pipe a twirly pattern on the top layer with your nutella buttercream. Decorate with chocolate buttons...and enjoy!

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



RTÉ's *Doc on One* delivers yet again

With the increased popularity of podcasts, it's worth noting the extensive archive of RTÉ Radio 1's **Documentary on One** series.

Last Saturday's episode, 'Sisters', was Emma Decker's engaging exploration of the lives of her grand aunts Sr Joe and Sr Gabrielle, who went to the US as teens to become nuns. They worked primarily with African-American children who were thoroughly marginalised in the late 1950s and early 60s and became involved in the civil rights struggle.

While it was social history, the family story was quite moving – the final heart-breaking farewell with their father, who died before the first return visit, brought tears to the sisters, now in their 80s. And though at that age, as with many of the sisters in the convent, what impressed Decker (who lived with them during her research) was their youthfulness and camaraderie.

Decker was intrigued by the choices these women had made when young, and the choice to leave Ireland her own mother had made. This reflection extended to consideration of her own choices as a young woman. Some might have found Decker herself overly prominent, but I thought she got the balance right in the light of the



Journalist Emma Decker, who presented the *Documentary on One* episode 'Sisters' (RTÉ Radio 1), with her grand aunts, Sr Joe and Sr Gabrielle. Photo: RTÉ

themes she was pursuing. Some of her pre-conceived notions were challenged while observing the life led by the sisters, but I think she was too casual and simplistic with throwaway comments about oppression of women by the Church. I'd like to have heard more about the sisters' Faith life and perhaps whether Decker's own spiritual life was affected. But she didn't go there. Despite that, awards are deserved.

Meanwhile, the papal visit sparked quite a few church related discussions. On **Lunchtime Live** (Newstalk) last Friday, former rugby international Shane Byrne,

said he was definitely going to see the Pope – he was a practising Catholic and so it made sense. He was critical of mistakes made by the Church, but thought that the "crazy things" that had been done were not about the Faith that people have.

Political commentator Larry believed the Church was a powerful voice in the world and that its message was broader than conservative stands on social issues. He hoped we'd have a "show of solidarity" during the visit and that active young Church people would be involved. Stand-in presenter Andrea Gilligan did a fine job teasing

out the issues and the show felt free of its usual agenda driving.

Leadership

On Tuesday of last week **Today With Seán O'Rourke** (RTÉ Radio 1) set out to explore *à la carte* Catholicism but the discussion morphed into considering cultural Catholicism and they're not quite the same thing.

I thought liberal theologian Gina Menzies was over inclined to quote Mary McAleese, and seemed disinclined to let Catholic hospitals opt out of performing abortions but David Quinn was keen for the Church to show

more leadership on this matter.

Fr Joe McDonald was wondering about the bishops taking responsibility for the referendum defeat on a matter of core teaching. Bishop Alphonsus Cullinane of Waterford thought the church used to be too privileged, too closely aligned with the civil authorities and was in a more realistic place now.

Not unrelated was Minister Josepha Madigan's appearance on the same show last Monday morning – apparently, in the absence of a priest, she had led a reduced liturgical service at Mass time in Mount Merrion parish. Considering that she spearheaded Fine Gael's campaign to facilitate easier access to abortion, this seemed more than a bit off.

She was in favour of the ordination of women, but didn't want the core teaching of the Commandments compromised. Seán O'Rourke suggested to her that respect for the sacredness of life was one of these, but she argued that God gave us free will and women should have the choice. I wondered if she'd extend that reasoning to other situations where one person decides to end the life of another?

Just before this, another prominent pro-choice campaigner, Hilary Clinton, was interviewed on **The Ryan Tubridy Show** (RTÉ Radio 1). She rightly lamented the "rip-

PICK OF THE WEEK

MASS
RTÉ1, Sunday, July 1, 11am

Station Mass from the home of Philomena and Adrian Owen in Strokestown, Co. Roscommon.

CATHOLIC AUTHORS
EWTN, Monday, July 2, 11am

John McCloskey discusses Victorian-era poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins.

