

The Irish Catholic

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Church warns homelessness must be Budget No. 1 priority

Pope's Capuchin Day Centre visit inspires plea

Greg Daly and Colm Fitzpatrick

Taking their lead from the Pope's outreach to the most marginalised in our communities, Church leaders have urged the Government to make tackling Ireland's homelessness crisis its top priority.

According to 'A Room at the Inn?', a pastoral letter from the hierarchy on homelessness, housing should be recognised as a human right, with its provision not simply left to the market and with housing policies recognising the rights of families and aiming to make Ireland a more equal society.

It quotes Pope Francis' words this August in Dublin's Capuchin Day Centre, when the Pontiff addressed homeless people, saying: "Do you know why you come here with trust? Because they help you without detracting from your dignity. For them, each of you is Jesus Christ."

The 58-page letter was launched in Maynooth's Columba Centre this week by Elphin's Bishop Kevin Doran, Fr Seán Donohoe of the Capuchins Day Centre, and Dr Emer Crooke, research coordinator of the hierarchy's Council for Justice and Peace.

In the letter, issued ahead of next week's Budget, the bishops call for action to increase the supply and reduce the price of housing, claiming that Ireland's lack of adequate housing is due to Governments prioritising other objectives. They criticise land speculation, encourage cooperative housing and advocate taxation and compulsory purchase orders to bring vacant sites into use.

Speaking at the launch, Dr Doran, who is acting chair of the Council for Justice and Peace, said landlords "should examine their consciences as to the extent of profit

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Faith in the future in Down & Connor



A group of young attendees are pictured at the Down & Connor Faith and Life Convention which took place in Belfast last weekend and which included Cardinal Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga amongst its guest speakers. See Pages 12-15 for reports and more photos from the event.

Call for laypeople to take lead in Church reform

Staff reporter

One of the Pope's closest advisers has urged the Church in Ireland to build a culture where laypeople increasingly take a lead.

Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga told an event in Belfast at the weekend that greater lay co-responsibility with clergy "is a vital part in the re-birth of the Church" and that "this is the wish of Pope Francis".

Speaking to more than 300 people at the Down & Connor Diocese Faith and Life Convention, he said "you are working to open wide the doors of our Church to all without exception".

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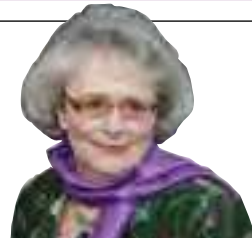
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John L. Allen Jr

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Fight over blasphemy law is really a phoney battle

In just over three weeks' time voters will be asked whether or not to delete the reference to blasphemy from the Constitution. It will pass by an overwhelming majority. Only the Islamic community are likely to oppose the move. Catholic bishops have already expressed the view that God can look after himself. In reality, the provision is meaningless from a legal point of view.

What is amusing about the referendum is the juvenile way in which some commentators and politicians who really ought to know better are determined to see the move as part of some sort of protracted battle between Church and State.

When the referendum inevitably passes, it will be hailed as another milestone on the road to the much-



Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

vaulted 'modern Ireland'. It is nothing of the sort. Rather it is a pointless exercise aimed at deleting something from the Constitution that has absolutely no meaning.

“It's a phoney war and no-one should be fooled into thinking it's anything more than virtue signalling”

Turnout is likely to be very low, even the Government's move to have

it on the same day as the presidential election in a bid to boost interest is unlikely to push voters to take an interest.

It's a phoney war and no-one should be fooled into thinking it's anything more than virtue signalling from a political class obsessed with easy wins on what they perceive to be popular things with some voters. People of faith should hardly dignify the process with anything more than a passing reference.

A note from the Editor...

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

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

Combined with the bitter disappointment at the result of the referendum on the Eighth Amendment and the lack of fairness during the campaign, I have been encouraged by the

many people who have told me that they passionately believe that the Church in Ireland needs a voice like *The Irish Catholic* more than ever.

Support

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

We do our level best to keep production, staff

and distribution costs to an absolute minimum. Unfortunately, however, due to increasing costs around printing, packaging and distribution and ensuring that the newspaper can continue to develop a broader audience we will be forced to introduce a modest price increase. From the issue of November 1, the cost of the newspaper will rise to €2 and £1.70 respectively. This is the first price increase in a number of years and we held it off as long as possible. However, rising costs have made it impossible to delay the increase any further.

I hope that you know and understand the enormous appreciation that I and all the team here have for your

invaluable assistance. *The Irish Catholic* celebrates 130 years in circulation this year and while the times have changed, the challenge remains the same: how can we continue to grow in our Faith and pass that Faith onto future generations. We are determined to play our part, and I thank you most sincerely for your assistance in this.

If you have any queries, feedback or there is anything in your area that you'd like covered in the newspaper or something you think we should include, please don't hesitate to contact me on michael@irishcatholic.ie.

Your sincerely,
Michael Kelly,
Managing Editor.

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Govt should 'wake up' to Christian persecution

Colm Fitzpatrick

The Government needs to "wake up" and commit to protecting Christians who are persecuted globally for their faith, an Irish charity has said.

Church in Chains, an outreach group which focuses on raising awareness of the plight of persecuted Christians world-wide, said that our Government is failing to protect the rights of religious groups.

Launching the third edition of the *Global Guide* in Dun Laoghaire on

September 27, the charity revealed that over 200 million Christians in 60 countries are persecuted, threatened, and fear for their lives weekly or daily.

The *Guide* intends to inform readers about what is happening to Christians in these countries and motivate leaders and readers to respond. According to David Turner, Director of Church in Chains, and author of the document, more Irish awareness of worldwide Christian persecution is needed so that real action can be taken to fight against and eradicate it.

"The persecution of Christians

rarely makes the headlines but is a weekly if not daily lived experience for millions of Christians worldwide – we estimate that over 200 million Christians are at constant risk of persecution," David said.

Belief

He added that governments and regimes worldwide are failing to uphold the right to religious freedom and belief, and that our own Government must prioritise this so that violations against persecuted and discriminated Christians can end.

"It is time for people in Ireland to wake up to what is happening around the world and for the Irish government to put flesh on the bones of its oft-repeated commitment to prioritising freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) in its foreign policy by raising the issue of violations of religious freedom directly with the governments that are actively persecuting Christians or facilitating the persecution of Christians," he said.

See Pages 10-11 for more information about the *Global Guide*.

Momentum builds for coastal rosary

Staff reporter

Tens of thousands of people are expected to pray the rosary at hundreds of locations around Ireland this weekend.

Organisers of the Rosary on the Coast hope between 30,000 and 50,000 people will participate in gatherings on Sunday, October 7, at over 300 locations throughout the country, mostly on the coast but also in churches, houses, grottos and other locations.

Bishops Phonsie Cullinan of Waterford and Lismore and Kevin Doran of Elphin have issued videos online inviting Irish Catholics to join in the event, which is dedicated to several intentions including respect for life and an increase in Faith throughout Ireland.

The event follows November 2017's Rosary on the Coast, which saw over 30,000 people joining in prayer at 295 locations around Ireland, with other prayer groups supporting the event from abroad; this year groups from 30 other countries are understood to be taking part remotely.

Rosary locations can be found and registered at www.coastalrosaryireland.ie

Avril Lavigne.

Punk pop princess thanks God for keeping her afloat

Greg Daly

A song from the first album in almost five years by 2000s Canadian pop star Avril Lavigne has entered the US Christian music charts at number five.

Ms Lavigne's new single, 'Head Above Water', addresses how she turned to God whilst battling Lyme disease, which she was diagnosed with in 2014. She has described the diagnosis as the worst time of her life.

The song likens the illness to drowning, each verse revealing her fears about not beating the disease, and the chorus acting as a

recurring prayer that God helps her through it.

"God keep my head above water / Don't let me drown / It gets harder / I'll meet you there at the altar / As I fall down to my knees / Don't let me drown / Don't let me drown," she sings in the song's chorus.

The 33-year-old singer who sang in church choirs as a young girl before cultivating a 'skate punk' image and achieving global success with such songs as 'Complicated' and 'Girlfriend', has revealed in a statement that she turned to God when she thought her life was reaching its end.

"One night, I thought I was dying, and I had accepted that I was going to die. My mom laid with me in bed and held me. I felt like I was drowning. Under my breath, I prayed, 'God, please help to keep my head above the water'," she said.

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Government is 'railroading' abortion legislation

Staff reporter

A prominent pro-life group has accused the Government of "railroading" abortion legislation which will leave no opportunity to make "life-saving amendments" to the bill.

The Pro-Life Campaign (PLC) said Minister Simon Harris is "shutting down debate" on the forthcoming abortion legislation which is due to be introduced to the Dáil this week. Despite expectations, the Government has sought to curtail debate by foregoing pre-legislative scrutiny of the Bill.

Legislation

According to pro-life activist Niamh Uí Bhriain there are 10 Amendments that need to be made to the current drafted legislation which

includes a right to conscientiously object in participating or making arrangements for the termination of pregnancy, as well as redefinitions of terms such as 'viability' and 'foetus'.

Although debate is trying to be curbed, Ms Uí Bhriain said that the Referendum Commission's information booklet sent to every household in the State prior to the vote told people: "Laws are made by the Oireachtas. You are not being asked in this referendum to vote on any particular law relating to the termination of pregnancy."

She added that RTÉ's exit poll found that only half of voters agreed with the 12-weeks on demand provision of the abortion. "Mr Harris' mandate is not what he is claiming it to be," she said.

Casual sex is a 'pseudo intimacy' leading to loneliness – chaplain

Chai Brady

Social media and a culture of brief sexual encounters is leading to loneliness among students and young people according to a university chaplain.

Commenting on a BBC study that found 40% of people aged 16-24 often or very often feel lonely, Fr Leon Ó Giolláin SJ said he was "not surprised".

A culture that encourages one-night-stands has led to people seeking a "false sense of intimacy", said Fr Leon, and asked what kind of message is being sent out by the Students' Unions when they give out free condoms on Freshers' Week.

"It's a very superficial type of relating, it might lead to a deeper sense of loneliness because it's not true inti-

macy," he said.

"It's a trap, it's a pseudo intimacy being promoted in the culture and unfortunately it leads to the exact opposite to what it promises. It leads to feelings of being used, or it didn't satisfy the way they thought it would, disappointment."

The results from the BBC's Loneliness Experiment were collated after a survey of 55,000 people, with those over 75 feeling the least lonely and the 16-24 age bracket feeling the loneliest.

Expectations

Pressures from high expectations of academic achievements or a feeling they should be having fun can leave students feeling "very awful".

"Students need to be told that they're going through a period of great growth spiritually, intellectually; that

naturally brings its own developmental issues and loneliness can be a part of that," Fr Leon said.

"Loneliness isn't always a bad thing, it's something we all have to face and a lot of growth can take place through that feeling. The degree of it is significant, if it's too much it's not good."

After Sunday Mass in UCD Fr Leon says they have refreshments which give students a chance to interact as a community.

Young people were also asked what solutions to loneliness they found most beneficial.

Doing activities like a hobby or work, joining a social club or taking up a new activity, positive thinking, talking to friends and family or just talking to anyone were the top five.

Homelessness must be the country's top Budget priority

Continued from Page 1

they make", and said State land should not be sold to commercial interests.

Asked about the disposal of land by religious orders, he said it would be better if this were done in conjunction with local authorities rather than commercial interests.

The letter comes against the background of a new report which shows that the high cost of housing is forcing families into unsurmountable debt.

The research, carried out by the Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice (VPSJ) and commissioned by the society of St Vincent De Paul, revealed that the cost of housing was the single most cited driver of income inadequacy, followed closely by family break-up, unemployment and low pay. It also showed that many families resort to borrowing from other family members or money-lenders to try and meet their basic needs.

Launch

Speaking last week at the launch of the report, entitled 'Stories of Struggle: Experiences of Living Below the minimum Essential Standard of Living', Sr Bernadette MacMahon (VPSJ) said the impact of living with an inadequate income touches every part of a family's life.

"They haven't enough money to make ends meet; they don't have enough money to pay for food, clothing – all the basic necessities they have to cut back on every one of those, and cutting back that brings us anxiety, brings us concern and brings very real pressure and burdens on households," she told *The Irish Catholic*.

Derry girls



Schoolgirls from St Mary's College in Derry attend their 2018 school Mass.

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Blasphemy and 'you can't say that!'

I sense that there is rather more interest in electing (or re-electing) the President of Ireland on October 26 than there is in voting to repeal the single line in the Constitution which deals with blasphemy.

This article (40.6.1.i) states that: "The publication or utterance of blasphemous, seditious, or indecent matter is an offence which shall be punishable in accordance with law."

As far as I can judge, this is more symbolic than operational: when Stephen Fry deliberately uttered blasphemies and invited prosecution by the Irish state, no such prosecution took place.

Nonetheless, Atheist Ireland wants blasphemy out of the Constitution, and since even religious people don't seem to feel that strongly about it, it seems likely to be abolished.

Michael Nugent, of Atheist Ireland, cited the entitlement to freedom of speech, and the separation of Church and State, as reasons for expunging



Mary Kenny

Stephen Fry was not prosecuted for blasphemy.



blasphemy from law and Constitution.

Difference

On the separation of Church and State, that is already a reality. And lest we forget, the idea comes from the founder of Christianity: "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto God what is God's."

Many commentators,

however, don't quite grasp the difference between "separation of Church and State" with "separation of Faith and State", or more complicated still, "separation of values and State". There are no clerics in Ireland's legislature – as there are Bishops in the House of Lords in the UK – but it is evident that the values of the people have historically

aligned with those of Catholic Christianity. Even in a changed Ireland, the deposit of this remains.

But looking at the bigger picture, what's striking about demands for free speech is how much free speech is now curtailed under the protocols of contemporary taboos. There is a lot of what "you cannot say" in the public (or even the private) realm today.

Some of the things "you can't say" are surely in accordance with respect and good manners. You cannot utter words that are racist, homophobic, sexist or prejudiced against disabled people: these things are all now considered unacceptable. If you hold any such views you are likely to lose your job. If an Editor publishes opinions deemed unacceptable he too is liable to be fired.

This very event has just occurred in liberal New York, where the Editor

of the prestigious *New York Review of Books*, Ian Buruma, has been sacked because he published a first-person article by Jian Ghomeshi on how he, in turn, lost his job, pension, reputation and money after being accused (but legally exonerated) of sexual misconduct.

“Some of the things ‘you can’t say’ are surely in accordance with respect and good manners”

This is the modern version of blasphemy law, and it is punished rather more severely than being "grossly abusive or insulting in relation to matters held sacred by any religion", (being the legal definition of blasphemy).

'Offensive' speech, or suggestions, can destroy an individual. Earlier this week, Prof. Alessandro

Strumia of Pisa University was suspended by CERN, the European nuclear agency, for saying that "physics was invented by men", and that the notion of equality between men and women in the hard sciences like physics and chemistry was just "an ideology".

Believe me, he'll never work in any respected institution again: he has blasphemed.

Interestingly, there was little enquiry as to whether there was any evidence for his assertion that most women aren't into particle physics. But evidence doesn't matter. What matters is the 'offensiveness' of what he said.

Let people campaign to remove blasphemy from the Constitution if they choose. But please, drop the hypocrisy about freedom of speech. There are very many restraints on free expression, and blasphemy, in western societies, is the least of them.

A tragedy but we must consider our resistance



It was dreadfully sad to read of the death of 15-year-old Natasha Ednan-Laperouse [pictured], who died on a flight between Stanstead and Nice after a fatal allergic reaction to a baguette sandwich containing sesame seeds. The food supplier, Pret-a-Manager, has been charged with not labelling their products with sufficient information, and a 'Natasha's Law' is planned to enforce such labelling in Britain.

It is worrying to note

that there has been such a dramatic increase in allergies in recent years. One British food scientist has claimed that allergies have increased four-fold in the past couple of decades. And why?

One theory is that babies today don't encounter enough microbes so they don't build up resistance. People are too clean, too hygienic. So it turns out that the old Cockney saying "every child needs his peck of dirt" contained some truth...

NEWS IN BRIEF

Former president to become Glasgow professor

Former President Mary McAleese is to become a Professor of Children, Law and Religion at the University of Glasgow.

The post is a joint appointment between the College of Arts and College of Social Sciences at the university. She will take up her position during the 2018/2019 academic year.

Prof. McAleese, who was the President of Ireland for two terms from 1997 to 2011, said that joining the University of Glasgow "opens up exciting prospects for collaboration in teaching and research on the subjects of children, law and religion".

She completed a doctorate in Canon Law at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, and her thesis will be converted into

two books on children's rights and an article on the Holy See and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Conference to bring together pro-life professionals

A conference that will bring together pro-life lawyers and healthcare professionals to discuss decisions-making in the workplace will be taking place in October.

The MedicoLegal (MLA) conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Dublin 9 on October 13 entitled 'Decision-Making in Everyday Practice – avoiding the Legal Pitfalls', will give attendees the chance to discuss topics such as understanding clinical judgements, the role of conscience, and patient referral. Please email info@medicolegal.ie to register your interest.

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Applicants to Church-owned schools tend to be Catholic, report finds

If ever there was a baffling headline in Ireland's self-proclaimed 'newspaper of reference', it was last week's 'Primary teachers disproportionately white, Irish and Catholic', with its equally perplexing sub-head 'NUI Galway finds Irish-nationality teachers "significantly over-represented"'. For those inclined to skimming headlines and moving on, confusion about the *Irish Times* article will mainly have been limited to wondering what's newsworthy about a country overwhelmingly inhabited by white, Irish and Catholic people tending to have white, Irish and Catholic teachers.

Those who stayed with the piece will have learned, however, that while 78% of the population in general identifies as Catholic, 90% of Ireland's trainee primary school teachers identify so, and that while 82.6% of the population tick the 'white Irish' box on census forms, fully 99% of



Greg Daly
Analysis

our would-be teachers do so, while 100% of trainees point to English or Irish as their first language.

Such is the fruit of research by Dr Manuela Heinz and Dr Elaine Keane from NUI Galway's school of education on 'Socio-demographic composition of primary initial education entrants in Ireland'.

In terms of its religious content, at any rate, the research doesn't really seem to be saying anything especially new.

In January, for instance, the *Irish Independent* reported that the same two authors had published research in the

European Journal of Teacher Education that said 90% of surveyed respondents entering primary teacher education programmes identified as Catholic (albeit with roughly a third of those rarely if ever practising their religion).

With the vast majority of Ireland's primary schools being owned by Catholic parishes and so under the patronage of Catholic bishops, Dr Heinz told the *Irish Times* that the Catholic identity of these schools may be deterring prospective teachers who do not share their religious beliefs and values. The researchers have said they hope their work will trigger

more thought about teacher demand and supply, and the characteristics and qualities Ireland wants in teachers.

“The State supports schools because it has a constitutional duty to provide for the education of children”

The problem here is that the State does not support schools so as to give jobs to people who would like to be teachers. Rather, it supports them because it has a consti-

tutional duty to provide for the education of children, and recognises that families are the primary educators of children, entitled to provide their children's education – including their religious education – through private schools and other schools recognised by the State.

In other words, teacher recruitment policy should surely be built rather more around the needs of families and schools than around the wishes of would-be teachers. Whatever one thinks of this discussion, the needs of children should be not be put second to the ambitions of adults.

Faith-based education should cater for 'stronger minority' – priest

Colm Fitzpatrick

The Irish Church should divest Catholic schools if they're not providing a religious education, a Waterford and Lismore parish priest has said.

Fr Michael Mullins said that it's better for Catholics to become a "stronger minority" and that Catholic education is "decapitated" without religious teaching.

"Education is more than just the accumulation of facts. It is the formation of character and it's also the develop-

ment of people's religious or philosophical position. To see it purely as learning languages and doing sums, that's a very limited understanding of education," he said.

Dr Mullins added that it's a "shame" Irish people have forgotten the vital role religious orders have played in educating the country.

"Well, the religious orders educated the people that no one else was educating. They made a huge contribution over two centuries. I remember before the national

schools were established you would have had the Presentation Sisters and you had Bro. Rice's group and they were educating people and they brought these people that otherwise wouldn't have had any education – they brought them a very good level of education," he said.

He also noted that the media only focus on the negative aspects of the Church, ignoring the important voluntary contribution that religious orders made in Ireland.



Bro. Jesse Maingot OP leads the Eucharistic procession from St Mary's to a new adoration chapel during the Rosary Rally Cork over the weekend.

Hospital waiting list is unbelievable says nun

Staff reporter

An Irish nun has said the number of patients who were treated without hospital beds last month is "unbelievable" and the Government should figure out a solution.

Sr Pat Donovan, a member of the Catholic Healthcare Council of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, speaking in a personal capacity said that it's "unbelievable in this day that you have this kind of waiting list" for patients, adding that it doesn't respect

their dignity.

Her comments come after new figures from the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisations (INMO) which revealed that almost 8,000 patients were forced to wait on trolleys and chairs in September.

The INMO's monthly Trolley Watch Analysis showed that 7,765 patients were treated without hospital beds in September 2018. Sixty-eight of them were aged under 16.

In response to the figures, Sr Donovan said that it's the "job of the politicians to figure it out" so the crisis can be alleviated.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Neil Mackay RIP

The management and staff of *The Irish Catholic* would like to extend sincere sympathy to our board member Paul Mackay and his wife Lila on the death of their son, Neil. Mr Mackay is survived by his wife Ciara, his son Daniel, his parents, brothers Ronan and Gavan and sister Elva. *Anima eius et animae omnium fidelum defunctorum per Dei misericordiam requiescant in pace.*

NI Church leaders support anti-scam campaign

Church leaders in the North of Ireland have joined together to endorse a campaign warning people how to avoid being scammed.

The Scamwise PartnershipNI advises that one of the best ways to fight scammers is to take steps to prevent being caught out in the first place using a simple four-step scam test: you're being scammed if something seems too good to be true; you're contacted out of the blue; you're asked for personal details and money is requested.

