

The Irish Catholic

BREDA O'BRIEN

You can't wish your way into virtue

Page 8



MAYNOOTH

The Future of Christian Thinking
Pages 12-13



MARY KENNY

Bishops: be realistic, not defeatist

Page 5



Thursday, May 5, 2022

€2.50 (Stg £2.20)

The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

@IrishCathNews

www.irishcatholic.com

'We need your idealism' – new bishop appeals to young Catholics on synod

Jason Osborne

The Church in Ireland will continue to shrink, the new Bishop of Galway has predicted, but with the help of young people engaging with the synodal process can be renewed afresh.

Bishop Michael Duignan was speaking as he took on the leadership of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora in addition to remaining as Bishop of Clonfert.

"It is clear that in the future, we will be a smaller faith community, but with the help of God we will be a more faith-filled, vibrant, welcoming, grounded community," 51-year-old Bishop Duignan said of the synodal process.

He also said that Church and State in the Republic had to find a new, more mature relationship. Bishop Duignan said that the Church in the future has to be a "faith community that builds bridges not barriers and that reaches out in compassion to aid those who find themselves in need. A faith community that is less afraid of those who see life differently from us," he said.

On the relationship between Church and State, he insisted that the future has to see "a faith community that finds its appropriate place within Irish society and an Irish society that finds a fair place for people of faith."

» Continued on Page 2

A post-Communion cuddle...



Cousins Laura Breen and Jack O Rahilly with their favourite hens after receiving first holy Communion Saturday April 30 in St Joseph's Church, Rathmore, Co. Kerry. Photo: Seamus Healy

DAVID QUINN

Marriage rates falling in Ireland with no debate **PAGE 14**



VOCATIONS SUPPLEMENT

Is this the path you are meant to follow?
PAGES 15-25



FR SILVESTER O'FLYNN

Your vocation to be missionary
PAGE 35



DCU
DCU School of Theology,
Philosophy, and Music
Enduring Questions.
Global Issues. Big Ideas.

Study Theology at Dublin City University
(All Hallows Campus, Drumcondra)

MA in Theology and World Religions
Flexible full-time and part-time options with evening lectures

BA in Theology and Religious Studies
Part-time, flexible programme with evening lectures designed for mature students (23+)

Key topics include:

- Catholic Theology and Church History
- Sacred Texts in Judaism, Christianity, and Other Traditions
- Faith and Justice
- Pastoral Ministry and Community Development
- Interreligious dialogue between Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism
- Politics and Religion in the 21st century

Undergraduate enquiries:

E: john.murray@dcu.ie
P. 086-078-3438
W: www.dcu.ie/dc300

Postgraduate enquiries:

E: joseph.rivera@dcu.ie
P. 085-825-1047
W: www.dcu.ie/dc693

Inside this week

TV and Radio

Another new player enters the TV news market

Page 23



Legion of Mary

Learning to trust God with Mary

Page 10



'Threshold moment'

Bishop Duignan installed Bishop of Galway Page 11



Managing Editor: Michael Kelly, editor@irishcatholic.ie

Deputy Editor: Chai Brady, chai@irishcatholic.ie

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

Multimedia Journalists: Ruadhán Jones, ruadhan@irishcatholic.ie

Jason Osborne, jason@irishcatholic.ie

Newsroom: news@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874026

Books Editor: Peter Costello, books@irishcatholic.ie

Advertising: advertising@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874094

Accounts: accounts@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874020

Magnificat: magnificat@irishcatholic.ie

Shop: shop@irishcatholic.ie

Annual Subscription Rates: Ireland €165. Airmail €250. Six months €85.

ISSN 1393 - 6832 - Published by The Irish Catholic, Unit 3b, Bracken Business Park, Bracken Road, Sandyford, Dublin 18, D18 K277.

Printed by Webprint, Cork.

Place an Advert

Phone 01 687 4094 or advertising@irishcatholic.ie



Oberammergau Passion Play 2022



Travelling 20 - 24 June, 07 - 11 July 2022 and 01 - 05 August 2022 from €1479pps

Visit the village of Oberammergau with an Irish Tour Manager to experience the world's most famous Passion Play which has taken place every ten years with just a few exceptions since 1634. In 2022 it will be performed for the 42nd time! Enjoy guided tours of Munich, Innsbruck, Salzburg & Stams Abbey along with a fascinating Sound of Music Tour.

**01 843 4734 info@gtitravel.ie
www.gitravel.ie/oberammergau**

GTI Travel is fully licensed & bonded in accordance with the Commission of Aviation Regulation (TA0533).

The lesson for Ireland from US pro-lifers

If a leaked document from the US Supreme Court this week can be taken at face value, the landmark 1973 ruling that made abortion legal in all 50 states will soon be overturned.

A draft document obtained by the news website *Politico* suggests the top US court is in favour of overturning *Roe v Wade*. If the Supreme Court strikes down the ruling, then abortion could be immediately banned in almost half of US states.

Its justices are expected to issue a ruling in late June or early July.

The leaked document - labelled '1st Draft' - appears to reflect the majority opinion of the court, and *Politico* reported that it was written by Justice Samuel Alito and circulated within the court in February.

But it is unclear if it represents a final opinion, as justices have previously changed their views during the drafting process.

“Its justices are expected to issue a ruling in late June or early July”

There are also serious questions about whether the leak is designed to cause mischief and pressure judges to change their minds on this extremely politically-charged issue. US President Joe Biden has even threatened in the past to increase the membership of the court to appoint more pro-abortion justices because he is concerned that the court currently has a pro-life majority.

It is a measure of how successful the pro-life

community has been in the US that it has managed to keep the issue of abortion central in the political stage. Pro-life groups with sympathetic legislators have worked tirelessly all around the US to ensure that abortion does not become the norm. They have lobbied and worked to make access to abortion more restrictive wherever this has been possible. There have been legislative moves to ensure that women who feel pressured into abortion can have another realistic option and receive the support that they need to keep their child.

Research

Time and again research has showed that where women

have the support they need, most will not choose abortion for their child.

“It is unclear if it represents a final opinion, as justices have previously changed their views during the drafting process”

There is a lesson in the US for pro-lifers around the world - particularly in Ireland - that even when you are down, you are not out. Too often pro-life activists in jurisdictions where abortion is legalised give up and just accept it as one more fact of life.

“There is a lesson in the US for pro-lifers around the world - particularly in Ireland - that even when you are down, you are not out”

‘We need your idealism’ – new bishop appeals to young Catholics on synod

» **Continued from Page 1**

“A faith community, that is filled with the sound of young voices and that is inspired by their idealism and urged on by their energy”.

The Church, he said, must be “a faith community, where people, priests and bishop walk side by side in a truly synodal manner as companions on the great adventure that is the Christian way of life”.

Underlining the need for reform, Bishop Duignan admitted “the more and more I see, the more and more I am convinced that much of our infrastructure, our systems, our pastoral practices that were beneficial in the past, now hinder rather than help the life of faith.”

“Inevitably, there will be a sense of genuine mourning in letting go but

these Easter days tell us that out of such death comes new hope and new life. Perhaps the Lord is asking us to throw out our nets in a different direction. In the direction of a new and profound re-evangelisation of ourselves,” he said.

Bishop Duignan's new role combining two dioceses is the first phase of a Vatican reform of the Church in Ireland that will see fewer bishops.



Editor's Comment
Michael Kelly



Lights burn inside US Supreme Court offices in Washington Monday, after the leak of a draft majority opinion written by Justice Samuel Alito preparing for a majority of the court to overturn the landmark *Roe v Wade* abortion rights decision later this year. Photo: CNS

The lesson from the US - whether the Supreme Court strikes down *Roe v Wade* or not - is that pro-life activists can never take abortion as an established fact. In Ireland we need to learn from those on the pro-choice side who were defeated in the 1983 referendum. They worked relentlessly to keep their views out in the media and influence politicians. They were, sadly, so successful that the mood of the nation shifted before many of us on the pro-life side of the argument even noticed.

Let's not be naïve: abortion is here to stay in Ireland for the short- to medium-term. But nothing is established forever. Tireless and painstaking work pays off and hearts and minds can be changed.

❗ To join Friends of The Irish Catholic and support Catholic journalism, please phone the office on 01 6874094 for more information or to make a contribution.

New nuns: Increased vocations for Ireland's contemplative cloisters

Chai Brady

There has been an increase in the number of women expressing an interest in becoming nuns and joining contemplative orders, according to the director of Vocations Ireland.

Despite a downward trend in vocations to religious life in Ireland over the past few decades, Margaret Cartwright told *The Irish Catholic* recently in Ireland "there is an increase in vocations".

"There has been a number of first professions and young women in particular entering the novitiate. It's interesting, there's a particular growth in among the contemplative orders and I think that's coming out probably from the fact that people are realising there's more to life than just making money."

She admits that there has only been a "small increase" but what is important is "that

call is still very much alive and at the end of the day it's not us that calls, it's God that calls so we have to be aware of that and encourage young people, and people, to look at where their path in life is."

Ms Cartwright said that what young people are looking for today is "prayer, a deeper faith experience and a sense of community".

However, the interest in vocations hasn't just been for contemplative nuns but several orders are seeing a heightened interest, she adds, saying: "It's interesting, I suppose when you look through history it's been swings and roundabouts all the time, some orders have grown, some haven't, and then the next couple of years it might be the other way around."

There are currently nine men who have expressed interest in the Capuchin Franciscans who are being

supported on their discernment journey.

Speaking to this paper Fr Martin Bennett OFM Cap. said that the majority of those interested were attracted to the order either because of saints connected to the order – Padre Pio being the main attraction – or their charitable works such as the Capuchin Day Centre for homeless people.

"Ultimately, it doesn't matter who they are, what age they are or where they're coming from, they're all people who feel some sort of a need inside themselves to live a life, they feel, is more authentic to who they are as human beings," Fr Bennett says.

He added: "I know from my own experience, if you don't express it you're going to repress it and you're going to be unhappy inside yourself. Even if nothing comes of it, I think it deserved to be looked at and the person deserves to be listened to."

Arthur Cox teams up with L'Arche for charitable outreach



Colm McElroy of Arthur Cox pictured with Brian Burns, Day Opportunities Leader L'Arche Belfast, and members of L'Arche Belfast's community launching the new charity partnership between the leading law firm and community-based care and support service.

Ruadhán Jones

Law firm Arthur Cox has announced it will team up with Catholic charity L'Arche Belfast, which will see employees engaging in volunteering and fundraising initiatives.

Brian Burns, L'Arche Belfast opportunities leader, said the charity is "so pleased" and looking forward to the partnership.

"We are so pleased that Arthur Cox has chosen us as their charity partner in Northern Ireland," Mr Burns said, adding that "we hope that through our partnership with Arthur Cox we can continue to foster an atmosphere of welcome, friendship and belonging".

Finance Partner and Chair of Arthur Cox's corporate social responsibility committee

Colm McElroy said they were "inspired" by L'Arche and keen to play their part.

"When selecting our new charity partner, we searched for an organisation that we could work with to make a real difference, and we believe that we have found that in L'Arche," Mr McElroy said.

"We were inspired by L'Arche's genuine commitment to improving the lives of others regardless of age, creed, capacity or social and ethnic background, and we are keen to play our part in assisting the charity in any way we can."

L'Arche creates opportunities for people who have learning disabilities to take up their place in their local communities, realise their potential, and make an active contribution to society.



MARIAN PILGRIMAGES

RENEW OUR SPIRIT OF LOVE, FORGIVENESS AND PEACE

GROUP PILGRIMAGE SPECIALISTS

LOURDES 2022

3 NIGHTS

from €569pps

4 NIGHTS

from €649pps

EXCLUSIVE

4 STAR HOTELS

HOTEL ROISSY - GRAND HÔTEL MODERNE - HÔTEL PADOUE

All within 5mins walk of the sanctuary

WE INCLUDE

Direct Flights to Lourdes - Coach transfers in Lourdes - 4 * Hotel
Spiritual Directors - Services of Marian Pilgrimages Rep. on the Ground - Walking
Tour of Lourdes - Travel Insurance - All Airport and local Taxes

FLYING DIRECT TO MOSTAR-MEDJUGORJE

DEPARTURES FROM CORK, DUBLIN, KNOCK AND SHANNON

7 NIGHTS

from €695pps

Arrive in Medjugorje in Half the Time

With the great success of our charter flights into Mostar throughout 2021, over 1000 pilgrims were lucky to have had their travel time cut by nearly a half.

Our first flight departs on the 18th May 2022 to Mostar & continues every week until the end of October 2022

WE INCLUDE

Direct Flight to Mostar - Coach transfers - 7 nights accommodation
Services of Marian Pilgrimages Medjugorje Team - Spiritual Programme
Travel Insurance - All Airport and local Taxes

Contact us today for a free quote for your 2022 group Pilgrimage
over 30 years of Group Pilgrimage experience with trust and integrity in everything we do

Deposits of only €100 per person are required to book with balances due 8 weeks before departure.
All major credit and debit cards are accepted for added protection.



WWW.MARIAN.IE

(01) 878 8159 | (028) 95680005

19 Eden Quay, Dublin 1

Fully Licensed and
Bonded by the Irish
Commission for Aviation
Regulation T0142



Taoiseach praises Presentation Sisters following major award

Ruadhán Jones

An Taoiseach Micheál Martin praised the Presentation Sisters for continuing the legacy of Nano Nagle, after Nano Nagle Place won the Council of Europe Museum prize 2022.

Mr Martin paid tribute to the whole team behind the Nano Nagle Place facility in Cork, singling out the Presentation Sisters “who continue to fulfil Nano Nagle’s mission through the various activities facilitated at Nano Nagle Place”.

On his visit to the facility, he added that it showcases “wonderful community spirit in action” through the staff and volunteers who help to run the centre, the members of the local community “who use the facilities and the museum team who have so successfully positioned Nano Nagle’s story in the history of Cork and brought it right up to date through the Sisters’ continuing work”.

The Nano Nagle Place museum is the first Irish museum to win the Council of Europe museum prize since 1980.

When presenting the award, the

Council of Europe Committee said that they “not only valued how Nano Nagle Place, in its museum, commemorates the Presentation Sisters’ educational and spiritual work, but also the way the Order continues its founding mission.”

Recognising the work of the Cork Migrant Centre and the Lantern Community Project, it said: “These initiatives bring Nano Nagle’s quest for equality and social justice to 21st Century Cork.”

Located on the grounds of the South Presentation Convent on Douglas Street in Cork’s south inner city, Nano Nagle Place is dedicated to the life and ethos of Nano Nagle, the founder of the Presentation Sisters.

Sr Julie Watson, Presentation Sisters Congregational Leader, said Nano Nagle Place had given a new meaning to the concept of the museum.

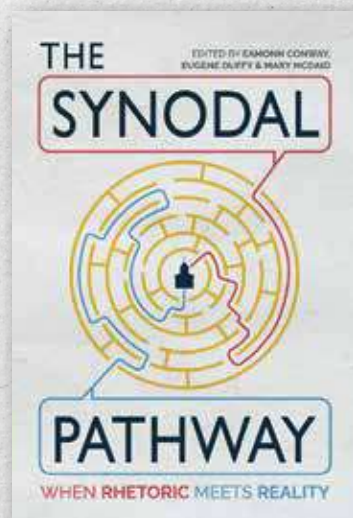
“It uses Nano Nagle, a powerful figure from the past, reinterpreting her call for the 21st century to create meaningful change in the present,” she said.

She was part of the delegation that travelled from Cork to accept the prestigious prize.



AVAILABLE TO ORDER NOW

HOW DOES THE SYNODAL
PROCESS WORK?
WHERE DOES THE IRISH
CHURCH GO FROM HERE?



PRICE: €16.99 + €4.50P&P

All your questions about synods and synodality answered in this practical companion. With discussion questions at the end of each chapter, it's the perfect tool for guiding groups and individuals.

ORDER TODAY 01 6874096

PLC criticises ‘censorship zones’ bill on legislative programme

Staff reporter

The Pro-Life Campaign have criticised the inclusion of the *Safe Access to Termination of Pregnancy Services Bill* on the Government’s legislative programme.

The bill proposes “to ensure safe access” to premises at which abortions may take place, according to the programme released Tuesday April 26.

This would create areas around abortion facilities that would “effectively func-

tion as censorship zones”, said Eilis Mulroy of the PLC.

“Any such legislation would deny women the chance to encounter support before going ahead with an abortion,” Ms Mulroy told *The Irish Catholic*.

She added that such a move would be “fraught with constitutional difficulties”, saying it’s hard to understand why the bill is still on the legislative programme.

“It would be surprising to see any Government bill on the issue actually progress-

ing given the constitutional difficulties around it and the advice of the garda commissioner to the previous health minister that existing public order legislation means there’s no need for such a draconian piece of legislation,” Ms Mulroy said.

She criticised the current Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly for being “slow to interact” with pro-life groups.

“He seems to want to at every corner satisfy and placate the pro-abortion lobby. That’s really regrettable,” Ms Mulroy finished.

Former Dublin seminary to auction contents to make space for refugees

Chai Brady

The Archdiocese of Dublin will be auctioning hundreds of items from its former seminary in order to make space to house Ukrainian refugees.

Taking place on May 10, there will be more than 600 lots from Clonliffe College in Drumcondra auctioned. Viewing on site is currently taking place and will continue until Monday, May 9.

The sale is being hosted by Niall Mulen Antiques on behalf of the archdiocese. Afterwards, the former seminary will be used to accommodate more than 600 Ukrainian refugees fleeing the war following Russia’s invasion.

The sale will feature ecclesiastical, mid-century, modern items and more.

Niall Muldoon, who is hosting the auction, said contents of the college are a “window into a significant part of Irish culture in the 19th and 20th Century”, adding

it is “amazing” to see the variety of styles accumulated, according to *the Irish Times*.

The 611 lots range from Edwardian and Victorian antiques, all the way through to modern art and functional furniture.

There is a 19th century oak pulpit, an oak confessional box which has a high estimate of €5,000, a wide collection of pews, including antique pitch pine specimens, as well as over 70 pieces of art dating back 300 years.

Couple prefer jail to paying fine for travelling to Mass during lockdown

Jason Osborne

A Catholic couple stand by their decision to travel over 70km to attend Mass during lockdown, saying they would rather go to jail than pay a €300 fine.

Jim Ryan (64) and his wife

Ann (59) were summoned to court earlier this month for exceeding the 5km limit on Palm Sunday last year.

The couple were convicted of the offence by Judge Raymond Finnegan at Cavan District Court.

“I will go to jail before I pay it,” Mr Ryan told the *Sunday*

World this week, continuing, “I would rather go to jail, without a shadow of a doubt.

“I have no intention of paying them a fine for me going to Mass – for doing what I have done my whole life.”

Living in Roscommon, the couple attempted to travel to Mass in Mullahoran church,

where Fr PJ Hughes was also issued a €500 fine for refusing to turn away parishioners from attending Mass during the Covid lockdowns.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic*, Fr Hughes clarified that he hasn’t yet been summoned to court for refusing to pay the fine.

Bishops: be realistic, but not defeatist

There was a time when the laity didn't take it upon themselves to advise a bishop, and the distance was maintained between the See and the flock. But we are moving at a different tempo now, as the new Bishop of Galway, Michael Duignan, indicated at his installation last weekend. Synodical measures are encouraging the laity to have a more active role within the Church.



Mary Kenny

Dr Duignan issued a partly mournful lament at Galway Cathedral, when he said that "much of what the Catholic Church has built up in Ireland over the last two centuries is crumbling before our eyes." Many parishes are

"struggling" and we need to let go of the infrastructure, systems and pastoral practices that were beneficial in the past but now may "hinder rather than help the life of the Faith."

As a member of the laity,

I would say that while input from all sources are helpful, yet any surviving organisation needs two elements: leadership, and optimism. "Structures" alone aren't what prompt re-growth in any community: there must be vision and courage, too. Meekness is praised in the New Testament, but I think that timidity is not.

Traditional religious practice has declined, but pilgrimages in various forms are as popular as ever"

Bishop Duignan is right to face up to the realities and the challenges of faith in our time. There has been a perceptible decline in faith practice: grandparents who were devout, daily Massgoers have begotten

grandchildren who are astonishingly ill-informed about Christianity, and parrot shallow clichés about Ireland having been a "dark theocracy", and politicians being under the thumb of the Church, neither which was true.