REBEL POPE
RTÉ1, Tuesday, July 3, 11.30pm

National Geographic documentary on Pope Francis a fascinating figure with an incredible backstory.

ping of children" (her words from their mothers' arms in the US migrant controversy) but what about the ripping of children from their mothers' wombs?; she said "these children can't speak for themselves" – how apt. She quoted the Nazi era poem 'They Came For...' but didn't include the unborn in her list of minorities targeted for discrimination. #moralblindspot

① boregan@hotmail.com



Aubrey Malone

Film

Graphic porthole into an Ireland of venal excess

Kissing Candice (18)

Midway through this psychedelic odyssey – the hell that is modern Ireland – I found myself thinking how much Ann Skelly, its main star, resembled Lady Lavery. And how, if Lady Lavery was the iconic image of a more halcyon time, Skelly could go on to become the face of the not so brave new world we've now landed ourselves with.

In the past few decades we've seen Irish film become globalised. Before that, its influences tended to be indigenously. Here we see echoes of David Lynch, Stanley Kubrick, even German expressionism.

Writer/director Aoife



Ann Skelly (left) with *Kissing Candice* writer director Aoife McArdle.

Very good
★★★★

McArdle has crafted a work that will shock many with its violence and coarse language – the contemporary vernacular. But it also exerts a hypnotic spell. Its sense of lethargy is intoxicating. So is the visual iconography, the

crepuscular mood, the potent mix of tenderness and savagery.

Candice (Skelly) is a 17-year-old schoolgirl. She's bored rigid by the seaside town where she lives with her father, Donal (John McKenna).

He's a police officer who's obsessed with the disappearance of a local lad. He doesn't let Candice out much. She has to resort to her imagination to achieve the thrills her hungry heart desires.

Fantasies

One of her fantasies is for a man. He materialises as Jacob (Ryan Lincoln). Later on she discovers he's embroiled with a local gang of thugs. One has to be careful what one dreams for.

When he rescues her from a sexual attack by the thugs she warms to him. But has he something to do with the disappearance of the lad?

This is a *A Clockwork Orange* for the noughties, the

disjointedness of the scenes mirroring the shiftlessness of the characters' lives. They suffer from what T.S. Eliot called "a dissociation of sensibility". Candice isn't much more than a child, we should remember, but she's been through more than most people three times her age.

"What have you taken?" Jacob asks her when she has a bad turn at a Halloween party towards the end of the film. "Everything," she replies. The word sums up her life. She's been guzzling whiskey and popping pills almost since the first scene.

This is a disturbing film but also a fascinating one. The incredible opening sequence – half dream, half nightmare

– segues into an atmospheric landscape of crude dysfunctionality. This, sadly, seems to be all too reflective of the kind of country we witness in the news reports splashed across our television screens every other night, the horrific murders that assail us on the front pages of our evening papers as we sit down to tea.

You won't come out of *Kissing Candice* feeling uplifted unless the brooding shadows of its cinematography uplift you. McArdle is a name to watch. So is Skelly. Together they manage to suck us into a Dante-esque inferno with the grip of a demonic vice.

This isn't so much a film as an experience. Approach it guardedly.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



Evolution of Desire: A Life of René Girard
by Cynthia L. Haven
(Studies in Violence, Mimesis and Culture series / Michigan State University Press, US\$29.95 pb)

Frank Litton

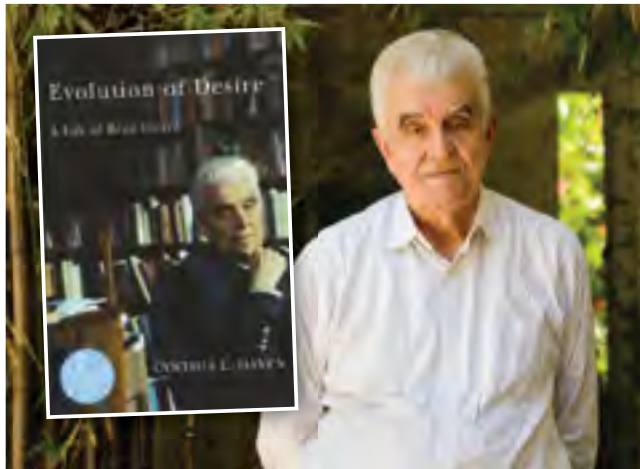
René Girard, who died in 2015, was one of the leading thinkers of our era – a provocative sage who bypassed prevailing orthodoxies to offer a bold, sweeping vision of human nature, human history, and human destiny. This first biography of this eminent French/American philosopher helps situate the nature of Western civilisation in a new light.