On behalf of the Church leaders, the Rev. Brian Anderson, President of the Irish Council of Churches, said: "We are encouraging clergy and church members alike to be alert to the problem of scamming and to spread the Scamwise message to friends and family members, especially those who might seem most vulnerable in society."

Three new deacons to join Cork community

Bishop of Cloyne William Crean will ordain three new deacons to serve in the diocese of Cloyne next week in Cobh, Co. Cork.

The new deacons will join six deacons already serving in the diocese. There are now over 100 permanent deacons serving in Irish parishes.

Paul Alipini from Cobh and originally from Nigeria, John McCarthy, from Ballintotas in the parish of Middleton and Gerard Rooney, a Wexford native who lives in Ballymacoda, will be ordained as Permanent Deacons on Sunday October 7.

Priests, religious and people of the diocese are welcome to attend.

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Breda O'Brien

The View



The valuable art of being alone without experiencing loneliness

The BBC is making a series of programmes about loneliness as a result of a study involving 55,000 people that it conducted. The findings are somewhat counter-intuitive. Young people are lonelier than older people.

Some 40% of respondents aged between 16 and 24 years old said they experience loneliness often or very often, compared with just 29% of those aged between 65 and 74.

So while a significant number of older people experience loneliness, younger people experience it more often and more intensely.

Some commentators wonder whether young people have always been lonely but no large study was undertaken say, in the 1950s, to establish if loneliness was a factor then. It is impossible to know. Perhaps there is something about adolescence and young adulthood, that whole process of trying to find out who you are and what you should do with your life, that makes people feel particularly lonely.

However, the era that we live in is often presented as one of hyper-connectivity, where people are in constant contact on social media. It is not a solution to profound loneliness, it appears. The study shows that people who are lonely have more online-only friends, whereas people who have more 'in real life' friends than connections that only exist online are less lonely.

Presentation

The kind of curating and presentation of one's life that social media encourage, so that only perfect photographs are posted and only happy social occasions are recorded, adds to people's feelings of inadequacy.

John Cacciopa, Director of the Centre for Cognitive and Social Neuroscience at the University of Chicago, is a leading international expert in loneliness. He has a TEDx talk that has been viewed



nearly 900,000 times, called the lethality of loneliness.

His basic point is that we are designed to be social creatures. He says that "we forget that we are members of a social species, born dependent on our parents and for our species to survive, these infants must instantly engage their parents in protective behaviour and the parents must care enough about these offspring to nurture and protect them".

“Some young people are so lonely today because they have never learned how to be really alone, to experience solitude”

He continues that even when full-grown, we are not particularly splendid creatures. Other animals can run faster, see and smell better and fight much more effectively than we can. He challenges the autonomous, solitary model so promoted in our society today, saying

that interdependence is much closer to our reality.

Despite that, one-person households are on the rise in the US, even though loneliness increases the risk factor for early death by 45%.

However, it would be unwise to equate people living alone with lonely people.

Perhaps another reason that young people are so lonely today is that they have never learned how to be really alone, to experience solitude as opposed to loneliness.

Not that I can talk. Sometimes, our house is so full of young people that I think my head will explode. But when there is no-one in the house, after the first few hours, the house can seem eerily empty.

I like my own company, but some time ago, when I was working and everyone else in my family was away for three days at a wedding, I found myself having long conversations with shop assistants because I needed the human interaction.

However, I think I could cope with 10-15 minutes

in a bare room. Apparently, others find it excruciating. In a small study conducted in 2014 by Timothy Wilson in the University of Virginia, participants were given a mild electric shock and most of them said that they would pay rather than experience it again.

However, nearly two-thirds of men and a quarter of women self-administered the very same shock rather than sit quietly in a room for 15 minutes, just thinking.

There was no difference across the age groups. Blaise Pascal must have been grinning wryly, given his famous maxim, that "all of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit

quietly in a room alone".

There are two separate issues here. One is a loneliness that is deeply damaging, that comes from a lack of profound human connections. The other is an experience that we should all cultivate: the ability to be alone with our thoughts, and with God.

“All of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone”

Young people are increasingly frightened of that kind of silence. And

of course, adults can be just as dependent on their phones to fill every potential moment of reflection. Gone are the days of casual conversations at bus stops. Everyone is hunched over their phone.

Some second-level retreats demand that young people give up their phones for the day and after initial protests, the young people often comment how much more they interact with each other and how much clearer their minds are.

Solitude is something we can all achieve, while real loneliness can only be alleviated by people who care.

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The Church that stayed home

According to the Office of Public Works, just under 152,000 people attended the papal Mass in Dublin's Phoenix Park on August 26.

While organisers' claims that over 180,000 Communion hosts were distributed suggest a counter-estimate of about 200,000 people, a respectable figure for a miserable day where Mass attendances held up around the country, one thing seems indisputable: the crowds gathered in the Park were well under half the 500,000 planned for.

Aerial photographs on the day pointed to this, and RTÉ's Philip Boucher-Hayes will have spoken for many when he wrote on Twitter: "Genuine question: was there any market research done before hand to gauge levels of interest? Is this a part of prudent event management?"

In fairness, polling had long pointed to a robust attendance being likely for a papal Mass.

In December 2016, for example, an Ipsos/MRBI poll found that 38% of people in the Republic planned to see the Pope when he came to Ireland, and a year later Ámarach Research found that 47% of people would like to attend a Mass celebrated by the Pope in Ireland.

Undecided

So far so vague, but by March the date of the papal Mass was fixed and RTÉ's *Claire Byrne Live* had Ámarach Research quiz 1,000 people on whether they would attend. This time 18% said yes, with a further 19% being undecided.

On the face of it then, just a few months ago almost a fifth of the country's adults were set to go to the Park in August, with as many again at least open to joining them.

Tickets subsequently became available, but while attention swirled around the 'Nope to the Pope' campaign to sabotage attendance, World Meeting of Families organisers were confident they could wash fraudulent bookings out of the system, and in early July they announced that the almost 500,000 tickets for WMOF2018's closing papal Mass had been booked.

Between July 23 and August 6, then, it was the turn of Kantar Millward Brown to poll on whether people intended to attend a ceremony linked with the papal visit, with 19% of those surveyed saying yes.

In other words, just weeks before the papal visit, around 670,000 adults from the Republic alone apparently intended to go to at least one



Greg Daly asks why attendance at the papal Mass was so low



papal event, this figure obviously leaving out both children from the Republic and adults and children from the North.

Even allowing for a hefty margin of error over 800,000 Irish people of all ages seemed set to attend papal events; even taking Knock and the Festival of Families out of the equation, the Park's Fifteen Acres looked guaranteed to be filled.

August 7, however, the day after Kantar Millward Brown stopped polling, saw the HSE's Health Protection Surveillance Centre warning that mass gatherings like that planned for the Park pose "unique health risks to attendants".

A week later, on August 14, just days after tickets were issued for the WMOF2018 Closing Mass, Dublin's Assistant Garda Commissioner Pat Leahy advised those intending to go to the Park to "treat

it as if you were going up the side of Croagh Patrick".

Going to the Park, official Ireland seemed to be saying, was only for the hale and hearty, and around the country doubt began to set in around whether the papal Mass attendance was liable to be anywhere near 500,000.

“Dublin seems to have seen a dramatic collapse in probable attendance”

According to Tralee's Deacon Denis Kelleher, for instance, while there had long been an expectation that the town's 15,000-strong St John's parish could send three buses to Dublin, it took a long time to fill one bus, and though in the end two buses went to the capital, one included about 20 people from Cahirsiveen, over 60km away.

"Buses were leaving at 5.30

in the morning, I'm sure that put some people off," he said, noting that buses to Dublin were to be "parked way out in the middle of nowhere".

"I think that in the weeks leading up to the Mass there was a lot of hype about that, that there would be a long walk and there would be an early start," he said. "When people were undecided and it was going to be a long trek from Tralee anyway, it put some people off."

Similar stories are told across the land, while Dublin seems to have seen a dramatic collapse in probable attendance just ahead of the Mass, some frustrated by being allocated entry gates far from their homes, and many others discouraged by how a constant media litany warned of early starts, long walks, long waits, cold weather, and even forbidden deckchairs.

Dublin's Cabinteely parish was just one of many that saw numbers melting away even in the last days before the papal Mass.

"We have had a lot of cancellations for the seats on our private bus to the Papal Mass in the Phoenix Park (from 59 down to 17)," the parish Facebook page announced on Thursday, August 23. "The main reason for the cancellations seems to be the early departure time of 7am as we were told just this week that our bus has to be parked in Kylemore Way between 8am and 8.30am."

Previously there had been a feeling that 500,000 was an inadequate number of tickets, according to Fr Aquinas Duffy, describing how parishion-

ers who had expected to set out around 11am for the 3pm Mass were shocked to learn of the early start time.

While many who dropped out of the private bus arrangement planned on travelling separately later by public transport, Fr Duffy said, others woke up on Sunday August 26, "looked out the window and saw the weather and cancelled".

Just 11 people travelled by the private bus in the end, he said, though he himself was at least glad to have participated in the Mass despite everything. "Would I have missed it? No. I was delighted to be there," he said.

“Anyone who pays attention to the New Testament will know that it's not shy about counting people”

For one expert in event management who asked not to be named, however, nobody should have been surprised at how attendance numbers at the Park fell far short of projections.

"It is well known in event management that a free event announced months before the actual event has a 30% no-show rate regardless of the event," he said, adding: "To get half a million people in the Park they would have needed to shift three quarters of a million tickets."

"It was daft to talk about 500,000, and even dafter for the OPW to be 'dressing' the venue for 500,000 at a huge

cost," he added, maintaining that with half a million tickets allocated, organisers should not realistically have expected more than 350,000 to attend.

Sharply critical of the HSE and An Garda's exaggerated warnings, he added that "While the OPW was working and spending money, other organs of State were incessantly telling people for three weeks beforehand not to go. It looked like a massive anti-marketing campaign, designed to suppress the event."

Whatever the reasons for the low turnout, some will dismiss talk of numbers as irrelevant. Numbers aren't everything, they'll rightly say, claiming that talk of them is 'managerial' and misses the point of the Gospel.

Maybe so, but anyone who pays attention to the New Testament will know that it's not shy about counting people. Miraculous feedings of crowds of 4,000 and 5,000 men – along with uncounted women and children – are famous, of course, while Acts carefully maps out how the earliest Christian community had about 120 believers, before 3,000 were added to them at Pentecost, and it wasn't long before there were about 5,000 adult men in the nascent Church.

We don't know what seeds were sown during Ireland's second ever papal visit, and numbers aren't everything. But if they mattered to the inspired authors of our Scriptures, we'd be reckless to act as though they don't matter to us.



Pope Francis prepares to celebrate the papal Mass in the Phoenix Park, assisted by Archbishop Eamon Martin.



Pretending that men and women are the same

It is increasingly becoming heretical to say that there are differences between the sexes, writes **David Quinn**

Not that you would think it from reading our newspapers, but one of the things that Pope Francis frequently criticises is so-called 'gender ideology'. This is the belief that men and women are the same and if we appear different it is only because of the way we are raised. Aside from the obvious biological ones, we are told that there are no natural differences between men and women and to suggest otherwise, is sexism.

To give an example, if you point out that more women than men become nurses, or teachers, or childcare workers, and then suggest that is because women are drawn more naturally to jobs involving the care of people, you are being sexist. The only reason more women are to be found in those jobs, say the feminists, is because of the way they were raised.

Likewise, if you point out that there are more men than women in the army, or the police, or in construction work, or engineering. That is also purely down to the way men are raised, we are told. It is not because men are more naturally drawn than women to jobs that involve risk and physical action and working with objects rather than with people.

Differences

Not all feminists deny that there are natural differences between the sexes, but gender feminists do. They say that with a different upbringing and a different set of social expectations, you could flip the current situation on its head completely, and you would have far more men than women working in childcare, and far more women than men working in the sciences.

Better still, the gender feminists would argue, there should be an equal number of men and women working in all jobs, across the board.

Another scientist got himself into big trouble this



Camille Paglia.

week (maybe he will have been sacked by the time you read this, or else have issued a grovelling apology), for saying that less well-qualified female scientists are being promoted over better qualified male scientists simply because they are female, and all across the sciences formal and informal gender quotas are now in operation that favour women.

Science is another area historically dominated by men. The traditional explanation for this is that men are more drawn to working with things. The feminist explanation is that men were encouraged into the sciences and women were not.

“Are women naturally more drawn to jobs involving the care of people?”

This is why there have been huge efforts in recent times to encourage girls to study one or more of the STEM subjects, i.e. science, technology, engineering or maths. The hope is that over time, more and more girls will have flourishing careers in one of areas.

Prof. Alessandro Strumia of Pisa University told a workshop this week at a major physics seminar at the European Centre for Nuclear Research (CERN). That male scientists are being discriminated against in favour of women. He has since been suspended by CERN.

According to a report, he produced “a series of graphs which, he claimed,

showed that women were hired over men whose research was cited more by other scientists in their publications, which is an indication of higher quality”.

To add insult to injury, he also cited research showing that women are indeed more naturally drawn to jobs involving the care of people, while men are naturally more drawn to jobs involving the study of things.

In feminist eyes, everything he has said is heresy. You cannot say men and women have natural differences, and you cannot say that better qualified men are being passed over for the sake of less qualified women. In feminist eyes, only women are ever discriminated against.

I landed in something of a social media storm myself a few months ago when I quoted the American feminist, Camille Paglia (she rejects gender theory), who has rightly pointed out that men are responsible for almost the entirety of the built environment.

Even though it is completely true, you are not allowed to say it.

The key question here is whether there are, in fact, any natural differences between men and women that draw us, in general, to one job or the other? Are women naturally more drawn to jobs involving the care of people, and are men naturally more drawn to jobs involving physical risk, and those involving the study or manipulation of objects?

One way to answer the question might be to look at societies that give women lots of freedom and make huge efforts to combat direct and indirect

other, is Sweden. But Sweden has a lower percentage of women working in the STEM fields than practically any country in the world. Finland and Norway are worse. Ireland, which now prides itself on its feminism, isn't far behind.

“Sweden has a lower percentage of women working in the STEM fields than practically any country in the world”

What countries have much larger numbers of women working in the STEM fields? The likes of Algeria it turns out, which is not famed for its gender equality.

Meanwhile, in Sweden women are still dominating the caring professions like nursing and childcare. If Sweden is failing so

miserably to alter the general job preferences of men and women, is it because those preferences have a strong natural basis after all, and are less to do with how we are raised than gender feminists would like to think?

The insistence that men and women are the same might be harmless enough were it not for the fact that it is now leading to policies that are directly discriminatory against men, namely gender quotas which can result in better qualified men being passed over in favour of less qualified women. A society that truly rejects discrimination gives the job to the best person, regardless of sex.

1 For more information about the relationship between gender and STEM subjects, see: <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/02/the-more-gender-equality-the-fewer-women-in-stem/553592/>

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A global Church bound



Christians are being persecuted at a worryingly unprecedented level, writes **Colm Fitzpatrick**

Since the emergence of Christianity, those who have spiritually identified with Jesus have been ostracised, jeered and persecuted. We learn in the New Testament that St Paul was imprisoned in Rome for preaching and according to Church tradition, the apostles all lay down their lives for the transmission of the Faith.

This pattern only intensified during the early Christian period, and we can still hear the stories of saints such as Polycarp who in the 2nd Century was burned at the stake for refusing to burn incense to the Roman Emperor. Indeed, the Church Father Tertullian only a few decades later would write: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church" – an affirmation that sacrifice is a constitutive part of what it means to be Christian.

And while there may be about 2.2 billion Christians world-wide, it is still the case that Tertullian's words ring home, given the ongoing persecution Christians continue to encounter today.

Indeed, new research by the Irish charity group 'Church in Chains' has revealed that the persecution of Christians worldwide is only getting worse, and that intervention politically and spiritually is needed in order to combat this. Launching the third edition of the Church in Chains *Global Guide* in Dun Laoghaire on September 27, the charity revealed that millions of Christians in 60 countries are persecuted, threatened, and fear for their lives weekly or daily.

Real action

For David Turner, Director of Church in Chains, and author of the document, more Irish awareness of Christian persecution worldwide is needed



so that real action can be taken to fight against and eradicate it.

“The booklet suggests that upholding religious freedom is often not a priority for governments”

“The persecution of Christians rarely makes the headlines but is a weekly if not

daily lived experience for millions of Christians world-wide – we estimate that over 200 million Christians are at constant risk of persecution,” David said.

“The situation is noticeably worsening in the two most populous nations on earth, as Hindu extremists across India attack churches in rural areas every week with impunity, while in China the authorities close churches every week as President Xi’s religious clampdown gathers

momentum.”

In order to highlight the varying degrees of Christian persecution from place to place, the *Global Guide* divides the 60 countries into three colour-coded categories to give the reader a visual aid of how this persecution is dispersed.

● **Severe** – Many or all Christians face persecution. State persecution includes the use of blasphemy laws and apostasy laws, arrests, fines, imprisonment, torture and

execution. Persecution by society includes abduction, murder and violent mob attacks (including bombings, shootings and arson).

● **Significant** – Some, but not all, Christians face many restrictions on practicing their Faith. Persecution by the state may include arrests, fines, imprisonment, restrictions on church registration and prohibitions on meetings and possessing Bibles. Persecution by society includes attacks of pastors and churches.

● **Limited** – Most Christians are permitted to meet but some churches or individuals face restriction of discrimination. Some of this persecution is by the state (such as discrimination and restrictions on church registration) and some by society (opposition from neighbours and ostracism).

Although the extent to which Christian persecution is taking place today may seem



Staff and trustees displaying the 3rd edition of the Church in Chains *Global Guide*. Pictured second from right, Rev. Trevor Sargent.



David Turner, Director of Church in Chains, said over 200 million Christians are at constant risk of persecution globally today.

by chains



outlandish and archaic given how rapidly the world has changed and modernised, the booklet suggests that upholding religious freedom is often not a priority for governments.

"Many observers wonder how religious persecution can continue when the world seems more interdependent than ever through trade and aid, when international travel is widespread, when every country's human rights record is regularly examined at the United Nations and when the internet enables immediate reporting of persecution incidents," it says.

"However, the insatiable global desire for goods and services often leads to blind eyes being turned to persecution in favour of trading with draconian regimes, while the principle of upholding religious freedom as an international human rights standard is frequently ignored if there are fears that to do so will offend certain nations or religions."

Extremism

Readers of the second edition published in 2014 will notice in this edition that Cameroon, Rwanda and Uganda have been listed for the first time and reflects the continuing spread of Muslim extremism

in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Each country has a majority Christian population that is beginning to come under threat. However, three countries in the second edition have been omitted (Belarus, Lebanon and Chad), in recognition that religious freedom in these countries has improved.

In some countries there have been notable changes, resulting in recategorisation. The situation in Egypt, Malaysia, Nepal and Tajikistan has deteriorated, while improvements have been noted in Colombia, Cuba, Kuwait, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkmenistan and Vietnam.

According to Rev. Trevor Sargent, recently ordained Church of Ireland minister and former Green Party leader, who launched the *Guide*, countries like these are also facing a multitude of resource problems and our own Government needs to step up to address this.

"Well it's very disturbing to see from the *Global Guide* from Church in Chains that there are at least 60 countries where there is serious persecution to one degree or another of Christians. Many of those countries are in Africa, but also south America, Asia and Europe and they are countries that also have other problems so we need to address the governments of those countries," he told this paper.

“It's time for people in Ireland to wake up to what is happening around the world”

"There's advice on writing letters and various other actions but we also need to address the resources issues in those countries and our own Government that is reluctant to take action because it might not be in our national interest. We have to make sure respect for human rights is in everybody's interest."

At least one hopeful sign in the Muslim world is the engagement of some key religious and political leaders on the issue of religious freedom – most notably in agreeing

the Marrakesh Declaration in 2016, which defends the rights of religious minorities in Muslim countries. However, the Declaration does not deal with the crucial religious freedom issue of conversion from Islam and it is not yet clear what practical effect the Declaration will have throughout the Muslim World.

In light of these findings, the *Guide* intends to inform readers about what is happening to Christians in these 60 countries and motivate readers to respond. Indeed, this has been an ongoing focus of the charity, which beginning with a different name in mid-1970's (Christian Concern for Freedom of Conscience), has raised awareness of the plight of persecuted Christians, encouraged prayer and action on their behalf, advocates before governments and ambassadors and sent aid to help Christian victims of conflict (including those who have been forced from their homes by extremists), to support prisoners' families and to supply Bibles where they cannot otherwise be obtained.

David has been involved with the charity since 1981, first as a volunteer, then in 2002 as part-time national co-ordinator, and full-time director since 2007. His role includes developing and maintaining links with overseas partners; advocacy with TDs, Senators, the Department of Foreign Affairs and foreign embassies; and editing *Church in Chains* magazine.

Stressing the importance of the troubling situations that Christians are facing globally daily, he said that it's "time for people in Ireland to wake up to what is happening around the world and for the Irish government to put flesh on the bones of its oft-repeated commitment to prioritising freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) in its foreign policy by raising the issue of violations of religious freedom directly with the governments that are actively persecuting Christians or facilitating the persecution of Christians."