The Church in Ireland is not alone in these changes: secularism has risen all over Europe, and even in the United States, where religious practice has traditionally been strong.

Modern times

Yet one of the most interesting statistics of modern times is that while church-going has decreased, cathedral-visiting has greatly increased everywhere. Traditional religious practice has declined, but pilgrimages in various forms are as popular as ever. There is a hunger and a thirst for the sacred and the development of a spiritual path in a world that is so often ugly, utilitarian; and most evidently lacking in the beauty that

the Church once provided, through music, art, the graceful ritual of the May processions, the aspirations towards what was holy and meaningful.

"Courage and affirmative attitudes, vision and creativity are needed, especially in low times"

Dr Duignan is seeking to be truthful and realistic: but there's a difference between facing facts and sounding defeatist. Courage and affirmative attitudes, vision and creativity are needed, especially in low times. Bishop Duignan avers there can be a "re-growth" and a "re-birth": yes, there can, with a positive approach and an imaginative exploration of the evident potential already in the soil.

It's 60 years since the film star Marilyn Monroe died, either from suicide or a medication overdose (the inquest was inconclusive) and a new documentary on Netflix, *Mystery of Marilyn Monroe: The Unheard Tapes* explores her troubled life.

Anthony Summers, who interviewed many people who knew the star, brings out just how exploited she was by Hollywood, and a movie industry which horribly used young women aspiring to be in films. But Summers also claims that the Kennedy brothers, President JFK, and Bobby, his Attorney-General, who were dazzled by her allure, also let MM down when she felt alone and abandoned.

The novelist Joyce Carol Oates, who wrote a biographical novel about Monroe, *Blonde*, explored more deeply the actress's awful childhood, never



Tony Curtis, Marilyn Monroe and Jack Lemmon are seen in a movie poster for the 1959 classic film *Some Like It Hot*. Photo: CNS

having known her father, and being sent to nine different foster-homes by her mentally disturbed mother. If Marilyn had been adopted by a loving intact family, Joyce Carol Oakes writes, her personality might not have

been so badly damaged.

Hollywood taught Marilyn that her sex-appeal was the only currency available to her, and that shattered any sense of inner worth and self-esteem she might otherwise have developed.

Proud paterfamilias



Mike Ireland and his seven sons.

Big families are unusual these days, but an English rugby enthusiast who rejoices in the name of Mike Ireland has become a celebrity paterfamilias after he was photographed heading a team, Heaton Moor: the entire set of forwards being his own seven sons.

Mr Ireland, an engineer from Reddish, near Stockport in Cheshire, also has eight daughters with his wife Donna. He believes that "the core values of rugby – discipline, respect, teamwork, enjoyment – are a real benefit in

bringing up boys to try to be good citizens and all-round people." Such sentiments were long upheld by the rugby-enthused Holy Ghost fathers at Blackrock College in Dublin.

It's not known if Mr Ireland has any connections with Ireland itself but on social media, Aer Lingus has taken the opportunity to link his surname with an advertisement inviting his followers to visit his namesake's country.

ALL IRELAND

Rosary Rally

SAT, JUNE 4TH
FROM 1.30 PM
KNOCK

Talk, Stations of the Cross,
Rosary and Holy Mass

Main Celebrant: Archbishop Jude
Thaddeus Okolo, Papal Nuncio to Ireland
Homilist: Bishop Michael Duignan

Rosary Talk: Fr Marius O'Reilly

In association with
Father Peyton Centre | Ireland

If you can organise a bus please
call Fiona on 086 876 0058

Bishops' NI election appeal banned by Belfast Telegraph

Jason Osborne

The Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland's NI election appeal, 'Make Your Voices Heard' was refused publication by the *Belfast Telegraph*, having initially agreed to publish it.

The *Belfast Telegraph* took issue with passages in the appeal pertaining to pro-life values and unborn life.

Taking to Twitter, Archbishop of Armagh Eamon Martin said he was "disturbed by @BelTel's refusal unless with this editorial interference and

censorship," he said, with a picture of the appeal with the highlighted passages attached.

"Protect #Unborn human life & #ReligiousFreedom," he tweeted.

The *Belfast Telegraph* responded by saying that it "stood over" its decision to request changes to the pre-election paid advertisement from the Church before agreeing to publish it.

"This newspaper reiterated that there was absolutely no attempt to alter the church's core anti-abortion message, a fact underlined by the publication of editorial on the same state-

ment last week," a post on the *Belfast Telegraph* website read.

"All advertising containing uncontested opinion and views, especially ahead of an election, is subject to review before publishing. We are subject to regulation by the Advertising Standards Authority," a statement issued by the *Belfast Telegraph* read.

The *Irish News* recently allowed the same submission to be printed in its paper.

The bishops' statement encouraged voters to speak up "clearly and unequivocally for the rights and

urgent needs of the most vulnerable in our society.

"This includes the rights and dignity of unborn children which are being increasingly relegated - culturally, politically and legally - to the realm of the worthless and sub-human," it said.

"In an inexplicable medical, scientific and cultural contradiction, so many of our local politicians seem willing to disregard the rights of our children in the earliest stages of their development before birth, while at the same time properly and stridently

defending the rights of animals, plants, trees and rivers," the bishops said in one of the passages that the *Belfast Telegraph* advised them to remove in order to be published.

"In a similarly bizarre twist of logic, many who stridently proclaim their commitment to equality for all are, at the same time, quite content to support legislation that would discriminate against children in the womb, even directly targeting those with disabilities, and denying them the very right to be born, the statement read."

Knights of Columbanus' mission 'more important than ever'

Ruadhán Jones

The Knights of Columbanus' mission is "more important than ever" as human rights issues continue to dominate in the North, a spokesperson said.

The Knights were set up in a time

when "human rights issues were big in Northern Ireland, and we're facing a different set of problems today", said their communications officer Colm O'Farrell, pointing to issues like abortion, family and marriage.

He added that the order is also working to counteract the issue of

men losing their faith, which he said often means "the family quickly follows".

"That's a big issue we have to try and counteract," he said.

Mr O'Farrell was speaking ahead of the 100th anniversary of their founder's death. Canon James K.

O'Neill founded the order in 1915 to "develop practical Catholicity among its members, to promote and foster the cause of the Catholic faith and Catholic education".

The Knights have organised events May 6 and 7 to mark the centenary, with guest speakers

including All-Ireland winning GAA manager Mickey Harte, Archbishop of Armagh Eamon Martin and Dr Eamon Phoenix.

"It will be an interesting weekend, with Mass, a golf tournament, the talks - so it will be a bit of fun as well," Mr O'Farrell said.

IC Editor presents new Holy Land book to Pope Francis at Vatican



Staff reporter

"Thank you from my heart for this beautiful book," was the message from Pope Francis to Editor of *The Irish Catholic* Michael Kelly during a recent audience at the Vatican.

Mr Kelly was presenting the Pontiff with a copy of his new book *An Irish Pilgrimage Guide to the Holy Land*. The fruit of years of travelling to the Holy Land and leading groups with *The Irish Catholic* and Marian Pilgrimages, the book was recently published by

Columba Books.

Mr Kelly described the experience with Pope Francis as "humbling".

"The Pope sees so many people but he had the time and warmth to stop and take the book and have a good flick through it. He seemed genuinely pleased with it and I know that he has a special place in his heart for the Holy Land," Mr Kelly said of the meeting.

The book is designed to be both a companion for those travelling to the Holy Land and a virtual experience for anyone who cannot travel to the Holy

Land. "I really wanted to help people see the Biblical sites come alive in a fresh way that would increase their faith as well as their knowledge of these sites that are so important," Mr Kelly said. The book also looks at the peoples, cultures and foods of the land sacred to Jews, Muslims and Christians.

i *An Irish Pilgrimage Guide to the Holy Land* by Michael Kelly is available from Columba Books www.columbabooks.com and all good bookstores.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ireland's Papal Nuncio to be sent to Czechia

The Pope's representative in Ireland will be ending his six-year mission to Ireland, the Vatican has announced.

Papal Nuncio Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo's new diplomatic posting will be Czechia.

Archbishop Okolo has held the papal nuncio role in Ireland since 2017.

Born in Kano, Nigeria, he served as an apostolic nuncio to the Central African Republic and Chad in 2008, and the Dominican Republic in 2013.

Politicians pressured for abortion until viability

The National Women's Council (NWC) and the Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA) called for making abortion still more easily available when received by the Oireachtas Health Committee April 27.

Politicians heard calls that included extending the current 12-week limit to allow

for abortions on request "up to viability".

NWC's director Orla O'Connor said in her opening statement that the current law "acts as a gatekeeper creating a series of obstacles that prevent access to abortion, disproportionately affecting the most marginalised".

Sisters of Charity exit Irish healthcare after 200 years

The Sisters of Charity have announced their departure from healthcare after more than two centuries, in a move that will allow for the building of the new National Maternity Hospital (NMH) at the Elm Park site in Dublin.

The development will allow abortions to be carried out in the new facility after it's built on the St Vincent's Hospital site.

"We will have no role in the future of the new independent charity, the St Vincent's Healthcare Group, St Vincent's Holding CLG or the new National Maternity Hospital," said Sr Patricia Lenihan, superior general of Religious Sisters of Charity.

"Our sisters will continue to work with local communities in Ireland and abroad."



A Sacred Space

Every day, people make their way to Knock Shrine, to seek healing in their lives, to take a step back from busy life and take comfort in the peace and calm of the Apparition Chapel.

Knock Shrine is open each day and ready to welcome you. On the 1st May, we began our official pilgrimage season, with a full reopening of services.

Whatever your reason for coming to Knock, we welcome you with open arms and hope that your time here may end with an answered prayer, that sought-after sense of healing, and that you leave Knock feeling unburdened.

Mass with Anointing of the Sick takes place daily at Knock Shrine as well as Confessions and Exposition in the newly refurbished Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

Why not take time to visit the award-winning Knock Museum (free admission, open daily), or visit the Bookshop where you can find a wide range of faith resources and the latest books.

If you are unable to come to Knock in-person, you can still join with us for Mass each day at the following link:

www.knockshrine.ie/watch-live

See our daily Mass times, find out about upcoming events and all of our available support services on our website www.knockshrine.ie



STAY CONNECTED
/knockshrine



+353 (0)94 9388100 info@knockshrine.ie www.knockshrine.ie

Remember, that when you enter the gates at Knock Shrine... there are no strangers, only fellow pilgrims.

Breda O'Brien

The View



You cannot wish your way into virtue

Long ago in a different century, I was a member of a college drama society. One of the plays we put on was a Thornton Wilder piece called *Our Town*. In the course of that play (spoiler alert) there is an unashamed tear-jerker moment. Emily, a 26-year-old who has died, is allowed to re-visit the day of her 12th birthday.

She is heartbroken, realising all that has happened since, and how much they took each other for granted, even on this happy day. Before Emily returns to the play's version of heaven, she exclaims, "Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realise you."

"Too wonderful" is not how most of us regard our daily life. We are struggling our way out of a pandemic and a giant, mushroom-shaped cloud of anxiety now looms over us, courtesy of Mr Putin.

Nonetheless, I remember being astonished by a long-time friend after the death of her husband. She still managed to find joy in small things. She could appreciate a perfect cup of tea, a flower in the garden, all while simultaneously experiencing grief that meant that she sobbed her way to work for weeks on end.

“My adult children have realised that much earlier in life than I did”

She would then wipe her eyes and get through the day. I don't know how she did either thing – the appreciation of small blessings or the performance worthy of an actor in the Abbey each workday. Except I am not sure it was a performance. She was just being present to the demands of the present moment and giving them her full attention. Her response flowed from that.

I just do not have that ability to be really present in that way. I can muster it when a friend needs it, most of the time, but it is not my norm.

Cries out

It is something for which our world cries out. I appreciate it immensely myself when someone is present to me.



I often think that the only wisdom I have accumulated after decades is the realisation that you cannot wish your way into virtue. My adult children have realised that much earlier in life than I did, so the somewhat ugly phrase 'virtue-ethicising your way into something' is common in our house.

Habitual

It stands for practising something until it becomes habitual. You 'virtue-ethicise' your way into patience by practising being patient in circumstances that make you itch with impatience. You practise presence in circumstances in which you habitually zone out.

Presence is also seen as central to corporate success. Amazon is replete with titles like this one: *Presence & Profitability: Understanding the Value of Authentic Communications In the Age of Hyper-Connectivity* by Philip Kelley. Goodness knows, even Dale Carnegie in 1936 was telling people that in order to influence others, you had to focus on them and have a magnetic presence.

“She is heartbroken, realising all that has happened since”

Sinclair Lewis, the author and playwright, wrote a

scathing criticism of Carnegie's book a year later, where he said the point of the book was to "smile and bob and pretend to be interested in other people's hobbies precisely so that you may screw things out of them".

Cult leader

Even worse, the biographers of Charles Manson, the hippie cult leader and mass murderer, found out that he took a Dale Carnegie course while in prison for a minor offence. Manson used the techniques to build a vulnerable group of young women around him.

Where the light is brightest, the shadows are deepest. The fact that some will use being present to people in order to manipu-

late them, or to turn it into yet another consumerist way to make a profit, does not negate the vital importance that our presence makes to others.

For Catholics, the Real Presence is central to our faith – that Jesus is still really and truly present under the appearance of bread and wine.

Sunday

Yet just this Sunday, I found myself yet again back in my seat after communion, realising that while Jesus is present to me, I had received communion with my heart and mind metaphorically thousands of miles away.

Did God build a major design flaw into human

beings? Are we just doomed to flitter and skitter, missing, like Emily Webb, the days in our life that are of the utmost significance? The fictional Emily was 12 in 1899, and Thornton Wilder published the play in 1938. If humans were unable to focus on the truly important, long before mobile phones and the internet, what hope have we?

“Where the light is brightest, the shadows are deepest”

I suppose the same hope that sustains us in everything. While 'virtue-ethicising' is a wonderful start, those of us with culture or personality-induced attention deficit also have access to grace. In my case, I think I will start by praying for the ability to be present to grace, to others, and to ask forgiveness in advance for all the times I know I will fail.

“I remember being astonished by a long-time friend after the death of her husband”

WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS
OF JESUS IN...

THE HOLY LAND

1 – 9

OCTOBER 2022

AND

6 – 14

OCTOBER 2022

Visit Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem and other sites in the Holy Land associated with Jesus.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

PRICE:
€1745
INCLUDING
TAXES AND TIPS



Fr Eamonn Conway
(1st trip)



Fr Emlyn McGinn
(2nd trip)

Eight-night pilgrimage in four-star hotels

- Luxury air-conditioned coach daily
- Breakfast and evening meal served each day
- Full religious programme organised by Marian Pilgrimages
- Services of Marian Pilgrimages representative and professional English-speaking guide throughout the pilgrimage
- Full-day guided tour of Jerusalem including visits to the Western Wall, Dome of the Rock, Church of St Anne, Via Dolorosa, Holy Sepulchre and Shrine of the Book
- Complete programme of sightseeing and visits to sites of interest in the Holy Land
- Boat trip on Sea of Galilee
- Return taxi transfers to Mount Tabor

To reserve your place:

Call Dublin (01) 878 8159 or Belfast (028) 95680005 or email info@marian.ie

Young Catholics learn to trust God with Mary at youth conference



Fr Luke Demasi of the Servants of the Home of the Mother delivers one of the talks at the youth conference, April 30. Photos: Gustavo Mendes



Young people listen to talks at the youth conference, which reflected on the theme 'Trusting God with Mary'.

Ruadhán Jones

Young Catholics from all over the country attended a youth conference that taught them to “trust God with Mary”. The day-long conference, organised by the Legion of Mary and held in St Patrick’s College, Dublin City University, Drumcondra, offered talks, adoration and conversation to Catholics from Belfast, Donegal, Dublin, Cork and more.

Speaking after the conference, one of the organisers Fr Declan Lohan said that he was impressed by the “energy of those who attended”. “There was a great atmosphere, everyone really invested themselves in it, whether it be the talks, adoration, Mass or just chatting to each other,” Fr Lohan said. “The speakers were excellent, explaining how if we trust in Mary, she will lead us to God. There’s a great sense of devotion to Our Lady among young Catholics,” he finished.



Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal from Drogheda attend the conference. The sisters led adoration in All Hallows chapel.



Mary of Net Ministries, who helped at the conference, listens on to the talks.



Augustine and Áine MC the youth conference, April 30.



Kiléy Jones, Ellen O’Shea, Sarah Deegan and Ruadhán Jones pictured at the conference, April 30.



Young people at the youth conference in St Patrick’s College, Dublin City University, Drumcondra.



Fr Declan Lohan, one of the organisers of the Legion of Mary’s youth conference, meets and greets attendees.

Church at 'threshold moment', says Bishop Duignan at installation



A large crowd gathered in the Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven and St Nicholas, Galway, May 1, to greet the new bishop of Galway Dr Michael Duignan.

Ruadhán Jones

The dioceses of Clonfert and Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora are at a "threshold moment", Bishop Michael Duignan said as he was installed as bishop of Galway, May 1.

Bishop Duignan, who will serve as bishop to both dioceses following the retirement of Bishop-emeritus Brendan Kelly, said that this is "a historic development" for the Church on the island of Ireland.

"I could not but think that this is in a very real sense a 'threshold moment' – a graced moment of transition from the past to the present to the future," Bishop Duignan said during his installation in the Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven and St Nicholas, Galway.

Bishop Duignan warned that "much of our infrastructure, our systems, our pastoral practices that were beneficial in the past, now hinder rather than help the life of faith."

"Perhaps the Lord is asking us to throw out our nets in a different direction," the bishop of Clonfert and Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora continued. "In the direction of a new and profound re-evangelisation of ourselves."

Bishop Duignan was the principal celebrant at his installation Mass, while Papal Nuncio to Ireland Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo, and Bishop-emeritus Brendan Kelly, were the principal concelebrants.



Bishop Michael Duignan meets a Ukrainian family during his installation as bishop of Galway, May 1.



Bishop Duignan speaks during his installation as bishop of Galway, May 1.



Bishop Duignan greets a family at the Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven and St Nicholas, Galway.



Bishop-emeritus of Galway Brendan Kelly speaks during Bishop Duignan's installation, May 1.

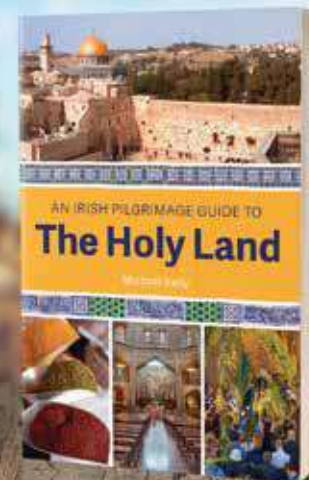


Bishop Duignan about to kiss a crucifix before entering the Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven and St Nicholas, Galway, May 1. Photos: Sean Feeney

AN INDISPENSABLE GUIDE TO The Holy Land

FROM THE EDITOR OF THE IRISH CATHOLIC

Price:
€16.99
+ €4.50
P&P



Michael Kelly has led more than a dozen pilgrimages to the Holy Land and in this unique guidebook, he takes readers to the sites associated with the earthly life of Christ from Bethlehem to Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee to Jerusalem. Whether you are planning a trip to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, or simply want to deepen your understanding of faith this guide is indispensable.

ORDER YOUR COPY TODAY

☎ 01 6874096 | 🌐 www.columbabooks.com

✉ Unit 3B, Block 3, Bracken Business Park, Bracken Road, Sandyford, D18 K277

Depth of Christian thought on display at timely Maynooth conference



A packed Aula Maxima on the campus of St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

Ruadhán Jones

Maynooth pulled out the stops last week for a timely and engaging conference on the future of Christian thinking.

The conference brought together some of the best-known philosophers of religion in the English-speaking world for three intensive days of talks and conversation.

Beginning Thursday April 28 and finishing Saturday April 30, the talks included the inaugural lecture in Christian Philosophy in St Patrick's College, delivered by Cork-born philosopher William Desmond.

Prof. Desmond's talk, titled "Christening Philosophy", summed up well the significance and timeliness of the conference, both for Ireland and the world.