Liberal democracy and capitalism triumphed in WWII. The noxious nationalism was defeated. Communism eventually followed, just as decisively. The dominant Christian democracy of Europe, inspired by Catholic social teaching, played a considerable role in consolidating the victory.

Nationalism was tempered by a sense of our common humanity, while its commitment to human dignity tamed capitalism. Years of economic growth and social progress followed. That chapter has concluded.

Nationalism reasserts itself. The vision of a European Union fades. Capitalism has gone global, escaping the fetters of nation-states. Inequality grows. Despite its failure as an economic doctrine, neo-

A philosopher with a vision for our times



René Girard and, inset, the cover of Cynthia L. Haven's book.

liberalism dominates politics. We lack the resources to face these challenges. Why?

The answer lies in the cultural impact of the two world wars. The trauma and scandal of these wars damaged the cultures that allowed or promoted them. Faith in 'grand narrative', religious or national, eroded. The focus was fixed on the individual, who was now found to be responsible for the meaning and purposes that shaped his life in a meaningless world where, as Sartre remarked, "hell is other people".

This pessimistic picture was given a positive gloss

when seen as emancipation from the oppressions of "bourgeois norms".

Cynthia L. Haven tells us that René Girard, born in 1923 and so marked by both world wars, was a full member of this cultural milieu, following his anti-clerical father rather than his pious Catholic mother.

Reputation

She traces how the ideas that won him the reputation as one of the 20th Century's most significant thinkers emerged in his engagement with it. He left France in 1947 to pursue an academic career

in the USA. He found in his studies of literature the psychology that showed that the modern individual who proud of his autonomy celebrated his independence was, in fact, caught in a web of antagonistic relationships.

The key was "mimetic desire". While physical desire is linear, a straight line joining a need, say thirst, with the object satisfying it, water, metaphysical desire is triangular. An object is desired, not for its intrinsic qualities, but because of its relationship to another person: Conor wants that toy because Aoife has it. They fight for it.

Girard unravelled the complexities of mimetic desire in a close reading of Cervantes, Stendhal, Proust and Dostoevsky. Envy, jealousy and hatred accompany mimetic desire. Girard came to see that we can only escape them in the imitation of Christ. He recovered the Catholic faith in which he had been educated. His exposition of mimetic desire inspired work in politics, economics, organisation theory and psychiatry.

Girard's second idea concerns the violence that inevitably follows from mimetic desire. He showed how the peace and order found in a

successful polity is based on violence.

The war of all against all ceases and peace is established when a scapegoat is identified and we find unity and common purpose in attacking him. This peace-finding moment is recapitulated in ritual sacrifice sustained by sacred myth.

“We see Girard as independent minded and combative; an inspiring teacher...”

The close connection between violence and the sacred that Girard found in ancient myths and the anthropological record is disturbing. Some were even more disturbed with his reading of the Old and New Testaments as a gradual uncovering of the scape-goating mechanism whose culmination is Calvary.

Jesus is the scapegoat, the innocent victim, whose death exposes the mechanism that unites the violent with the sacred.

Haven's biography provides an excellent introduction to Girard, the "Darwin of

the social sciences" as he was described on his induction into the Académie Française. Those already acquainted with his work will find much of interest in her lucid account of the evolution of his thought. They will enjoy the portrait of the personality that emerges from these nuanced pages.

We see Girard as independent minded and combative, an inspiring teacher who attracted enthusiastic followers just as he appalled those troubled by the confidence with which he ranged across disciplines.

While the world may be deaf, or indifferent, to the Gospels, Girard shows how they understand the world better than it understands itself. They direct us out of the "hell that is other people" to which modernity assigns us and they reveal the mechanism through which violence constitutes our society providing an uneasy and always threatened peace.

Girard gives us an account of the salvation of the world that matches our troubled times. Cynthia Haven must be congratulated for the skill with which she conveys this good news.