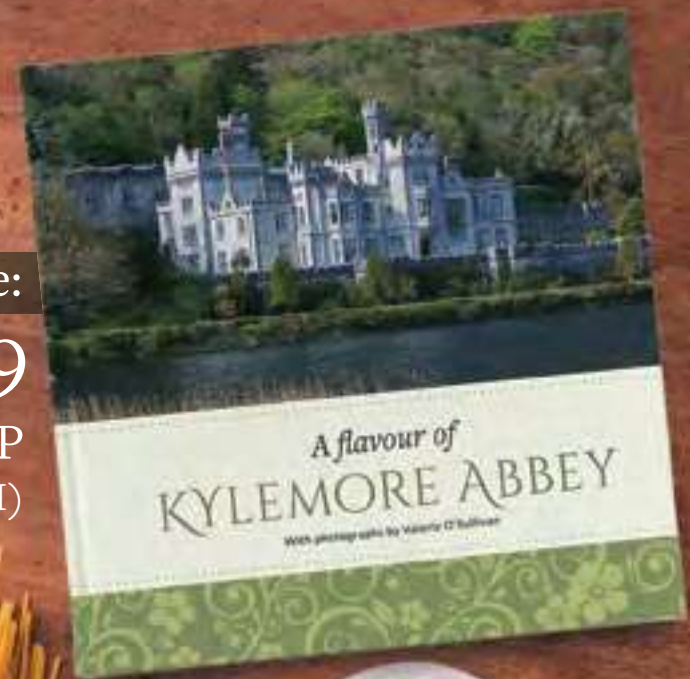
In this way, there is real hope that Christians don't become a minority, but that persecution of them does.

“At least one hopeful sign in the Muslim world is the engagement of some key religious and political leaders on the issue of religious freedom”

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Down & Connor Faith and Life Convention

Opening wide the doors of



The radical challenge set before Catholics is to learn a new language, writes **Michael Kelly**

One of the Pope's closest advisers has urged the Church in Ireland to continue to work to build a culture of co-responsibility between laypeople and clergy.

Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga was speaking to more than 300 people at the Down & Connor Diocese Faith and Life Convention in Belfast at the weekend.

He said that greater lay responsibility "is a vital part in the re-birth of the Church" and that "this is the wish of Pope Francis".

Honduran Cardinal Maradiaga is a close confidant of Pope Francis and the Pontiff has appointed the cardinal to co-ordinate his key group of advisers, the so-called C9, who are advising Francis on reforms in the Church.

Pastoral plan

Dr Maradiaga commended the Down & Connor pastoral plan which has been in the process of being rolled out over the last five years.

He said that the plan "points out numerous arenas in which we can support others on their journey to Christ, so that in our parishes we may truly be a welcoming community of believers, bearing witness to our Faith in today's society".

He encouraged participants to take up their baptismal call to evangelise. "We must not leave it to others! Let's dare to live for each other and revitalise the culture of volunteer service in our Church! Let's desire to participate more fully in the life of the Church and to be co-responsible for the mission of the Church!" he said.

However, he warned that pastoral imperatives always need to lead to concrete action. "These desires and these words need now to be put into action by each one



of us. This new era in the life of our diocese offers many opportunities for you to put your talents and experience at the service of the common good in our Church, and by extension in our society.

"You are working to open wide the doors of our Church to all without exception, ensuring that the highest standards of safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children continue to operate in Down & Connor".

He described the pastoral plan as a "personal invitation" to each parishioner "to enrich one's relationship with Christ, to grow in holiness, and to

serve your neighbour both as believer and fellow-citizen".

He insisted that Catholics must work hard to "ensure that the voice of the Church and of the Gospel is heard in the public square and that the Catholic response to all major issues is clearly presented.

"Contribute to the Church's engagement with legislators, politicians and public bodies both within the statutory and voluntary sector," he said.

Returning to the theme of collaborative ministry between priests and laypeople, the cardinal encouraged participants at the gathering to "promote a culture of co-

responsibility among clergy, religious and laity at every level of the life of the diocese.

"Promote the on-going formation and development of lay volunteers for service in parishes," he said.

On the theme of youth ministry – which is the subject of this month's Synod of Bishops in Rome – the cardinal said that parishes need to work hard to "reach out to young adults and provide them with a peer community that supports them in entering fully into the life and mission of the Church.

"Ensure that young people, aged 11-18, recognise

their place within the parish community and grow in their own relationship with Christ and with peers who will share with them the mission to build the Kingdom of God," he said.

Dr Maradiaga proposed the 'see, judge, act' model to parishioners as a way of revitalising the Church and the presence of Faith in the wider culture. In this, he said that the Church often needs to learn a new way of speaking.

"No longer do we find ourselves speaking the language of today's world. Fewer and fewer people understand our message, whilst fewer people

are listening to us.

“The Faith and Life Convention has been a key part of the pastoral plan in the diocese aimed at renewing Faith”

"Skilful communication presupposes one who speaks and one who listens. Perhaps today we are not on the right frequency and those listening cannot understand us," he said.

However, he warned that it is not an option for the Church to retreat from dialogue. "The

“Skilful communication presupposes one who speaks and one who listens. Perhaps today we are not on the right frequency and those listening cannot understand us”

the Church to all



Youth attendees.



Volunteers and Living Church team supporting the convention. Left, Cardinal Maradiaga in conversation with Dr Jessie Rodgers.

life of Faith is lived out in the world, not in the sacristies of our times.

"As laypeople, you must allow the life of God to saturate your every experience, indeed every dimension of your existence, not in a vague sense but effectively through your daily work, your family life, your suffering, your prayer, in and through your celebration of the Eucharist and the Sacraments, in your relationship and membership of the Church; indeed, wherever you find yourselves," he said.

The Faith and Life Convention has been a key part of the pastoral plan in the diocese aimed at renewing Faith. Down & Connor will take another historic step on Sunday October 14 when Bishop Noel Treanor will ordain nine men for service as permanent deacons in the diocese.



The Irish Catholic

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Down & Connor Faith and Life Convention



Youcat exhibitors.



Cardinal Maradiaga joining in Morning Prayer.



Cheerful conversation dominated the gathering for lunch at the convention.

The Church needs speech and language therapists



Bishop Treanor extending a word of welcome to speakers and 450 delegates at the convention.

The last Saturday in September is now permanently blocked out in my diary, as it is on that date that we in the Diocese of Down and Connor hold our Faith and Life Convention.

It is one of the many events organised by the Living Church Office since the diocese launched its pastoral plan five years ago. We have been delighted over the last five years to have had a great variety of keynote speakers John Allen Jr, Alan McGuckian SJ, Sarah Teather, Cardinal Kevin Farrell and last week Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga.

Held in Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Belfast, the Faith and Life Convention has a great atmosphere.

As soon as delegates arrive, they are hugging people they haven't seen for a while, checking their name badges to see which workshops they are allocated to and buying new books from exhibitors before quickly making their way into the hall to get a good seat. It's great to be at a Catholic event where people want

We need to learn a new way to reach those who do not feel themselves part of the Church, writes **Paula McKeown**



to be in the front row!

At all of these gatherings I am always convinced that the Holy Spirit will move and indeed have a word for each person that gathers, be it in a conversation, over coffee, or an insight offered during a workshop.

“There is no doubt that we need speech therapists to help us communicate with this new world”

I found myself being captivated when Cardinal Maradiaga started to speak about the ever-changing nature of humanity and how we must come to understand the new humanity, and to know what

is happening in the lives of the people of Down and Connor.

He said we also needed to learn anew how to communicate with the world and people around us – we need, he said, speech and language therapy. “How can we reach out to this new humanity if we don't know the language of today's world?” the cardinal asked.

We need to re-learn. There is no doubt that we need speech therapists to help us communicate with this new world. Imagine my surprise when I heard these words, because before I came to work for the diocese I was a speech and language therapist! I have seen first-hand the power of helping someone to commu-



"Let the little children come to me" – everyone was welcome at the convention, young and old.



Cardinal Maradiaga addressing the convention.



Delegates enjoyed hearing the inside story of Cardinal Maradiaga's interactions with Pope Francis.



nicate with those around her or him.

I have seen frustration subside, health return and relationships flourish. Indeed, recently I have found much

joy in helping my own son Lorcán to communicate.

Though tough at times, speech therapy is worth the effort. As a diocese, we are now five years into our pas-

toral plan. This pastoral plan came out of a period of listening that took place in each of our 87 parishes. We heard from thousands of people in that process. This rich com-

munication led to a plan that has helped us in the diocese to take steps towards being the Church Jesus would have us be.

Language

Hearing the cardinal's words at our convention confirmed my own thinking that we may well be called to listen afresh to all of the people; to learn together once more how to communicate with each other within the Church and, essentially, to learn a new language in order to communicate to those who, for whatever reason, do not see themselves as being part of the Church.

Tough as this may well be, undertaking some speech therapy and listening to those around us is sure to help us in the Diocese of Down and Connor take the next steps on the journey of revealing the Living Church.

i Paula McKeown is Director of the Living Church Office in the Diocese of Down and Connor.

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Out&About

University campus opens to the sound of St Clare's singers



► **DUBLIN:** Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, who was principal celebrant, stands with children from St Clare's Primary School in Harold's Cross who sang during the Mass for the opening of the academic year in DCU's St Patrick's campus. Photo: John McElroy

▼ **DUBLIN:** Cllr Deirdre Heney launches 'Getting the Messages' in SuperValu in Raheny, a pilot project designed to support those living with dementia and their carers by making it easier for them to shop and do business in their local communities. Pictured are Cllr Deirdre Heney with Agris Rubulevs, Assistant Manager, store assistant Jane Griffiths, and customer Arthur Freeney. Photo: Fennell Photography



CORK: Bishop Tom Deenihan, Bishop of Meath, was presented by his priest colleagues with a pectoral cross at the Diocese of Cork and Ross' clergy dinner. Pictured (l-r) are Msgr Kevin O'Callaghan, Bishop Pdraig O'Donoghue, retired Bishop of Lancaster; Bishop Patrick Harrington SAM, retired from Lodwar, Kenya; Bishop Tom Deenihan, Bishop John Buckley; Msgr Aidan O'Driscoll, and Archbishop Patrick Coveney, retired Apostolic Nuncio to Greece. Photo: Fr Tom Hayes.



IN SHORT

Irishman to lead Columban missionaries worldwide

As the Missionary Society of St Columban embarks on its second century, it has chosen Irishman, Fr Tim Mulroy from Co. Mayo as its new Superior General.

Fr Tim (54) is originally from Meelick, Swinford and was a primary school teacher before he joined the Columbans in 1987.

Prior to his election as Superior General, he was working as regional director of the Columbans in the US, a role he has held since 2012.

Responding to the news of his election Fr Tim said: "As Columban Missionaries conclude the celebration of the centenary of our founding and at the same time prepare for a new century of mission, I feel both humbled and honoured to be given this leadership position."

Fr Mulroy was ordained at Our Lady Help

of Christians Church, Swinford in 1995.

He worked in parish ministry in Japan from 1995 until 2002, when he went to the US as director of formation at the Columban International Seminary in Chicago, a role he held for nine years.

Afterwards he served in parish ministry at St Pius X Parish in El Paso, Texas before he was elected Regional Superior of the Columbans in the US.

Fr Mulroy said: "As Columban missionaries look towards the future, we will continue to promote greater understanding and collaboration among people from different religious traditions. We will also continue to emphasise the importance of caring for our planet earth, so that succeeding generations will enjoy God's blessings."

The Mayo-native will be assisted by three other Columbans, Fr Brian Vale from New Zealand, Fr Alvaro Patricio Martinez Ibañez from Chile and Fr Joseph Kang South Korea.

Parents struggling on low income give priority to their children's needs

Parents struggling to make ends meet give priority to the needs of their children over their own and often worry and feel guilty that they are letting their children down.

This was revealed as one of the key findings of a new study published today by the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul (SVP) and the Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice (VPSJ).

Called 'Stories of Struggle' the report shines a light on what it is like for families whose income is not enough to afford a minimum essential standard of living (MESL).

Caroline Fahey, SVP Head of Social Justice said: "This report clearly shows that families with an inadequate income work very hard to make ends meet and use a myriad of coping strategies to help manage the shortfall in income. Dealing with income inadequacy

requires discipline, resilience and sacrifice. The longer it goes on, the more difficult it is for families to see a way out."

'Stories of Struggles' also found that:

- The high cost of housing was the single most cited driver of income inadequacy.
- Housing was followed closely by unemployment and family break-up.
- The inability to access affordable and good quality childcare forced families into unemployment, or restricted the hours they could work.
- Most families interviewed could point to specific events that lowered total family income such as the death of an immediate family member, being 'let-go' from a job or having hours reduced, rent increases, a car accident, the birth of a child with special needs, a family separation or a parent's illness.

The full report, 'Stories of Struggle – Experiences of living below the Minimum Essential Standard of Living' is available at <https://www.svp.ie/storiesofstruggle2018> and www.justicematters.ie/

Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



KERRY: Active participants in the workshop 'Be the Solution to Plastic Pollution'. The Diocese of Kerry has taken up the challenge of plastic pollution for the Season of Creation 2018 on this theme. The season runs from September 1 to October 4.

MEATH: After many years of dedicated service, Jody Kelly retired early in September as head gardener/caretaker for St Patrick's Church, Trim. A presentation was made on Sunday, September 9 to Jody by Trim parish priest Fr Seán Henry who thanked him for his selfless service to the community. Pictured (l-r) are Jody Kelly, Fr Seán Henry and Alo Kelly, Jody's brother. Photo: B. V. Doyle



KERRY: Sylvia Thompson with Angela Nagle of Voice at the 'Be the Solution to Plastic Pollution' workshop in the Diocese of Kerry, held in the John Paul II Pastoral Centre.



MEATH: Fr Tim Mulroy, who was elected as the Columbans new Superior General, is pictured with his new general council which includes Fr Joseph Kang, Fr Brian Vale and Fr Fr Alvaro Patricio Martinez Ibañez.



CLARE: Bishop Fintan Monahan attends the St Padre Pio Triduum in the Franciscan Friary in Ennis with Fr Tom Ryan PP of Ennis Parish, the Papal Nuncio Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo and Fr Cletus OFM



KERRY: Fr Mario Jachym SChr is pictured with Bishop Philip Boyce, Polish Consul Mr Jerome Mullen, friends and parishioners. The Parish of Saval marked the departure of Fr Mario with a special Mass, concelebrated with Bishop Philip Boyce.

CLARE

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

Ennis Parish, led by Fr Tom Hogan, will make a pilgrimage to Italy on October 15-22. Details: Mary 087 124 7669.

Mothers' Prayers in Cloughleigh Church every Tuesday evening from 7-7:45pm. During Mothers' Prayers we pray for our children and all who need our prayers. New members are always welcome. Info contact Noreen at 085 1530051.

CORK

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

DERRY

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

DUBLIN

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

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

FERMANAGH

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

GALWAY

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

KILDARE

Leixlip Parish Cell Groups: An invitation is extended to everyone to experience a cell meeting in a home near you (morning or evening). Meeting date: October 16. Info: Bridie 086 3807917, Donal 086 4472605. Morning groups: Mary 087 6205435, Maura 087 4141706.

Family Cell Meeting: A cell meeting for parents/carers/expectant parents and babies/toddlers in Our Lady's Parish Centre on Tuesday afternoons 1-2pm. Volunteers will lead the meeting, prepare refreshments and help with the toddlers. Upcoming date: October 16. Info: Kate 086 4132511. Email: leixlipparishcells@gmail.com Website: www.parishcellsireland.ie

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, Crecora on Thursdays, following morning Mass until 12noon and from 6-10pm, and in Mungret Church on Wednesdays, from 10am to 12noon.

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

The Dominican Sisters in Limerick will be offering Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a Montessori-based religious education programme, for children ages 3-9 beginning in October. Interested parents please contact limerick@op-tn.org or 085 2255796.

LOUTH

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

St Gerard's Solemn Novena at St Joseph's Redemptorist Church in Dundalk from October 8-16. Weekdays: 7am, 9.30, 11.30, 1.10pm, 2.30, 4.30, 6, 7.30, 9, 10.30. Sunday: 7am, 8, 9.30, 11, 12.30pm, 4.30, 6, 7.30, 9.00. Confessors available every day except for Sundays. Visit: www.redemptorists.dundalk@cssr.ie

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

MEATH

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

ROSCOMMON

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

WATERFORD

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

WICKLOW

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

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

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A people fit to govern themselves

While, of course, this was not known at the time, the week ending Saturday, October 5, 1918, marked the beginning of the last whole month of the war, and *The Irish Catholic*, in keeping with its output in the preceding weeks, was keeping its focus very firmly on post-war developments.

As will become evident in future articles, Cardinal Logue, Archbishop of Armagh and primate of All-Ireland, featured prominently in the paper's pages – all the more as his counterpart in Dublin, William Walsh, continued to have serious problems with his health and was simply not able to engage with the public sphere to the same extent as Logue.

Cardinal Logue's politics were complex. He shared the Church's suspicion (some might say hatred) of French-style republicanism. Yet he was an ardent Irish nationalist, and an advanced one, at least by the standards prevailing until the Easter Rising, advocating Dominion Status long before this formula became 'practical politics'.

Openly hostile to John Redmond, even at the moment of the latter's greatest triumph (the passage of the Home Rule Act in the Autumn of 1914) he had become ever more critical of the Home Rule party, particularly because he felt it had shown itself to be 'soft' on the question of partition – an issue on which no Archbishop of Armagh could compromise.

“He shared the Church's suspicion (some might say hatred) of French-style republicanism”

As was the case with Walsh he had never actively supported the war effort – a stance that had won him few new friends in Dublin Castle. With an Allied victory on the continent now in sight, and with republicans on the march (literally and metaphorically) at home, he had to pick his words carefully.

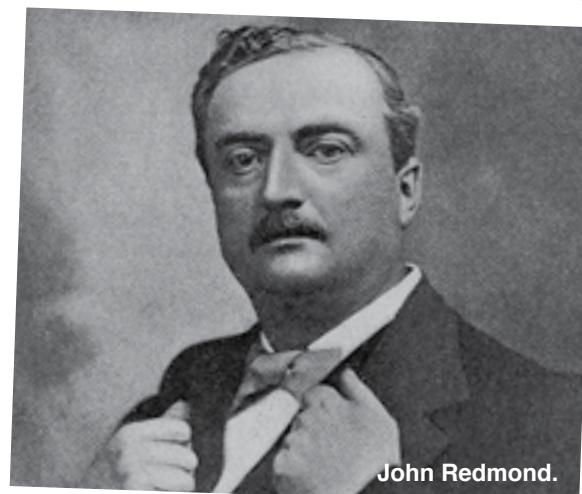
The Irish Catholic gave front page coverage to a speech Cardinal Logue had recently delivered in Enniskillen, during which he praised the proven capacity of the Irish people for responsible administration. This was illustrated by the number of Irish who had carved out impressive political careers in



Cardinal Logue pictured with other clerics at Lough Derg.

100 years on

Cardinal Michael Logue was proud of Irish people's gifts for administration, writes **Gabriel Doherty**



John Redmond.

the United States, or achieved senior positions in the British Empire.

Displaying sarcasm and a knowledge of Irish he observed to applause that “It would be a strange thing if going beyond the sea changed Irishmen so much that they got inspiration to enable them to do great things, while in their own country they were mere bosthoons...”

In the cardinal's view such ability was already on display on the home front, pointing to the success of the county councils created in 1898 as demonstrating beyond question the capacity and talent for self-government existing within the country, and especially within the Catholic community.

Reverting to a frequently-repeated theme of his, he argued that this talent continued to be wasted as the affairs of the country were run in the interests of the unionist bloc, and this lamentable situation would continue until effective self-government was granted.

Given such an outlook, it is no surprise that it was he who led the hierarchy's attack on the Government of Ireland bill, when the Government's proposals for the future of the country became known in early 1920.

The edition also discussed the ramifications of the withdrawal from the war of Germany's ally, Bulgaria, whose surrender was announced when the Armistice of Thessalonica was declared on Sep-

tember 30.

Emphasising the fact that the development threatened to disrupt contact between Germany and both Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman empire, the paper speculated that the latter would be forced to sue for an immediate peace – a prediction that was borne out within a fortnight by the start of the discussions that led to Turkey's withdrawal from the fighting on October 30.

“It would take the general election, promised immediately after the war's end, to make manifest the new reality”

From an Irish perspective the “wonderful events” of the previous week, events that portended the end of the conflict, removed both the threat of conscription that even yet hung over the country, and also hastened the day when the Home Rule Act, in abeyance since 1914, would be put into effect.

The mood of the country, however, had been transformed over the intervening four years, and it was as yet by no means apparent that *The Irish Catholic* realised by just how much. It would take the general election, promised immediately after the war's end, to make manifest the new reality, and it was to this election that the paper's eye increasingly turned.

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

Cornerstone

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Page 22

Being the Digital Light of Christ

A new website aims to be a beacon of hope in today's Ireland

The Hook of Faith is a brand-new website that has been set up by Ferns CAFÉ (Catholic Adult Formation and Education), a group in the Diocese of Ferns, who are committed to the work of evangelisation and adult faith formation. Fr Billy Swan of St Aidan's Cathedral in Enniscorthy is at the centre of the initiative, which grew out of the Certificate in Theology course in the Wexford Campus of Carlow IT. "The role of the lay people in this initiative is indispensable," said Fr Swan. "On completion of the course, this group of dedicated lay people desired to keep the momentum going, to keep writing and contributing to something about the Faith," he continued.



The result is an impressive website, which "seeks to bring the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to bear on all sectors of society in a way that offers life and meaning to everyone." It is, to all intents and purposes, an Irish cousin of Word on Fire, Bishop Robert Barron's Catholic media apostolate. The mission of The Hook of Faith is straightforward: "to digitally proclaim the Gospel in the Diocese of Ferns and beyond". However, there is a realism at its heart, as all involved "recognise the challenge of this task at a time in the Church that needs healing and hope." The site itself hosts an array of free videos, articles and interviews, which can be used to deepen your faith, and encourage more engagement.

» Continued on Page 20



Fr Billy Swan, Neil Foley of Ferns CAFÉ, Breda O'Brien and Bishop Denis Brennan at the launch of The Hook of Faith website.

Editor's Note by Eoin Walshe

A voice amidst crises



We are living at a fascinating intersection of historical significance – for example, the quincentenary of Wittenberg, Pope Francis' ongoing "quiet revolution" of reform and his historic papal visit to Ireland, which coincided of course with Dublin's historic four in a row!