He began by pointing out how "dark" and confused discussions on Christianity have become in Ireland since the collapse of the Church's influence. However, he saw the conference as a hopeful sign, opening space for a serious discussion of the merits of a closer relationship between philosophy and Christian thought.

"This conference is a hopeful testament of Maynooth as a meeting place, of possible companionship" between Christian and secular thought, Prof. Desmond said.

"I stress this as Ireland often lacks a middle space where the Christian religion can be explored in open way. In Irish commentary, I fear darkness has now descended on such discussions."

Many of the speakers emphasised the importance

of a renewed connection and relationship between theology and philosophy.

Chair of philosophy for NUI Maynooth Prof. Philipp Rosemann, for instance, showed how Christian liturgies and secular liturgies both point to the annihilation of our selves – but only Christianity offers of the possibility of regeneration and renewal.

Meanwhile, Prof. Judith Wolfe analysed the different ways in which Christian and secular society fit death into the overall narrative about life and its meaning.

Prof. Wolfe's deft analysis highlighted how the way we think about the future – the end times, the last things, union with Christ in Heaven – orders the way Christians live in the present, in particular our morality.

As our culture has become secularised, we now want to bring our future glory into the present, leading to confused and utopian thinking, which can be solved by returning to a Christian understanding of our future.

The genteel setting of St Patrick's College campus was ideally suited to these far-reaching talks, and also to the conversations that carried on over lunches and dinners.

Maynooth professors Philip Gonzales and Gaven Kerr, who were in charge of organising the event, as well as the college as a whole, can be rightly proud of the conference.

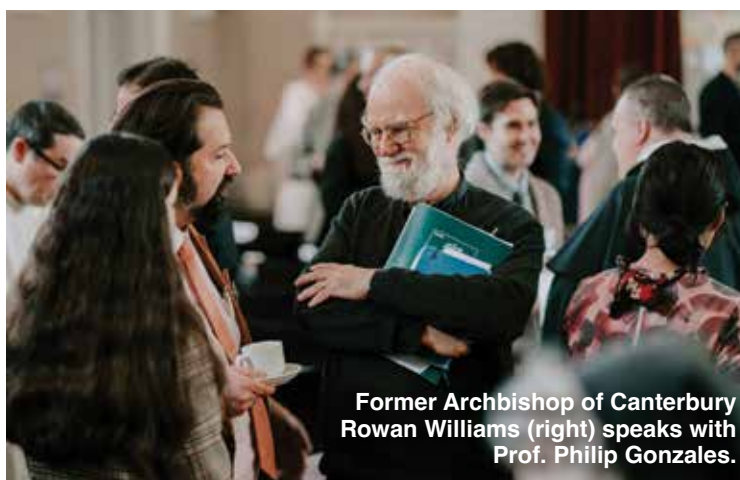
That this is just the first of these conferences bodes well for any such endeavour in the future, highlighting the impressive depth of Christian thinking that continues to this day, even if more quietly than in the past.



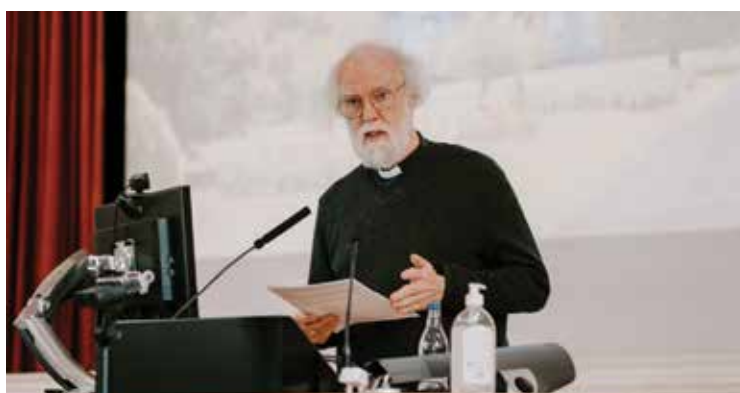
Maynooth chair of philosophy Prof. Philipp Rosemann speaks during the Conference on the Future of Christian thinking. Photos: Bro. Sean Blackwell OP.



Dr Caitlin Smith Gilson of the University of Holy Cross, New Orleans, speaks on the final day of the conference.



Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams (right) speaks with Prof. Philip Gonzales.



Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams speaks on the final day of the conference.





Guests and speakers got to spend time in the famous Pugin chapel on St Patrick's College campus.



Prof. Judith Wolfe speaks at the conference in Maynooth.



Prof. Gyula Klima of Fordham University responds to a question following his talk.



Dr David Bentley Hart delivers his talk during the conference.



Dr Therese-Anne Druart (left) interacts with one of the attendees at the Maynooth conference.



John Milbank asks a question following one of the talks.





The institution on which the family is based is in trouble and no-one cares, writes **David Quinn**

Marriage in Ireland is changing rapidly. Fewer marry at all. We marry later. We are more likely to break up, and same-sex couples as well as opposite sex couples can legally wed. There are far more civil ceremonies than there used to be and fewer religious ceremonies. A growing number of marriages are second-time ones.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) has just published its latest marriage data, and they confirmed all of the above.

The average age of a groom in Ireland is now 37.4, and that of a bride, 35.4. If you go back to the 1980s, men were generally in their late 20s getting married and women in their mid-twenties. We often say the cost of living has caused people to delay tying the knot, but that is not the whole story. In the 1980s, there was lots of unemployment, many were forced to emigrate and mortgage rates were very high, but people still got married younger. I'll come back to this.

Needless to say, the number of weddings plunged in 2020, thanks to lockdown restrictions. The figure went up by 80% last year, but was still 15% down compared with 2019, before Covid-19 arrived on the scene. We can expect the normal number of marriages this year, or maybe even an increase, because so many people had to delay the big day.

“Needless to say, the number of weddings plunged in 2020, thanks to lockdown restrictions”

Nonetheless, the overall trend shows that marriage rates in Ireland are declining. In 1980, 6.4% per thousand married each year. In 2019, this had fallen to 4.1, which is below the average for the EU. Countries lower than us again tend to be Catholic, historically-speaking, such as Spain, France, and (lowest of all), Italy. The marriage rate in Italy is a dismal 3.1.

Factors

Two factors are driving this. One is that people are delaying getting married until they are well into their 30s, but the bigger one is that many are not marrying at all. They might cohabit or else remain single all their lives.

Marriage rates in Ireland continue to fall with no debate



Looking at marriage ceremonies by form, we find that only 39% now take place in a Catholic church.

The next biggest category, accounting for 34.8% of all marriages, is civil weddings. Next are 'humanist' (that is, atheist) ceremonies, with 8.5% of the total followed by those conducted by the 'Spiritualist Union' with 8%.

Civil weddings

Many civil weddings take place in hotels. They are often not secular weddings as such because the vows will sometimes contain references to God. Hotels are increasingly popular for both the ceremony and the reception because the hotels are often in beautiful locations and guests don't have to travel between the venue for the ceremony and the reception. Hotels are also very good at marketing a 'whole package' to couples, whereas churches do no marketing at all by offering (say) beautiful music and a beautiful ceremony.

The Spiritualist Union, incidentally, offers couples a wedding with religious trappings, appealing to couples who are not entirely secular.

In 2020, there were almost 6,000 applications made for

divorce or judicial separation. Therefore, while the rate of marriage is going down, the rate of divorce and separation is going up.

Coming back now to the high age at which people marry, we need to ask what is driving this, because the consequences are extremely serious for society. As mentioned, it is not simply to do with the cost of living, because the high cost of living in the 1980s did not stop people tying the knot at a younger age, and in bigger numbers, back then.

“Looking at marriage ceremonies by form, we find that only 39% now take place in a Catholic church”

In addition, when you look at the birth rate per county, you find very little correlation between it and the cost of living. Therefore, the birth rate in Leitrim isn't so different from that in Dublin, despite housing being a lot cheaper in the former. The places where the birth rate tends to be higher than the average is in 'commuter belt' areas, like Co. Meath.

So, if the cost of living isn't having as big an impact on marriage (or birth) rates as we might imagine, then what is? I think the main factor is that young people today want to delay getting married and having children in any case. That is, even if the cost of living was not an issue, they still would prefer to wait until they are well into their 30s before marrying. They don't want to be 'tied down' before then. They want to be single. Therefore, they delay the responsibilities of marriage and family as long as possible, until their reproductive body clocks are ticking loudly as they advance into their 30s.

Fast-aging

This is very bad for society because it is resulting in a fast-aging population. If people delay having children until they are getting close to 40, then they can have only one or two at most, and maybe none, hence the big increase in demand for fertility services.

An ageing population means fewer workers for the labour force, and fewer people to pay taxes or fund the health and pension needs of growing numbers of retirees.

And yet, the age at which people marry, the declining fertility rate, the growing number of divorces is

scarcely a matter for debate in the country at all. The fertility rate is obviously not helped by the fact that almost 14,000 abortions took place in Ireland over the course of 2019 and 2020.

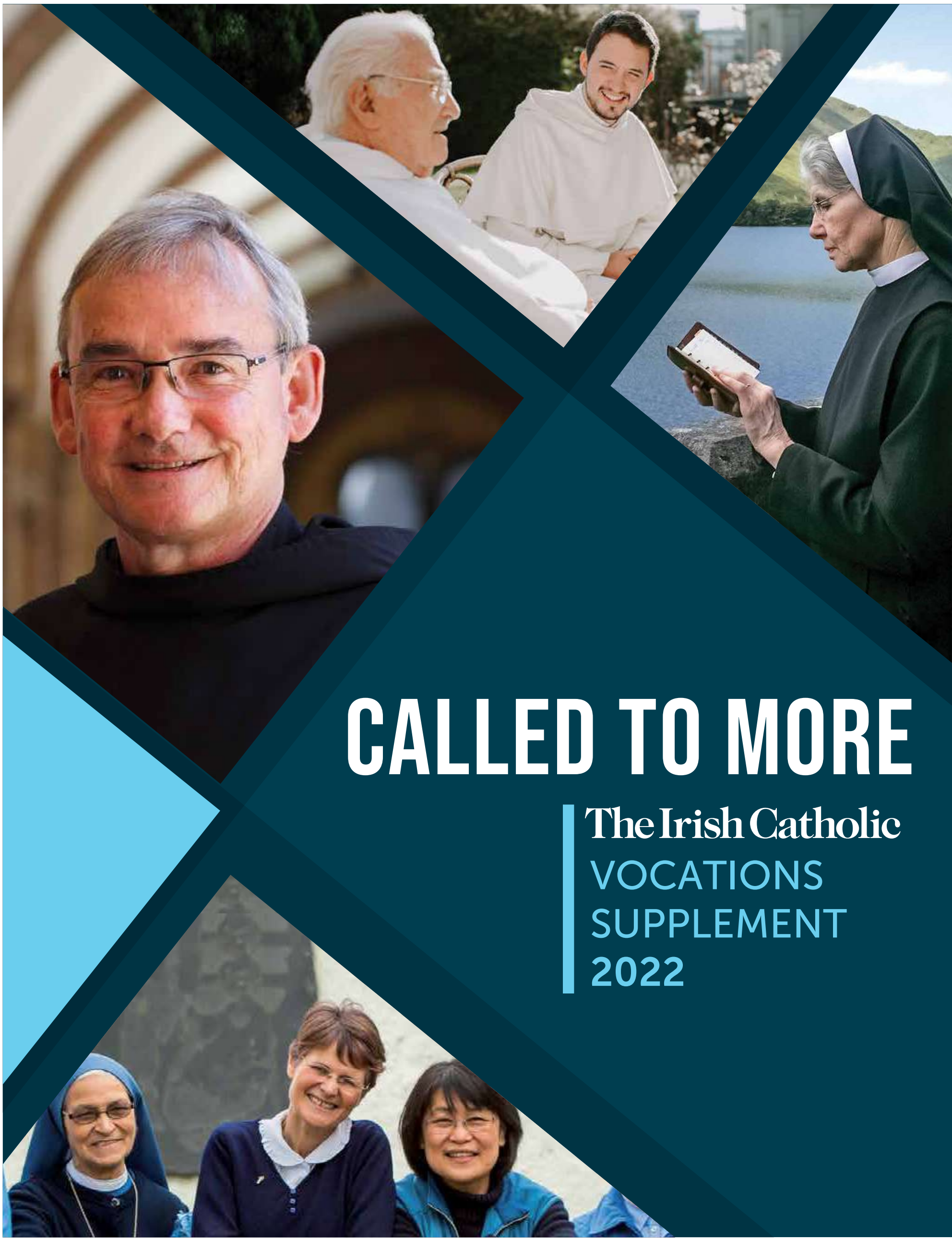
I think the absence of debate is because all these things are seen as purely 'private' choices and we don't want to be 'judgemental'. Therefore, we say nothing at all, despite the drastic social consequences. Not even the Churches have much to say, apart from occasional mentions of the cost of living.

“This is very bad for society because it is resulting in a fast-aging population”

In fact, liberals almost never see a low marriage rate, a low fertility rate, a high abortion rate or divorce rate as bad things in themselves no matter how much they go in the wrong direction. They see them as the result of 'freedom', rather than as the outcome of bad social norms they have helped create.

Indeed, as these social trends just described take hold and worsen, we pat ourselves on the back for being 'progressive' and 'modern'. We refuse to see how bad they are. There is something pathological about that. We need to debate what is taking place before it is too late.

“Fewer marry at all. We marry later. We are more likely to break up, and same-sex couples as well as opposite sex couples can legally wed”



CALLED TO MORE

The Irish Catholic
VOCATIONS
SUPPLEMENT
2022

Pope Francis' challenge: Is this



Ireland's hostile media landscape can make promoting religious vocations difficult, Chai Brady hears

The Church's long history across the world has been punctuated with tremendous growth and decline, despite these swings and roundabouts there has always been those who felt a calling to enter religious life – even though the numbers sometimes dwindle.

In response to Pope Francis, Vocations Ireland are focused on promoting a culture of vocation in a challenging societal landscape.

Margaret Cartwright, Director of Vocations Ireland, tells *The Irish Catholic* the Pope “clearly wants us to encourage young people, and people in general, to be able to respond to their own personal vocation”.

While the decline in vocations in Ireland has been rapid over the past number of decades, Vocations Ireland has noticed a modest increase, particularly among the contemplative female congregations.

“In Ireland there is an increase in vocations, we've had two ordinations this year, which means they've gone through the whole six-year process,” Ms Cartwright explains.

“There has been a number of first professions and young women in particular entering the novitiate. It's interesting, there's a particular growth among the contemplative orders and I think that's coming out probably from the fact that people are realising there's more to life than just making money.”

Increase

“It's only a small increase but that doesn't matter, numbers are not important, what's important is that call is still very much alive and at the end of the day it's not us that calls, it's God that calls so we have to be aware of that and encourage young people, and people to look at where their path in life is.”

She continues saying that what young people are looking for today is “prayer, a deeper faith experience and a sense of community”, all of which are very much alive in contemplative orders.

All the interest in vocations hasn't just been for contemplative nuns but several orders are seeing a heightened interest.

“It's interesting, I suppose when you look through history it's been



Recently ordained Redemptorist Fr Ryan Holovlasky pictured with Archbishop of Armagh Eamon Martin.

swings and roundabouts all the time, some orders have grown, some haven't, and then the next couple of years it might be the other way around,” Ms Cartwright adds.

There are currently nine men who have expressed interest in the Capuchin Franciscans in Dublin who are being supported on their discernment journey.

Fr Martin Bennett OFM Cap. said that the majority of those interested were attracted to the order either because of saints connected to the order – Padre Pio being the main attraction – or their charitable works such as the Capuchin Day Centre for homeless people.

“Ultimately, it doesn't matter who they are, what age they are or where they're coming from, they're all people who feel some sort of a need inside themselves to live a life, they feel, is more authentic to who they are as human beings,” Fr Bennett says.

“Our way of life is one based in community, we live together as friars, it's a particular way of living a vocation, it's not for everybody so that's why it's important when we invite these people along that they get a

sense of that, they get an experience of it.”

The nine men they are currently speaking to are all different ages, from different backgrounds and have varying life experience. The one thing they have in common is the “desire to dedicate their lives to serving God and the Church”.

“I suppose when you look through history it's been swings and roundabouts all the time”

The Capuchin Franciscans look for people who would work well living in community taking into account both the “joys and challenges” according to Fr Bennett, who added they would also need to be open to self-development “which is what community life is all about”.

The person would need a spiritual core, they would spend time in prayer, go to Mass and are interested in developing their spiritual side. In addition, Fr Bennett underlines the fact they



Sr Helen making her First Profession with the Redemptorines.

are not monks, their ministry is active which could see a person based in a parish, hospital, community, working with children and more.

However, Fr Bennett adds that no one is expected to be perfect and the formation process is there for a reason.

Those putting themselves forward may not have mentioned it to any of their loved ones with Fr Bennett saying: “Oftentimes people come to us as vocations contacts and it's secret, they haven't spoken to anybody, they haven't told anybody about this, they keep it to themselves and that's a lot of pressure.”

“If there was a more open conversation that could happen around that, maybe people would see it as a more viable option. I think that is what he is encouraging, I think that is what Pope Francis is encouraging, don't be afraid to talk about these things or encourage somebody to go for it if they want it. If it doesn't work it doesn't work.”

He adds: “I know from my own experience, if you don't express it you're going to repress it and you're going to be unhappy inside yourself. Even if nothing comes of it, I think it deserves to be looked at and the person deserves to be listened to.”

The Presentation Sisters are also actively promoting the congregation across Ireland and are hoping for vocations.

Sr Concepta O'Brien PBVM tells *The Irish Catholic* that there are and have been professions, with one sister soon to make her final profession. She says

the guiding age limit are women from 20-45 and they are looking for people who have an “emotional, psychological and spiritual balance in life”.

“We're sowing the seeds and we're looking at ourselves as Presentation Sisters, what are we to contribute to the world. At the moment, with the Ukrainian crisis, we're quite involved,” she says.

“Vocations Ireland have tried to approach the media to highlight some of the good news stories associated with religious orders”

For example, a convent which was the home of the Presentation Sisters for more than 150 years, in Fethard, Co. Tipperary is now accommodating 55 refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine.

“We were looking at the local community taking it over for a day-care centre and all of that kind of thing and in the meantime now, due to the Ukrainian crisis, the community have worked very hard with us to set up the place,” Sr Concepta explains.

Future

“We're looking at the way we are, we're using the word transformation and how we see ourselves in the future. We have a project with UCD, we're also sponsoring Christian leadership in MIC [Mary Immaculate College] and in DCU we've given some money to promote research around parish life. There's a lot of life going on. We've also been working closely with the Peter McVerry Trust as well.”

Asked why she believes a young woman who feels a calling to religious life should consider the Presentation Sisters, she says: “Nano was a woman who saw a need at the time,

“In Ireland there is an increase in vocations, we've had two ordinations this year, which means they've gone through the whole six-year process”

the path you are meant to follow?



Some of the Franciscan novices in Killarney, (left to right) Bros Aldin, Steven, Leopold and Hawkins.

which was education really for the marginalised, so our focus would be looking at those who are less well off, marginalised, migratory. There is a great opportunity to respond to the Ukrainian crisis at the minute, but there's also a lot more than Ukrainian people around.

Sr Concepta continues: "The most important thing is the basis on which we go out to work, which comes from our community life and living and praying together. Our faith and our relationships – they're normal relationships we're not perfect – are the basis on which we would swing forth and do whatever work that needs to be done. It's Gospel-based no matter what, but maybe in a certain direction as our foundress would have."

Promoting

Religious orders, while promoting vocations, continue to cater to the needy and those forgotten or ignored by society. A plethora of work is being done to alleviate suffering but much of this is not known by Irish society.

Ms Cartright says that Vocations Ireland have tried to approach the media to highlight some of the good news stories associated with religious orders.

She says: "I think Ireland itself has become quite secular so they [secular media] are not really interested in the religious side of things. I think definitely in places it's hostile, very much so. They hook on to the big stories and try to get the gritty bits out of it and it keeps getting repeated but they're not bringing in the new stories, the very positive things that are happening around the country.