Ireland's valley of the kings

Discovering the Boyne Valley

by Noel French
(Mercier Press., €14.99)

Christopher Moriarty

A small river, in quite a small country, yet a portion of the Boyne Valley contains an amazing wealth of solid remnants which incorporate a huge spectrum of human civilisation.

A day trip can include them all and a good guidebook can outline the essentials within 200 pages. Thirty years as director of the Meath Heritage Centre and years as a tour guide have provided Noel French with the necessary knowledge – and his abilities as a writer have combined with this to produce a remarkable and very readable work. The author is also a talented photographer, and beautifully illustrates the text with his pictures.

The publishers have, perhaps, been a little niggardly in omitting such helpful items as a table of contents and a list of illustrations



Dawn at Newgrange.

so that it takes the reader a little while to discover the structure of the book.

Disappointingly for a description of a valley, it follows an alphabetical sequence of the principle monuments rather than the direction of the river. The faint puzzle of why the Battle of The Boyne is the first chapter is solved by ignoring the 'the' and noting that 'Battle' comes before 'Bective'. In the light of the quality of the writing this may be trivial – but it

does nothing to help the reader in search of a guide to the features of the valley.

That said, the substance of the book is excellent, each of the chapters providing an erudite summary of the historical or archaeological facts of the subject, together with the relevant folklore, myth and legend and instructions on the opening hours and admission needs for each of them. Some, such as the interior of Trim Castle, are guide-accompanied only, while

others, Tara above all, are accessible free of charge day and night throughout the year.

To return to the spectrum: Newgrange and Knowth aren't just some of the oldest buildings in the world, but the technology was so well advanced that their roofs have never leaked. Together with the Hill of Tara they contain material objects and traces of construction work showing ceaseless veneration over five or six thousand years until the arrival of Christianity.

“The substance of the book is excellent, each of the chapters providing an erudite summary of the facts of the subject”

The Christians introduced the widespread use of writing, and a slow development of the replacement of oral tradition by historical record. For centuries the followers of St Patrick applied their skills mainly to liturgy and scriptures,

rather than current affairs and biography so that the details of the lives of the saints are largely conjectural.

Nevertheless they produced manuscripts of beauty, treasured in various libraries of Ireland and farther afield. And they created sculpture in the form of the high crosses which abound in the valley and the round towers which testify to truly remarkable engineering skills.

The dramatic changes introduced both by the reforming prelates such as St Malachy and the invading Normans began a millennium of increasingly sophisticated building and town-planning.

They are well represented in the valley and engagingly described in the book. Beginning with Trim Castle and Mellifont Abbey, they lead on to 18th-Century mansions at Slane and elsewhere, followed by 19th-Century churches. Spanning the 5,000 years from wealthy farmer to space traveller, the Boyne Valley is a microcosm of the history of humankind.

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.

A truer view of a Christian poet

Christina Rossetti: Poetry, Ecology, Faith
by Emma Mason
(Oxford University Press,
€30.00; available also as
an ebook)

John F. Deane

The ever popular Christmas carol *In the Bleak Mid-Winter* was written by Christina Rossetti but holds its fame more from the musical setting by Gustav Holst than by the strength of the poem.

Rossetti wrote a great deal, in prose and poetry, but too much of it is riddled with easy sentiment and remains difficult for the modern reader to appreciate. For her there was simply no question to answer: God is, Faith is certain, and the New Testament holds all that we need to know.

She was writing thus, and gained great popularity, at a time when a poet like Gerard Manley Hopkins, suffering exile in Dublin, was “wrestling with (my God!) my God”, suffering doubts, illnesses and doing his duty as a Jesuit. Hopkins was way ahead of his time with the power and range of his verse-forms and his language, too much for the age in which he lived. Rossetti, and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, captured the mood of a weakling age and are now viewed with some suspicion.

Convincing work

Which leads me to honour the work of Emma Mason in this book, a reasoned, convinced and convincing work, that shows Christina Rossetti to be far more than we have been led to believe. (Emma Mason, Professor in the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies, University of Warwick, has written many books on the interface of religion and literature.)

“Rossetti’s final vision,” Mason suggests, “was a self-emptying of her will to the will of God. It was a “self-less, power-less love for other things able to resist the egoic pull of ambition, greed, privilege, and supremacy”. Her awareness of ecological concerns and her notion of a universal Catholic Church to include all Christians,

Christina Rossetti by her brother, D.G. Rossetti.



should endear this late 19th Century poet to us ‘moderns’.