It can sometimes feel like we are living in a time of crisis, particularly in Ireland and particularly in the church. However, before succumbing to a sense of doom regarding the current state of affairs, it is comforting to remember that the coming of our cornerstone, was marked by crisis. Jesus, whose initial coming was marked by crisis, may be speaking again to his people in the crises of today, and reflection on his Word may enable us to discern his voice. Accordingly, our weekly Scripture section continues to focus on the Second Reading from next Sunday –

reading what was being said to early Christian communities, in order to discern what is being said to us today. This week's features includes a new website which aims to be a digital beacon of hope in today's Ireland, while Fish & Tips this week is about Bishop Barron's online ministry which inspired the aforementioned website.

This week spotlight

Also this week: a parish that is actively exploring ways to embrace mission and laying the groundwork for a vision of the future of their parish, another People of God Profile introducing another one of our sisters or brothers in Christ from around the country, and Donal Harrington continues his series on what it means to be an evangelising parish.

If your parish is engaged in something exciting or innovative, contact us and let us know! Email me on eoin@irishcatholic.ie



Being the Digital Light of Christ

» Continued from Page 19

There is a section on the Building Blocks of Life, where Sean O’Leary examines the interaction between science and faith. There is also a resource for priests, outlining homily ideas and reflections. Meanwhile, an in-depth audio interview with Bishop Denis Brennan looks back at the World Meeting of Families and Pope Francis’ recent visit. There are also some reflective videos of evening sunsets over the calming tides of Hook Head; perfect for an introduction to evening prayer, or a beginning for meditation.

“The Hook of Faith works off eight key principles, which can be viewed from a link on the home page.”

The Hook of Faith works off eight key principles, which can be viewed from a link on the home page. These 8 pillars are: a concentration on Evangelisation and the Kerygma; pointing always to the person of Christ; seeking to evangelise our culture so that faith becomes culture; recognising the particular woundedness of the Church today, and so contributing to healing and rebuilding trust; focusing on the central importance of the Sacraments; creating com-

munities and parishes where people feel welcome, accepted and loved; promoting effective collaboration between laity and clergy; and encouraging both the Church’s diversity and true unity.

Fr Swan notes that while “we don’t have the resources of someone like Bishop Barron,” it is his “hope that the light that comes from our faith will reach a wide audience through this new age of digital media and will help transform lives through the joy of the Gospel.” This appears to be very much in the realm of what Pope Francis called for in his Joy of the Gospel exhortation, when he yearned for Catholics to be “bold and creative” in their efforts for the New Evangelisation. Fr Swan references Saint Pope John Paul the Great as another key influence. He said of the former Pontiff, “he called for the New Evangelisation to be new in its ardour, methods and expressions. The Hook of Faith is concentrating on the new methods of spreading the Gospel.”

He continued, “If we reach as many people as possible, this could be a resource for them to discover the Good News, to grow in their relationship with Christ and to grow in their faith in Him.” This outlook is mirrored in the three patron saints of the initiative: St Aidan, who is the patron of the Diocese of Ferns, which gives the local angle; St Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, which gives the national angle; and finally, St Therese of Lisieux, who is the patron of mission worldwide. Thus, the



threefold nature of what the Hook of Faith is trying to do becomes evident. “We want to reach people in Enniscorthy, all over the country, and indeed, throughout the entire world”, Fr Swan said.

“We just have to get started and see where the Lord takes us”

However, the importance of starting small is not lost on Fr Swan and the team. “We just have to get started and see where the Lord takes us,” he reflected. “We start with engaging with the internet and being involved online. We have to be less afraid of new technology



The Hook of Faith is inspired by Bishop Barron’s Word on Fire ministry

and the likes of social media,” he continued. There are challenges, naturally, to what the team are trying to do, but there is a dedication to “maximising the new media to proclaim the Gospel and get it out there.”

Fr Swan is at pains to clarify that he does not believe this online ministry should in any way come at the expense of real, lived pastoral ministry. He sees that they can compliment each other, and

each ministry’s strengths can build upon the relative weaknesses of the other. “It’s not either/or,” Fr Swan explains, “it’s very much the Catholic sense of both/and. This is media that can – and should – be used alongside old media. None of this can be a substitute for human interaction, naturally”.

The team’s major concern is to have a website which is at the service of the light of faith. And just as the Hook lighthouse has been throwing out light off the coast of Wexford for 800 years, there is a hope that this website might act as a light to bring people closer to Christ.

To read more about the Hook of Faith, see the website www.thehookoffaith.com

Scripture

Reflecting on Scripture is an important part of the Christian faith. Often, however, we Catholics do not allow ourselves the time to really reflect on the Word of God. This weekly series will explore the Second Readings from the coming Sunday’s Mass. These readings were written specifically for the early church, but since it is a living Word, we can still try to see what it is saying to the Church today.

Hebrews 2:9-11

We see in Jesus one who was for a short while made lower than the angels and is now crowned with glory and splendour because he submitted to death; by God’s grace he had to experience death for all mankind. As it was his purpose to bring a great many of his sons into glory, it was appropriate that God, for whom everything exists and through whom everything exists, should make perfect, through suffering, the leader who would take them to their salvation. For the one who sanctifies, and the ones who are sanctified, are of the same stock; that is why he openly calls them brothers.

Spend some time in prayer with the reading.

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



PARISH INITIATIVES

Laying the groundwork for a vision of the future

A Dublin Parish group meets every fortnight to explore ways of embracing the Church's mission



Dalkey Parish in Co Dublin are accepting the challenge to move from maintenance to mission, with a Vision Group currently meeting every two weeks. They meet for two hours, and their role is to act as a kind of "think-tank" for the Parish Pastoral Council, generating ideas and submitting proposals to the Council. The idea for the Vision Group stemmed from a Deanery Mission for young adults which was held two years ago. Texas-based Amy Luttrell was a parishioner in Dalkey at the time.

“The Divine Renovation system worked in his own Parish in Texas, and he carried ideas to help people see a different vision. Leadership was a key part of his visit”

“Curtis Steven, a musician and youth minister, came to Ireland and brought with him an energy that really caught on,” Ms Luttrell said. “The Divine Renovation system worked

in his own Parish in Texas, and he carried ideas to help people see a different vision. Leadership was a key part of his visit,” she continued. This focus on leadership drew out people from all corners of the parish. “Curtis showed people that transformation and lay ownership are at the heart of parish renewal,” Ms Luttrell said, continuing, “People got a taste of this vision. And they wanted more.” Names of interested people were taken, and a meeting was arranged, with the full backing of the clergy. Announcements at Mass followed, and the parish team directly invited people who would be ideal for the vision group.

The result was a lively mix of people from all sorts of backgrounds and interests. This had its challenges. “We had to be persistent in meeting up and trying to stir ideas and getting other people on board,” said Ms Luttrell. Another key issue was to go beyond the seemingly natural inclination to concentrate only on youth ministry as an area of intentional growth. “The youth thing is interesting,” said Ms Luttrell, “since we can try reach youth, but if we don’t have parish-wide renewal, then it won’t work. It won’t be sustainable. Growth has to be within the context of full parish renewal. If the community isn’t built on a solid foundation, then

where are the young people ultimately going to go?”

“The Vision Group soon became a think-tank for the Parish Pastoral Council.”

The Vision Group soon became a think-tank for the Parish Pastoral Council. The PPC would focus on the maintaining part – “this is still important,” asserts Ms Luttrell – while the Vision Group “plays the role of doing the blue sky thinking.” Since the PPC might be limited in the time it could give to discussing and debating particular pastoral ideas, the Vision Group takes this process on. Only when an agreement is reached within the Vision Group is a proposal drawn up, and then the idea is presented to the PPC to reflect upon. This worked well as the Parish looked at reducing the number of Sunday Masses. The Vision Group chatted to the musicians from the different Masses, for example, and drew up a proposal after all the research. The PPC were then freed up to look at the final recommendations. “This became a mission-focused ministry issue, not just a

functional thing of trying to cut Masses. The reasoning goes that more time between Masses allows for more community-building opportunities,” Ms Luttrell said.

The Vision Group meets biweekly for two hours, and the priests are at every meeting. A key task for anyone who wants to be in this group is to read Divine Renovation by Fr James Mallon. Copies were purchased by the Parish and given to interested people, including every member of the PPC. The reason given for this was that it was “important that everyone had the same language and a similar vision about where our parish could go”, Ms Luttrell reflected, “the book gave us all a unified goal to strive towards. The priests were also inspired by that. They are invigorated by the Vision Group. They know they can do something better, and the Group helps them to achieve this. It’s one of the reasons they became a priest to begin with.”

The Vision Group has caught the imagination of the laity and the clergy in Dalkey, and it has found a place within the parish structure to bring a wider vision and imagination to the tasks that lay ahead of the Irish Church as a whole.

Fish & Tips

Daily Ideas for Disciples



A few weeks ago, we told you about the Pray As You Go podcast, which looked at the daily Church readings and provided an audio reflection. But some people prefer to have the experience of reading about the Gospel. Bishop Robert Barron’s Word on Fire Ministry provide a short, daily Gospel reflection from Bishop Barron. During Advent and Lent, nearly 300,000 people receive the daily reflections straight into their inbox, and so Bishop Barron started to provide these short reflections every single day throughout the Church’s year.

You can sign up for these free daily reflections at www.DailyCatholicGospel.com.

Be sure to check for the introductory email in your inbox, and if it’s not there, to check your spam or junk folders. Each morning, you receive a brief email, with a link to that day’s Gospel passage, so you can read the Scripture yourself. There is then a short reflection on the passage from Bishop Barron. These reflections act as mini-homilies, and work as part of prayer, reflection, or even as a basis for a homily for that day’s Mass. The reflections are short, simple, but often very powerful and challenging. It’s well worth checking out as a tool for discipleship!

People of God

Lucy Nally (19)

Parish: Athlone

Occupation: Student in Maynooth University studying German & Music

What ministry/service/role do you have in your parish?

I sing in the Friary Choir and occasionally play the organ at Masses in Ss. Peter and Paul Church.

How/Why did you get involved?

In Transition Year I started playing the organ – to practice, I went to the Friary. When I arrived to practice, Sr. Anne said to me, “Soprano or Alto”, I hesitantly replied “Alto”. She pointed to a seat beside a lady called Jean and said, “Sit there, Jean will look after you”. Almost 4 years on, I still sit beside Jean and she still looks after me!

What is your favourite thing about your ministry?

Meeting and getting to know new people. Also, I’ve feel blessed to be able to pursue my love of liturgical music. Music helps me to keep in touch with my faith and my parish.

Favourite Scripture Quote;

“Do not be afraid I am with you” (Isaiah 43:5)

I find this verse to be very comforting. In times of happiness or sadness, to know that God is there for each one of us, we are not alone. As my Dad always says, “God’s ways are not our ways”. God has a plan for us all.



Biggest influence on your Faith journey?

Without doubt, my Granny (rip). I have many wonderful memories of her, but nothing has inspired me more than the strength of her faith. I am so grateful that I had time to pray with her in her final days. I thank God for the wonderful memories and the lasting impact that she has left on my life.

Challenges to your faith?

I feel blessed knowing that I have friends who respect my faith, but there have been times where people have not been as kind. For any young person reading this, please “Do not be afraid” – don’t feel like you need to hide your faith because you don’t!

EVANGELISATION

Introducing people to the Good News



Donal Harrington continues his series on what it means to be an evangelising parish

BEING EVANGELISED

The idea of introducing people to the Good News could sound as if there are two categories, those who evangelise and those who are evangelised. It could give the impression that, as more people are evangelised, there are then less people to be evangelised. And that is misleading. A key part of it is that everybody is called to evangelise and everybody is called to be evangelised. The call to be evangelised con-

tinues for everybody. Pope Francis talks about ‘the first proclamation’, when first we heard the Good News. But it is called first “not because it exists at the beginning and can then be forgotten ... It is first ... because it is the principal proclamation, the one which we must hear again and again in different ways.”

“A key part of it is that everybody is called to evangelise and everybody is called to be evangelised”

This ‘self-evangelisation’ is not something occasional. It is an on-going process, whether church is strong or weak, whether an individual’s faith is strong or weak, at any given time. It is a permanent part of being a Christian and being a faith community. We talk of the sacraments of ‘initiation’, but in fact Christians are a community of ongoing initiation. The life of the faith community is a process of being initiated ever more deeply into their Baptism identity. The greatest contribution anyone can make to evangelisation is to lead a profound



Christian life. Self-evangelisation is the way to this. We open ourselves to being evangelised, out of a complacent, merely ‘believed-in’ faith, into an ever richer faith in the heart, in the head, in the hands. We open ourselves to being evangelised, out of a passive, ‘provided-for’ faith, into an ever stronger participative faith, our every member ministry. A big part of it is opening ourselves to being evangelised by the faith and witness of others around us.

From this depth of ‘inreach’ we reach out. When we have this depth, we embody the Good News. Then we “retain freshness, vigour and strength”. Together we present a version of Christianity which is credible and which is attractive. This is what others will listen to.

‘NEW EVANGELISATION’

Outreach is a relatively recent addition to the vocabulary of the parish. It does not carry the baggage of words like mission and evangelisation. The word is a product of changing times, of the realisation that it will not do for the church to stay absorbed in its own inner life. It captures the need to move out from comfort and complacency, and to reengage with the larger community. It is also an attractive word, very much in the same spirit as the phrase of ‘introducing’ people to Jesus Christ. It has that same mood of offering. It does not want to pressurise or manipulate. It approaches



the other graciously and, conscious of its own need to be evangelised, humbly. But it also has a mood of confidence, believing that there is something really worthwhile for the other to know about and experience. But who is it that we reach out to?

Words like mission and evangelisation can sound as though it is non-Christians we are reaching out to, people who have not heard the Gospel. It may of course be the case in some instances. But mostly in Ireland, it is to people who are baptised into the church, but who may not have gone much further than that. ‘New evangelisation’ is the term now in currency for this outreach to the already baptised. It comes

from John Paul II and his attention to this issue. He speaks of the situation “in countries with ancient Christian roots ... where entire groups of the baptised have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a ‘new evangelisation’ or a ‘re-evangelisation’”.

Now evangelisation is directed to people already baptised. It is addressed to people who no longer engage with church, or perhaps never had an experience of belonging in the faith community, or who no longer profess Christian faith.

This series was first published by Donal Harrington in Tomorrow’s Parish, available now from Columba Books.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Get the courage to be Catholic

The Legion of Mary in Belfast are delighted to announce the upcoming annual Catholic Young Adult Conference in Belfast. Taking place in Queen’s University Legion of Mary Catholic Chaplaincy on Saturday 20th October 2018, the conference is aimed at those aged 18 to 40. This will be the 4th consecutive year of the conference, with 70 young adults attending last year.

There has been a range of interesting speakers from across Ireland at each conference so far. Support from the Diocese of Down and Connor has enabled us to provide a range of excellent speakers. Diocesan Priest Fr

Andrew Black has been crucial every year to the event and is a Spiritual Director to Queen’s University Legion of Mary. The Dominican Order has spoken at every conference and always give interesting talks and workshops. The Prior of Silverstream Benedictine monastery in Stamullen, which was founded in 1212, spoke at the conference. This in turn inspired a man to join the monastery, which is rapidly growing. Last year John Lacken from Lumen Fidei Institute spoke about Marriage and the family.

This year there is a wonderful collection of guest speakers who will deliver talks and workshops on how to be a truly

courageous Catholic in today’s world, helping guests to live out their Faith in every part of life. The programme is packed with what promises to be excellent input. The main talks will come from Fr Andrew Black, who will speak on “The Four Last Things”, while Maria Steen of the Iona Institute will give a timely and challenging talk on the “Unity of Life and Family”, and finally, Dominican priest Fr. Conor McDonoughue speaks on the theme of “The Courage of Exiles”. Three workshops are also scheduled, with a range of themes covered. Fr. Gerry McCloskey’s input will focus on Our Lady, with Maolsheachlann O Ceallaigh looking at inspira-

tion from the lives of the Saints. Finally, Dr Brian O’Caithnia will lead a workshop on Catholic Social Action. There will also be time for two testimonies, from Sr. Elaine Kelly and also from Greg McGuigan.

There will also be time for Mass and Confessions. Registration will take place from 9am, with the programme starting at 10am. Admission is £10, which includes lunch. This day promises to be an unmissable opportunity to grow in knowledge of Our Lord and the Church. For more information or to register your place, phone Stephen on +44 7753 379110, or email cya-conference16@gmail.com.

Pope portrayed as catalyst for end of violence

Did the 1979 visit of Pope John Paul II to our shores eventually impact on the Good Friday Agreement that saw “the force of argument”, as this fascinating documentary puts it, replacing “the argument of force”? Or as Seamus Heaney said, helped “hope and history rhyme”?

It frames his visit in the context of 700 years under suppression by British rule and the manner in which we crawled out of that suppression through revolution, dialogue and a mixture of both.

Taking us back to the invasion of Henry II, the Reformation, the Ulster Plantation, the Penal Laws, the Battle of Orange, the failed coup of 1798 and the Act of Union that followed a few years afterwards, the film becomes a kind mini-history of Ireland's violent past set against the backdrop of his trip here.

The Famine is also mentioned, and the decimation of our country's population that followed it. It was many years later that we had the Home Rule Bill of 1912, but this wasn't fully implemented because of the outbreak of World War I, which led indirectly to the Uprising of 1916, the Civil War that followed it, and our eventual independence.

Escalation

Tensions simmered in the fractured six counties during the following decades, as everyone is all too painfully aware. They exploded in 1969 with many outbreaks of violence, followed by the internment of 1971 brought in by Brian Faulkner, a disastrous move that only resulted in its escalation.

Pope John Paul II knew of many if not all of these events when he made his landmark visit here. The film makes the point that even though he was an avatar for change and a profoundly charismatic speaker, IRA violence continued after he left Ireland, in Britain with atrocities in places like Hyde Park, and here with murders, punishment shootings and hunger strikes in the Maze prison. (He was even a victim of violence himself when he became the victim of an attempted assassination, something the film almost glosses over.)

There was never, of course, going to be a quick fix to a

Pope John Paul II in Ireland: A Plea for Peace (12A)

Review • Aubrey Malone



problem that had gone on so long. As Terence O'Neill once stated, Northern Ireland was somewhere that was “born in pain”.

There was no magic bullet that could erase that pain overnight. Too many people had died on both sides; too many jobs had been taken from Catholics by Protestants in war-torn Belfast, too many people dragged out of their beds in the middle of the night in pogrom-like raids to be interrogated – or murdered – on spurious pretexts.

Neither were the British noted for being a nation that ceded control of their colonies easily. Brian Keenan wrote in the last line of his brilliant memoir *An Evil Cradling*, “freedom comes slowly at first”. Everything reached a head on Bloody Sunday, as the film makes clear. It posits this as one of the most obvious precursors of the Good Friday Agreement but the Omagh bombing should have been mentioned as well.

It was here, it should be remembered, where the IRA killed many Catholics as well as Protestants. (Statistically, the film points out, the IRA killed more Catholics than the British Army and the Northern Ireland Police Service combined over the years, something I hadn't been aware of.)

“Everything reached a head on Bloody Sunday, as the film makes clear”

No matter how eloquent the Pope was, actions always speak louder than words. The British war poet Robert Graves famously said: “Not one poem of mine saved a Jew from Auschwitz.” The bullet was never going to be replaced with the ballot box overnight.

It was all of 20 years after his visit that the Good Friday Agreement was signed. By that time, both the British gov-

ernment and the IRA knew they'd reached an impasse. Like America in Vietnam a few decades before, they realized they were fighting an unwinnable war.

Whether we like it or not, peace sometimes comes about not as a result of the rhetoric of heads of state – or Church – but because of good old-fashioned common sense. Or as Winston Churchill once put it: “Events, dear boy, events.”

Having said that, the Pope's inspirational addresses in Drogheda, Clonmacnoise, Galway and Limerick were hugely influential for the fact that it came about. The singer/politician Dana describes these addresses as being “the bedrock” for it.

Michael Kelly, who's also interviewed in the film, sees the Limerick address as being one of the neglected aspects of the Pope's visit, a prophetic one that seemed to fly in the face of the optimism he showed elsewhere, suggesting Ireland was at a crossroads not only politically but spiritually as well and that dark clouds were on the horizon.

More positively, Michael speaks of his parents telling him time and again about the convoys of cars streaming across the border to see the Pope in Drogheda. Nearly

three million people saw him during his visit here in all, almost half the population of the country.

* * * * *

He was a relatively young man, unlike many previous Popes, which seemed to suggest almost a gerontocracy at work in the Vatican. He was also very interested in immersing himself in Irish culture – and cuisine. For his in-flight meal he had an Irish fry and three cups of coffee. Details like this were delightfully picked up by the press. They humanised him, making him more into a person than a patriarch.

He even said disarmingly to interviewers, “I am not an interesting man.”

When he came to speak about the North, such humanness became even more striking. “On my knees I beg you,” he said, “to turn away from the path of violence.” When before had we heard such passion – or humility – emanating from the mouth of a pontiff? It would have been difficult to imagine a man of the austerity of, say, Pope Paul VI, speaking like this.

Pope John Paul II also knew how to work a crowd. He had a warmth about him; he had the ability to listen. His English was good, if broken. His bright eyes seemed like the windows of his soul.

That was why, when he told the congregation at Galway during his Mass there, “young people of Ireland, I love you” – a phrase that would be remembered more than any other one he uttered during his time here – he received an 11-minute standing ovation for it.

It was said, as Michael Kelly notes, at a time when people weren't in the habit of evincing such personal feelings, least of all popes. Most of us were aware our parents loved us in 1979 but they didn't usually say so, unlike today when ‘love you’ seems almost as common an expression as ‘hello’. It had a

big impact because nobody was expecting it.