"There are 40 congregations at the moment who have provided accommodation for Ukrainians coming into the country, whether that be a bungalow or an apartment that a congregation has had the use of or whether it is

a school that's closed down or a nursing home that's closed down, they've given over that to house Ukrainians and they have provided other materials too.

"I think the important thing is that there are still congregations who are very much alive, who are doing wonderful ministry both here in Ireland and abroad and are responding to the needs of the times, and that's what's important.

“No one is expected to be perfect and the formation process is there for a reason”

Vocation Ireland are currently doing research to ascertain in more certain terms the lay of the land regarding the numbers of people

making enquiries, those who have entered formation and who left and why and also the numbers of people who have stayed and why they stayed.

Regarding Ms Cartwright's hopes for the future of vocations in Ireland, she says: "My hopes are that anybody who is looking at their path in life, that they can really be the best they can possibly be and whatever path that is, they can do that to the best of their ability.

"We all need to look, starting out from our own vocation as baptised Christians, what are we doing with our life? Are we really living that to the full? Pope Francis will challenge young people and he will ask them, 'is this the path you're meant to follow?', and I think we have to have the courage to ask that question and it can be a hard question to ask people."



Srs Stacey and Maire Brid, two professed Irish Redemptoristines.



Augustinian Fr Stephen Shield in Drogheda.



Sr Beatrice junior professed and Laura, Postulant with the Glencairn Sisters.

Franciscans Friars - OFM

Living the Joy of the Gospel

We Franciscans are a *Fraternity in Mission*, inspired by the life of St. Francis to bring the *Gospel of Joy and Grace* to the world. We devote our lives to the search for God in a fraternal life of prayer, simplicity of life and service to others.

At the heart of Francis' Gospel vision is delight in the Lord and his overflowing goodness. We strive to continue our Order's 800-year-old mission as we serve the Church and the world as brothers and priests in a wide variety of ministries. The Irish friars are part of the world-wide Franciscan Order present in 120 countries with some 12,000 friars.

St. Francis was a man on fire with the desire to tell others of the love of God that Jesus had made known to us. Irish Franciscans are present today in Central America and South Africa. We are still inspired by the words of St. Francis: "God



Fraternity in mission: Friars Stephen O'Kane and Liam McCarthy called to witness to the Gospel of Christ.

has sent us into the whole world so that by word and deed we may bear witness to him."

All God's Creatures

Francis found his true meaning and identity in being a child of God living in union with creation, reflecting God's generosity and love. Gradually Francis realised

that he was truly a brother to the sun, moon, stars, fire and water, and to the whole cosmos for he along with them was being given existence at every moment by God. Through a life of prayer and relationship, Francis came to see God's goodness at the heart of all he has created.

As God's children we are

called to praise and thank God daily for the gift of creation, a world that mirrors God's beauty and goodness. Francis shows us how to live with a spirit of gratitude for the gift of creation and how to joyfully embrace our responsibility to care for that same creation.

Peace and Good

Pope Francis, who chose St. Francis as his patron and model when he became Pope, said, "Francis of Assisi - for me, he is the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation. He is the man who gives us the spirit of peace, who tells us we should work to build peace, within our hearts and among ourselves."

"Pace e Bene!" (Peace and Good!) is a greeting used on all continents by Franciscan men and women since the time of Francis. In the joyful and prophetic spirit of St. Francis, the Irish Franciscan friars are dedicated to sharing the Gospel of Christ by serving the poor and promoting justice, peace, and the care of creation.



Sharing God's goodness: Friars Ronan Sharpley and Liam Kelly in a joyful spirit.

If you would like to know more about following Jesus as a Franciscan Friar contact:

Friar Liam Kelly OFM. Phone: 087 396 0262

Email: irishfranciscansofm@gmail.com

Postal address: Franciscan Friary, The Abbey, St Francis Street, Galway City.

We look forward to hearing from you and having a conversation. God will do the rest!
Check out: www.franciscans.ie

My Life - Is This It?

Discerning a vocation to religious life takes a lot of courage, consideration and prayer, it is to embark on a quest to look at life with the eyes of God.

St Dominic founded the Order of Preachers 800 years ago. His method was simple: to go where people are, to preach and talk with them. To do this, he needed people whose sense of happiness was to be their most convincing witness to the Gospel.

**Be who God meant you to be
& you will set the world on fire.**

Saint Catherine of Siena

Congregation of Dominican Sisters

of Our Lady of the Rosary and Saint Catherine of Siena, Cabra



We Journey In The Search For Truth

As Dominican women of the 21st century we strive to continue Dominic's vision: Our mission is to study, share, proclaim and witness to the liberating Word of God in order that right relationships be restored between God, people and the earth where these are broken due to the lack of knowledge and distortion of the truth.

If you feel that God might be calling you to be a Dominican Sister why not talk with us? We would be happy to explore with you any questions you might have.

CONTACT US

domsvocation@gmail.com

086 2352299

www.dominicansisters.com

@JoinDominicanSistersCabra

@JoinDominicanSistersCabra





Prayer
Simplicity
Zeal
Mission
Courage
Faith
Fidelity

*Courageously committed to God's
Reign of Peace and Justice*

We are an international group of Religious sisters; apostles rooted in faith and hope. ***Ready to risk it all for the Lord.***

We strive to be examples of "Women in Communion". Living in international communities, we continue to fulfill the intense missionary dream of our founder, Father Augustine Planque!

WWW.OLAIRELAND.IE



olasisters



@olaireland



olasistersireland

The Poor Clare Sisters



She was so inspired by him, this young man from her own town, twelve years older than her. He had been well known for parties, music and singing. Now all he cared about was following Jesus Christ and encouraging everyone else to do likewise! Francis preached with total sincerity and conviction, and Clare could see that he lived what he preached. He had committed his life wholly to Jesus, the poor and humble One, and Clare knew in her heart that Francis was

lighting the same fire in her soul too. She was still in her teens yet so strong in her belief, her faith having been nurtured by her mother, a woman of devotion and of good deeds. Clare was quietly respected and admired by all who knew her. They knew she gave generously to the many poor people living in and around Assisi at that time, the early thirteenth century. Clare knew that marriage was not for her. She too, like Francis, would commit her life to following Jesus.

Clare felt called to give her life to God as a cloistered sister, devoting herself to prayer, to living in community with the young women who joined her in the little monastery outside the walls of Assisi. Her total commitment to Jesus drew many women to join her, to found Poor Clare communities in other countries. Our monastery here in Cork was founded in 1914. We strive to follow Jesus as Poor Clare Sisters, devoting ourselves to prayer and Eucharistic Adoration.



If you are interested in finding out more and if you think Jesus may be calling you to work for a better world through a life of prayer, you are very welcome to email: vocationspoorclarescork@gmail.com or write: Mother Abbess, Poor Clare Monastery, College Road, Cork. You may also like to visit our website: www.poorclarescork.ie

Come and plant *Seeds of Hope*

Planting seeds of hope is a way of putting our faith into action. Since we, **Medical Missionaries of Mary (MMM)**, were founded in 1937 by Mother Mary Martin, we have been bringing hope to people in some of the poorest and most remote areas of the world. As MMMs we bring our faith, skills and tenacity to the work that needs to be done despite the possible challenges of the place or situation. Over the years, our work has changed, but the focus of bringing healing and the love of God to women and children in need has been constant.



MEDICAL
MISSIONARIES
of MARY

Visit us at: www.mmmworldwide.org
Email: mmmcomm@mmmworldwide.org

MMM
'Rooted and founded in love'



Who are the Capuchins? As Franciscans we are part of a larger family of Catholic friars, sisters and dedicated laypeople founded by St. Francis and Clare of Assisi in the 1200's.

The Capuchins came about when in the 1500's a group of those friars decided to seek a more radical following of the Gospel according to the original spirit of St. Francis. Becoming known for their distinctive hooded habit, rough cord and bare feet, they chose a life based on contemplative prayer, gospel poverty lived in simple brotherhood, care for the poor and respect for all creation.

We still choose that life today. Could you?

The Capuchins in Ireland:

Since our arrival in 1616 we have served the Irish people during some of the most difficult times in their history. To this day the Irish Capuchins are working as "brothers of the people" by living the good news of the Gospel, reaching out to those on the margins who are in need and by extending the gift of peace to one and all. Today we are present in Dublin, Cork, Kilkenny, Carlow and Donegal, with missions in Zambia, South Africa and South Korea.

Any famous Capuchins I would know?

Perhaps the most famous of our saintly brothers is St. Pio of Pietrelcina in Italy. Padre Pio as he was known became renowned for the many miracles and healings that took place through his prayers and for the hospital he founded for the relief of the sick and poor. He



Rebuilding the Church, Serving those in need, Brothers to all

was the first priest to receive the Stigmata, (the visible wounds of Christ's passion), which he bore for 50 years as a witness to Christ's love for all of us. Many Irish people still seek his prayers and intercession with the Lord.

“Two periods of silent meditation, the Divine Office, the Rosary, Lectio Divina and time in adoration are always part of the prayer schedule of the friary”

As well as St. Pio we have been gifted with many saintly and good brothers down through the years. In Ireland the most famous of these was the "Apostle of Temperance" Fr. Theobald Mathew, who did so much for the relief of the poor. His statue can be seen in both Cork and Dublin city centre.

What work do you do?

While according to the vision of St. Francis our primary work is the simple living out of Gospel brotherhood together we also have many and varied apostolates. Preaching, teaching, chaplaincies to hospitals and hospices, parish work, working with young people, leading prayer groups, ministry to immigrants, online ministry, guiding prayer and retreats and working with the homeless are all part of our Capuchin way of reaching out to our brothers and sisters and building the Kingdom with them.

What's your prayer life like?

Our day, like our life as friars, begins and ends with prayer.

Two periods of silent meditation, the Divine Office, the Rosary, Lectio Divina and time in adoration are



always part of the prayer schedule of the friary, the crowning moment of which is the celebration of the Mass together each day. It is there we meet our Eucharistic Lord and from there that we draw the grace and help necessary for our life as brothers and our ministry to the people. It was said of St. Francis that he did not so much pray as become prayer. That is what every friar aspires to, while being invited and supported to journey ever more deeply into the way of prayer by the fraternity.

Regular times of retreat are also encouraged and made available to all the brothers.

You're all "brothers" but some of you say Mass, how does that work?

The Capuchins returned to the original vision of St. Francis that the Order would be a "fraternity" a group of brothers living as equals and sharing Gospel life together. Francis, while ordained a Deacon, was never a priest himself. While many of the friars are ordained

priests all the friars are equal by profession of the three vows we take to become Capuchins; namely Chastity, Poverty and Obedience. It is this profession that makes you a Capuchin. After that you may feel called to priesthood or to non-ordained ministry. This will be discerned with the community during formation.

What is Formation?

Formation is that period of time spent training as a friar and "discerning" or seeking out as to whether this way of life is for you or not. During this time you will have the experience of living and working with the friars and growing in commitment to the Capuchin Franciscan way while being guided by brothers specially trained to help you make your decision. From Postulancy, (the first stage of formation) to taking perpetual vows usually takes about 8 years.

Making Contact...

A vocation is a mysterious thing! It needs to be discerned carefully and



with an open heart. If any of the above has caught your interest or even just your curiosity take some time to read over it, to pray, and research a bit more. You can find out all about the Irish Capuchins at www.capuchinfranciscans.ie and then get in touch by dropping an email to Br Richard on capuchinvocation@gmail.com

"Whatever else may come of that first step you can be sure you will meet a brother"

Presentation Brothers Vocations Ministry: Helping Young People Find God

Pilgrim Brothers with the compassionate Christ in an evolving world. One can passionately trust that Religious Life, religious community, and the work they do, for example the Presentation Brothers, continue to find new ways expression and relevance in our Church and world today.

As Presentation Brothers, we have kept praying, inviting, promoting, and encouraging new life and vocations to our Congregation.

We believe that it is our duty to invite and encourage. The rest is the work of the Holy Spirit. Rather than disengage, we co-operate with the Holy Spirit, in a secular society in Ireland, in a ministry of accompaniment with young people. This ministry is needed more than ever today. It is not about numbers or results, but about helping young people find God. Therefore, we hope. As Pope Francis says:

This is the reason for our hope: that God never tires of waiting for us. When we turn away, he comes looking for us; when we fall, he lifts us to our feet; when we return to him after losing our way, he waits for us with open arms. His love is not weighed in the balance of our human calculations, **but unstintingly gives us the courage to start anew. This teaches us resilience, the courage always to start**

again, each day. Always to start over after our falls. God is patient.

Pope Francis: The 25th World Day for Consecrated Life - 2021

Presentation Life – A Journey in Faith, an Adventure in Hope

The Presentation Brothers have launched a new initiative in vocations ministry in the Anglo-Irish Province. We will establish Vocation Discernment Groups – Places of Prayer and Support for the Spiritual Journey, for young men discerning a Call to Religious Brotherhood.

This new initiative is a collaborative effort with Brother Barry Noel, vocations director for Ireland, the Leadership Education And Formation Project, (L.E.A.F. Project), which has brought a new and creative dimension to our mission of Christian formation in the Anglo-Irish Province, and Br. Simon Fernandes, a young Religious Brother, based in the Mardyke House and working in Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh.

In our Vocation Discernment Groups, young men will be invited to learn more about the life and mission of the Presentation Brothers and discern how God may be calling them to the Presentation Way of Life, in the context of Church and world today.



A group of young Religious from different Congregations with Bishop Fintan in Cork.

Participation in group meetings will be over a one-to-two-year period.

If you, or you know someone who might be interested in talking part in our Vocation Discernment Groups, please share the information with them and invite them, or put them in contact with the Vocations Director:

Br. Barry Noel, Vocation Director for the Presentation Brothers:
+353 87 7519794
barrynoel@presentationbrothers.org



Bros. Barry, Joseph and Martin at the Launch of the Vocation Discernment.

A Time of Quiet Prayer in a Busy World Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament



PRAY

SUNDAY 8 MAY (4PM - 6PM)
World Day of Prayer for Vocations

You are welcome to call in for a few minutes quiet prayer.

**PRESENTATION BROTHERS COMMUNITY CHAPEL,
Mardyke House, Mardyke Walk, Cork T12W8RP.
Parking available.**

We are praying for vocations to the priesthood and the Religious Life in our diocese, throughout the world and especially to our own community of Presentation Brothers. All welcome! Please share.

Come and Pray...

The Presentation Brothers are an international, Catholic Congregation of Lay Religious. Our life is based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It involves prayer, living in community and service to people, both at home and abroad. Our special mission is to make the message of Jesus known among young people, especially those who suffer any kind of poverty and disadvantage.

COME JOIN US ON THIS JOURNEY!



Presentation Sisters...

"Called to live as consecrated women, we strive to witness to joyful, reflective, compassionate service, constantly calling ourselves to be aware of, and where possible help those who find themselves on the edge, forgotten and neglected".

Sisters Regina, Neneth, Jo, Bernadette, Pauline, Gabrielle and Josephine willingly do all in their power *'to be of any service, in any part of the globe'*.

Presentation Sisters are present in 24 countries.

Get to know us by contacting:

Presentation Sisters Vocation Link Sisters - Concepta

(Dublin) enquiry@presprone.com T. 01 416 6010 &

Eileen (Cork) at anamchairde@presentationsisterssw.ie

T. 021 497 5190



Vocations:

Think about it,
Pray about it,
and Do it.



*Frances
Teresa Ball*

"Seek ye first
the Kingdom of
God and his
righteousness
and all these
things will
be added
unto you"



Loreto Sisters in Ireland
Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Serving Christ in a Spirit of
Justice Freedom Joy Sincerity Truth

Dorothy Day

"You will know your vocation by
the joy that it brings you"

Pope Francis

"Vocations aren't the result of
planning, but an encounter with
God that changes your life"

IS YOUR CONGREGATION INTERESTED IN TAKING UP POPE FRANCIS' CALL TO CREATE A CULTURE OF VOCATION?

DO YOU HAVE VOCATION PERSONNEL NEW TO THE POST OR RETURNING TO THIS MINISTRY AFTER A BREAK?

If the answer is yes, then your congregation should consider joining Vocations Ireland.

Vocations Ireland is a committee under the auspices of the Association of Religious & Missionaries of Ireland. We assist with vocation promotion, by

- hosting online events for young people
- attending youth festivals
- connecting young people with congregations they enquire about
- organising discernment groups both in person and via zoom

The benefits of belonging to Vocations Ireland include:

- Publication subscriptions, including an annual subscription to the highly respected HORIZON quarterly.
- Special rates on NRVC & Vocations Ireland workshops and training programmes.
- Members-only Website Portal for accessing exclusive material from courses and workshops.
- Professional support and networking opportunities.
- Publicity for your religious institute highlighted on the Vocations Ireland website and social media.
- Access to Vision Vocation Network, the most comprehensive vocation discernment guide.
- Consultation about vocation ministry including help, suggestions and support.

PROPOSED WORKSHOPS FOR 2022 (SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER)

ORIENTATION FOR
NEW/RETURNING VOCATION
PERSONNEL
CULTURE DIVERSITY IN RELIGIOUS
LIFE TODAY
CREATING A CULTURE OF
VOCATION
SOCIAL MEDIA, ZOOM & BLOGGING

Promoting vocations to the religious life, accompaniment, and assessment of candidates requires us to be professional, ethical, and spiritual in this ministry. Therefore, our own spiritual, professional and personal development is essential. As members of Vocations Ireland this is a way of staying connected, upskilling, avoiding burnout and keeping abreast of best practices in vocation ministry today.



Join Vocations Ireland - phone Margaret on
086 7820149 or email **info@vocationsireland.com**

ASSIST US IN PROMOTING IRISH VOCATIONS BY MAKING A CONTRIBUTION. CONSIDER DONATING BY COMPLETING THE FORM BELOW.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- ☐ I would like to support training vocations personnel from Missionary countries
- ☐ I would like to support social media training programmes
- ☐ I would like to support programs for young people interested in discerning religious life

Gift of €

Via: Cheque (to: Vocations Ireland)
Online

**Send your form and donation to:
VOCATIONS IRELAND, AMRI OFFICE, CYPRESS GROVE ROAD, DUBLIN, D6WYV12**



SISTERS OF BON SECOURS

The Sisters of Bon Secours are an International Religious Congregation of Catholic women based in six countries who bring to the world "Good help to those in need". The Congregation was founded by a group of 12 women, led by Josephine Potel, who came together in Paris in 1824 to nurse the sick and the dying in their own homes, demonstrating the healing presence of Christ through their compassionate care.

Although the Congregation's work has broadened since the early days, the core intention stays the same, to bring the healing hand of Christ to all those in need.

Today Sisters minister in healthcare, social services, pastoral and community based ministries.

In Ireland Sisters of Bon Secours are based in Cork, Dublin and Tralee. Their ministry includes more than just the physical; it is a holistic approach which includes peoples' spiritual, psychological and emotional needs.

We are all called to serve. It is just a matter of finding the way that best suits your interests and talents.

See our website and social media for opportunities to come and spend some time with us in prayer and get to know the Sisters. We regularly host retreat days and prayer events.



www.bonsecourssisters.ie | [f @sistersbonsecoursireland](https://www.facebook.com/sistersbonsecoursireland) | [@BonSecoursIre](https://www.instagram.com/BonSecoursIre) | [@sistersofbonsecours](https://www.instagram.com/sistersofbonsecours)



Handing back the joy to God



Finding Joy in God

The Silence - The Solitude
BUT
Needing to find a Rhythm

Desiring to turn the experience over to God's Glory
In the Company of others

Consider Life with the Carthusians

A Community of Hermits Founded in
1084 by St. Bruno and 6 Companions

www.chartreux.org



Visit Resources/Books/DVD
for a full length Feature Film



Handing on the joy to the next generation!



Jesus waits for your response



Cell, Hermitage & Garden



Total consecration to Jesus
- a life of Prayer & Sacrifice



1084 St Bruno & Companions



Lectio Divina



Prayer in Cell
The Little Office of Our Lady



Work and Study in Cell



Daily Mass & Confession



Walking Together



Gregorian Chant

A love for all of God's creation

We can learn a lot from a simple Italian friar, writes **Eve Parnell**

There's a painting in the National Gallery of Ireland, big, oil on canvas, 17th century, dark colours, easy to walk by and not notice, but one day a little flash caught my eye.