She viewed the world in cosmic terms, all of creation involved in an on-going movement towards God, almost Darwinian, almost Teilhardian. Hence her Faith in ecology, in the saving force of Christian faith, in a gentle but certain feminism, in a fight against all human greed, violence and hatred. Behind the somewhat sentimental and easy acceptance of Faith, is a strong vision of a harmonious universe.

“Her vision moved towards that of William Blake, a belief in the afterworld based on the book of Revelation”

Her work certainly ‘charms’ rather than ‘challenges’, but that must not take from the depth and range of her thinking. Mason outlines the strengths of the Tractarian Movement that brought Anglicans like Hopkins and Newman to the Catholic faith, and shows how Rossetti touched on a high Anglican-Catholic belief.

Mason also outlines Ros-

setti’s awareness of theological concerns of the time and how this poet held herself as wisely theological as any man. The influence of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, spearheaded by her brother Dante Gabriel, touched her deeply, too, yet her own work offered a greater depth of actual worldly awareness than those around her.

Her vision moved towards that of William Blake, a belief in the afterworld based on the book of Revelation, and that the New Heaven and the New Earth would be based, somehow, in England’s green and pleasant land.

Yet her hold on the person of Christ as God and Man remained meaningful; her knowledge and use of the scriptures to sustain her Faith, in ecological matters, in human decency and in hope, remains a vital necessity for our own disrupted and disrupting time.

Mason does a fine job of putting a real importance behind the work of Christina Rossetti, a poet truly ahead of her time.

John F. Deane is a poet and critic. His latest book, with John Behan, is *Achill the Island* (Currach Press, €19.99).

WebWatch

Greg Daly

When the language of love falls on ears that do not hear

“It’s funny, I haven’t seen any outcry from ‘pro-life’ organisations about the treatment of children at the border,” observed author and columnist Jessica Valenti last week on her [@jessicavalenti](#) Twitter account. It was, she claimed, almost as though such organisations couldn’t care less about “actual babies”.

Retweeted over 70,000 times, it’s worth reflecting on in light of Scott Alexander’s celebrated and lengthy September 2014 [slatestarcodex.com](#) blogpost ‘I can tolerate anything except the outgroup’, which considers how modernity allows us to live alongside each other while inhabiting different moral and social universes.

Sure, there are those who call themselves pro-life and have been silent or even supportive in the face of the Trump regime’s sundering of families and incarceration of children, but if you look at, for instance, Mike Lewis’s ‘Raymond Arroyo: Party over Faith’ piece at [wherepeteris.com](#), you’ll get a useful rundown on how such individuals are defying Catholic teaching – and indeed common decency.

Immigration isn’t always a simple issue, of course, so it was refreshing to read Matthew Walther write in ‘Confessions of a former immigration hawk’ at [theweek.com](#) of how he has changed his mind over the years.

The possibility of a better life for oneself and one’s family should be recognised as the foundation of all decent human relations, he points out, praising how Jeb Bush observed in 2014 that entering the US illegally was more often than not an “act of love”.

“To risk one’s own well-being in order to provide better for one’s family really is an act of love, whatever else it may be,” he admits. “There are any number of reasonable views one might take about American immigration policy, but the idea that we should



Billie Piper as Fanny Price in ITV’s 2007 adaptation of *Mansfield Park*.

respond to acts of love with legalese and cages is so unspeakably vicious that it cannot be countenanced. I am glad that I can now say this without prevarication.”

Catholics are by no means the only proliferators to have challenged what’s gone on on the US’s southern border, of course. Religion News Service reporter Jack Jenkins has tweeted from his [@jackmjenkins](#) account a thread of over 40 tweets detailing faith groups and faith leaders who have condemned either the Trump administration’s policy towards families or Attorney General Jeff Sessions’ claim that the Bible supports the enforcement of this policy.

“It has been centuries since we have agreed on what our words mean”

His thread includes groups ranging from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Southern Baptist Convention to individuals as diverse as longtime Trump support Franklin Graham and the Episcopal Church’s Bishop Michael Curry.