Many people who will be familiar to *The Irish Catholic* readers feature in the documentary: Nuala O'Loan, Mary Kenny, Martin Mansergh and Breda O'Brien. Footage of the visit is interspersed with their observations on it, alongside observations by people like Cardinal O'Fiaich, Fr Alec Reid, Fr Michael Neary, Cardinal Cahal Daly, Lord David Alton, Rev. Harold Good, Jeffrey Donaldson, historian Diarmaid Ferriter, author/journalist Tim Pat Coogan and so on.

“On my knees I beg you to turn away from the path of violence”

We also see people like Bertie Ahern, someone who, whatever we may say about his mismanagement of our economy preceding the recession, was always brilliant at brokering deals. We see Albert Reynolds, Gerry Adams and John Hume, who's unfortunately in poor health now. And Tony Blair, a politician I highly admired at this time. Sadly, power went to his head afterwards, as he showed when he travelled on the coat-tails of George Bush during that man's over-zealous militaristic endeavours in subsequent years, resulting in the upsurge of terrorism that has made the world such a dangerous place today.

It also shows David Trimble, someone who's almost forgotten today despite risking the wrath of his own party by offering compromises to the IRA that were unprecedented by a man from his Orange background. He failed in the end but it wasn't due to lack of commitment. The time was simply against him. (Once again it was a case of “events, dear boy, events”.)

* * * * *

A Plea for Peace isn't an unduly lengthy film at 69 minutes but under the direc-

tion of Marc Boudignon and David Naglieri, and the narration of Jim Caviezel (who played Jesus in *The Passion of the Christ* in 2004), it makes every moment count.

As well as the above figures it deals with other ones as well. Fr Paul Clayton-Lea for instance, who was inspired to become a priest by the “groundswell” of positive thinking the Pope engendered in him. We also hear the story of Richard Moore, a man who was blinded by a rubber bullet at the age of 10 but who was inspired by the Pope to forgive the person responsible.

And then there's Shane O'Doherty, a former IRA man who was sentenced to life imprisonment for a letter-bombing campaign he conducted in England but who turned to God in prison, largely as a result of Pope John Paul II's influence on him. His conversion was greeted with scepticism by some but he sounds genuine in the film.

At the centre of it all, needless to say, is the man formerly known as Karol Wojtyla. “He seemed to have a power beyond a human one,” Ronan Mullen opines, “a power that blessed us all”.

He was also someone well qualified to speak on political suppression, having experienced it in his own country when the jackboot of Nazism plundered Poland so viciously during his youth. Seamus Mallon says he reminded him of what he thought St Peter would have been like if he'd been born in the 20th Century.

Northern Ireland was, in a way, his second Poland. He saw kindred souls there and wanted to reach out to them. His condemnation of violence helped disabuse people of the oft-held belief that the Church here was within the grip of the IRA, that they, as the film notes, “sang from the same hymn sheet”.

1 www.jp2inireland.com



Director David Naglieri.

World Report

IN BRIEF

East African bishops to discuss blight of fundamentalism

● Due to its impact on young Catholics in Africa, fundamentalism will be a topic that bishops from East Africa prioritise in their talks with other delegates during the synod's intervention sessions.

More than 300 delegates, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, sisters and laypeople are expected to attend the October 3-28 Synod of Bishops, which will meet at the Vatican to discuss 'young people, Faith and vocational discernment'.

Bishops from the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa also will take to the synod topics such as young people as protagonists, the training of spiritual directors and holistic formation in Catholic schools and universities.

Former Cardinal McCarrick living with Kansas Capuchins

● The Archdiocese of Washington has announced that former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, who was removed from ministry earlier this year after abuse allegations came to light, is now living in Kansas in a friary for Capuchin Franciscan friars.

Archbishop McCarrick resides at St Fidelis Friary in the city of Victoria, the archdiocese said in a statement, adding that "respect for the privacy of this arrangement is requested" out of consideration for the peace of the community of the friars who live there.

Victoria is in a rural area of Kansas and has a population of about 1,200.

Italian laywomen and Dutch priest win Culture Awards

● An Italian laywoman and a Dutch-born priest were among the winners of this year's Culture Awards, presented by the Indonesian government in recognition of their "outstanding contribution to strengthening the nation's character".

Valeria Martano, a Community of Sant'Egidio member, and Fr Leonardus Egidius

Joosten Ginting Suka OFM Cap, a retired priest who has lived in North Sumatra province since 1971, received their awards from the Education and Culture Ministry during a ceremony in Jakarta.

Martano (62) was recognised for having promoted interreligious dialogue in Indonesia since 1990.

Police drop abuse investigation of UK cardinal

UK police have investigated an abuse claim against Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor but decided that it could not be substantiated.

LifeSiteNews reported last week that a woman had accused the cardinal, who served as Archbishop of Westminster from 2000 to 2009, of abusing her when she was 13 or 14 years old.

It is believed the Kent Police investigated the allegation, but decided not to proceed with the case.

The *LifeSiteNews* report raised questions about how the Diocese of Westminster initially responded to the abuse allegation.

The cardinal died in September 2017.

Russian Orthodox prelate visits Fatima

Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev, the number two cleric in the Russian Orthodox Church who is responsible for dialogue with the Catholic Church, visited the Shrine of Fatima in September.

The visit came one year after the centenary of the apparitions in which the Virgin Mary asked for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart, and at a time when the Russian Orthodox Church sees itself as threatened as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church tries to break away from its jurisdiction.

Hilarion was welcomed by Cardinal António Marto, Bishop of Leiria-Fatima.

Synod aims to renew Church for Catholic youth

To strengthen and support young people in the Faith, members of the Synod of Bishops will need to listen to their real-life stories, interpret what they hear in the light of the Gospel and make decisions that will lead to an authentic renewal of the Catholic Church, said Brazilian Cardinal Sergio da Rocha.

"Often we hear voices that blame young people for moving away from the Church. But many of them have lived in situations that lead them to affirm that it was the Church that moved away from them," said Cardinal da Rocha, archbishop of Brasilia and relator general of the Synod of Bishops 2018.

The Brazilian cardinal introduced the work of the synod on October 3 and mid-way through the meeting will summarise the speeches individual bishops make in the synod hall.

The synod kicked off yesterday and will continue until October 28 discussing 'young people, the Faith and voca-



Cardinal Sergio da Rocha of Brasilia, Brazil, was chosen by Pope Francis to serve as relator general of the Synod on youth.

tional discernment'.

Introducing the synod at a news conference on October 1, Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, synod general secretary, said it will have 267 voting members.

Conferences

The synod's members include 15 heads of Eastern Catholic

churches, 16 heads of Vatican offices, 15 members of the synod's permanent council, 181 members elected by national bishops' conferences and the men's Union of Superiors General and 40 members named by Pope Francis. Eighteen of the voting members are priests; two are religious brothers.

On October 1 the synod released a new 'Instruction of the Celebration of Synodal Assemblies and on the Activity of the Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops'. The document specifies that religious brothers may be voting members of a synod, but women may not.

Cardinal Baldisseri said, however, that the synod observers, which include women and 34 young people between the ages of 18 and 29, can participate in the synod's working groups and are encouraged to help formulate the synod's final resolutions.

The instruction and Pope Francis' new constitution on the synods, which was published on September 18, looks to the future, but "first of all looks to the past, to the deposit of Faith and the tradition of the Church," the cardinal said. "It is the structure of the Church for a synod of bishops. Obviously, there is an increasing effort to involve the entire people of God."

Infamous Chilean abuser priest is dismissed from the priesthood

Pope Francis has expelled from the priesthood a Chilean who gained notoriety for sexually abusing young men in his parish.

The Vatican announced that Fernando Karadima was dismissed from the clerical state by the Pope, who "made this exceptional decision in conscience and for the good of the Church".

Citing canon law, the Vatican said the Pope "exercised his 'supreme, full, immediate, and universal ordinary power in the Church' aware of his service to the people of God as successor of St Peter".

Pope Francis signed the decree on September 27 and Karadima was informed of the decision the next day, the state-

ment said.

Vatican spokesman Greg Burke said it is a sign of the Pope's "hard line against abuses".

"We were in front of a very serious case of rot that needed to be yanked by its root," Burke said.

Influential

Known as an influential and charismatic priest, then-Fr Karadima founded a Catholic Action group in a wealthy Santiago parish and drew hundreds of young men to the priesthood. Four of Karadima's protégés went on to become bishops, including retired Bishop Juan Barros of Osorno.

However, several former seminarians of 'El Bosque' revealed in 2010 that the Chilean priest sexually abused them and other members of the parish community for years.

One year later, Karadima was sentenced by the Vatican to a life of prayer and penance after he was found guilty of sexual abuse.

The Pope, who initially defended his 2015 appointment of Bishop Barros as head of the Diocese of Osorno, apologised after receiving a 2,300-page report from Archbishop Charles Scicluna of Malta. He subsequently accepted Bishop Barros' resignation on June 11.

Cardinal says women deacons 'open question'



Cardinal Christoph Schönborn.

Cardinal Christoph Schönborn has said that in his view, whether the Church could ordain women as deacons remains an "open question".

The Archbishop of Vienna was speaking on September 29 to 1,700 delegates from parish councils and other bodies in St Stephen's Cathedral. Reflecting that he recently had ordained 14 men to the permanent diaconate, he added, according to

local news agency Kathpress, "perhaps one day also female deacons".

Schönborn said that there had been female deacons in the Church in times past, and that "basically, this [question] is open".

Pope Francis has spoken often about the importance of the role of women in the Church. In 2016 he appointed a new commission to examine the possibility of ordain-

ing women to the permanent diaconate.

Archbishop Luis Ladaria, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, was appointed president of that commission, consisting of 12 members – six men and six women.

According to sources, drafting of their final report was completed in April. Whether it has yet been submitted to the Pope is unknown.



Edited by Chai Brady
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Sisters act



Students, alumni and faculty members at the Catholic University of America in Washington gather outside the student commons to call for the resignation of the dean of the school of social work following a series of tweets he wrote criticising women who accused embattled Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh of sexual misconduct. Photo: CNS

Pray to protect Church from devil says Pope

Signalling his belief that the Church faces a serious crisis, Pope Francis asked every Catholic in the world to pray for the protection of the Church from attacks by the devil, and also for the Church to be stronger in combatting abuse.

Pope Francis asked Catholics to pray the rosary each day in October, seeking Mary's intercession in protecting the Church, and "at the same time making her (the Church) more aware of her sins, errors and the abuses committed in the present and the past, and committed to fighting without hesitation so that evil would not prevail", the Vatican said in a statement released on the feast of the Archangels.

United "in communion and penitence as the people of God", the statement said, Catholics should plead for protection against "the devil, who always seeks to divide us from God and from one another".

Protection

Pope Francis met earlier in September with Jesuit Fr Federic Fornos, international director of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network, formerly known as the Apostleship of Prayer, to ask that the recitation of the rosary in October conclude with "the ancient invocation *sub Tuum Praesidium* ('under your protection') and with the prayer to St Michael the Archangel, who protects us in the battle against evil".

The Vatican, announcing Pope Francis' prayer request, cited his homily on September 11 at morning Mass where he spoke about the devil as the "Great Accuser" who "roams the world looking how to blame" and spread scandal.

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, the former nuncio of the United States, who has called on Pope Francis to resign, claiming the Pope knew about and ignored the sexual misconduct of former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, issued another statement on September 27 accusing the Pope of "subtle slander" with that homily.

India legalises adultery after Supreme Court ruling

Catholics will continue to regard sex outside marriage as a sin despite India's Supreme Court ruling that adultery will no longer be a crime, Church leaders say.

The country's top court has struck down a 158-year-old British-era law which said it was a crime, punishable with a five-year jail term, for a man to have consensual sex with a woman without the knowl-

edge of her husband. The law didn't prescribe any punishment for the woman.

The "archaic" law treats women as "property of the husband", the court said. It violates the rights guaranteed in India's constitution for personal liberty and equality, it added.

The law, known as Section 497, allowed a husband to prosecute any man who

engaged in sexual relations with his wife. In addition, it prevented a wife from prosecuting either her husband or the woman with whom he was engaged in extramarital relations.

The change does not affect the teachings and belief of the Church that adultery is a crime, Church leaders said.

"For the Catholic Church, all sexual acts outside the

realm of marriage are sinful and there is no change to this position," said Bishop Sarat Chandra Nayak of Berhampur. "Morally, socially and spiritually, adultery will remain a sinful act."

The prelate welcomed the verdict, saying it stresses the "equality of men and women" and it is "a right step" in a male-dominated society like India.

Vatican roundup

Be open to the good, regardless of origin – Pope

Pope Francis has advised people to be open to the good, regardless of whether it comes from someone outside their own "circle".

The Pope reflected, during his Angelus address in St Peter's Square, September 30, on the day's Gospel, in which Christ taught his disciples humility and to avoid scandal.

When the disciples objected to someone outside their group casting out a demon, Pope Francis said they "demonstrate a closed attitude before an event that does not fit into their schemes, in this case the action, though good, of a person 'external' to the circle of followers".

"In good faith, indeed, with zeal, one would like to protect the authenticity of a certain experience, protecting the founder or the leader from false imitators," he said, but there is also fear of competition, that someone can "steal followers". This leads to a lack of appreciation for what others do, Francis said.

Call for Catholics and Pentecostals to learn from each other

Pope Francis said many Catholics share his initial thoughts about the worship of charismatic Christians – "that more than prayer meetings they seem to be samba schools" – but he is convinced God wants Catholics and Pentecostals to learn from each other.

Catholics can appreciate the way Pentecostals "live their Faith, give praise to God and witness to the Gospel of charity" although "often in ways different than we are used to", the Pope said during a meeting with members of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian

Unity.

Pentecostals, on the other hand, should be helped to "overcome their prejudices about the Catholic Church and recognise that in the invaluable treasure of the tradition received from the Apostles and safeguarded throughout history, the Holy Spirit has, in fact, not been extinguished or suffocated, but continues to work effectively," the Pope said.

Council members were holding their plenary meeting, which focused on relations with Pentecostals, charismatics and evangelical Christians.

Viganò claims Vatican official has cover-up evidence

Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, the former nuncio to the US who accused Pope Francis and Church officials of failing to act on accusations of sexual abuse, has urged a top Vatican official to release documents that would prove his allegations. In a four-page letter released last week, Archbishop Viganò called on Canadian Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, to release information about alleged private sanctions imposed by now-retired Pope Benedict XVI on then-Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick.

"Your Eminence, before I left for Washington, you were the one who told me of Pope Benedict's sanctions on McCarrick. You have at your complete disposal key documents incriminating McCarrick and many in the curia for their cover-ups. 'Your Eminence, I urge you to bear witness to the truth,' the former nuncio wrote.

He also called on leaders of the US bishops' conference, who had a private meeting with Pope Francis on September 13, to say if the Pope refused "to carry out a Vatican investigation into McCarrick's crimes and those responsible for covering them up".

Cardinal Ouellet has described Dr Viganò's claims as "an unjust attack".

Youth motivated to 'heal' Church facing scandal storm



Michael W. Higgins

One could be forgiven for thinking that it has never been as bad as this—Church authority assailed from within and from without, the episcopate in so many jurisdictions discredited, the papacy under siege from schismatic factions, the non-Catholic world appalled by a level of corruption the magnitude of which seems incomprehensible, and of course, the Catholic laity dispirited and demoralised to an unprecedented degree.

For sure, there have been scandals before – their number legion, in fact – and the wounds inflicted on the Church have been many, but never have there been so many self-inflicted.

American Catholicism will be reeling from the Ted McCarrick Affair and the Grand Jury Report from Pennsylvania for generations and not because the laity are easily scandalised—they have been living with daily scandals for years now—but because they thought, naively, that it was stanchied.

But the haemorrhaging of revelation after revelation of sexual abuse has become a sickening cascade without seeming end. It is the betrayal of trust, the lack of firm leadership, the spinelessness that produced inaction rather than reforming zeal that has come to define American lay response to the latest iteration of scandals.

Tepid support

Add to this the failure of many of the US bishops to rigorously defend Pope Francis against his detractors, to hedge their bets on the future and durability of this troublesome, to them, pontificate. At best, he receives tepid support from them when, like his immediate predecessors, he should be able to count on their fervent loyalty.

A Church riven in a country riven; a Church suffering from intense polarisation in a country burdened with the weight of a visceral partisanship. It all makes for a very unhealthy environment – temporal and spiritual.

But just as many young people in the political arena, who have grown tired of the status quo and are energised to do things differently in the face of a lethargic officialdom, are beginning to shape things differently on the ground, so too many young Catholics are motivated to 'save' their Church. At a recent colloquium held at



Youths wait for Pope Francis' arrival for a meeting with young people in Palermo, Sicily, on September 15.



Pope Francis embraces a youth during a meeting with a group of young people from the Diocese of Grenoble-Vienne in France, at the Vatican in mid-September.

Sacred Heart University designed to engage a panel of experts around the current ecclesial malaise, students milling around the dais before the arrival of the panelists overheard a professor muse aloud whether the students would actually be interested in a "conversation" around the current crisis.

She was astounded to hear one of them approach her and respectfully declare that indeed they were aroused to hear what can be done to heal their Church. A teaching moment for the teacher and indeed for us all.

Calls for reform, however, have been made before when a cynical

hierarchy simply decided to wait it out, to let the outrage spend itself, before all reverted back to normal.

“A fearful attachment to the old conventions... has not served us well”

But that is not going to happen this time. Righteous fury over the scandals must translate into meaningful reform, efforts to tinker with structural change must give way to radical change, simple denunciations of the curse of clericalism, a mantra trotted out by all sides on the Catholic spectrum of opinion, must result in a strategy

of enlightened insight.

For instance, the formation of priests is lamentably unsuited to modernity; the candidates for priestly ministry shaped in a hothouse of archaic sensibility and arrested emotional growth; healthy social intercourse hampered by a quasi-cloistered way of living; a culture of exceptionalism encouraged in a rarefied environment of pathetic irrelevancy; exaggerated notions of vocational uniqueness with bizarre talk of ontological differentiation, fatherly emanations and a distorted sacramentalism ensuring that the priest-in-formation understands his sacred identity.

The presbyterate, the priesthood, a precious gift of the Church, must no longer be held hostage to clericalism. There are ways to train priests, ways to enhance ministry, to render credible again the witness and indispensable contribution of the ministerial priesthood. A fearful attachment to the old conventions, the tired beliefs that often sustain us – these have not served us well in our contemporary upheaval.

“Calls for reform, however, have been made before when a cynical hierarchy simply decided to wait it out”

New visioning is called for; time to translate the rhetoric of reform into a pastoral dream rooted in the Second Vatican Council; time to face the rapid and painful dissolution of the old structures with a robust imagination and Faith.

The American Catholic Church may well be in massive meltdown, but it can generate new hope, marshal its energies to scour the vessel that is the Church, rid the community of believers of the scourge of clerical deceit and privilege.

It is a *kairos* moment.

i Michael W. Higgins is co-author with Peter Kavanagh of the award-winning *Suffer the Children unto Me: A Critical Inquiry into the Clerical Sex Abuse Scandal and Distinguished Professor of Catholic Thought at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut, USA.*

Letter from Rome



John L. Allen Jr

Moments of great crisis generally affect institutions in multiple ways, some of which are immediately evident and others that take longer to discern. Amid the clerical abuse scandals currently rocking Catholicism, it's worth asking if one such long-term result is playing out before our eyes.

To wit, are we seeing a redefinition of the traditional left/right divides in the Church because the focus of popular complaint is no longer really teaching, one of the three traditional duties of a bishop, but rather governing?

Recently I sat down with a senior Church leader who was musing on criticism of the bishops of late, which he said at times seems reminiscent of Congregationalism – the idea that it's the lay congregation, not the clerical caste, that exercises real power over Church affairs.

"Basically, they just want us to be Greek Orthodox priests and keep the thurible full," this leader said. "Otherwise, they want us to get out of the way."

Looking around, one understands the reaction. There's a cohort of Catholic laity today, often wealthy and influential, who seem increasingly bold about clashing with bishops over governance questions. The recent dust-up within the Papal Foundation over funding of a Roman hospital being a good case in point.

Tensions

At one level, it seems almost silly to say that the left vs right divide is diminishing, given all the ways in which the Pope Francis era seems to have brought those tensions to the surface and given them a turbo-charge. From the death penalty and immigration to Communion for divorced and remarried Catholics, it's not as if progressives and traditionalists aren't going at it hammer and tong every day.

Even within the abuse crisis, liberal and conservative Catholics often propose very different diagnoses of the problem. For the left, it's often about mandatory celibacy and the exclusion of women from leadership; for the right, the chief culprit is often an excessive tolerance of homosexuality within the clerical ranks.

So no, the ideological clash that has defined Catholic debate since the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) isn't about to disappear. The question is whether those



Pope Francis meets with bishops from England and Wales at the Vatican on September 28. Photo: CNS

Is it now bishops versus everyone else?

questions will continue to set the agenda.

Traditionally speaking, the Church holds that bishops possess three munera, meaning 'duty' or 'responsibility'. A bishop is to be priest, prophet and king in the imitation of Christ, which practically means he is to sanctify, teach and govern.

“The questions that matter today are why it should be exclusively up to a bishop where a priest serves”

For most of the post-Vatican II era, the controversial part of that formula has been teaching. Few Catholic thinkers or activists questioned a bishop's right to make personnel assignments or to oversee budgets, but they did vigorously contest various elements of their teaching, from birth control and women priests on the left to inter-religious *détente* and the limits of a 'just war' on the right.

In general, the Catholic right

has been more sympathetic to the bishops, but it's an open question whether that's because they accepted their teaching authority on principle or because they simply liked what they heard most of the time.

Amid the abuse scandals, however, the focus has shifted. The questions that matter today are why it should be exclusively up to a bishop where a priest serves, and whether he should remain in ministry; whether bishops can be truly trusted to exercise sound fiscal oversight; why bishops get to decide which Church records are made public, when, and why; and, in general, whether the practice of styling bishops as the ultimate decision-makers has served the Church well.