I looked at the painting, really looked, for the first time to be honest, and the little flash is actually the clever combination of fairly limited colours, to create the appearance of the silvery body of a small fish peeping cheekily up out of a pond of water.

“They killed Martinello, cooked him, scraped the meat from his bones and tossed the bones, fleece and remains into the furnace”

Further intrigued I followed the directions of the little shiny fish, up the painting to a big guy holding another little fish. He is just in the act of dropping the fish into the water. Actually, it would be a more accurate observation to relay he is carefully returning the fish to its proper environment. And I say 'carefully' with some authority because this is a painting of San Francis da Paola, and the fish in the painting also has a name. Antonella!

St Francis of Paola was born on March 27, 1416 in Calabria, Italy. He died at the age of 91 on April 2 in 1507. Throughout his life during the 15th century he addressed social problems and raised awareness. A charismatic and proactive person, Francis could be described as being very modern with his great love of animals and his vegan diet. He gained many followers who embraced his strict guidelines for a better life - along with the traditional Franciscan vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, Francis introduced a fourth vow of abstinence from meat, dairy and other animal products, and of



course fasting during Lent was included.

Martinello

Like many of us today, Francis gave the animals he knew names. Martinello was a very happy lamb, until one day, some workmen onsite ate him. They killed Martinello, cooked him, scraped the meat from his bones and tossed the bones, fleece and

remains into the furnace. Later, Francis was asking if anyone had seen the lamb? He asked the workmen, had they seen the lamb? “Eh...no” was the awkward reply. Not satisfied, Francis carried on looking for the lamb calling his name when out from the flames jumped Martinello! Whole and restored! Happy again!

There are a number of well-documented miracles

like this, many witnesses were called to give their account for record before Pope Leo X proclaimed Francis a saint in 1519.

The painting by Novelli in the National Gallery of Ireland represents accounts given about the ‘miracle of the trout’. One day a clergyman, visiting Francis’ monastery, expecting lunch, spied a fit and lively trout swimming in her pool.



The clergyman decided he would like trout for lunch, took the trout home, threw the fish into a pan and fried her. Francis, who was out, came home and quickly noticed the empty pond. Finding out what happened, he asked a parishioner to go fetch the trout back.

“These are just two examples of the miracles Francis performed. It wasn't only animals”

When the clergyman was confronted, he was disgusted and flung the fried fish to the ground, smashing her to pieces. The parishioner gathered up the bits and returned them to Francis. Appalled, Francis placed the pieces into the pond, praying, in

the name of charity for his friend to return to life, and then who became whole again? Antonella! The trout happily darted through the water as if nothing had happened!

These are just two examples of the miracles Francis performed. It wasn't only animals. Respecting all life equally, he healed the sick and raised the dead. Perhaps due an incident many people witnessed, of Francis walking on water, he is the patron saint of mariners and naval officers.

Holy See

Francis received the approval of the Holy See in 1474 to found an order. He named them the ‘Minims’, a reference to humility which was to guide the friars. Yet Francis and his followers never went short. There was plenty of good food, good company and shelter. Enough for everyone to live in peace and harmony.

“Perhaps due an incident many people witnessed, of Francis walking on water, he is the patron saint of mariners and naval officers”

i Eve Parnell is an artist. Francis of Paola's Feast Day was April 2 and A Miracle of Saint Francis of Paola by Pietro Novelli, purchased in 1868, is part of the permanent collection on display in the National Gallery of Ireland.

Out&About

The future of the Faith



LIMERICK: Pope John Paul II award recipients for Limerick diocese are pictured after receiving their awards from Bishop Brendan Leahy. Pictured are back row, from left: Alesha South, Kayla Duggan, Clodagh Shanahan, Paddy O'Sullivan, Oisín Lynch, Christopher Costigan, Michael O'Farrell, Anthony Kelly, Killian Aherne and Michael O'Dwyer. Third row, from left: Fr. Michael O'Shea, Laura O'Connor, Hazel Mulcahy, Holly McCarthy, Áine Hayden, Georgina Crawford, Sophie Leahy, Jasmine Walsh, Orla O'Leary, Linnea Hove, Leah O'Brien, Caoimhe Howard. Second row, from left: Clara Connery, Frankie Naughton, Sean Meade, Michaela McAuliffe, Margaret Convey, Bishop Brendan Leahy, Sr. Patricia Coughlan, Rebecca Hennessy, Denise Mullins, Rachel Walsh, Bróna McGlinchy. Front row, from left: Abi McCarthy, Ciara Slattery, Ian Finn, Ciara O'Riordan, Leah O'Toole.



LIMERICK: The Knights of Columbanus, who sponsored the establishment of the award in the diocese of Limerick, are pictured at the Awards ceremony: (from left) Brian McCarthy, Fr Michael O'Shea, Bishop Brendan Leahy, Brendan O'Neill, Gerry Buckley and Michael Keogh.



LIMERICK: The Limerick diocesan pastoral outreach team, which coordinates the JPPI Awards are pictured at the Awards ceremony: (from left) Rose O'Connor, Bishop Brendan Leahy, Aoife Walsh, Michael Kelly, Sharon Collopy and Dermot Cowhey.

IN SHORT

Irish charities receive €2m for Ukraine aid

Irish Aid has granted €500,000 each to four Irish charities – Trócaire, Goal, Concern and Plan International – to support their humanitarian response to the Ukraine crisis.

Announcing the grant, Minister for Overseas Development Aid and the Diaspora Colm Brophy said that the grant enables charities to assist “those worst affected by this terrible conflict”.

“The people of Ukraine continue to suffer unimaginable horrors, and need our support and solidarity now more than ever,” Minister Brophy said in a statement.

“Too many have died, or have been injured.

Millions have fled their homes. Their needs are complex and evolving.”

He continued, saying: “It is important that organisations with experience work with those affected, and with authorities where they are taking shelter, to help meet their needs.

“With this €2 million in Irish Aid funding four of our trusted long-standing partner organisations will be enabled to assist some of those worst affected by this terrible conflict, in Ukraine and also in Poland and Moldova where millions have sought refuge.”

The €2 million forms part of Ireland's €20 million aid package for Ukraine and was set aside as a dedicated fund to support Irish-based NGOs.

The four recipients were chosen from nine applications to access the fund, based on an appraisal and scoring system.

Cork Simon announces fundraising ball

Cork Simon's annual fundraising ball will mark 50 years of Cork Simon Community, and is the first ball after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic.

The fundraiser returns as the number of men and women in emergency accommodation in Cork increased by 20% in the 12 months to February, and by 7% in just one month, Cork Simon said in a statement.

The fundraising ball will take place on May 6 at the Fota Island Resort and will raise much needed funds for Cork Simon Community's work with people experiencing homelessness.

CEO of Cork Simon Dr Dermot Kavanagh said that support is critical “now more than ever” to ensure that Cork's homeless community have the best care available.

“We have never seen such demand on homelessness services,” Dr Kavanagh said.

“Our much-needed and essential services remained operational throughout Covid-related restrictions and lockdowns. We couldn't have done that without the tremendous support from the people of Cork.”

Chairperson of the voluntary fundraising ball committee Donal Downey, said they are “particularly looking forward to the auction on the night”.

To bid on auction prizes, visit <https://app.galabid.com/simon22>.



MONAGHAN: Fr Owen Joe McEneaney (right) PP Bawn parish presents a cheque to chaplain to the Ukrainian community in Ireland Fr Vasul Kornitsky to help the people of his homeland, April 26.



ROME: Pope Francis greets Fr William Coleman, Rochfortbridge, Co. Westmeath, following the General Audience in St Peter's Square on Easter Wednesday.



SPAIN: The chair of Halston Street parish's PPC Carmel Keogh has undertaken a 1,200km walk in aid of St Michan's church. She is walking a camino from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic across Spain, and is pictured here outside Sagrada Familia, Barcelona.



CORK: At the launch of the 2022 Cork Simon Community annual ball are Marion Bradley, Heineken, sponsor; Barbara Anne Richardson, Heineken, sponsor; Dr Dermot Kavanagh, CEO Cork Simon; and Leigh Gillen, Cork Simon annual ball voluntary organising committee member.



CORK: Fr Marius O'Reilly blesses an image of Jesus of Divine Mercy during a Divine Mercy Sunday celebration at the Church of the Real Presence, April 24. Photo: CNS



DOWN: Bishop of Down and Connor Noel Treanor is pictured with the 18 people who were received in to the Church at the Easter Vigil after completing the RCIA course in the diocese, 10 of whom were baptised.



DOWN: Bishop Treanor and Fr Aidan McCaughan with the choir of Boston College High School who sang at the 9am Mass on Easter Sunday in the Cathedral.

Edited by Ruadhán Jones
Ruadhan@irishcatholic.ie

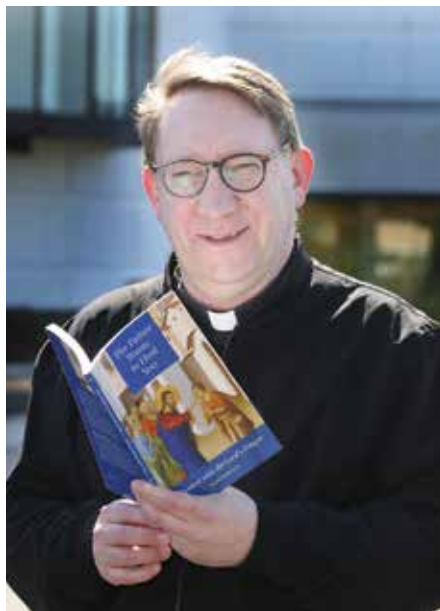
Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



DUBLIN: Johnny Logan performs Hallelujah with Davy Arkins in St Mary's Pro Cathedral Dublin on Monday night, April 25, in aid of Fr Peter McVerry, Dog's aid and Blossom Ireland. Photo: John McElroy



DUBLIN: Niamh Kavanagh performs in St Mary's Pro Cathedral Dublin on Monday night, April 25, in aid of Fr Peter McVerry, Dog's aid and Blossom Ireland. Photo: John McElroy



MAYO: Fr Nigel Woollen from Westminster Diocese pictured at his book launch at Knock Shrine, April 23. His book *The Father Wants to Heal You, A Retreat with the Lord's Prayer* (Veritas, €14.99). In the book Fr Nigel provides a guide to a personal pilgrimage through the Lord's Prayer to discover the depth and healing of God's love for us. Photo: John McElroy



ZAMBIA: Fr James Connolly OFM Cap. (centre) is pictured after his farewell Mass and celebration, marking the end of his service in Zambia after more than 50 years work on the missions. He is pictured with Bro. Noel O'Brien and Bro. Damian.

ANTRIM

The Knights of St Columbanus Centenary Anniversary will take place on May 6 and 7 at the Marine Hotel Ballycastle. Speakers include Bishop Noel Treanor, Dr Eamonn Phoenix and GAA manager Mickey Harte.

ARMAGH

Blessing of Graves at St Mary's Cemetery, Newry on Sunday, May 8 at 7.00pm.

CARLOW

Graigucullen/Killeslin Solomn Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. The theme for this year's event is: "You are not alone". Novena will be held at St Clare's Church, Graigucullen for 9 Monday nights between April 25 - June 20. Time: 7.30pm (Rosary at 7.10pm).

CAVAN

Legion of Mary Meetings continue on Tuesdays at 8pm at Cavan Cathedral.

CLARE

The Legion of Mary convenes at 7pm every Tuesday at St Mary's Church, Mullagh.

CORK

Cork Simon's annual fundraising ball May 6 at the Fota Island Resort. Auction on the night. Anyone can bid on auction prizes at <https://app.galabid.com/simon22>.

DONEGAL

Adoration takes place on Thursday between 10.30am and 7.30pm at the Church of Mary Immaculate, Stranorlar.

DOWN

Solemn Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament every Monday at St Comgall's Church, Bangor. Adoration will last from after Morning Mass until 4pm with the intention of prolonging it later until 9pm as heretofore subject to there being sufficient adorers on the rota.

DUBLIN

Taize- Prayer, Song and Silence event held in Newman University Church, May 10 between 6pm - 7pm.

Youth meeting - Pure in Heart hold a weekly youth meeting every Thursday from 7.30pm for people aged 18-35 in 23 Merrion square.

FERMANAGH

6pm Rosary between Monday to Friday and 6.45pm on Saturday with Legion of Mary Prayers at St Michael's Parish, Enniskillen.

GALWAY

A weekly prayer meeting prayer meeting takes place on Monday night from 8pm to 9.30pm in the parish centre beside Athenry church. All very welcome.

Youth 2000 host a youth prayer meeting in the Church of St Oliver Plunkett, Renmore, Galway on Fridays at 8.15pm. Contact Maire on 0851482076.

KERRY

Kerry Choral Union will host its much-anticipated spring concert at St Brendan's Church, Tralee on Sunday, May 8 at 7.30pm.

KILDARE

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament Monday to Friday from 10am to 6pm at Ballycane Church.

Catholic academic Theologians and Philosophers Gathering on Saturday, May 7 from 10am at St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

KILKENNY

A Spirituality of our Times: The Sisters of St John of God conference will be on May 14 at St Patricks Parish Centre, Loughboy, Kilkenny. The speaker is Jane Mellett. Times: 10am - 4pm Cost: €10 (bring your own lunch, tea/coffee provided) pay on the door. Booking essential: Contact Sara or Catherina @ 056 7722870 9am-5pm or email sara.bulfin@ssjg.ie before May 6.

LAOIS

Adoration in Rathdowney on Thursday from 2pm to 4pm and in Errill on Friday from 10am to noon.

LEITRIM

Daily Rosary in St.Joseph's Church, Leitrim Village, at 6pm.

LIMERICK

Adoration will continue in the Blessed Sacrament each Friday from 11am to 8pm at Abbeyfeale Parish. There is a chart behind the Tabernacle where you may fill in your name to spend an hour in adoration each Friday.

LONGFORD

Diocesan assembly will take place in St Mel's College on Saturday May 14 from 9am to 4pm.

LOUTH

During the month of May the Holy Rosary will be prayed daily at 4pm at Ladywell Shrine, Dundalk and at 7pm at Our Lady's Grotto, Blackrock, Co Louth.

MAYO

Confessions heard Saturday from 12pm to 1pm at St Mary's, Westport.

MEATH

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Thursday 10.30am to 8pm at Church of Immaculate Conception, Ashbourne.

MONAGHAN

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament each Tuesday 2-4pm at Muckno Parish.

OFFALY

Adoration of the Blessed Eucharist from Monday and Friday - 5-6pm and Tuesday and Wednesday - after 7.30pm Mass to 9pm at St Brigid's Church, Clara. All welcome.

ROSCOMMON

Croghan, Drumlion and Cortober pastoral council meeting on May 10 at 8pm in priest's house.

SLIGO

Adoration every Wednesday, 7-10pm at Cliffoney Church and every Thursday, 7-9pm at Grange Church.

TIPPERARY

Rosary is said every Monday-Friday at 6.30 pm at St Mary's Parish, Clonmel.

TYRONE

Omagh Charismatic Prayer Group host Life in the Spirit seminars in Sacred Heart Church Omagh on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm. Mass with homily.

WATERFORD

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Thursday after 10am Mass until 5pm at Holy Cross Church, Tramore.

WICKLOW

The Annual Blessing of the Graves Cemetery Mass at Burgage is scheduled for Sunday 15 May at 3pm.

WESTMEATH

Prayer meeting in the Friary Church, Athlone every Monday night from 7.30 - 8.30 pm. Participants can attend in person or online by tuning into <https://mcnmedia.tv/cameras/franciscan-friaryathlone>.

WEXFORD

Legion of Mary: Meetings every Thursday afternoon at 12.00pm in St Michael's Pastoral Centre, New Ross. Contact: Alex Doyle, Tel: 087 273 8703.



World Report

IN BRIEF

Spanish Cardinal Amigo Vallejo dies at 87

● Spanish Cardinal Carlos Amigo Vallejo, a medical student turned Franciscan and a much-loved Archbishop of Seville, died in Spain on April 27 at the age of 87. He had experienced a number of complications after suffering a fall in February and died at a university hospital outside of Madrid as a result of heart failure while trying to recuperate from surgery. Pope Francis sent a telegram with his condolences to the Faithful of Seville and Tangier, Morocco, as well as to the Order of Friars Minor. The Pope praised the late cardinal for his devotion and fidelity, giving "his life in service of God and the Church."

Cardinal Amigo had a great impact on the Archdiocese of Seville, which he led as archbishop from 1982 to his retirement in 2009, as well as on the city and surrounding region. The autonomous region of Andalusia named him 'Favourite Son' in 2000; the city of Seville named him an honorary citizen with the title 'Adopted Son' in 2007; and the province of Seville named him 'Favourite Son' in 2011; the city council unanimously approved naming a large square after him in 2018. He was known for working closely with the elderly, the sick and disabled, and being dedicated to those who were most in need.

German bishop: Pastoral ministers must get training about dementia

● Dealing with dementia should be an integral part of the training and further education of pastoral ministers, said Bishop Franz-Josef Bode, deputy president of the German bishops' conference. More and more people suffering from dementia needed support just as much as their relatives, Bishop Bode said on April 28 in a podcast of the Catholic Academy of the Diocese of Dresden-Meissen. The German Catholic news agency KNA reported he said every pastoral minister should have a basic knowledge of how to deal with dementia.

Dementia is a generic term for the impaired ability to remember, think or make decisions that interferes with

doing everyday activities. It is not a disease itself, but is often caused by diseases such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's. It is one of the most frequently mentioned fears that people cite with regard to old age. KNA reported that on April 30, Bishop Bode was scheduled to participate in the start of the Church's 'Week for Life' campaign in the eastern city of Leipzig. The joint campaign this year focuses on people with dementia. Bishop Bode said pastoral ministers had to ask themselves whether they were sufficiently aware of people with dementia and their relatives. In addition, integrating people with dementia into the general life of the Church was a new challenge.

'Thirst for peace': Cameroon Bishops rededicate nation to Mary

● Battered by a separatist war to the west, a Boko Haram insurgency to the north and the influx of Central African refugees to the east, Cameroon is a country in crisis. And with no end in sight, Catholics in Cameroon turned to Mary to intercede for them. On April 23-24, more than 1,200 Catholics gathered around their bishops at the pilgrimage site in Marienberg, about 115 miles from the country's capital, Yaoundé. They were there to reconsecrate Cameroon to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, 12 decades after the German Pallottine fathers consecrated the country to Mary in a move now considered by Cameroon's Catholics as the very foundations of Catholicism in the country. "The presence of all these Christians testifies to the importance that Mary occupies in their life of faith, but also to the thirst for peace that inhabits the Cameroonian people. We should therefore ask God for this peace, but also do everything necessary at our level to maintain it, because peace is a grace, but also a personal effort. And this undoubtedly involves acquiring a quality of God which must also become ours: mercy," said Bishop Abraham Bouala Kome, president of the Cameroonian bishops' conference. "Peace is what is normal; when peace is absent, we are in something abnormal, and we must always look for what is normal," he said.

Leak suggests US Supreme Court will overturn Roe v. Wade

The US Supreme Court will vote to overturn Roe v. Wade, the 1973 decision that legalised abortion nationwide, according to draft opinion cited in a news report released Monday evening.

"We hold that Roe and Casey must be overruled," Associate Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. writes in the purported 98-page draft document, obtained by Politico, which is labelled as the "Opinion of the Court." "It is time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people's elected representatives."

The Politico report described the opinion as "a full-throated, unflinching repudiation" of Roe v. Wade, which created a constitutional right to abortion nationwide up until roughly 24-28 weeks of pregnancy. The court sides with the state of Mississippi, which had appealed to the court to uphold a 15-week abortion ban that lawmakers there passed in 2018.

The document, which bears the words "1st Draft" at the top, states that Roe v. Wade's reasoning was "exceptionally weak," that the original decision has had "damaging consequences," and that the decision was "egregiously wrong".

"Abortion presents a profound moral question. The Constitution does not prohibit the citizens of each State from regulating or prohibiting abortion. Roe [v Wade] and [Planned Parenthood v Casey]



A pro-life activist holds a fetus doll during a protest outside the US Supreme Court in Washington in this file photo. Photo CNS

arrogated that authority. We now overrule those decisions and return that authority to the people and their elected representatives," the draft decision reads.