Readers might remember Bishop Curry for his sermon at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, which, curiously, doesn’t seem to have done much to help British viewers understand Christianity.

Over at [premierchristianity.com](#), statistician and Anglican priest Rev. Peter Ould

analyses a poll that considered the sermon’s impact, noting that just 12% of viewers felt the bishop’s words helped them understand Christianity, with regular churchgoers being far more likely to have got something from the sermon than other viewers.

If religious illiteracy can render eloquent sermons incomprehensible, it shouldn’t be a surprise that, as Rev. Ould observes, “evangelism in our communities can be as much a cross-cultural mission as going overseas”.

Not that such incomprehension is new. Even two centuries ago, Jane Austen mapped out in *Mansfield Park* just how two people could speak on different planes while ostensibly talking the same language, incapable of communicating “even the most basic ideas about how to live a good life”, as Haley Stewart puts it in a wonderful essay at [churchlife.nd.edu](#).

Bearing the curiously clunky title ‘Alasdair MacIntyre reads Jane Austen reading her Late Modern reader’, it beautifully shows how Austen understood what the philosopher MacIntyre would spell out in the 1980s: we may draw from a common well of moral language, but it has been centuries since we have agreed on what our words mean.

Incapable as we can be of understanding each other, is it surprising that we should find it so easy to think the worst of those with whom we disagree?

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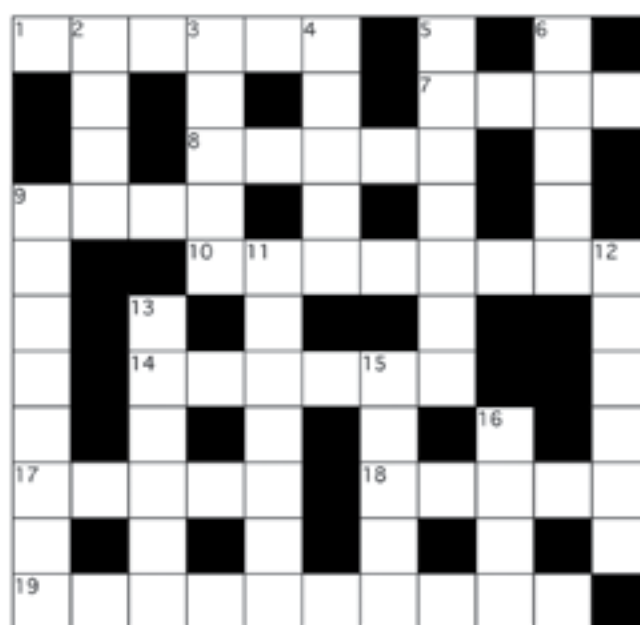
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Leisure time

Crossword Junior

Gordius 238



ACROSS

- 1 Rain-forest, like where Tarzan lived (6)
 7 In the Bible, he built the Ark (4)
 8 Grown-up (5)
 9 Notices with the eyes (4)
 10 One day during the weekend (8)
 14 Got the creases out of clothes (6)
 17 Person who flies a plane (5)
 18 Astonish (5)
 19 Country near Australia, where the All Blacks come from (3,7)

DOWN

- 2 Encourage (4)
 3 It grows in a lawn (5)
 4 Blow up, like a volcano (5)
 5 Went in (7)
 6 Black and white bear (5)
 9 Cooking pot (8)
 11 One of Jesus' twelve special friends (7)
 12 Shouted (6)
 13 You rest your head on this at night (6)
 15 A message sent on the internet (1-4)
 16 Ache (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

GORDIUS No.356

Across – 1 What's up Doc 6 Wash 10 Day of Atonement
 12 Assault 15 Aidan 17 Warn 18 Edna 19 Chasm 21 Idolise
 23 Learn 24 Ages 25 Just 26 Bantu 28 Hundred
 33 Augmented 34 Vesta 35 Site 36 Adventures