There aren't clear left/right answers to any of those questions.

In addition, the dissolution of the liberal/conservative divide has also been accelerated by the realisation that being on the left or the right has almost no relationship with the propensity to abuse. That point has been driven home

of late by Chile, where two highly prominent priests – one a hero of the anti-Pinochet days, another a minister to the country's wealthy conservative elite – have both been dismissed from the clerical state after convictions for serial sexual abuse.

All this isn't really good news for the bishops, since as long as the fault lines broke left vs right over politics, they could count on about half the Catholic laity to be on their side. Now that it more often breaks bishops vs everybody else on governance, it's hard to know who, exactly, their natural allies might be.

“What seems to be at stake today, however, isn't just management but governance”

In fairness, most bishops long ago made a healthy distinction between 'governance' and 'management'. Yes, it's ultimately their responsibility to exercise oversight, but in a thousand ways

they've turned over management to others, most often laity – and, in a surprising number of cases, women. (Consider the proliferation of female chancellors of dioceses in America, for instance.)

Bishops with well-administered dioceses almost always will tell you that they do shockingly little of the actual administration themselves, having learned to appoint competent people to the right jobs and then to stay out of their way.

What seems to be at stake today, however, isn't just management but governance – should the bishops be the ultimate authority in a diocese, or does that system need to be deconstructed in favour of checks and balances to prevent the sort of tragic, even criminal, failures brought to light by the abuse scandals?

For most bishops, governance is a red-line issue, and they can be expected to defend it. As the saying goes, now they may just find out who their real friends are.

i John L. Allen Jr. is the Editor of *cruxnow.com*

Letters

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

Letter of the week

Crying need for more education

Dear Editor, The article by Fr Martin Delaney 'Is it really unacceptable to label suicide as 'wrong'?' (IC 27/9/2018) is both sensitive and honest. It reveals the pain and bewilderment of individuals, families, the community and the local priest, in the aftermath of three suicides. It raises a really important question on whether it is unacceptable to label suicide as 'wrong'.

On the cusp of adulthood, I lost a loved one through suicide and I have also counselled people similarly bereaved. My experience dates back to a time when suicide was rare and virtually unheard of among young

people. Nobody spoke about suicide and there was no support for the bereaved. I moved away and did not deal with the loss until many years later which made the process more difficult. I had never spoken about it. I availed of help provided by my diocese and elsewhere.

I share Fr Delaney's discomfort that suicide might become normal in our society and I too had a scary moment when I heard a group of primary school children singing the praises of a pop star who took his own life and admiring his 'courage'.

I believe there is a crying need for education of Catholics, especially

young people, on distinctions. We love the person and we never judge them, leaving that to God in his mercy. But we don't condone their actions that are wrong and sometimes we need to state this. Just as it is wrong to kill another person it is wrong to take one's own life. Our approach towards the bereaved does not exclude sensitivity, empathy and compassion – the literal and true meaning of the word being 'to suffer with', walk with, or as Pope Francis says to 'accompany'.

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

Blame inadequate catechesis and poor homiletics

Dear Editor, Permit me to comment on Pat Seaver's letter 'Old Testament readings don't help us celebrate the Covenant' (IC 20/9/18).

The Bible recounts history, prophecy and prayer and is puzzling without explanation. The Israelites knew God only as Father because the Trinity was not revealed until Jesus came. The New Testament fulfills the Old.

The Old Testament texts in the Mass help us to understand the roots of Christianity, who Jesus is and why He came. As a Jew Jesus

celebrated all the traditional rituals. The last of these was The Passover after which he instituted the Eucharist, the New Covenant.

To understand the expiatory or atonement aspect of Christ's death as in Jewish tradition we must appreciate original sin and its consequences which necessitated expiation by an appropriate sacrificial victim – the Incarnate Son of God.

Old testament sacrifices demonstrate the darkened intellectual understanding of the consequences of The Fall and the insufficiency of

animal sacrifices. Though Israelites understood God's attributes as fatherly they emphasised justice over love because of their lived experience of fulfilled prophecies of war, exile and oppression.

Through Jesus' revelation to St Faustina we know that God's mercy is His greatest attribute. Confusing mercy with justice causes difficulty in accepting the "traditional piacular sacrifice". God's unconditional love does not mean that He is not just! The proper understanding of His unconditional love is

first annunciated in the Old Testament where He says that no matter how he sins God will never withdraw His love from David. Our legal system is based on justice i.e. crime warrants punishment and reparation.

The Holy Sacrifice of The Mass renews in an unbloody way the sacrifice of Christ. Current difficulties with appreciating the Mass stem from inadequate catechesis and poor homiletics.

*Yours etc.,
Loretto Browne,
Ashbourne, Co. Meath.*

History may judge us harshly

Dear Editor, Regarding the forthcoming legislation on repealing the Eighth Amendment – an amendment which protected both Mother and Child – abortion is only a fancy word for the killing of the most vulnerable of all human beings – the unborn child. How anyone could condone the murder of any human being, in particular the most defenceless, is beyond my comprehension.

In 50 years' time will our descendants be shocked at how we, in Ireland in 2018, approved of the destruction of human life?

Only time will tell!
All human life is sacred.

*Yours etc.,
Helen O'Brien,
Bishopstown, Co. Cork.*

We must become clever and creative

Dear Editor, Apropos your correspondent, Mary Stewart on September 27, 'pro-abortion campaign was based on lies', might I just say a few words by way of clarification?

Writing to our parishioners on the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima on October 13, I said: "My friends, I respectfully urge you not to align yourself with the culture of death. Vote No. In voting 'no' you stand with Jesus, the Lord of Life."

In acknowledging a campaign that was clever, well-orchestrated and of course very successful, I remain utterly opposed to abortion but seek to reach out to the nearly 70% of our sisters and brothers who took a different view to us.

In post-referendum Ireland if all we can do is rehash the debate and hector our sisters and brothers as to how terrible they are then I feel we should

get off the stage. If all we have in our missionary arsenal is "thou shalt not" no wonder we lost. We are better than this and if we are to have any success in the re-evangelisation of this country we need to get clever and creative – and quickly.

*Yours etc.,
Fr Joe McDonald,
St Matthews,
Ballyfermot, Dublin.*

Will Constitutional change make us 'better'?

Dear Editor, The offence of blasphemy consists of uttering material "grossly abusive or insulting in relation to matters held sacred by any religion", when the intent and result is "outrage among a substantial number of the adherents of that religion".

How does removing this offence from our Constitution, whether uttered or printed, make us a better or more progressive nation? Any kind of sacrilege is abhorrent to any, and all religions, and should certainly be banned. The use of blasphemy is not an authentic forum for 'freedom of speech' and therefore such an offence should I believe, remain in the Constitution. Let us reflect deeply before taking such a regressive step if we are to pass on respect for the sacred to this and future generations.

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

Referendum 'losers' are far from that

Dear Editor, It has come to a sad pass when, as reported (IC 20/9/2018), a priest of the Catholic Church commended the success of those who obtained the legal right to kill babies.

The referendum was not just a contest between two sides; it was about the preservation or destruction of human life. For those who wanted to retain the Eighth Amendment it was about an ardent desire to conserve the safety of the lives of mothers and babies already pledged in our Constitution.

Those who sought to retain that protection for both mothers and babies are the heroes not the "losers". No, the losers are the innocent victims, the babies – who have no choice – and the mothers who may well regret taking the irreversible action was all to readily on offer.

*Yours etc.,
Aoibheann Ni Ruaidhrí,
Drumcondra, Dublin 9.*

People are people, Brexit or no Brexit

Dear Editor, Greg Daly's article about fears violence will emerge on account of border and structures being erected between the North and South as a result of Brexit was very thought-provoking, and I'm sure it struck a chord with many readers. This is a real and worrying concern for Irish citizens and I'm glad someone is speaking about it. Addressing the issue, Archbishop Eamon Martin said it's important to put a "human face" on these high-level negotiations, so that people are not viewed as statistics but actually people. The peace process was long-run and hard-fought, so the idea of this being dismantled because of an uninformed vote and deceiving politicians is a disheartening and disturbing prospect.

*Yours etc.,
John O'Hagan,
Newry,
Co. Down.*

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



INDONESIA: People look over debris after an earthquake and tsunami on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island. Photos: CNS



CANADA: Ursuline Sr Cecile Dionne speaks to Sr Pauline Duchesne and Sr Celine Bergeron inside Quebec City's Ursuline monastery chapel. This month the majority of the 50 sisters who live in the monastery, founded by St Mary of the Incarnation, will head to the borough of Beauport.

VATICAN: Pilgrims listen as Pope Francis leads the Angelus overlooking St Peter's Square.



USA: Prelates process into the Cathedral of St Matthew the Apostle in Washington for the annual Red Mass on September 30. The Mass traditionally marks the start of the court year, including the opening of the Supreme Court term.



YEMEN: A Yemeni health worker fumigates a neighbourhood amid fears of a cholera outbreak in Sanaa.



USA: Children yawn as they wait in line with their family for relief goods at St Joseph's Church in Burgaw, North Carolina, in the aftermath of Hurricane Florence.

The search for an indubitable



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

In a book, *12 Rules for Life – An Antidote to Chaos*, that's justifiably making waves in many circles today, Jordan Peterson shares about his own journey towards truth and meaning. Here's that story...

At one point in his life, while still young and finding his own path, he reached a stage where he felt agnostic, not just about the shallow Christianity he'd been raised on, but also about most everything else in terms of truth and trust. What really can we believe in? What's ultimately to be trusted?

Too humble to compare himself to one of the great minds in history, René Descartes, who, 500 years ago, struggled with a similar agnosticism, Peterson nonetheless could not help but employ Descartes' approach in trying to find a truth that you could not doubt.

Premise

So, like Descartes, he set off in search off an 'indubitable' (Descartes' term), that is, to find a premise that absolutely cannot be doubted. Descartes, as we know, found his 'indubitable' in his famous dictum: I think, therefore, I am! Nobody can be deceived in believing that since even to be deceived would be indisputable proof that you exist. The philosophy that Descartes then built upon the indubitable premise is left for history to judge. But history doesn't dispute the truth of his dictum.

So Peterson sets out with the same essential question: what single thing cannot be doubted? Is there something so evidently true that nobody can doubt it? For Peterson, it's not the fact that we think which is indisputable, it's the fact that we, all of us, suffer. That's his indubitable truth, suffering is real. That cannot be doubted: "Nihilists cannot undermine it with scepticism. Totalitarians cannot banish it. Cynics cannot escape its reality."

Suffering is real beyond all doubt.

“If there's something that is not good, then there's something that is good”

Moreover, in Peterson's understanding, the worst kind of suffering isn't that which is inflicted upon us by the innate contingencies of our being and our mortality, nor by the sometimes blind brutality of nature.

The worst kind of suffering is the kind that one person inflicts upon another, the kind that one part of humankind inflicts upon another part, the kind we see in the atrocities of the 20th Century – Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot and countless

others responsible for the torture, rape, suffering and death of millions.

From this indubitable premise he submits something else that too cannot be disputed: this kind of suffering isn't just real, it's also wrong. We can all agree that this kind of suffering is not good and that there is something that is (beyond dispute) not good. And if there's something that is not good, then there's something that is good. His logic: "If the worst sin is the torment of others, merely for the sake of the suffering produced – then the good is whatever is diametrically opposite to that."

What flows from this is clear: the good is whatever stops such things from happening. If this is true, and it is, then it is also clear as to what is good, and what is a good way of living: if the most terrible forms of suffering are produced by egotism, selfishness, untruthfulness, arrogance, greed, lust for power, willful cruelty, and insensitivity to others, then we are evidently called to the

opposite: selflessness, altruism, humility, truth-telling, tenderness and sacrificing for others.

Not incidentally, Peterson affirms all of this inside a chapter within which he highlights the importance of sacrifice, of delaying private gratification for a greater good long-range.

His insight here parallels those of René Girard and other anthropologists who point out that the only way of stopping unconscious sacrifice to blind gods (which is what happened in the atrocities of Hitler and what happens in our own bitter slandering of others) is through self-sacrifice.

Only when we accept at the cost of personal suffering our own contingencies, sin and mortality will we stop

projecting these on to others so to make them suffer in order to feel better about ourselves.

Peterson writes as an agnostic or perhaps, more accurately, as an honest analyst, an observer of humanity, who for purposes of this book prefers to keep his faith private. Fair enough. Probably wise too. No reason to impute motives. It's where he lands that's important, and where he lands is on very solid ground.

“The most important question we need to challenge ourselves with is: how can I be more helpful?”

It's where Jesus lands in the Sermon on the Mount, it's where the Christian Churches land when they're at their best, it's where the great religions of the world land when they're at their best, and it's where humanity lands when it's at its best.

The medieval mystic, Theresa of Avila, wrote with great depth and challenge. Her treatise on the spiritual life is now a classic and forms part of the very canon of Christian spiritual writings. In the end, she submits that during our generative years the most important question we need to challenge ourselves with is: how can I be more helpful?

Jordan Peterson, with a logic and language that can be understood by everyone today, offers the same challenge.



Jordan Peterson.

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, October 4, 2018

Personal Profile

Travelling with
the chaplain on
the move

Page 34



Rise and shine!



During the winter season, when mornings and nights are both cold and dark, the prospect of voluntarily waking up at 4.30am seems like an untenable and daunting nightmare. To intentionally remove yourself from the comforting warmth of your bed to face the drudgery and stresses of everyday life sounds like an unavailable option, reserved for insomniacs and people trying to catch an early-morning flight.

Yet, for millions of people globally, waking up in the early hours of the morning gives them the energy and enthusiasm to take on the important matters of their day. In fact, many well-known celebrities and



**Waking up earlier
in the morning will
change your life for
the better, writes
Colm Fitzpatrick**

entrepreneurs attribute their success to their morning routine habits as it provides structure and more time to think and create. For example, Tim Cooke, the CEO of the tech-giant Apple, wakes up at 3.45am to sift through hundreds of emails and then hits the gym at around 5.00am for a morning workout.

More recently, the Hollywood actor Mark Wahlberg told social media that he rises at 2.30am

which is followed by half-an-hour of prayer, a gym session and then breakfast.

To average onlookers, these individuals may appear to look like superheroes impervious to the effects of tiredness, but in reality, they just have a planned routine and stuck to it until it became normal. Although biologically, some people may need less sleep to function, it's certainly the case that everyone

can alter their sleeping routine to get the best out of their mornings. Here are seven reasons why you should give it a go, and perhaps it might even change your life.

1. Avoid the rush

A great reason to be an early riser is that you won't have the feeling of being rushed which waking up later usually entails.

Robotically and unconsciously brushing your teeth, getting dressed and managing to squeeze in a quick breakfast before heading out the door is the norm for most people. Studies have shown that around 33% of working women feeling rushed while the figure for working men is 25%, and this number increases

if you're a parent. However, this isn't the case if you're an early riser. By waking up a little less late in the morning, you will have more time to focus on hygiene care, decide what you want to wear and fit in a nutritious breakfast.

If you're a parent with children in school, you'll have more time to meal prep for their lunches and make sure they have everything they need. In this way, you can avoid the morning rush and the stress associated with it for a more productive day.

2. Appreciate quietness

Another great benefit of waking up early is the ability to appreciate quietness. Our days

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Family News

AND EVENTS

A 'novel' festival idea

For writing fiends and imaginative thinkers, this October the 'Dalkey Creates Writing Festival' will give aspiring writers the opportunity to improve their craft and help them on the difficult journey to being published. The festival offers writing courses from published authors in an encouraging and supportive environment.

There will also be a range of talks from authors, focusing on different topics such as murder mysteries and historical fiction to even courses for beginners. For want-to-be publishers, 'The Writer's Forum' – an informal, conference style event – is the go to place for finding out from insider information about the publishing industry in and Ireland and the UK.

Alongside all of this there is DCJr – a programme of events for kids – and a family day planned. Writers and scribblers of all descriptions should head south to the beautiful seaside town of Dalkey for this wonderful literary weekend in October.



READING MADE EASY: Before most people switch off the lamp at night for some well-deserved sleep, they usually indulge in a few pages from a book they're currently reading.

While this is a great practice to get into, and one that will enrich your mind, those who have posture difficulties or sitting up straight may find this an arduous task, especially if their neck is looking down towards the book for a prolonged period of time. Prism glasses solve this problem, as they allow you to read while you lie down flat on the bed.

The glasses act as a periscope meaning you can see every word with ease without the fear of developing neck or back pain. The gadget is ideal for those with mobility issues like the elderly or individuals with a physical disability.

Best of all once you're finished reading, you're already in the correct position to snooze off!

It's bedtime!

Everybody is aware that getting a good night's sleep is important for your body to properly function especially if you're working all day – but research is also showing that regular bedtimes are key to a person's heart health and the good functioning of their metabolism.

A new study from Duke University Medical Centre led by Jessica Lunsford-Avery, Ph.D., examined the link between bedtime patterns and markers of cardiometabolic risk, and found that volunteers with irregular bedtimes had a higher body mass index (BMI), higher levels of blood sugar and higher blood pressure.

The volunteers were also more likely to have a heart attack or a stroke in the following decade than individuals with regular sleeping patterns. "Sleep irregularity may represent a target for early identification and prevention of cardiometabolic disease," the authors concluded.

However, they also pointed out that their study is observational and cannot say anything about causality.

Time to consider getting the flu vaccine



The winter is soon approaching and it may be time once again for you to get the flu vaccine which is now available. Reports from Australia and other countries so far this year suggest that the influenza strains are not as virulent as last season but viral mutations can occur and so it's important to get immunised if you are at risk.

Indeed, anyone who is 18 or older can avail of the flu vaccine at pharmacies though in particular, it is recommended that everyone aged 65 or older should be vaccinated. In addition, others at risk who should get the flu jab include those with a chronic lung, heart, liver or kidney condition, along with diabetics, pregnant women (who can be given it any stage of gestation) and those who have a weakened immune system.

It should also be administered to health care workers and carers who have the potential to pass on the flu to others at risk.

As the flu season typically lasts from October to April it's best to get vaccinated early. While the efficacy of the vaccine will depend on how well matched it is to the flu virus, there is an overall reduction in the risk of flu by about 40-60%. There is also evidence that even if you catch the flu, due to cross immunity it may reduce the severity of symptoms, the need to visit your GP and go to hospital.

At risk

In those at risk, flu can be very debilitating and life threatening complications such as pneumonia and encephalitis may occur. Indeed, it is estimated that about 100 people died from influenza in Ireland during the 2017/2018 season.

If you are aged 65 or older, you should also be immunised with the pneumonia vaccine. However, it usually only needs

Medical Matters

Dr Kevin McCarroll



to be administered once off in your lifetime. It provides immunity against pneumococcal pneumonia in about 50% of those vaccinated. Importantly, it also protects about 75% of older adults from its serious complications. While there are several bacterial causes for pneumonia, the pneumococcus accounts for about 50% of all cases acquired in the community and tends to be particularly virulent.

“The lifetime risk of developing shingles is about 25% rising to 50% in those aged 85”

In recent years, the shingles vaccine has become available and though not part of the routine immunisation schedule in Ireland, should be considered in those at risk.

Shingles occurs as a result of a reactivation of the chicken pox virus which the vast majority of adults (95%) carry after infection in childhood and adolescence. While the virus usually remains dormant in our bodies for the rest of our lives, it can reactivate when our immune system is compromised or under stress giving rise to shingles. In fact, the lifetime risk of developing shingles is about 25% rising to 50% in those aged 85.

Shingles initially manifests

as a burning or stabbing pain, followed by a very characteristic blistering rash along the path of our cutaneous nerves (where the virus is present). This can persist for about 10-14 days though it may take up to two to four weeks for the symptoms to resolve.

As the virus reactivates inside the nerves it can cause severe pain. In addition, a complication called post herpetic neuralgia may occur in about 20% of cases whereby there is ongoing pain which may persist for months to years. Indeed, in about 10% of cases, neuralgia is still present one year after having shingles.

In the UK, the shingles vaccine Zostavax is now being

for about five years and the vaccine can be co-administered with flu and pneumonia jabs too. However, the vaccine has 'live virus' and cannot be given to those who are immunocompromised.

In the last two years, there has also been the approval of a new shingles vaccine Shingrix which has superior efficacy. Indeed, it is about 90% effective at preventing both shingles and post herpetic neuralgia though it requires two injections to be given at least two to six months apart. Both vaccines can be given from the age of 50 and it is likely that their use will become part of a routine vaccination schedule in the future.

“Washing your hands frequently and avoiding contact with those with respiratory infections may also reduce your chance of picking up the cold or flu”

As smoking, stress, poor sleep and having an unhealthy diet can all affect your immune system, make sure (where applicable) to address these factors. The herbal preparation Echinacea may be associated with a small reduction in cold incidence but there is no evidence that it reduces cold duration. Washing your hands frequently and avoiding contact with those with respiratory infections may also reduce your chance of picking up the cold or flu.

Finally, make sure to check whether you should be vaccinated!

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



offered to adults when they visit their GP (if they are aged between 70-80). It has been proven to prevent shingles in up to 50-60% of those vaccinated and importantly also reduces the risk of developing post herpetic neuralgia by 70-88%. Immunity from vaccination lasts

» Continued from Page 31



are usually infiltrated with noise from phones, commuting, colleagues and family so it's very rare that we ever get to experience prolonged times of silence.

This opportunity will allow you to reflect on the day without any unwanted interruptions, and allow you to think clearly about what you want to achieve. Many people use this quiet time to meditate or practice yoga which is amplified in a space of stillness and calmness.

By waking up early, you'll learn to develop a love for this quiet time, and it may become the area in your life where your most important decisions are made, and ideas are created.

3. Exercise with ease

Hitting the gym in the early morning hours is also a great practice. One of the most common excuses people make for not exercising is that they don't have enough time. This is a response that should be met with sympathy, especially for those in the workforce.