Genuine

CNA has not been able to independently verify if the draft opinion shared by Politico is genuine, and the court's decision will not be final until it is published, likely to happen by the end of June. If the decision holds, more than a dozen states will immediately outlaw abortion.

The news report, while noting that justices can change their votes as drafts are revised, said it is "unclear" whether there have been changes made since that first draft. The report, citing an unnamed Supreme

Court insider who leaked the document, says that four justices — Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett — have joined Alito in the majority opinion, while three — Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan — are preparing dissents.

Chief Justice John Roberts has not yet decided how he will vote, the report says.

In the draft, Justice Alito writes that the Constitution "makes no reference to abortion," and that "no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision".

"[F]ar from bringing about a national settlement of the abortion issue, Roe and Casey have enflamed debate and deepened division," Justice Alito continued.

The case in question, *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, was argued before the court in December 2021. The case involves a Mississippi law restricting most abortions after 15 weeks and centres on the question of "Whether all pre-viability prohibitions on elective abortions are unconstitutional," or whether states can ban abortion before a fetus can survive outside the womb.

In *Roe v. Wade*, the court ruled that states could not ban abortion before viability, which the court determined to be 24 to 28 weeks into pregnancy. In 1992, the court largely upheld *Roe* in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. If *Roe* is ultimately overturned, as the draft suggests, abortion law would be left up to each individual state.

German Catholics demand curbs on leaders' power

Catholics in Cologne who responded to a survey preparing for the 2023 worldwide Synod of Bishops on synodality have called for big changes in the Church.

The German Catholic news agency KNA reported that a statement on the archdiocese's website noted a majority of respondents called for the Faithful to be given greater self-determination and demanded major curbs on the power of the Church leadership and priests. Offices, ministries and functions should be assigned on a temporary basis, they said. In addition, Church members should have a democratic say in matters such as the election of bishops.

The Archdiocese of Cologne has just under 1.9 million Catholics, KNA reported. More than 1,700 people — about .09% of archdiocesan Catholics — took part in the nonrepresentative online survey. "Tell the Pope — what should the future of the Church look like?" They submitted more than 5,400 contributions and 1,200 comments.

The survey results were summarised by an agency in accordance with social science standards. The findings showed

that respondents favoured a "separation of powers as in democracies" instead of "priest-centredness." In addition, people of all sexual orientations and those who had been married several times should feel fully accepted in the faith community, respondents said.

Same-sex couples should be entitled to be blessed and married in the Church, and divorced Catholics should be allowed to marry in the Church again, the survey showed. Respondents also demanded an admission of guilt by the Church for the "discrimination and personal injury of non-heterosexual people."

A person's gender and sexual orientation should not affect their ability to serve in Church ministries, respondents said. Also, "women as well as trans people should be able to hold all ordained offices in their calling." In the future, respondents said, priestly celibacy should be voluntary rather than obligatory.

Many respondents demanded a complete reappraisal of abuse cases and said hierarchical structures had greatly hindered this in the past, KNA reported.

The responses also included calls for

the resignation of Archbishop Rainer Maria Woelki of Cologne, who has come under criticism for his handling of abuse cases. While there were not many such calls in proportion to the total responses, they were "insistent and present in the course of the dialogue, and vehemently expressed in some cases," the agency said.

In fewer cases, participants said the Church should not succumb to the spirit of the times, should adhere to the ordination only of male priests and to mandatory celibacy, and should clearly identify abortion, adultery and homosexuality as sins.

The results will be deliberated at a diocesan gathering of 150 delegates in May — half from the archbishop's highest advisory body, the archdiocesan pastoral council, and the other half as a "cross-section of people from the archdiocese."

Cardinal Woelki and Auxiliary Bishop Rolf Steinhäuser plan to comment on the survey results at a news conference. Bishop Steinhäuser had launched the survey while representing Cardinal Woelki during the cardinal's leave of absence ordered by the Pope.



Edited by Jason Osborne
jason@irishcatholic.ie

Meeting to protect the vulnerable



Pope Francis looks on as Cardinal Seán O'Malley, president of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, speaks during a meeting with commission members at the Vatican (see Vatican roundup). Photo: Vatican Media

Pope wanted to 'turn page' on costly property, defendant says at trial

The former director of the Vatican's financial watchdog agency told the Vatican court that his office's minimal involvement in a costly property deal was at the behest of Pope Francis and several top Vatican officials.

Tommaso Di Ruzza, the former director of the Vatican watchdog agency, then known as the Financial Information Authority, or AIF, is one of nine defendants facing a slew of charges related to financial malfeasance.

At the April 27 session of the trial, he testified that, during a March 2019 meeting, the Pope asked Archbishop Edgar Peña Parra, substitute secretary for general affairs in the Vatican Secretariat of State, to update AIF on the situation with the London property.

The Pope, he said, "told me that he had invited Archbishop Peña Parra to speak to

the president and the director of AIF as trustworthy persons of the Holy See," Mr Di Ruzza said, referring to himself and the former president of AIF, René Brühlhart.

He also said Pope Francis told him "that it was in the interest of the Holy See to turn over a new page" and that the Vatican would directly manage negotiations regarding the London property.

Mr Di Ruzza also said he had "frequent meetings" with Archbishop Peña Parra and Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state.

The former director of AIF was questioned by prosecutors and defendants' lawyers for several hours regarding his alleged involvement in the Vatican's majority stake purchase of a property development project in London's Chelsea district.

London-based Italian

financier Raffaele Mincione purchased the London property in 2012 for £129million. In 2014, he sold a minority stake in the development project to the Vatican for €200million.

After relations with Mr Mincione soured in 2018, the Vatican turned to Gianluigi Torzi, an Italian broker, to serve as the middleman in purchasing the majority stake on the property so the Vatican could end its dealings with Mr Mincione.

According to prosecutors, the Vatican lost €350million for the entire deal, including the debt owed on the property. Both Mr Mincione and Mr Torzi are facing several charges, including extortion, fraud and abuse of office.

In their 487-page indictment, Vatican prosecutors accused Mr Di Ruzza and Mr Brühlhart of failing "to carry out any type of investigation"

before approving the payments made to Mr Mincione and Mr Torzi.

Addressing the Vatican court, Mr Di Ruzza said neither he nor his office played a role in a London property development deal that cost the Vatican millions of euros.

"I acted in the interest of the Holy See within the limits of my mandate and information available," Mr Di Ruzza said.

He also said he had no contact with several defendants, including Mr Mincione and Mr Torzi.

Mr Di Ruzza's testimony echoed that of Mr Brühlhart, who told the court that after a meeting Archbishop Peña Parra, he understood that the archbishop "and the secretary of state wanted to proceed under any circumstance," despite various warnings against dealing with Mr Torzi.

Volunteers weave camouflage nets in Ukrainian church

In the basement of a church in western Ukraine, far from the most ferocious Russian attacks, residents and displaced people contribute to the war effort by weaving camouflage nets, baking vareniki dumplings and making rosaries. "We're not just weaving good luck charms for the guys; we are weaving the country together," said Lyudmila, who fled the battered Kharkiv region and

now weaves camouflage netting for the Ukrainian military. Sitting in front of a wood frame where she threads green, khaki and brown scraps of fabric around plastic netting to shield military vehicles and positions, Lyudmila said she and the other volunteers put their hearts and their longing for their hometowns into each motion. Fr Mykyta Ovchar, one of the Incarnate Word priests at the Church

of Christ the King in Ivano-Frankivsk, said, "When our nation is at war, we cannot just stand by." While the soldiers take up weapons, he said, others take up prayer, which is one reason why rosary making is one of the projects locals and displaced people are engaged in. "We weave, make rosaries and pray, pray for our defenders, pray for our children," Lyudmila said.

Vatican roundup

Pope praises Papal Foundation's generosity

● Pope Francis praised members of the US-based Papal Foundation for helping the Catholic Church build "a culture of solidarity and peace," including by providing assistance to victims of the war in Ukraine. "As we are witnessing in these days the devastating effects of war and conflict, you increasingly see the need to provide care and humanitarian assistance to its victims, to refugees and to those forced to leave their homelands in search of a better and more secure future for themselves and their loved ones," the Pope told members of the foundation. "Your work helps to bring the love, hope and mercy that the Gospel proclaims to all who benefit from your generosity and commitment," the Pope told the foundation's major donors, who are called Stewards of St Peter, and members of the board of trustees. Although the six active American cardinals resident in the United States are part of the foundation's board, only Cardinals Seán O'Malley of Boston and Timothy Dolan of New York were part of the group's pilgrimage to Rome. Cardinal O'Malley, chairman of the board, told Pope Francis, "As we gather today, we join in your Holiness' concern and prayer for the tragic circumstances of the attacks on Ukraine and the desperate circumstances of the Ukrainian people." The foundation, he said, has provided funds to the Ukrainian Catholic Church "to assist with emergency relief efforts." After the meeting with the Pope, the foundation announced the approval of US\$14 million in grants, scholarships and humanitarian aid that will be distributed throughout the world. The amount included more than US\$9 million in grants requested by the Vatican for 123 projects in 64 countries, the foundation said.

Pope wants annual audit of Church's safeguarding measures

● Pope Francis asked his safeguarding commission to provide an annual audit of what the Church is doing to protect minors and what needs to change, as well as to urge bishops' conferences to set up special 'centres' where victims can be heard and find accompaniment toward "healing and justice." The annual audit "report will be a factor of transparency and accountability and - I hope - will provide a clear audit of our progress in this effort," he told members of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors on April 29. "Without that progress, the faithful will

continue to lose trust in their pastors, and preaching and witnessing to the Gospel will become increasingly difficult," he said. The Pope addressed the commission's plenary assembly, which focused on how to best continue assisting the Pope and the local churches in promoting best practices in safeguarding strategies, implementing guidelines and accompanying survivors. Commission members also were looking how they will work within the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, according to Pope Francis' reform of the Roman Curia, a change that goes into effect June 5.

'Embracing vulnerability,' sisters hope to help others

● Superiors of women's religious orders from around the world will gather in Rome or online to look at their areas of vulnerability and find ways to "embrace" them so that together they are stronger and can be signs of hope for other vulnerable individuals and communities in the world, said Claretian Sister Jolanta Kafka. "We have often placed ourselves on the side of the needy, but from a position of power," said Sister Kafka, president of the International Union of Superiors General. The challenge is "to recognise more consciously that we too need compassion, mercy, conversion, to be aware of our wounds, our sins." Nearly 700 superiors general - 520 attending in person - will participate in the UISG plenary assembly this week in Rome under the theme, 'Embracing Vulnerability on the Synodal Journey.'

Letters

Letter of the week

A need for genuine openness to change

Dear Editor, While I agree with David Quinn that we must try to avoid any potential schism over recommended changes to Church teaching and practices as a result of our Synodal pathway journey [The Irish Catholic – April 21, 2022], this must not be at a cost of a veto on any significant change. Those of us involved in parish Synodal pathway meetings, know that among

the most committed of parishioners some important changes are sought. Certainly in Ireland and apparently in many Western European countries, people want the crisis in priestly vocations addressed, they want women to exercise leadership roles in our Church and they want our parishes to be a place of welcome for divorced people who may have remarried and those

who are gay and in relationships. Perhaps if we genuinely are open to change, we may be able to accommodate the needs of our Church in each part of the world without disunity or schism.

*Yours etc.,
Deacon Frank Browne,
Rathfarnham, Dublin*

Catholicism is a tough and challenging religion

Dear Editor, “The Church must regain the nerve to teach unpopular things” [The Irish Catholic – April 14, 2022]. But the Catholic Faith is for grownups. It is a tough and challenging religion. David Quinn’s recent article under this heading, on sexual morality I think fails to see that the Church’s teaching on this subject is the hidden jewel in the crown, the greatest of all teaching on the subject.

I think that is vital to be able to distinguish different types of love. Without going into philosophical categories such as *agape*, *philia* etc., most people will accept that there are good and bad forms of love and the Church, the body of Christ Who gave his life for love, teaches and promotes this perfect form.

Even we, of course, fall short it is still an ideal for us to work towards.

*Yours etc.,
Brid Ní Rinn
Naas, Co. Kildare*



The fluorescent pink elephant in the room

Dear Editor, Nuala O'Loan's 'The View' article [The Irish Catholic – April 14, 2022] spoke movingly about the 19 'disappeared' from the Troubles of Northern Ireland: people who were taken away, killed and secretly buried between 1972-2005. Of the 19 in total, 14 have so far been recovered. Rightly she says: "This terrible suffering is such a stark example of the evil of which man is capable."

She went on to list other evils such as those in Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan and Tigray.

After reading the article it struck me that there was one glaring and regrettable omission re the evils of our time – the mass destruction of unwanted unborn babies by abortion. This is taking place in our time and in our 'back yard'. Some 200,000 Irish lives were 'terminated' mainly in British abortion clinics prior

to the 2018 Referendum and more than 13,000 in the years 2019-20.

This is truly the fluorescent pink elephant in our room/country! These 'disappeared' children are more abandoned than the aforementioned 'disappeared' who are at least recognised by society, loved by their families and friends, annually commemorated and given the dignity of a Christian burial when recovered.

The article ends with "our call to be holy, to love as Christ has loved us: completely". If we are to work towards this call to Christian holiness we need to see beyond this tragic blind-spot in our vision. These forsaken children are truly the 'least' – and thus most favoured – of Jesus' brethren (Matt 25:40ff).

*Yours etc.,
Fr Morty O'Shea SOLT
Rye, New York, USA*

German synod discussions could bring beneficial change

Dear Editor, In his article 'German synodal process a danger to Church unity' [The Irish Catholic – April 21, 2022], David Quinn wrote "The Church in Germany seems to be seeking the abolition of priestly celibacy, ordination of women, communion for the divorced and the blessing of same sex unions, among other radical changes".

It is important to consider why some of those changes might be of benefit to the Church.

For instance, priestly celibacy becoming voluntary is a case in point. There are, at this time, married Roman Catholic priests. In addition, allowing married deacons, who are willing and suitable, to go forward for priestly ordination could assist in

reducing the shortfall in the number of ministering priests.

In regard to communion for the divorced, Matthew in his gospel, wrote "But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the grounds of unchastity, makes her an adulteress". So, why should the innocent party in a divorce, caused by adultery, be deprived of receiving communion?

Discussion of critical modern issues should take place and reliance placed on the Scriptures, Apostolic Tradition and the Holy Spirit.

*Yours etc.,
Daithi O'Muirneachain
Drumcondra, Dublin 9*

Aontú committed to protecting 'born and unborn'

Dear Editor, I refer to a letter from Mr Billy Adams in your April 21 edition where he states "No party really cares for the vulnerable- born or unborn".

He may not have been at home or maybe the Aontú canvassers have not yet had the pleasure of calling to his home but he can rest assured that Aontú is the only party fully committed in protecting and supporting the 'unborn' child in the womb as well as for its entire 'born' life too.

*Yours etc.,
John Burke Aontú*

facebook community

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

German synodal process a danger to Church unity

The Catholic Church in Germany has been losing adherents since the 1980s and the loudest voices are often the fringe as it empties itself out. – **Mícheál Lyons**

The same "issues" have been raised by many during the listening sessions in parishes all over Ireland. Are we now questioning what the Spirit is saying? Could she be wrong? – **Christina Malone**

What worries me most about the German synod, is that it comes across as a sort of fait accompli. Before it has even concluded its business, there is a strong feeling that it has already decided its position on a number of issues. The whole thing comes across as deliberately confrontational. – **Thomas O'Mahony**

They no longer Catholic if that is their pathway. – **Edel Jones**

We must stop the German synodal pathway, we must stop this sin, heresy, ideology! I only follow the universal synodal process with the doctrine of the Church and Pope Francis! – **Bella Sp**

'Intolerant secularising forces' resent Catholic education, says Bishop McKeown

Well said Bishop Donal. The race for integrated schools is nothing short of limiting the choice of parents who want their children taught in a faith school. – **Patricia Shearer**

Great leadership from Bishop Donal against a cattle stampede of cynical, virtual signalling politicians. – **Charles Glenn**

Aontú committed to being 'voice for voiceless' Catholic schools

The way some, so-called 'progressives', have talked about Catholic schools in the North has been nothing short of shameful. They've gleefully taken the baton from Unionism in how they view the staff and the standard of education in these schools. They are an embarrassment to themselves. – **Thomas O'Mahony**

More than ever our children need to be taught their religion. So much hate in the world. – **Ann Devereux**

Culture of death needs a negative narrative to achieve goal which is Faith removed completely or watered down to untruth. – **Bernice Collins**

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

Letters to the Editor

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

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

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



TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Another new player enters the tv news market

I always get a pleasant sense of expectation when I hear of a new channel coming to the television or radio landscape.

Last week saw the start of yet another TV News channel in the UK – *Talk TV*, (with much the same schedule as the existing *Talk Radio*), available on the usual platforms and its own apps. “Straight talking starts here” say the promos, yet I wonder if we really need yet another of these so soon, relatively, after the arrival of *GB News*. The results are pretty mixed so far and regular readers will know I’m not a fan of opinionated broadcasting. I don’t like the abrasive styles of Piers Morgan and Jeremy Kyle, so having prime time shows headed up by these individuals did not bode well. To be sure **Piers Morgan Uncensored** got off to a noteworthy start, bagging an interview with Donald Trump on the opening night on the Monday and repeated in the highlights last Friday. Based on what I saw Mr Trump hasn’t changed his tone or rhetoric. I’m sure many would agree with his contention that the USA is not currently in a good place, but to have him still going on about having won the last election (“by a tremendous margin”) is more than tiresome. He was coy about whether he’d run again in 2024 – he wouldn’t reveal



Former US president Donald Trump was a guest on the opening night of Talk TV.

that yet, but said “people are going to be very happy” – true no matter which way it goes!

Impressed

I was impressed by **The News Desk** (week nights) with Tom Newton Dune, a serious journalist. He has excellent reporters – among whom Louise Callaghan of *The Times* and Kate McCann, ex-Sky News. On Wednesday night he had an item of the UK High Court judgement that found the health authorities there acted unlawfully guilty in discharging patients from hospitals to care homes without adequate safeguards during the Covid-19 crisis. As one commentator said, they

were “neglected not protected”. This was despite government claims that a “ring of steel” was thrown around these homes. I’ll be looking forward to a report on what happened in Ireland.

That show also featured an interesting item about ongoing protests by women against the invasion of their safe spaces by biological males who identify as trans women. We learned in the intro that the group was supported by J.K. Rowling who has been vilified, torch and pitchfork style, by trans activists. She doesn’t have to fear ‘cancelling’ as she is wealthy, influential and courageous. Maya Forstater, who lost her job over having

allegedly unacceptable views on the issue, put it succinctly – “You can’t protect women’s rights if you can’t define what a woman is” – this in the context of various politicians and public figures fumbling as they try to answer this question without offending anyone – what a strange new world! I reckon the boy who realises the emperor has no clothes has been cancelled and carted off to a re-education centre. Another of the group, Caroline Ffiske, wanted an open debate and free speech on the issue and implied she would have been glad if there had been a representative of the opposite viewpoint on the show.

PICK OF THE WEEK

THE MESSAGE OF FATIMA

EWTN Sunday May 8, 9pm

Documenting the astounding miracles at Fatima, where Lucia dos Santos and her cousins, Francisco and Jacinta, were visited by the Blessed Mother in a series of apparitions.

WINTER WALKS

BBC Four Monday May 9, 7.30pm

Adrian Chiles enjoys a seaside stroll around Scarborough, discussing life, the importance of his Catholic faith and how walking helps him ‘reset’ his mental health.

NATIONAL MARCH FOR LIFE, OTTAWA, CANADA

EWTN Thursday May 12, 4.30pm

Direct from Ottawa’s Parliament Hill, EWTN provides complete coverage of the annual National March for Life, Canada’s most significant pro-life event.