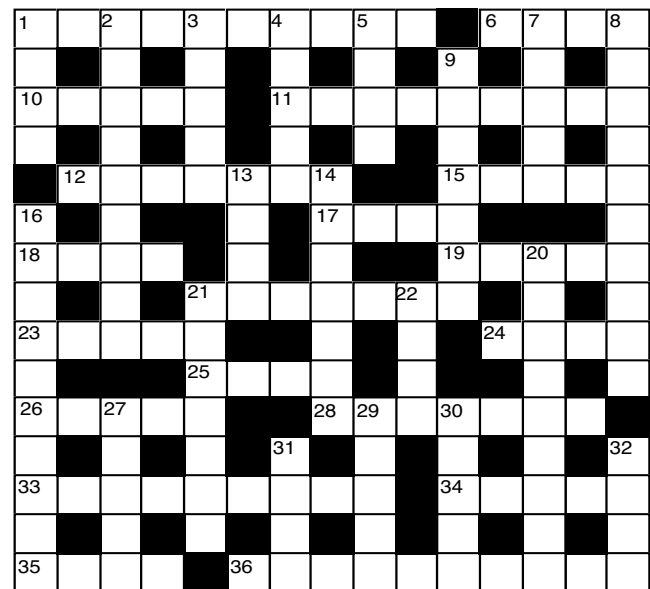
Down – 1 Wade 2 Abyssinia 3 Sofia 4 Pearl 5 Oboe 7 Amend
 8 Hit and miss 9 Penance 13 Used cars 14 Twelfth Night 16 Jelly beans
 20 Aggressor 21 Injured 22 Spun 29 Undue 30 Divot
 31 Stud

CHILDREN'S No.237

Across – 1 Portugal 5 Sea 6 Naughty 8 Easier 9 Under
 11 Ignored 13 Nylon 15 Garbage 18 Cone 19 Mutiny 20 Discuss
Down – 1 Penguin 2 Round 3 Gate 4 Madrid 5 Skier 7 Yawn
 10 Ring 12 Engine 14 Links 16 Aims 17 Bats 18 Cod

Crossword

Gordius 357



ACROSS

- 1 & 19a Hector's beatings disrupted a Highland sport (7,3,5)
 6 What a group of wolves does before a journey? (4)
 10 Money found when a wagon crashed (5)
 11 Colleague, fellow-traveller (9)
 12 Find where eggs are laid and chop one up (3-4)
 15 Jewellery for the fingers (5)
 17 Fruit encased in snug lining (4)
 18 Imperial unit of measurement of area (4)
 19 See 1 across
 21 Bird with magnificent plumage (7)
 23 Great poet, author of 'The Inferno' (5)
 24 A line of cabs with no start (4)
 25 Scottish singer seen finally in the Hawaiian capital (4)
 26 The Muse of love poetry (5)
 28 Pope is quiet concerning an argument (7)
 33 Did he sign the Lateran Treaty to upset mini-souls? (9)
 34 The 'cream', the privileged few (5)
 35 Ice-skating venue (4)
 36 Dairy product produced in the Downs? (4,6)

DOWN

- 1 Population centre (4)
 2 Inn shared out by the ancient Jewish council (9)
 3 In the Bible, the only son of Abraham and Sarah (5)
 4 Type of lizard (5)
 5 Sing wordlessly and quietly to part of the camel (4)
 7 Birdlike (5)
 8 Waiting for a train here in London makes monarchs irate (5,5)
 9 Ireland's patron gets father a stratagem (7)
 13 Flow sluggishly (4)
 14 Brawl involving drink at altitude (5-2)
 16 One whose mind is elsewhere (10)
 20 Where one buys tickets to see where crates are administered? (3,6)
 21 The main body of cyclists in a race (7)
 22 Family, tribe (4)
 27 To blazes with this crime! (5)
 29 Surmise (5)
 30 Molars, for example (5)
 31 An invoice for Mr Gates (4)
 32 Grant, yield up (4)

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Sudoku Corner

238

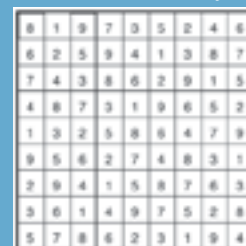
Easy



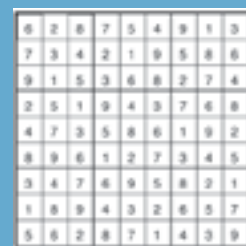
Hard



Last week's Easy 237



Last week's Hard 237



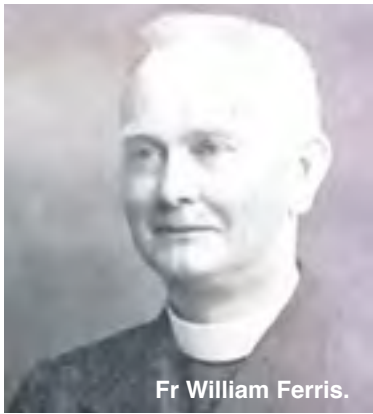
Book shakes off the dust of time to see the light