“Another benefit of waking up early is that it has a strong correlation with productivity”

Working a 9-5 job, in between making meals, taking care of children and trying to fit in some leisure time is not an easy task. However, if you're an early riser, you'll be afforded the time to go to the gym more often. This is also ideal for people who are frightened or intimidated by joining a gym out of fear they will be judged by others as there will be very few people there early in the morning.

A quick half-an-hour workout is all that's needed, and then you can hit the shower before beginning your day knowing that you have already accomplished something important.

Gyms are usually close-by, either near your house or passed on a morning commute so distance shouldn't be a big issue. If it is, a home-workout will also suffice, and so as long as you keep at it, you'll become stronger and more energetic.

4. Improve your health

Physical health can also be maintained much better by waking up early because your nutritional

standards are vastly improved. By rising later in the morning, you're less likely to eat a healthy breakfast, and this also extends into lunch and dinnertime.

Early mornings mean you can plan out your weekly eating plan with ease and then act on it. Best of all, you can head to the local supermarket before anyone else is there and buy all of your groceries in a breeze, even picking up a few bargains before others have seen them. With this structure, you can prepare all your meals in advance and pop them in the freezer.

Moreover if you're having a few friends over or a romantic dinner date in the house, you have plenty of time to decide what culinary dish you want to make.

5. More productive

Another benefit of waking up early is that it has a strong correlation with productivity. A study by Harvard biologist, Christoph Randler, discovered that early risers are more proactive. They were more likely to agree with statements like “I spend time identifying long-range goals for myself” and “I feel in charge of making things happen”.

After a good night's sleep your brain will be charged from yesterday's work, and will be functioning optimally. There's no better time than in the morning to review your goals and decide what you want to do that day to reach them.

Productivity also extends to students too. Some research has shown that individuals who wake up early receive better grades so perhaps it's a practice even teenagers could adapt – although trying to enforce this as a parent is much more easily said than done!



6. Better sleep

Although it may seem like those who wake up early don't get enough sleep, the reality is that early risers get plenty of shut eye. This is because they often go to bed much earlier in the evening at a fixed time to curb off their tiredness and prepare for a refreshing and energising start the next day.

“Early mornings mean you can plan out your weekly eating plan with ease and then act on it”

Moreover, the quality of their sleep also improves given their fixed routine which means they feel much more stimulated in the morning. Often, people who get in eight hours of sleep still feel lethargic when they wake up, but this is probably due to how they treat themselves throughout the day, be it not eating properly or hitting the hay late at night. But by routinely waking up early and following a pattern, these problems will disappear.

7. It makes you happy!

One of the best and most important reasons why you should wake up early is that it improves your mental health and makes you much happier.

Endless research has shown that ‘morning people’ are more optimistic and positive not only about themselves but also about the day ahead of them.

This is due to a combination of factors already mentioned, but researchers have also suggested that our modern world in all its frenzy is better catered to early risers than night owls. In any case, the evidence is clear that waking up early will make you feel more confident in yourself and give you the time to take on the day ahead of you.

The benefits of waking up early are clear, so if it's an idea that appeals to you the next step is making this goal a reality. Do some research about how to get up earlier, and look at tips to make it easier for yourself.

It's the recipe for any success story and will surely teach you more about yourself and what you're capable of really doing.

Faith — IN THE — family



Bairbre Cahill

Diarmuid is doing his Leaving Certificate this year and recently had a very interesting Irish essay for homework – ‘Will young people in the future have Faith?’. They were asked to explore a number of questions including the impact of the Pope's visit, the scandals that continue to rock the Church and whether young people today feel the need for religion. There is a good probability that a question along these lines will come up in the Leaving Cert this year and so there is an added incentive to open up these conversations at home – but it is challenging.

When we ask if our young people will have Faith what do we have in mind? Do we simply mean will they go to Mass? That really is not enough.

The reality is that there are young people who do not go to Mass but consider themselves to be people of Faith. Now I would certainly want to ask them how Faith shapes their lives and how it is expressed without a Faith community.

But the reality is these young people may feel disconnected from parish life and yet in no way would they describe themselves as atheist (there is no God) or agnostic (I don't know if there's a God). We need to be very careful not to alienate young people further by measuring their Faith only in terms of Mass attendance.

“We all need to look at where the heart of our Faith lies – is it in a relationship with God or is it in an institution?”

I met a lovely couple a few months ago who are deeply involved in parish life but their children have drifted. The mum asked her daughter why she didn't go to Mass and the response was “because the Mass has no connection to my life”. We have to face up

to the reality of this for a lot of people – not because the Mass has no connection but because we have failed to help people explore and take ownership of those connections.

So maybe that is a conversation we need to open up. Why do you go to Mass? Why is it important to you? What difference does the Eucharist make in your life? Are there times when Mass has been a strength and support for you? Are there times when you have struggled to keep going to Mass?

If our teenagers and young adults were to ask us those questions would we be willing to answer them? Have we thought about these matters deeply enough ourselves? Because these are the types of questions that need to be explored and we need to have the openness and courage to do so. We need to be able

to talk about the abuse scandals that are coming to light in Chile, the US and now Germany. It is not up to us to be defensive on behalf of the Church.

Young people have been scandalized by what they have heard and we need to acknowledge the rottenness and corruption that have enabled people within the Church to protect abusers and ignore victims.

However, we all need to look at where the heart of our Faith lies – is it in a relationship with God or is it in an institution? Do I believe in God or do I believe in the Church?

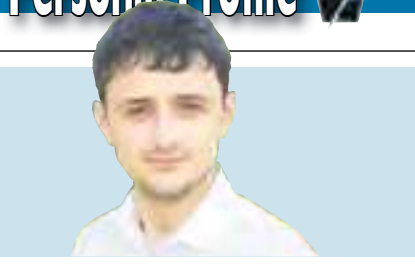
Personally, I feel that if I was to rely on my Faith in the Church I'd be gone by now. My Faith is in God, in Jesus, in the Holy Spirit and while I recognise the vital role of the Church I also recognise its brokenness and sinfulness.

So, if our young people – and indeed all of us – are going to have Faith we need to be a people, a Church rooted in relationship with God, humble, Spirit-led. Our Faith needs to connect with our daily lives and help us see, in the midst of everything, the presence and the power of God.



Travelling with the chaplain on the move

Personal Profile



Colm Fitzpatrick writes about how we can learn from the Travelling community

Most priests spend their time ministering to their parish communities and those on the margins, but as chaplain for the Travelling community in Ireland, Fr Tom Naughton has truly taken this vocation of outreach to heart. The Limerick-born priest who was ordained in the diocese of Cloyne in 2001 is on a mission to ensure that Travelling groups encounter the Faith and are properly respected as members of Irish society.

The role of chaplain to this community, Fr Tom explains, has strong historical roots and came into existence to cater for the spiritual needs of Travellers who were constantly moving from place to place.

"Originally it was for anyone who might be nomadic who mightn't be of any fixed abode. So that was the original idea of having a chaplain far back so that if they were getting married, if there were any particular needs that they had in the spiritual or pastoral area, there would be a chaplain available to them – they would have a contact they could come to," Fr Tom says.

Nowadays, he says the Travelling community has

changed significantly as most of them would be "pretty settled" in particular places and are no longer roaming around. Explaining specifically what his duties are, Fr Tom says that he tries his best to visit various Travelling groups in dioceses, adding that there are plenty of groups who are members of youth travel associations and so he tries to get to know them. Alongside his pastoral role, he also organises Masses, Confessions and pilgrimages, like journeying up Croagh Patrick or going to Mass rocks.

Reminder

"It's almost like it's a reminder of the time when they were nomadic. You know, you were going up and you might have Mass in a holy well, you might climb Croagh Patrick, you might even go to a Marian Shrine – so my whole thing is to not so much go and tell travelling people what sort of expression or format of religiosity they should be following but rather staying open to what they would want and if it is possible to accommodate that,"

he says.

Initially developing a relationship with the Travelling community was not a point of tension or anxiousness for Fr Tom, given that he "sort of knew a lot of Travellers growing up" and also went to school with them, so it was "natural" for him to fit into this type of work. Since then, Fr Tom says he has developed a "great grá and a great love" for the Travelling culture, particularly because of their piety and unwavering devotion to the Faith.

“I do think from the point of view of Faith that we should be sort of moving towards more integration”

"This is the thing that impresses me most in the Faith aspect – the deep respect it has for the things of God," he says, stressing that the community have the ability to see beyond the personality of priests, and appreciate the

important, sacramental role they carry out. This perception, he adds, also extends to the youth who have adapted the Faith from older generations, and are able to appreciate the sacred.

This deep devotion to God, Fr Tom suggests, could be one outlet by which the rest of society can begin to develop bonds with the Travelling community, and so break down barriers that ultimately cause conflict and discrimination.



"I do think from the point of view of Faith that we should be sort of moving towards

more integration and towards understanding one another. And I think those sorts of things could help break down prejudice and break down discrimination which quite frankly is still present," he says.

This goal is no trivial task given that a study on behalf of the Irish Human Rights Equality Mission (IHREC) last year showed that Travellers are almost 10 times more likely to deal with instances of discrimination than white Irish members of the general population.

“It is important that representatives of Ireland have given them the recognition they deserve”

This number shoots up to 22 when Irish Travellers avail of private services, particularly shops, restaurants and pubs. However, Fr Tom says that the move of the Government to recognise Travellers as an ethnic group has given them self-confidence, and it is important that representatives of Ireland have given them the recognition they deserve.

In spite of this "step forward", Fr Tom still believes it's not just up to the Government to create better structures for integration but society as a whole has to play a role if real change can happen. In doing so, this current social divide can be bridged so that tangible, constructive developments can take place between communities.

"I think around that, there should be more effort made to have more activities be it with young Travellers and young settled people as well as older people.

"There would be activities organised in order to bring them together and in order for them to do things together – be it simply social gatherings and outings so that genuine understanding of each other could take place.

"Without genuine understanding, ignorance and prejudice could prevail."



Members of the Travelling community pictured with Fr Tom Naughton on pilgrimage.

Children's Corner

Colm Fitzpatrick



Your eyes can deceive you sometimes...here's why!

There's an old phrase that goes, 'What you see is what you get' – and while this might be true sometimes, it's not always the case. Often, we can be deceived by what we see, and our brains might not be able to fully process what's right in front of us.

One way to demonstrate this phenomenon is by looking at optical illusions. Simply put, optical illusions are visual puzzles that appear to defy reality and make us question what we're observing. They're really fun to look at, and can be a source of confusion or amazement.

In fact, it has been suggested that prehistoric artists were the first to create optical illusions given that several caves in France show engravings of woolly mammoths and bison which share certain lines and features. The overlapping imaging means that they're both distinctive but you can look at them simultaneously.

Illusions like this are very simple, but artists throughout history have created some very complex pieces that still continue to boggle the

mind. It may seem like creating optical illusions is a craft only geniuses can accomplish but you can actually find and make some in the comfort of your own home – all that's needed is a glass of water!

For the first illusion take a piece of paper and with a marker draw a big arrow that's pointing to the left.

Direction

When you place the paper behind the glass of water and slowly move it horizontally, the direction of the arrow will change, so that it will be pointing to the right.

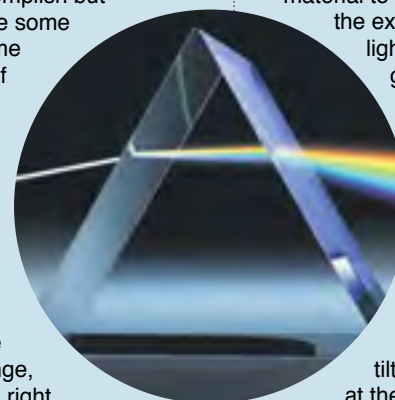
This may seem like a magic trick but really, you've just demonstrated a physics concept called refraction, which means the bending of light. When the arrow is moved to a particular distance behind the glass, it looks like

it reversed itself. When light passes from one material to another, it can bend or refract. In the experiment that you just completed, light travelled from the air, through the glass, through the water, through the back of the glass, and then back through the air, before hitting the arrow.

Anytime that light passes from one medium, or material, into another, it refracts.

An even easier way to see refraction happening is by placing a straw in a glass vertically and watch it from the side. If you slowly tilt the straw, it appears to be broken at the surface of the water. For onlookers,

it will look like you're able to drink from a straw that's disconnected. These illusions go to show that the world we live in is not always what it seems, so it's important to explore and learn whenever we can.



TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Real-life drama from the US Senate

I've reviewed some riveting TV dramas, but last week's US Senate Committee hearings were up there with the best of them.

I don't know whether Judge Brett Kavanaugh or Dr Christine Blasey Ford is telling the truth, or whether one or both were deceptive, delusional or mistaken, but I'm taken aback to hear people pronouncing so decisively and judgementally on one side or the other.

Which side people come down on seems dependent more on the political affiliation of the commentator than on anything evidential.

On last Friday's **Morning Ireland** (RTÉ Radio 1) Republican commentator Matt Clink was firmly in the Kavanaugh camp, but he thought both had been victimised in this "calculated plot" to delay the nomination. He found both contradictory testimonies credible, reckoned something had happened to Dr Ford when she was 15, but suggested there was a lack of corroborative evidence to prove that Kavanaugh was the culprit. Ultimately he believed the Democrats had made it all about abortion.

Later that morning, on **Today With Seán O'Rourke** (RTÉ Radio 1), it was the turn of journalist Marion McKeone who found Dr Ford's testimony "extremely credible". She thought Judge Kavanaugh wasn't credible in relation to



Judge Brett Kavanaugh.

his drinking habits in school and college, but said if he was innocent he had "every right to be angry, upset and emotional". Overall she thought it was all an "angry, bitter, recriminatory, sorry mess", with no winners.

Credible

McKeone appeared again on that evening's **Last Word** (Today FM), when she was much more critical of Kavanaugh ("an entirely not credible witness"). She argued the toss with conserv-

ative journalist Cal Thomas – their regular sparring at least ensures a real debate. Whatever the case, I did agree with presenter Matt Cooper that the current controversy displayed a desperate polarisation in American public life. Thomas agreed, criticising both sides and saying it was all about conflict not resolution, but Cooper scolded him for suggesting the political left engaged in the nastiness more than the right – saying that this in itself was a partisan stance.

Whatever the rights and wrongs it's pretty clear, as Matt Clink suggested, that it's largely about abortion – if Kavanaugh is appointed there is the hope (or fear, depending on your point of view) that the Roe vs Wade decision that ushered in abortion on a grand scale in the USA will be overturned. Some vocal feminists and liberals cannot tolerate the idea that they might not be free to have their unborn children killed.

And maybe the issues at stake go broader than abortion to a conflict of world-views. I was reminded of this when I heard Democratic Senator Cory Booker on the live CNN coverage suggesting that Dr Ford was telling "her truth". This captured the spirit of relativism and subjectivity that is at the heart of divisive identity politics. Surely there is only one truth as to what exactly happened?

The abortion battleground



Minister Simon Harris.

PICK OF THE WEEK

MAGNIFICAT DAY

EWTN, Saturday, October 6, 10pm

The Most Rev. Robert Barron, live from Brooklyn, New York, to celebrate the silver jubilee of the *Magnificat*.

MY COUNTRY, MY FAITH: IRELAND

EWTN, Wednesday, October 10, 7pm

'The Eucharist, the greatest saint and the little girl' – Fr. Owen's guest, Jacky O'Hagan tells the moving story of Little Nelly.

PAT KENNY'S BIG DEBATE: WELFARE IRELAND

Virgin Media 1, Wednesday, October 10, 10pm

Post Budget 2018, Pat Kenny and panel debate Ireland's welfare system with a live audience.

at home is still simmering on, with the media being rather low key about it, as we edge ever closer to the disaster of abortion legislation. On the **News At One** (RTÉ Radio 1) on Wednesday of last week, the Minister for 'Some People's' Health Simon Harris TD strained credibility – he said "maybe it's an old fashioned idea but I believe when you campaign and tell the Irish people if they vote in a certain way you're going to do something, that you go ahead and do it". Funny enough he didn't apply that principle when he originally got elected touting his pro-life credentials and then proceeded to support an abortion bill.

He was asked about concerns around the three-day waiting period (or stay of execution, if you're the baby), but not about the conscientious concerns of doctors who

face being forced to refer for abortions. He also got away with the pro-choice fiction "we sent them abroad".

Newstalk promoted the 'March For Choice' at the top of their **News Headlines** last Saturday morning, and again it was the main headline at 6pm, the report including Choice marcher Simon Harris.

Was this more important than the lives lost in the tsunami in Indonesia? And when will any interviewer challenge the march slogan "free, safe and legal"? It's never safe for the baby, and are people really happy about it being free (i.e. tax payers' expense) when so much life enhancing health care is so expensive and hard to access?

boregan@hotmail.com



Aubrey Malone

Film

Spouse's creative influence too close for comfort

The Wife (15A)

Glenn Close has been labouring away in the Hollywood vineyard for many moons now without too much to show for it. She's been a bridesmaid at the annual Oscar ceremonies so often, 'Close' isn't just her surname – it's more like a career description.

Some poor editorial decisions haven't helped. In *Fatal Attraction*, for instance, she was originally cast as the spurned lover of Michael Douglas, which would have given her the opportunity to work up some deep emotions, but audiences yawned at the test shows, which caused the film's director, Adrian Lyne, to declare: "I know how to save



Glenn Close and Jonathan Pryce star in *The Wife*.

Excellent
★★★★★

the movie – we'll make her into a monster!" The rest is history – or rather, 'herstory'. Goodbye spurned lover, hello vampiress.

Pundits are saying her Oscar luck is going to change with this latest offering and I

can see why. She's excellent as the *femme inspiratrice* of a man who's just won the Nobel Prize for literature.

The Wildean dictum of "be careful what you dream for" comes to the fore as the award brings to a head a

welter of tensions that have been simmering in her marriage since she sacrificed her writing career for that of her husband back in the 1950s in Massachusetts. I'm normally not a fan of flashbacks but here they work fine.

Unfaithful

In an age where it was significantly more difficult for a woman to achieve fame as a writer than it was for a man no matter how good she was, Joan Castleman (Close) has played second fiddle to her sexually unfaithful husband Joe (Jonathan Pryce) all through the years while he took the glory for her work behind the scenes.

But when they travel to

Stockholm for him to collect his prize, the trip opens up a Pandora's Box of secrets, lies and duplicities.

The manner in which Joan sheds her invisibility is the main theme of the film. It's set off against a number of interlocking subplots involving their disgruntled son, their pregnant daughter, Joe's heart problems and a journalistic mole (Christian Slater) who sniffs around them looking for gossip for his forthcoming biography of Joe.

It's a fascinating ensemble piece with not a word wasted in Jane Anderson's fantastic script and exemplary performances all round, Close particularly but also Pryce. A quality-studded offering

that's as much a portrait of a time as well as a marriage, it's probably the best film I've seen so far this year.

Temptation

Director Bjorn Runge resists the temptation to blacken Joe as a loudmouth charlatan when it would have been so easy to do so. Instead he portrays him as a somewhat pathetic figure who's almost oblivious to his indiscretions and subterfuges, a man so comfortable to wear the raiment of the big time writer that he all but forgets the woman who shunted herself into the shadows to put him there all those years ago as he stretched a severely limited talent to bursting point.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



What we can learn from Christianity's first centuries

The Triumph of Christianity: How a Forbidden Religion Swept the World
by Bart D. Ehrman
(One World, £20.00)

Peter Costello

Recently we have had several histories of early and medieval Christianity written from a very traditional Catholic point of view. These have in their way been very reassuring, but perhaps only by passing over darker passages in the development of a 2,000-year-old institution. This book takes a different approach.

Bart D. Ehrman is a professor of religious studies at the University of North Carolina, and the author of *Misquoting Jesus*. Having moved from being a man of faith to an agnostic, he still finds himself (like so many) caught by the appeal of Christianity.

His many books are intended for a wide readership, and have proved both popular and enlightening to many. Yet he draws on the latest scholarship in the area, on ideas that might otherwise take decades to filter down to the pews.

He is the kind of writer who



Bart D. Ehrman. Left, Jesus teaching his disciples and, below, proclaiming the gospel – early Christian art from the catacombs.



are times then when many might need to relearn the confidence, and perhaps acceptance of the world, that gained Christianity a following in those early centuries among all classes of society, as the New Testament reveals, from the poorest of the poor to officials of the state.

“The global movement of Christianity from the Europe of Rome took much longer, and was never completed”

What is best in early Christianity survives for us to make use of and can be found in the Gospels. Those things that were derived from the social attitudes of earlier times and the influences of other philosophies can now be put aside, in favour of a renewed understanding of the Gospel, what its saving grace might be in the approaching era when Christianity fully realises its nature as a religion among other religions, needing to gain adherents through the message that inspired so many in these early centuries.

aims at clarity, and serves the general reader by setting the past both in context and in its relevance to this age we live. To those worried about the present day and the state of religion this may bring some insight, but also challenges to understanding, and the nature of belief.

Here he deals with the first three centuries of the Christian era. The book ends little more than a century before

the death of St Patrick, a fact which sets it in the context of Ireland's own religious history.

Struggle

He opens with that struggle of those who had followed Jesus in his lifetime and ends with Constantine “the first Christian emperor” – though that is indeed a very ambiguous title.

He explains that the victory of Christianity, as pro-

moted by St Paul, was not inevitable. Nor indeed by the ‘conversion’ of the Roman Empire could the new faith be said to have “swept the world” – in terms of mere population most of the planet remained quite as it was.

The global movement of Christianity from the Europe of Rome took much longer, and was never completed. As we face resurgent forms of Islam, Hinduism and Bud-

dism, we can feel what it must have been like for the established religion of ancient Rome to feel itself under attack from an aggressive new faith.