Protests

The News Desk last Friday night looked at the protests of those other activists – the likes of ‘Extinction Rebellion’ and ‘Insulate Britain’. Newton Dunne interviewed a representative of that latter group, Zoe Cohen – she was interviewed remotely, according to the host, because the last time one of their representatives got an in-studio interview (on LBC) he glued himself to the microphone! She resorted to holding up signs (lost on the radio version), and she was irritated by the focus on the group’s tactics rather than the underlying message and the ‘climate emergency’. She didn’t help her case by not showing empathy for the people severely discommoded by the disruptive protests and by, in

my opinion, overstating the case – she warned against banking with institutions that invested in fossil fuel industries, saying “your money is helping to kill your children”.

The new channel is open to conservative views, in a less in-your-face way than *GB News*. I’m surprised that neither channel has a religious affairs show. Because of the simulcast with *Talk Radio* don’t expect many visual delights! A lot of the programming is talking heads, so it suits radio perfectly – at least you can do the washing up rather than being glued to the TV – not a protest gluing of course.

① boregan@hotmail.com,
[@boreganmedia](https://twitter.com/boreganmedia)



Pat O’Kelly



Music

We’re happily back on track

This week’s NSO event at the National Concert Hall (tomorrow May 6) brings young Portuguese conductor – Joana Carneiro – to its rostrum for the first time. Her programme includes Mahler’s *Songs of a Wayfarer* with mezzo Tara Erraught and Stravinsky’s 1947 revised version of his ballet *Petrushka*.

However, before these familiar and popular pieces Joana Carneiro opens her concert with Finnish composer Esa-Pekka Salonen’s *Helix*, described as “a thrilling contemporary work”.

For Mr Salonen (b 1958), who studied composition in Helsinki’s Sibelius Academy, conducting may have been something of an afterthought. But, anxious to ensure that



Musical prodigy Rowel Friers at the piano with his mother

someone would conduct his music, who better than himself?

His conducting career was, more or less, launched when invited to replace the indis-

posed American Michael Tilson Thomas at very short notice. The principal work at this Philharmonia Orchestra concert in London was Mahler’s Third Symphony. Mr Salonen,

without even time to study the score, proved a remarkable success on the podium. That led to his appointment as the Philharmonia’s principal guest conductor between 1985 and 1994. At roughly the same time he was also principal conductor with Swedish Radio.

Mr Salonen had made his US conducting debut in 1984 with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Remembering the occasion he commented, “I had no idea what to expect. But the one thing I didn’t expect was when an older player came to talk to me after the first concert and said, ‘consider this your future home’. Something was going on, because I felt the same. I sensed with an absolute certainty that this orchestra, in whatever way, was going to be a very important part of my life”. And, indeed, a lengthy period with the Los

Angeles Phil ensued.

Following his time in LA, Mr Salonen returned to the Philharmonia in London as principal conductor and artistic adviser. And this connection lasted until 2021 even though he had become music director of the San Francisco Symphony in 2018 – a post he still holds.

You might think all these engagements left Mr Salonen little time for composition but he has managed to put a considerable wealth of music to paper. Termed “an exuberant showpiece”, *Helix* was commissioned by the BBC and first performed at the London Proms on August 27 2005 under Russian maestro Valery Gergiev, to whom the piece is dedicated.

Brainchild of John O’Conor, the triennial Dublin International Piano Competition, postponed from last year, is

happily back on track with its quarter and semi-final recital rounds taking place between May 17 and 22 in the new TU Dublin Conservatoire complex in Grange Gorman. The four concerto finalists will be heard at the NCH on Tuesday May 24 with Gerhard Markson conducting the NSO. First prize is €15,000.

There is only one Irish competitor among the 28 quarter finalists – Hollywood, Co Down’s twenty-year old Rowel Friers. I wish him every possible success.

Away from pianos, Galway’s Leisureland celebrates the cello on Wednesday May 11 when David Brophy and the RTÉCO present music by Bill Whelan, Gerald Barry, Julia Wolfe and Elgar with cello soloists Naomi Berrill, Adrian Mantu, Jacob Korangi and Laura van der Heijden.

Managing an ascension not a death

A friend of mine, somewhat cynical about the Church, recently remarked: "What the institutional Church today is trying to do is to put its best face on the fact that it's dying. Basically, it's trying to manage a death."

What he's suggesting is that the Church today, like a person struggling to accept a terminal diagnosis, is trying to reshape its imagination to eventually accommodate itself to the unthinkable, its own dying.

He's right in suggesting that the Church today is trying to reshape its imagination, but he's wrong about what it's trying to manage. What the Church is trying to manage today is not a death, but an ascension. What needs reshaping in our imagination today is the same thing that needed reshaping in the imagination of the first disciples in the 40 days between the resurrection and the ascension. We need to understand again how to let go of one body of Christ so that it can ascend and we can again experience Pentecost. What's at stake here?

“He's right in suggesting that the Church today is trying to reshape its imagination”

Among the elements within the paschal mystery, the ascension is the least understood. We are clearer about the meaning of the death and resurrection of Christ



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

and the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost. We have less understanding of the ascension.

Joy

The 40 days between the resurrection and the ascension were not a time of unadulterated joy for the first disciples. It was a time of some joy, but also of considerable confusion, despondency, and loss of faith. In the days before the ascension, the disciples were overjoyed whenever they recognised again their risen Lord, but most of the time they were confused, despondent, and full of doubt because they were unable to recognise the new presence of Christ in what was happening around them. At one point, they gave up completely and, as John put it, went back to their former way of life, fishing and the sea.

However, during that time, Jesus slowly reshaped their imaginations. Eventually they grasped the fact that something had died, but that something else, far richer, had been born, and that now they needed to give up clinging to the way Jesus had formerly been present to them so that he could be present to them in a new way. The theology and spirituality of the ascension is essentially contained in these words: Refuse to cling to what once was, let it go so that you can now recognise the new life you are already living and receive its spirit. The synoptic gospels teach this to us in their pictorial rendering of the ascension, where a bodily Jesus blesses everyone and then rises physically out of their sight. John gives us the same theology but in a different picture. He does this in his description of the encounter

on Easter morning between Jesus and Mary Magdala when Jesus says, "Mary don't cling to me!"

Ascension

Today, the Church is trying to manage an ascension, not a death. I can easily see where my friend can be confused because every ascension presupposes a death and a birth, and that can be confusing. So where, really, is the Church today?

“The synoptic gospels teach this to us in their pictorial rendering of the ascension”

Edward Schillebeeckx once suggested that we are living in that same despondency that was felt by the early disciples between Jesus' death and their realisation of his resurrection. We are feeling what they felt, doubt and confusion on the road to Emmaus. The Christ we once knew has been crucified and we cannot yet recognise the Christ who is walking with us, more alive than before, though in a new way.

Hence, just as those first disciples on the road to Emmaus, we also frequently walk with faces downcast, in a confused faith, needing Christ to appear in a new guise to reshape our imaginations so that we can recognise him as he is now present to us.

I think Schillebeeckx is right about this, except that I would put it in another way. The Church today is in that time between the resurrection and the ascension, feeling considerable despondency, with its imagination attuned to a former understanding of Christ, unable to recognise Christ clearly in the present moment. For many of us who grew up in a particular understanding of the Faith, our former understanding of Christ has been crucified. But, Christ is not dead. The Church is not dead. Both Jesus and the Church are very much alive, walking with us, slowly reshaping our imaginations, reinterpreting the scriptures for us, telling us again: Wasn't it necessary that the Christ (and the Church) should so suffer?

For many of us today, to live in faith is to be in that time between the death of Christ and the ascension, vacillating between joy and despondency, trying to manage an ascension.

On the road of faith, there's always bad news and good news. The bad news is that invariably our understanding of Christ gets crucified. The good news is that Christ is always very much alive, present to us still, and in a deeper way.

“What the institutional Church today is trying to do is to put its best face on the fact that it's dying. Basically, it's trying to manage a death”

Your vocation to be missionary

The Sunday Gospel

Fr Silvester
O'Flynn OFM
Cap.



The Fourth Sunday of Easter is called Vocations Sunday, and each year the Gospel is about Christ the Good Shepherd and the flock of his followers. Today's reading is short enough to quote it in full. "Jesus said: 'The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life; they will never be lost, and no one will ever steal them from me. The Father who gave them to me is greater than anyone, and no one can steal them from the Father. The Father and I are one'" (John 10: 27-30).

As a visitor to the Holy Land, I experienced little drops of serendipity, moments of happy surprise which gave new richness to reading scripture. One was in hearing a little child cry out to Abba, Daddy. Up to then my mind knew what Abba meant but now my heart knew it too. It was Abba who gave his flock to Jesus and no one can steal them from Abba.

Another moment, seeing a shepherd on the hillside leading the sheep, not behind them on a tractor but walking in front of them. Writers about the Holy Land have been intrigued by the various calls and whistles that the shepherds use and how the sheep respond to them. Several different flocks may be intermingled overnight in the same stockade. Morning will present no problem in sorting out the flocks. Each shepherd has his peculiar call and straightaway his flock, and only his flock, will follow him. "The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me." It is a family relationship.

False shepherds

Whose voice do I follow? Who inspires my beliefs, ideals, aspirations, standards or fashions? Competing calls make it difficult to listen to the voice of the Risen Lord. There can be no discernment of God's call without the control of our mental diet. One's physical health is greatly dictated by what we eat and drink. Spiritually, our attentiveness to God is only as healthy as our

mental diet. Do I avail of inspirational spiritual reading? Or do I spend vapid hours before the television or internet? Am I aware of the huge influence of the modern media? People are seriously misled by false shepherds who have completely changed what is meant by truth. Truth has always been understood as the coordination of the mind with real facts. But the manipulators of the mass media treat truth as something pliable to what I want to promote. So, we have fake news, slogans and conspiracy theories that play on the fears and anxieties of people. Pope Google is not a very reliable shepherd to follow when it comes to religion. Even a blatant lie is accepted when it is repeated over and over again. As we know today, truth is the first victim in every war. Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" but he did not wait for an answer.

The Lord as shepherd

One of my favourite places in the Holy Land is Tabgha, reputed to be where the miraculous catch of fish took place. Beside the lake there are statues of Jesus and Peter. Peter is kneel-

ing in humble contrition for his denials but Jesus is reaching out to him offering the shepherd's staff or crozier. "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep". Some days later, when the 40 days of preparation were complete at the Ascension of the Lord, he sent all the disciples to bring his message to the ends of the earth. At the end of the Sacrament of Baptism, light is taken from the Easter candle to light the candle of the new Christian. This is the beginning of a mission.

Universal call

For long centuries we have had a Church dominated by clergy. Sixty years ago, at the Second Vatican Council a very significant change of direction was expressed in emphasising the universal call to holiness. In the Sacrament of Baptism every Christian

receives a vocation to bring the light of Christ to others. It has been said that it takes a hundred years for the ideas of an ecumenical council to be fully implemented. All the popes since the council have spoken of the vocation of all Christians but it appears that now is the time for the idea to take fire. It has been forced on us by the belated recognition that clericalism facilitated the abuse and exploitation of people. This, in turn, was a factor in the rapid decline in the numbers entering the priesthood and religious life.

Vocation of Baptism

For many years, on this Vocations Sunday, like the vast majority of priests, I preached about the vocation to the priesthood

and consecrated life. I realise now my mistake in neglecting the vocation to all who are baptised to fan into flame the charisms of being Christened and the mission at the end of Mass to go out to serve the Lord.

Pope Francis issues a strong call to all Christians to be Spirit-filled evangelisers, fearlessly open to the working of the Holy Spirit. It is not simply that I have a mission, but he says, "I am a mission. That is the reason

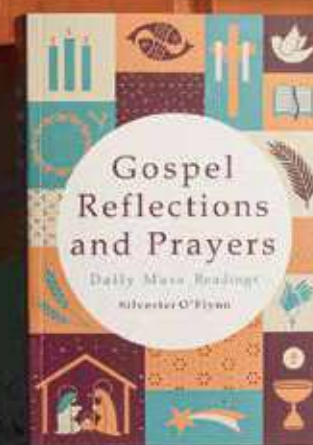
why I am here on earth" (*The Joy of the Gospel*, 273). He has invited us to participate in a worldwide synod to discern where the Holy Spirit is leading us to set the world on fire with the light of Christianity. A synod literally means walking together, gathering with others to talk and listen in a spirit of discerning where God is leading us. Let us trust in the Spirit of the Lord to guide us where to cast our nets.



A priest celebrates Mass in Israel on the shore at Tabgha. Tradition holds it is the place of the multiplication of the loaves and fish. Photo: CNS

More of Fr Silvester's Gospel Reflections

ARE AVAILABLE



ORDER
Gospel
Reflections
and Prayers
TODAY

€19.99
+€4.50 P&P

columba BOOKS

Prayer for the Synod

We stand before you, Holy Spirit, as we gather in Your name.

With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts; teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong

path, nor may partiality influence our actions.

Let us find You in our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and Son, forever and ever. Amen.

Phone 01 6874096 | Visit www.columbabooks.com



BookReviews

Peter Costello



A culture flaming on the midnight sky



Burning the Big House: The story of the Irish country house in a time of war and revolution, by Terence Dooley (Yale University Press, £25.00/€30.00)

Ian d'Alton

The Anglo-Irish descendancy from the mid-19th century is the stuff of grand tragedy. Everywhere there are echoes of the elegiac.

The men and women of the caste were relatively wealthy, powerful even if power was slipping away, educated, resource-rich and resourceful. Often caricatured, they acted up to their stereotypes. They entertained, or aimed to entertain, monarchs and potentates. Nobles of the sword as well as the robe they had the time and the connections to pursue military, colonial and governmental careers. They held a terrifying responsibility (or irresponsibility) over the lives and livelihoods of their tenants, servants, townspeople and estate workers. The Irish gentry and nobility were the stars of their own self-constructed soap opera. With a few idiosyncratic exceptions, they fulfilled faithfully their parts in the drama that had commenced, grown and developed over 800 years or so.

They did so from the security their own 'open prisons' – the Big and Great Houses of Ireland. There were lots of them, many constructed during Ireland's 'Protestant century', the 18th. Anglo-Irish writer Elizabeth Bowen, herself *chataleine* of a modest example, has described them, perceptively, as '...an effect rather than a reality'.

That may have reflected their inhabitants' internalised view of the places they lived in. But the houses were an

landscape, as alien as their occupants in the 'unwilling bosom' in which they were set.

Another "sturdy reality" was the destruction of 300 or so by arson during the revolutionary period. Some 80% survived though, living on, dying in their beds, usually the victims not of violence but of economic uselessness, emigration by their owners and the taxation policies of the Irish Free State.

Terry Dooley's new book is a sympathetic interrogation of "the landlord experience... through the prism of the Big House". He examines where, how and why Big Houses were burnt during the revolutionary period. There is a strong and necessary introductory section, placing the gentry and their residences in the context of the upheavals of the later 19th century and the First World War. He discusses the multiple motivations involved in the deliberate destruction of these houses. In particular, he emphasises the role that agrarian disputes and land hunger played: "a Big House without its land bank was inevitably unsustainable".

The bulk of this book contains a finely-crafted description of many of the houses that were burned in the period 1919-23, and there are many evocative 'before-and-after' photographs. Destruction and looting, compensation, the extraordinary stoicism of owners are all here, including a fascinating case study of the life, times and death of Mitchelstown Castle, Co. Cork. Within an ongoing controversy about whether the Irish revolution was 'sectarian', Professor Dooley's study does not offer "any significant support" (p. 129) to the theory that houses were destroyed solely because they were inhabited by Protestants – some Catholic landowners were also burnt out, especially by anti-Treaty forces during the Civil War.

Dooley's book may not be the last word on this topic, as he himself acknowledges. But in its comprehensive coverage, assiduous scholarship and engaging prose he has recreated a three-dimensional sense of what these houses represented to a fractured Ireland and maybe why they had to be largely symbolic sacrifices to the gods of land, politics and personal

What the files reveal about Ulster's defenders

UDR Declassified, by Micheal Smith (Merrion Press, €18.95/£14.50)

Joe Carroll

The Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) was set up in late 1969 as the Ulster Special Constabulary (B Specials) was being disbanded as a result of its role in the sectarian violence which broke out in Derry and Belfast the previous August. Inevitably, large numbers of the B Specials, who were 100% Protestant and much feared by Catholics when on night patrol, joined the UDR. The UDR would not be a police reserve, however, but the biggest regiment in the British Army with almost 10,000 members.

Non-sectarian force

The British Labour Government of the time wanted the UDR to attract Catholics and to be seen as a non-sectarian force. Some Catholic bishops and nationalist politicians such as Austin Curry encouraged Catholics to join. An estimated 20% of the early applicants were Catholic. But from then on it was all downhill. After internment in 1971, Catholic UDR members were targeted by the Provisional IRA. Numbers dropped sharply.

This book by a former official in the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and

Centre in Belfast draws on official British files to show how the UDR became an overwhelmingly Protestant force easily infiltrated by loyalist paramilitaries. The collusion between UDR members with loyalist gangs resulted in many murders of innocent Catholics, the Miami Showband massacre being just one example.

“The Dublin Government also kept a close eye on the UDR and had an updated list of members charged with killings and thefts but with their UDR membership not disclosed in court”

Much of this collusion has already been detailed but this book uses recently opened official files, of the British Government and defence forces, to reveal how much senior officials and even ministers suspected that UDR collusion was not just a case of a "few rotten eggs" but was widespread. The official toleration of the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), was widely exploited by its loyalist members. Many joined the UDR to get weapons training and then resigned. Others persuaded friends in the UDR to let them stand

rifles and submachine guns.

Amazingly, the UDA, which used the *nom de guerre*, Ulster Freedom Fighters, to claim murders of Catholics, was not only legal until 1992 but it figured in Army plans for dealing with civil unrest. The book quotes from a secret report into "Subversion in the UDR" prepared for the British Prime Minister. In a seven-month period 73 UDR were discharged and 20 more had resigned when "subversive traces" came to light.

The Dublin Government also kept a close eye on the UDR and had an updated list of members charged with killings and thefts but with their UDR membership not disclosed in court. This list was often passed on to London.

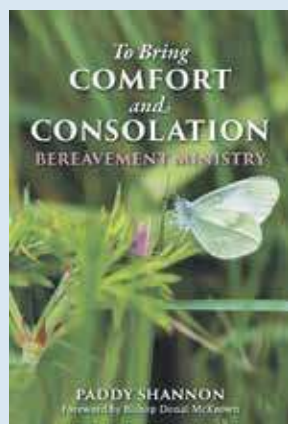
The author acknowledges that the bulk of the UDR were mostly farmers, workers and unemployed (the Protestant middle class avoided joining up) who genuinely wanted to keep Northern Ireland free of paramilitary violence. Almost 200 active UDR were murdered by the IRA and 62 after leaving the UDR.

By the 1980s the British acknowledged that, in the words of one official, the UDR was "an inescapably sectarian body". Less than three per cent were Catholics. Its days were numbered. In 1992 it was merged into the Royal Irish Regiment. It was, in its way, the end of an era in Ulster.

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.



Reaching out to those who have suffered loss



To Bring Comfort and Consolation: Bereavement Ministry, by Paddy Shannon SJ, foreword by Bishop Donal McKeown (Messenger Publications, €14.99/£12.95)

Peter Costello

While our daily newspapers and television bring us continual news of war and disaster, our historians reinforce

this state with multitudinous echoes of past loss and the toll it took. There are days when there seems to be little comfort to be found anywhere in this tormented world.

Paddy Shannon is a married layman who worked for nearly twenty years with Cruse Bereavement Care across Northern Ireland, a country where all communities of whatever identity have suffered pain and loss over the decades.

In this career he developed through parish work a way of bringing aid and comfort to those he encountered and he has since worked to share this experience and knowledge not only with communities, but with individuals.

His theme is that the traditional rituals and practices of bereavement and mourning of the Christian traditions can still be utilised to bring real comfort to communities and those struggling to survive

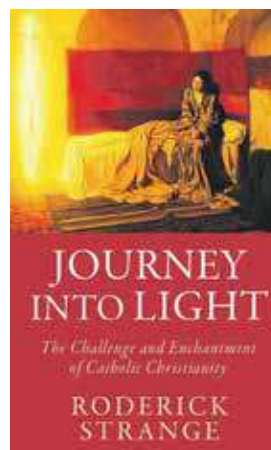
within them.