RECENTLY Bishop Ray Browne of Kerry launched a book that was banned by one of his predecessors. The book – *Fr. Ferris's Parish Histories: Ballymacelligott, Ballyseedy, O'Brennan and Nohoval* – was ready for printing in 1932, but Bishop Michael O'Brien put a stop to its publication. The eponymous Fr William Ferris was a priest of the diocese, and the book itself was an anthology of the archaeology, history and traditions of Ballymacelligott gathered at station Masses during his time there as curate.

It seems strange that a parish history would fall foul of censorship. The problem was that Ferris claimed that St Brendan was born, not in the Fenit area as diocesan tradition held, but at O'Brennan in the parish of Ballymacelligott.

Publication

Fr Donal Reidy, the Bishop's secretary, wrote to Ferris telling him that if he would correct that one point, nothing would stand in the way of publication. Ferris, however, was not a man to back down. As a nationalist curate in Tralee he had been threatened with assassination by



Fr William Ferris.

the crown forces during the War of Independence.

After the Treaty, he then had the independence of mind to swim against republican opinion in

Kerry by backing the Treaty and taking up a post as a Free State Army Chaplain. On the issue of St Brendan's birthplace, Ferris would not compromise and his book was confined to oblivion for eight and a half decades.

Ironically enough, the Bishop's secretary who wrote quashing the publication of the book would later put the saint's home in Annagh on the other side of Tralee Bay to the official birthplace in Fenit. Ferris would sarcastically note that Reidy's theory must have arisen through some kind of "private revelation".

The recovery of Ferris's book is due to the work of one Brendan McCarthy (www.ballymacelligott.com).

A STORY IS TOLD of Fr Ferris's legendary foresightedness. At some stage in the 1960s, he put a call through to the ESB depot in Tralee asking to speak to "one of the top engineers". Assuming that there was an electrical fault at his presbytery in Ballylongford a repair van was dispatched post-haste. Fr Ferris met the workmen and invited them in for refreshments and a chat.

After a while, the workmen asked him what needed fixing. Nothing needed fixing, Ferris explained. The depot had got the wrong end of the stick. He wanted to speak with a "top engineer" to discuss with him how the ESB might "harness the power of the waves". The ESB men drove back to Tralee, greatly amused by this curious cleric and his idea of making electricity from the sea. It was only decades later when wave-power technology became a reality that they recognised Ferris's spark of genius.

Whilst researching his own family history, he came across the manuscript in Tralee library and recognised a treasure trove that would be otherwise lost. As Fr Ferris himself noted: "Every time the wind blows from the east, it sweeps away with it forever some old seanchaí with his store of local traditions."

“He also wrote on political and religious matters. Sometimes he was prophetic...”

As well as reviving these old traditions, the publication of this book allows for Ferris's own memory to be revived. Ferris is worth recalling as a larger-than-life priest who turned his gifts towards the betterment of nation and Church, albeit with mixed results.

Quite apart from gathering parish folklore, he also wrote on political and religious matters. Sometimes he was prophetic – he anticipated the intellectual atmosphere of the Second Vatican Council and the need for Parish Pastoral Centres as early as the

1940s. In the 1920s he could see the troubles inherent in both the political right and left.

However, his ideas for how Ireland might steer a middle course between the extremes of capitalism and communism and develop a unique form of government were quixotic in the extreme – he proposed a state where most government is local and voluntary with each parish looking after its own roads and railways.

He suggested the state be defended by a sort of citizens' militia with coastal communities fundraising amongst themselves for the purchase of submarines.

In Ferris's Ireland not only the clergy, but also the legal and medical professions would be bound to celibacy. (He held a prejudice that the sons of doctors were especially prone to dissolute living!)



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