Today, of course, many Christians in turn feel that they are also under attack from both aggressive new faiths in the religious sense, such as Pentecostalism, but also the secular sense, such as organised atheism. These

A local legend's lively life

Spoilt Rotten: Memoirs of Jack McKenna

by Jack McKenna
(North Kerry Literary Trust, €15.00; contact St. Johns Arts & Heritage Centre, The Square, Listowel, Co. Kerry; tel: 068-22566)

J. Anthony Gaughan

This autobiography, by a novice author as old as the century, is a valuable local history written from an urban perspective. For many years the author was in charge of McKenna & Sons, one of the leading businesses in Listowel, Co. Kerry.

Most of the town's citizens always regarded the McKennas to be essentially business people, but in providing an account of his family background Jack McKenna reveals that his father, Jack McKenna Snr, as he was known, in his early years was involved in much more than the family business.

He was a committed patriot. Sworn into the IRB by Cathal Brugha in 1910, he was OC of the Listowel company of the Irish



Volunteers in 1913. He was in Dublin on Easter Monday 1916 when he volunteered his services to Major John McBride, but these were declined.

He was jailed on two occasions and harassed by the crown forces during the War of Independence.

From 1917 onwards, he was chairman of Kerry County Council and regarded as one of the leading

Sinn Féiners in the county. When the Sinn Féin movement and the IRA split on the issue of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in disgust he retired from politics and from public life.

Jack lists his siblings: Joan, May and Grace, two of whom entered the Congregation of the Ursulines, and his brother Liam.

Traumatic period

He then records a traumatic period in his early years. At the age of ten he struggled with a grave chest ailment. The family GP feared for his life, in this time before penicillin and the wonderful streptomycin drugs. At that time the treatment for any serious chest ailment was a long rest in a sanatorium. Jack was sent to Switzerland, then regarded as the best place to receive treatment. There he made a full recovery.

Jack and Liam were educated by the Jesuits at Clongowes Wood. Both had vocations to the priesthood: Liam was ordained as a Jesuit and spent most of the rest of his life lecturing on industrial relations in the Jesuit Workers

College in Dublin.

Jack himself had entered Clonliffe to study for the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Dublin. Within four years he concluded that he did not have a vocation, and joined his father in the family business.

In the next and most valuable section of Jack's narrative he discusses the development of the family business and its crucial role in the business and commercial life of the town and its vicinity. The challenges to business in a provincial town were many and varied and this book illustrates adaptability was the key to coping with them. Jack married Susan Kelliher, daughter of Maurice Kelliher, one of the leading businessmen in Tralee and she was a knowledgeable and admirable partner in all his business enterprises.

Family business

Jack did not merely concern himself with the family business. He was actively involved in projects to promote the civic, economic and

social life of the town. He and other prominent fellow town's people bought the Listowel Arms Hotel when it was very much down-at-heal and they ensured that it was again fit for purpose.

Largely the same group set up the Tarbert-Killimer Ferry. Jack also strongly supported every other worthwhile project, not least Writers Week. In all this he had the enthusiastic support of Sue, his wife.

One of Jack's hobbies was an interest in trains and railways. The remains of one of the most exotic examples of a railway was right before his eyes – The Listowel / Ballybunion Lartigue Railway. With dogged determination he resurrected the engine, carriages, turn-table and rails and he bequeathed to the town the unique Lartigue Railway Museum.

Jack McKenna's journal of his life and times is an inspiring account of a hard-working and public-spirited business family, such as was to be found in all our provincial towns. Congratulations to him for completing it and on reaching his 100th birthday!

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.

Soldiering Against Subversion: The Irish Defence Forces and internal security during the Troubles, 1969-1998

by Dan Harvey
(Merrion Press, €19.99)

Joe Carroll

The role of the Defence Forces (the army, naval service, and air corps) in ensuring that the Troubles in Northern Ireland did not spill over into the Republic and undermine the stability of the State is not as well recognised as it should be according to the author, a former serving officer.

Lieut. Colonel Dan Harvey served on operations at home and abroad for 40 years, including tours of duty in the Middle East, Africa, the Balkans and South Caucasus. In his latest book he aims to correct this by detailed descriptions of operations by the military in guarding the Border, disarming bombs, suppressing prison riots by IRA prisoners and manning road blocks with the Gardai.

These were instances where the Defence Forces were called out as Aid to the Civil Power (ATCP), but the gardai always played the lead role which was sometimes resented by the soldiers who were less well paid and did not qualify for overtime. But in general the cooperation between these two arms of the State was effective.

Nevertheless, the author constantly returns to his complaint that the role of the Defence Forces in this dangerous period (1969-1998) has been "minimised, overlooked and disregarded". He hopes this book will help to remedy this.

“It reveals how unprepared the Army was to respond to the outbreak of the Troubles”

He does this by quoting first-hand accounts, mainly by junior officers, of operations on the Border, dealing with prison riots, street demonstrations, kidnap operations and road blocks. Most, but not all, of these insider accounts are anonymous, but have the ring of truth.

In a book published in 2017, called *Bombs, Bullets and the Border*, Pat-

Safeguarding the nation from itself

Irish soldiers on patrol.



rick Mulroe examined Irish security policy for the 1969-1978 period and provided a revealing political context by his research in Irish and British national archives. Dan Harvey fills in political and social background in broad brush strokes, but the book would gain by including more archival material.

The author could also have responded to the charge on page 135 of Mulroe's book that "a high level garda report claimed that the Irish army had been 'carefully infiltrated by the provos'". Mulroe also quoted from British archives that the British had similar fears.

The present book reveals how unprepared the Army was to respond to the August 1969 outbreak of the Troubles and the Jack Lynch pledge "not to stand by". This unreadiness was due to the neglect of successive governments to update military equipment and barracks. Civilians would not have lived in such conditions and for such poor pay.

He also refers to the impossible task that the Government in 1969-1970 asked of the Defence Forces to plan for incursions across the Border if necessary to rescue the nationalist population from pogroms in loyalist areas. How this could be done without clashing with British forces was not spelled out and the draft plans were quietly shelved.

The book describes the *Dad's Army* conditions in which the army was ordered by the Minister for Defence, James Gibbons, in April

1969, to transport 600 rifles and ammunition to Dundalk barracks.

Six trucks set off on a tortuous route from Dublin. The convoy got separated in the darkness. A truck went missing. There was no radio contact so the officer in charge had to find a pay phone to call Dundalk to see if it had arrived. When the rest of the convoy arrived the officer in charge in Dundalk refused to take responsibility for it or unload the rifles. The trucks were parked and had to be guarded.

Suspicious

The army was right to be suspicious. It later emerged that while Jack Lynch was on holidays, it was the hawkish Neil Blaney, Minister for Agriculture, who persuaded Gibbons to send the rifles to Dundalk for onward smuggling to Northern nationalists. The plan was dropped when it was realised the numbers on the rifles would link them to the Irish army.

The book also details the heroism of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal team in dealing with the numerous bombs and booby traps left in Border areas by the IRA.

During the course of the Troubles, the IRA developed improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to such a degree that terrorists around the world have copied them. In turn, the EOD has developed such expertise in disarming these devices that foreign armies and police forces have attended the Irish refresher courses.

WebWatch

Greg Daly

The best and the worst of Catholic journalism

A diocesan website from the other side of the world may not seem the most obvious place for Irish Catholics to find relevant and fruitful reading but angelusnews.com, the news website of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles can be just that.

While local and American news are obviously major points of concentration for the news site of the largest diocese in the US, Angelus also features an impressive amount of what might be considered 'magazine' content, with feature articles and decent opinion pieces; currently flying high on the site are pieces by Tony Magliano entitled 'Active nonviolence: rediscovering a central teaching of Jesus' and Archbishop José Gomez on how 'This is the hour of the Laity'.

As an example of such, Greg Erlandson's column on 'The hard grace of being a Catholic journalist' is compelling reading for those who want to understand some of the challenges of Catholic journalism, and the importance of such.

Evil organisation

Director and editor-in-chief of *Catholic News Service*, Erlandson opens by relating how sneers from some about working for an evil organisation and criticism from others about not defending the bishops more strongly are par for the course for Catholic journalists nowadays, with criticism being far worse on social media than in person.

Despite this, he says, as a Catholic journalist covering the abuse scandals can be the best of times as well as the worst.

"Best of times because Catholic journalism can actually play an important role. It is a way of demonstrating, not just talking about, transparency. It is a way of demonstrating, and not just talking about,



accountability," he says.

"It is a time of informed credibility, when all the knowledge and experience of a Catholic journalist is really worth something. Not every Catholic journalist is an expert in canon law or ecclesial politics, but Catholic journalists can provide context," he continues. "They can make complex events understandable. They can put historical events in perspective or provide the back story instead of treating every event as if it happened yesterday."

“Revelations about Archbishop – until recently Cardinal – Theodore McCarrick have been uniquely painful too”

Times of crises, in short, are times when Catholic journalists get to do their job, and serve the Church by doing so, neither ducking bad news nor forgetting good news.

At the same time, he points out, it can be the worst of times because differences between Catholics mean that not every story pleases everybody.

"The mote in a journalist's eye is sometimes a more tempting target than the beam in a churchman's. Complaining about being victimised by journalists comes more easily than engaging victims," he says, noting that "the credibility of a Catholic newspaper

or magazine is neutered when someone decides that no news is good news in a self-serving attempt to 'not scandalise the faithful'".

On the other hand, he says – and this is just as important – "while some may resent Catholics reporting on Catholic scandals, others accuse the journalist of participating in the cover-up because he or she isn't reporting every social media rumour or every blogger's claim".

And of course, he adds, this is the worst of times for journalists because there is a sense that reading time and time and time again horrific reports and learning just how badly – for whatever reasons – things were handled is a Sisyphean task, one that destroys trust in a way Erlandson describes as "crushing".

Revelations about Archbishop – until recently Cardinal – Theodore McCarrick have been uniquely painful too, he adds: "We thought he was a voice for reform and protection. Instead he was just grooming us all. His betrayal casts doubt on everyone. This is the real corrosion of the sexual abuse crisis in the Church: We don't know if we can trust priest or bishop or even Pope."

It's a powerful piece, a dark exposure of what honest Catholic journalism can sometimes entail that ends, nonetheless, on a profoundly hopeful note.

For anyone curious about the challenges of being a Catholic journalist, it's definitely worth reflecting on.

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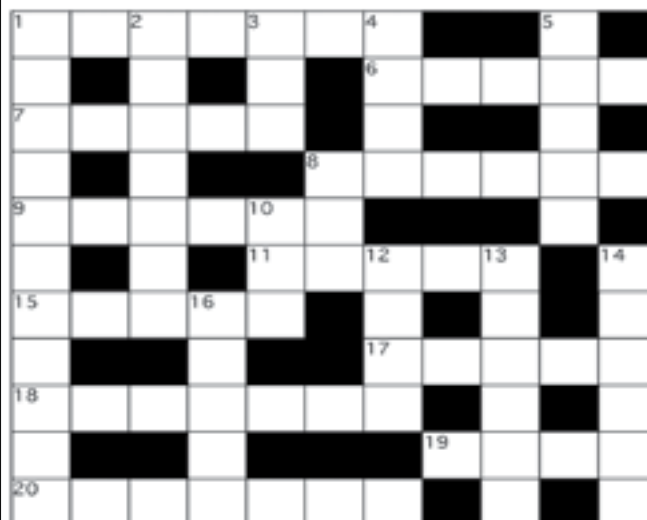


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Leisure time

Crossword Junior

Gordius 252



ACROSS

1. Ali Baba and the Forty _____ (7)
6. Travel by bike. (5)
7. A spy is sometimes called a secret _____. (5)
8. This planet is between Saturn and Neptune. (6)
9. Bonbons. (6)
11. Our planet. (5)
15. Church music is often played on it. (5)
17. Sometimes, you need to change a baby's _____. (5)
18. Non-magic people in the Harry Potter books. (7)
19. Your blood flows through this. (4)
20. You put a car in this gear to go backwards. (7)

DOWN

1. Toy - or machine in the movie - that looks ordinary until it changes into a fighting machine. (11)
2. The Titanic sank when it hit one. (7)
3. This person will treat your sick pet. (3)
4. Mark on your skin from an old wound. (4)
5. Use it to make bread. (5)
8. The initials of a country across the Atlantic. (1.1.1)
10. Moses was given have this many Commandments. (3)
12. Sprints. (4)
13. Take place; occur. (6)
14. "Having a go". (6)
16. Each corner of a square shows a right _____. (5)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

GORDIUS No.370

Across – 1 Ned 3 Silver birch 8 Ice age 9 Ruby port 11 Patch 13 Dunce 15 Nullify 16 Hoodlum 20 Darth Vader 21 Harpo 23 Papal audience 25 Entomb 26 Preparatory 27 Tun

Down – 1 Nail varnish 3 Sugar 4 Vermont 5 Buy up 6 Roosts 7 Hot 12 Haemoglobin 13 Dyfed 14 Epoch 17 Lamppost 18 Trident 19 Grudge 22 Opera 23 Penny dreadful 24 Asp

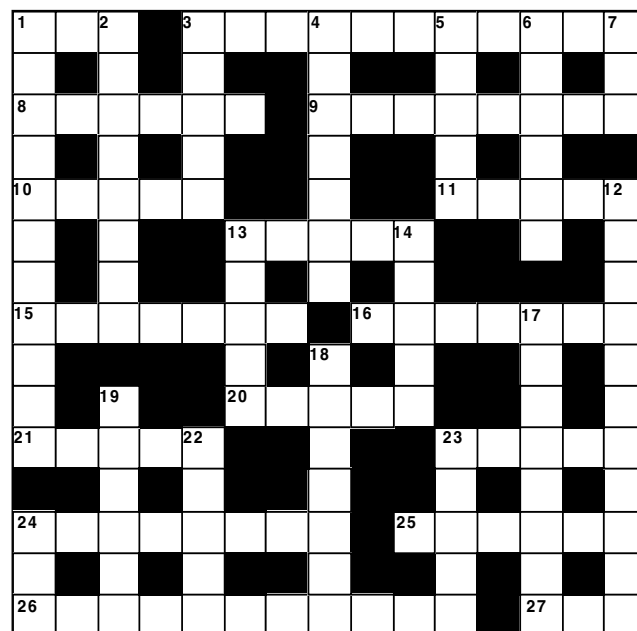
CHILDREN'S No.251

Across – 1 Lisa Simpson 6 Leapfrog 7 Ink 8 Medal 9 Sheet 10 Oval 11 Add 13 Easter 16 Gravel 17 Lovely

Down – 1 Lollipop 2 Shark 3 Safe 4 Piglet 5 Orchard 8 Meat 9 Sleeve 11 Argue 12 Dairy 14 Sell 15 Cry

Crossword

Gordius 371



ACROSS

- 1 What cows chew (coughing up daisies, initially) (3)
- 3 They share a parent - with inhabitants of the Convent of the Pace? (11)
- 8 Fifty-fifty chance (4-2)
- 9 & 10 Member of the clergy created by a weaver or shaped by a tailor? (3,2,3,5)
- 11 Contractual conditions (5)
- 13 Pours down golf pegs (about a thousand) (5)
- 15 Nickname for jazz great Louis Armstrong (7)
- 16 Prevail, achieve one's objective (7)
- 20 & 25a With no qualms, she mixed a soft drink (5,6)
- 21 Map, graph (5)
- 23 An easily taken goal, or the result of a faucet installation? (3-2)
- 24 Ill? Go aid - perhaps with flowers (8)
- 25 See 20 across
- 26 Take rum veal (chopped) - what's it worth? (6,5)
- 27 Male cat (3)

DOWN

- 1 How earth-shattering, to see icy cats clam up like that! (11)

- 2 Price reduction (8)
- 3 & 18d Continent of aromatic hues (5,7)
- 4 Acne spots (7)
- 5 Yell (5)
- 6 Complete 'The Heart of Ancient Ireland' (6)
- 7 Female pronoun (3)
- 12 One may be handing arms out in a royal residence in Norfolk (11)
- 13 Sri Lankan ethnic group, a part of the Malta military (5)
- 14 Reject outright (5)
- 17 The plane could be a Jumbo (8)
- 18 See 3 down
- 19 This kind of fair sounds strange (6)
- 22 A journey east? Rubbish! (5)
- 23 Chef's hat (5)
- 24 Fitness room in a rangy mansion (3)

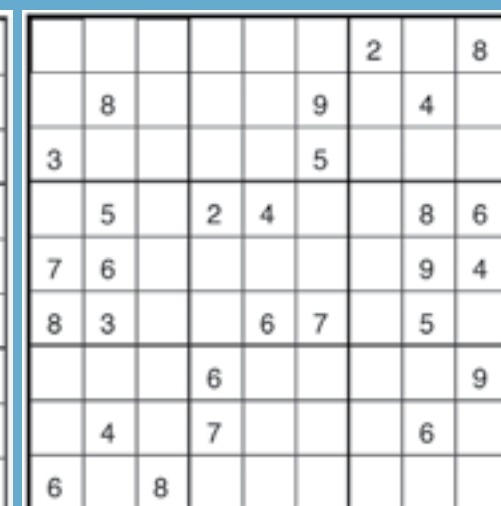
Sudoku Corner

252

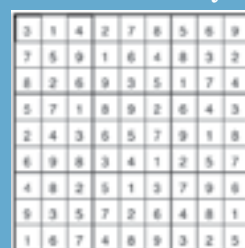
Easy



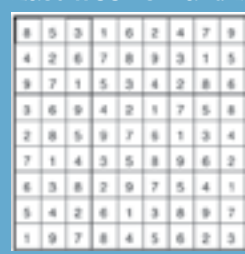
Hard



Last week's Easy 251



Last week's Hard 251



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Notebook

Fr Bernard Cotter



A Faith-memory would be worth all the speeches

I HAVE A LOT to answer for. As a young priest, I presided at numerous weddings, and often went along to the wedding reception too. I reflected on what I saw, and these reflections turned into an article in the diocesan magazine, which the national dailies took up. That was how I came to address the nation on the subject of weddings, through a quarter-hour interview with Marion Finucane, who then presented *Liveline*.

One of the topics I addressed was wedding receptions and particularly the speeches then made at the end of the meal. In those days, many of those who spoke at receptions were ill-suited to the task and found the experience discomfoting. My heart went out to people suffering through the meal as they waited to get the speech done, and I wondered why the speeches could not be gotten over with at the start, to save the pressure on these unwilling speakers.

Fast forward 30 years and that idea has been taken on with a vengeance. Speeches at the start of the wedding banquet are now commonplace, but often by confident speakers with no



difficulty in speaking at length. Thirty years ago, speeches were made by the few, now the many speak... and speak and speak. And the guests starve! And they probably curse whoever's bright idea these beginning-of-meal speeches were.

"Be careful what you wish for" said the wise man of the East. I wished for a new time zone for wedding speeches and my wish was granted. My apologies to all who suffer as a result of that youthful foolishness!

What would be my observations on weddings today? One dramatic change I notice is the decline in Faith. Thirty years ago, people knew the Mass, they were familiar with it, they knew the responses. Picking out readings was made easier by the fact that many couples had heard many of the readings in many contexts. It makes marriages today challenging, both in their preparation and their execution.

● Did you ever notice the roadside signs indicating the venue for (for example) 'Michael & Mary's' or 'Sean & Fidelma's' wedding? Thirty years ago, finding a church in a different part of the county was not so difficult, as people went to Mass in many different places – for funerals, on the way to matches or other functions etc. These signs have become necessary as more and more are unfamiliar with where churches are located, something to muse on as you drive in the countryside. (These signs are also a testament to how poorly county councils signpost our rural churches.)

Challenge or opportunity? It depends on the president's mood!

As Faith declines, non-essential elements take on greater priority – there is a vacuum to be filled. So it's not a one-day event any more, weddings take three days (rehearsal, the day itself, then the barbecue). And every moment of every day has a gimmick attached to it, a money-making opportunity for some person.

Entrepreneur

I was told of one enterprising entrepreneur whose speciality was matching the cushions on which the bridal couple were to sit with the bridesmaids' dresses – a level of speciality unheard of a few short years ago.

And sadly, as the externals grow in extent and in cost, the core is emptying. And yet priests have an opportunity to accentuate the core when they preside and preach the Word of God on wedding days. Maybe a Faith-memory is created, maybe in a moment of quiet prayer a connection with the personal God who loves each is re-established. If at least that happens, everything thrown at weddings suddenly becomes worthwhile.

Words worth

● My early media exposure on weddings taught me a valuable lesson – the danger that parishioners can think one is writing about them.

Critiquing wedding practices, I looked at the practice of the bride's father 'giving her away'. This seemed outdated; the bride should not be traded 'like a sack of spuds'. Unfortunately, the family at whose marriage I had most recently presided weren't all that impressed to hear their daughter being compared to such a product.

No such comparison was intended, naturally – but I did learn the dangers of writing about parish experiences when one continues to minister in a parish...





KERALA FLOODS: FATHER SILVESTER CALLS FOR HELP

Reverend Father Silvester Cottage, Little Way Association Director for India, has managed to contact us after several days during which he was stranded on the top floor of our Little Way Centre in the Diocese of Alleppy, Kerala, without food or clean drinking water and with no means of reaching safety or calling for assistance. Fortunately, his Little Way volunteers were eventually able to reach him, and the flood waters are slowly receding, but almost everyone in the area has lost their home and essential possessions in the floods, or in landslides caused by torrential rain and rivers bursting their banks. Father Silvester praised his volunteers who have been giving practical assistance to the flood victims, despite themselves being in desperate circumstances. But financial help is urgently needed, now and for rebuilding in the months ahead.

Can you spare a donation to help Fr Silvester and the flood victims in Kerala?

The whole of the State of Kerala has been seriously affected by these floods and The Little Way Association is in contact with other missionary Societies, too, who are also helping the needy in affected areas. Your donation, large or small, will be sent direct, without deduction.

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