The Church indeed is a way in which the community can steady and sustain people, which are what it is there for after all. Many think and say the Church has no real role in modern Ireland, North or South. And yet there are times when many, indeed most, still turn, almost instinctively, to the devices that served their people in the past. Seemingly derided, religious belief still carries on.

The book is rich in advice, in extracts, and readings, many of which will be new or unfamiliar. This is the kind of book which every parish, and every community, can learn from.

Death can be very sudden and unexpected. There need to be those everywhere who have thought ahead. In time of need they are a truly necessary source of comfort and consolation, and as such not to be neglected.

A road to Rome that could have been better illuminated



Journey Into Light: The Challenge and Enchantment of Catholic Christianity, by Roderick Strange (Hodder and Stoughton, €20.99/£16.99)

Ruadhan Jones

In *Journey Into Light*, Msgr Roderick Strange sets himself quite a task – to convey *The Challenge and Enchantment of Catholic Christianity*, as the subtitle says, in little more than 200 pages. Measured against this ambition, the book is not a success; but it is not quite a failure either.

Msgr Strange, who serves as rector of Mater Ecclesiae College, the pontifical institute in Twickenham, is already the author of a well-respected introduction to the Faith from the 1980s, simply titled *The Catholic Faith*.

As he explains in a brief introduction, the idea for his latest publication came when Brendan Walsh, the editor of the British Catholic weekly *The Tablet*, suggested Msgr Strange revise his original work. After some consideration, he decided that the task was beyond him.

However, he realised that he had accumulated a great deal of other material in talks, homilies and a monthly column for *The Times* of London. He decided to mine these columns for “ideas, stories and images that, with the other material, might offer a fresh presentation of Catholic Christianity”.

He arranges this disparate collection according to the Church's liturgical year. This, to me, seemed a clever idea and early on reaps some notable rewards. For instance, he reflects on the readings for the Christmas Masses, pointing out the significance of the way they reflect, diverge from, and

develop each other's themes.

However, while I found it interesting, I also wondered how much someone who has never attended Mass could really draw from such an unfamiliar narrative and structure.

There were also times when I wondered if he would have been better advised to write a memoir. New sections often begin “I had a friend...” or “I remember back when I...” – his goal is to be informal and conversational, but when the model is too often repeated, it begins to feel a little too self-centred.

So while Msgr Strange demonstrates an ability to pick up common false conceptions and gently, unassumingly correct them; or else to simplify a complicated subject like the Trinity, there were too many passages that simply seem less *à propos*.

Ultimately, *Journey Into Light* suffers from a lack of direction, struggling to nail down who its intended audience is. The blurb suggests it

is an introduction for those new to the Faith or who want to reawaken their search for God. Msgr Strange's conversational, anecdotal style is well-suited to such a task, but his choice of subject matter is not so clearly related to the goal.

For instance, late in the book he analyses the significance of Vatican II in re-orienting the Church's mission and outlook. It is a gentle chapter, not wading too deeply into the controversies – but it also presumes an understanding of Ecumenical Councils and Church history that is hardly likely to be casual knowledge for someone quite new to the Faith.

As it stands, I think anyone familiar with his previous work will enjoy Msgr Strange's company as he works his way through the Faith. For newcomers to his work like myself, though, it is missing an integral ingredient that could turn this collection into something more than an unconnected set of interesting ideas.



Roderick Strange (left) in the grounds of the Beda College, Rome.

ORDER NOW



FOUNDER OF PILGRIM PATHS IRELAND, JOHN O'DWYER SHARES THE BEST WALKS IN THE COUNTRY

€16.99 + €4.50P&P

A must read for anyone interested in Ireland's hills and mountains, these trails range from easy to moderate walks all around the country. Accompanied by maps and beautiful photographs, it's an ideal collection for the avid walker.

To Order: Phone 01 6874096 | www.currachbooks.com

Classifieds

The deadline for advertising in the classifieds is 10.30am, the Friday before publication. Contact the Classified Team on 01 687 4094 or email advertising@irishcatholic.ie

Inspired by the vision and passion of Sr. Stan, many people are choosing to leave a loving gift in their will to support people who are homeless to find safety and a place they can call home.

To join in Sr. Stan's vision please contact cian.dikker@focusireland.ie or phone 01 881 5962



FOCUS
Ireland

GOAL

Please remember GOAL in your Will

45 years on we continue to deliver lifesaving support to the most vulnerable people in our world. Leaving a gift in your Will is priceless.

Contact Courtenay on 01 2809779 or via email at cpollard@goal.ie

Registered Charity No. 20010980; CHY 6271

Please pray for the beatification of

Little Nellie of Holy God

“May God enrich with every blessing all those who recommend frequent Communion to little boys and girls proposing Nellie as their model”

– Pope St Pius X, June 4, 1912

Remembering

MEMORIAM CARDS
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
CARDS & NOTELETS
BOOKMARKS

Samples / Information

KENNEDY PRINTERS
BANTRY, CO. CORK, IRELAND
Tel. 027 50102
www.kennedyprinters.ie
email: info@kennedyprinters.ie

The Miracle Prayer

Dear Heart of Jesus,
In the past I have asked for many favours.
This time I ask for a special one. (mention here)
Take it, dear Heart of Jesus, and place it within your own broken
Heart where your Father sees it.
Then, in his merciful eyes, it will become your favour, not mine. Amen.
Say this prayer for three days.

E.K.

Hoping...
to be in a relationship?
Seeking...
someone who shares your faith?
Finding...
it difficult to meet the right person?

Call: 01 568 6568



Support Irish **Missionaries**



'NET helped me make my faith SO much stronger than it's ever been, and it's really helped me improve as a man of God.' – Michael (19), Dublin

Please help support young NET missionaries like Michael to minister to the youth of Ireland.

Phone 074 919 0606 to make a donation today.

Operation Smile

Charity Regulatory Authority No. 20054588 Revenue Number: CHY 15661

By remembering Operation Smile in your Will, you are leaving the gift of a lasting smile for a child born with a cleft condition.

Operation Smile envisions a future where health and dignity are championed through safe surgery. Get in touch with Kristen Bell, Legacy & Fundraising Manager, on 01 667 6659 or kristen@operationsmile.ie or visit operationsmile.ie/LastingSmile

SERVICES

ALL UNWANTED home waste removed. Cookers, fridges, beds, suites, wardrobes, carpets etc. Removed and disposed of in a proper manner. No job too small or big. Contact Tommy, 087 6406015.

3 DAY PILGRIMAGE TO LOUGH DERG

ST OLIVER PLUNKETT Lough Derg 2022 3 day pilgrimage from Dublin. Dates are June 3 - 5, July 1 - 3 and August 12 - 14. Cost €120 / Pensioners and Students €110. Phone 086 3853027 or 01 4941171 for booking form.

The Irish Catholic

PREPAID CLASSIFIED AD COUPON

Please print your advertisement in the coupon, placing ONE word in each space. Below, please print your name and address. Do you require a Box Number? YES ☐ NO ☐ (Please tick ✓) Box Number €6 extra.

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

Name and contact detail form **MUST** be filled out

Name

Address

Landline Mobile

The Irish Catholic, Unit 3b, Bracken Business Park, Bracken Road, Sandyford, Dublin 18, D18 K277.

STATE UNDER WHICH HEADING YOUR AD IS TO APPEAR:

Minimum charge of €24.60 (inc. VAT) for 5 lines (25 words). Extra lines €4.92 each.

No. of insertions: _____ weeks

Miracle Prayer €40

I enclose Cheque/PO: €..... I wish to pay by Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Laser ☐

My Visa/Mastercard/Lasercard number is:

.....

Expiry Date: Signature

Phone: 01 687 4094

We will pass on the flame of faith.

For over 130 years, The Irish Catholic has been a voice of hope and inspiration for Catholics in Ireland. Help us pass on the flame of faith by remembering us in your Will.

Phone 01 6874028 info@irishcatholic.ie

Classifieds: 01 687 4094

The Gift Of A Lifetime

Be there for others after you're gone.

A gift in your will to Irish Hospice Foundation is a meaningful way to help ensure no-one faces death or bereavement without the care and support they need.

Email Anna Sadlier at
anna.sadlier@hospicefoundation.ie
or call 01 679 3188



Irish
Hospice
Foundation

www.hospicefoundation.ie

MQI

Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

Your heart for the homeless

Merchants Quay Ireland reaches out with kindness to people living on our streets, sleeping in doorways, suffering and alone.

Your legacy, of any amount, can enfold the most vulnerable and lonely in wrap-around supports. You may wish to keep the details confidential. But we want to give you this little wooden keepsake, made by a client, for you.

This is your heart for the homeless and those on the road to recovery.

To receive your little wooden heart and information on remembering

Merchants Quay Ireland in your will, ring Emma Murphy, Legacies Manager at 01-524 0965 or email emma.murphy@mqi.ie

Please pray for the beatification of

Little Nellie of Holy God

"May God enrich with every blessing all those who recommend frequent Communion to little boys and girls proposing Nellie as their model"

— Pope St Pius X, June 4, 1912

Will the MSC Missions

Missionaries of the Sacred Heart bring hope to the poorest people living in over 48 countries worldwide.

Please help us with a gift in your Will

Contact:

MSC Missions Office, PO Box 23 Western Road, Cork.
Tel: 021-4545704 Email: info@mscmisions.ie

www.mscmissions.ie

When you remember Trócaire in your Will, you bring hope to people living in the world's poorest places

Trócaire

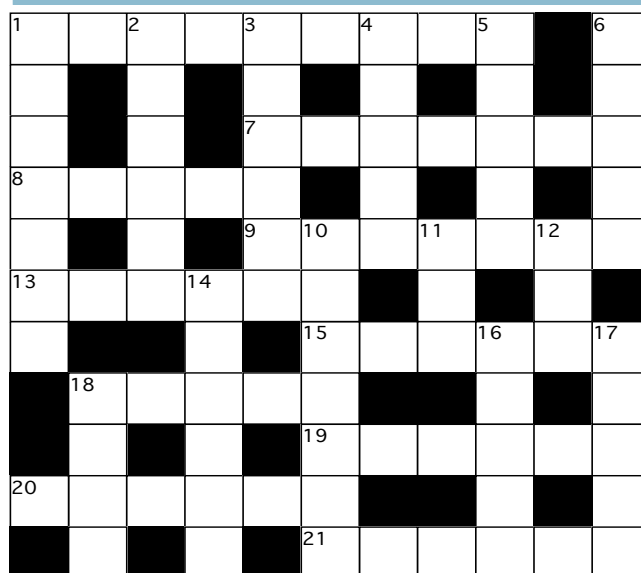
It's easy to get started, and we'll help you every step of the way. Call Grace Kelly on 01 629 3333, email grace.kelly@trocaire.org or write to me at Trócaire, Maynooth, Co Kildare.

One day, parents and their children will tell the story of how your legacy of love changed their lives. Thank you for considering a gift to Trócaire in your Will.

Leisure time

Crossword Junior

Ferdia 431



Across

- 1 It grows in an orchard, and might have plums or pears on it, for example (5,4)
7 You may get this if you touch something hot (7)
8 Not tilted; flat (5)
9 Green jewel (7)
13 What is left when you take ten from one hundred (6)
15 There is a breed of dog named a Red _____ (6)
18 Ahead of everyone else (5)
19 Get bigger (6)
20 Rock travelling in space (6)
21 People sail these boats for pleasure (6)
- 2 Odd, like the numbers 1, 3, 5 and so on (6)
3 Pill (6)
4 Lift up, make higher (5)
5 A bit more (5)
6 The Earth (5)
10 Something that can't be explained (7)
11 Creature that followed the Pied Piper (3)
12 This river flows through Cork (3)
14 Deserved because of effort (6)
16 An American word for rubbish (5)
17 Travels on horseback (5)
18 These parts of your body include your toes (4)

Down

- 1 Tumbling (7)

SOLUTIONS, APRIL 28

GORDIUS NO. 556

Across — 1 Microlight 6 Scot 10 Shave 11 Things are looking up 12 Pounded 15 Nerds 17 Road 18 INRI 19 Adder 21 Skewers 24 Afar 25 Main 26 Ninja 28 Gascony 34 Brave 35 Drey 36 Usherettes

Down — 1 Mass media 2 Clamoured 3 Ocean 4 Istle 5 Hail 7 Chair 8 Treasurers 9 Agendas 13 Dark Ages 14 Drawing 16 Dismantled 20 Defendant 21 Samaria 22 Rows 27 Niobe 29 Ample 30 Cable 32 Fees

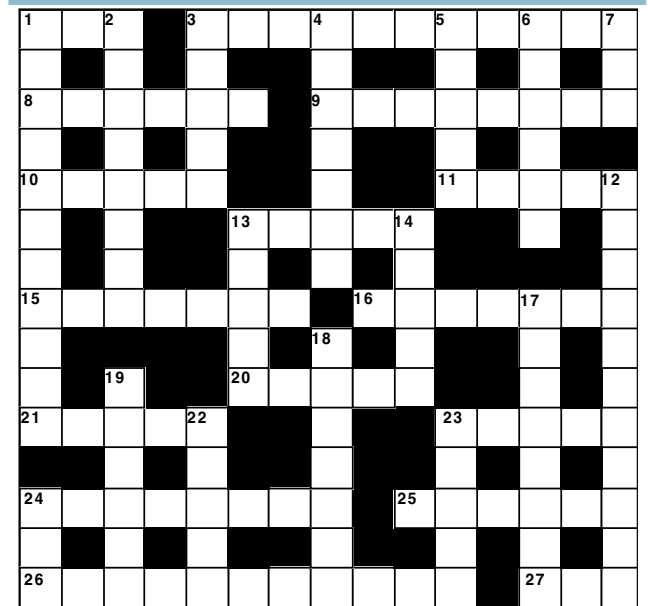
CHILDREN'S No. 430

Across — 1 Orang-utan 6 Earrings 7 Pet 8 Ticks 9 Orders 10 Kid 12 Aeroplane 14 Nib 15 Read 16 Radio

Down — 1 Overtaking 2 Abracadabra 3 Grins 4 Tightrope 5 Cactus 7 Prepared 11 Great 13 Euro

Crossword

Gordius 557



Across

- 1 Taxi (3)
3 Sweet-singing bird (11)
8 How one clouts a voracious eater (6)
9 Omit, neglect to include (5,3)
10 Perfect - exactly as imagined (5)
11 Showing signs of age or worry (5)
13 & 20a One whose work should ensure one's keys work properly! (5,5)
15 Panacea (4-3)
16 Of a wandering lifestyle (7)
20 See 13 across
21 Finger or toe (5)
23 & 24 Hymn which begins "Bring flowers of the rarest" (5,2,3,3)
25 Goodness; they say it is its own reward (6)
26 German valley where pre-historic humanoid remains were discovered (11)
27 Decompose (3)
- visitor who presents it (7,4)
2 An unmarried man (8)
3 Pertaining to the nose (5)
4 Vacation (7)
5 Book of fiction (5)
6 Flourish, be widely present (6)
7 Amphibian (3)
12 Fine insight and judgment (11)
13 Aviator (5)
14 A smell (5)
17 One who makes movies (8)
18 Set in code (7)
19 Crime writer Ms Christie (6)
22 Progression (5)
23 Feather used as a pen, or surname of The Bould Thady (5)
24 Possess (3)

Down

- 1 It bears the name of the

Sudoku Corner

431

Easy

	5		9	7		4		
4							2	1
3					5			
2	9		1			6	7	
		8				3		
	1	7	6	8				
		6			7			
	3			2	9	7		4
7		4		3	6	1		2

Hard

4			8					
	2				9		7	1
3					4	8	6	
				9	8			
	5	8				9	4	
			4	1				
	1	4	7					6
6	3		9				2	
					3			9

Last week's Easy 430

7	2	1	3	4	8	6	5	9
9	5	8	1	6	2	4	7	3
4	6	3	9	5	7	8	1	2
5	4	9	7	8	6	2	3	1
1	3	6	4	2	9	5	8	7
8	7	2	5	1	3	9	6	4
3	1	5	8	9	4	7	2	6
6	8	4	2	7	1	3	9	5
2	9	7	6	3	5	1	4	8

Last week's Hard 430

9	1	7	8	6	2	3	5	4
2	8	6	5	4	3	1	7	9
3	4	5	1	9	7	6	2	8
7	6	4	3	2	1	9	8	5
8	2	3	6	5	9	7	4	1
1	5	9	7	8	4	2	6	3
4	9	1	2	7	8	5	3	6
5	3	2	4	1	6	8	9	7
6	7	8	9	3	5	4	1	2

Notebook

Fr Vincent Sherlock



Too quickly we can forget the victims in horror headlines

WHEN I WAS ABOUT seven years old, my county, and indeed the whole country, was shocked by the murder of Bernadette Connolly, a young girl from Collooney. It was as if the world had stopped spinning and her name was on everyone's lips. Later, I came to know her father and some of her family when I worked in Collooney parish. Though I never recall speaking to her father about Bernadette, any time I met him, I knew that his heart must have been so broken by those events from over 20 years earlier. There is no getting over tragedy like this and time, despite the cliché, more often than not falls well short of the promised healing.

The shock of this event and the impact it had on countless people speak to the value of life. It was wrong, is wrong, that anyone's life be taken by another and when that person is so clearly an innocent victim of another's warped perception of life, the pain is more tangible. Bernadette should not have died but her death rightly and understandably shocked and angered people, beyond just her immediate family and circle of friends.

In recent weeks three men have been murdered in Sligo. Their names are well known and



have been circulated in countless newspaper articles, news bulletins and social media. Again, people are shocked and angered by this senseless taking of life. A few months ago, the country experienced similar outrage following the death of Ashling Murphy. There is scarcely a news bulletin now that does not carry a report around violent deaths in our streets and, indeed, in our homes. It is frightening.

Sad truth

The saddest truth of all, it seems to me, is how quickly we can move on. The horror of the headlines, the calls for justice, the blaming and the name-calling, quickly fall to silence and fall from our

memories. I noticed an online post recently in the wake of the murders of Aidan Moffitt and Michael Snee that referenced "that young teacher" in Tullamore. To my shame, though I prayed for her and lamented her death, the name would not come to me, and I felt neither had it come to the person who posted the comment. How quickly – too quickly, we forget. We should not forget. We cannot forget because to forget makes these deaths just another story and they are never "just another story" for their families, loved ones and friends. I know that Ashling's family, Aidan and Michael's families and the families of all murder victims will, not for a single day or hour, forget their names and be reminded of the depth of pain and loss they endure.

I think we need to hold on to shock. I know we cannot allow ourselves to be over-whelmed or brought to a place where we are too fearful to live our lives but there must remain a place for shock. My parents spoke of Bernadette's death. I remember, albeit vaguely, watching a clip of her funeral and seeing the white coffin. I think I remember flowers around it too, but they were without colour in the black and white

reel. Whether this is an accurate memory or not, there is something emblazoned that takes me back to when I was seven and a child, not much older than I, was murdered. My parents knew this was wrong and I did too. I don't remember them saying anything to me, but it was an upset to them, to everyone and we knew this should not be happening.

Murders

That leads me to wonder what will be remembered of recent murders? As I say, family and close friends will remember but, for the rest of us, will we struggle to recall names? It is so important that we never allow ourselves not to be shocked by violence, cruelty and death. All too easily we can click the remote-control button and move to another channel as if that erases the reality we have just witnessed – as if life goes on. Yes, it goes on, but in the wake of violence we need to let shock and horror have their say. We need to draw closer, in thanksgiving, for those around us and we must not easily forget the pain of those whose lives will never, ever, be the same again because someone murdered someone they love.

Respect life.

Tell me it's not true

The first live musical I ever attended was 'Blood Brothers' in the Olympia Theatre and it would have been in the mid-80s. Rebecca Storm played the part of Mrs Johnstone and the final scene has her on her knees between her two sons who have just died in gunfire. As she takes off her coat and tries to cover their bodies, she sings:

"Tell me it's not true, say it's just a story

Tell me it's not true, though it's here before me

Say it's just a dream, say it's just a scene, from an old movie from years ago

Say it's just pretend, say it's just the end of an old movie from years ago..."

She is broken in grief. I have thought of her many times in recent weeks. Lord, console those left to grieve.



THIS EASTERTIDE, PLEASE HELP THE CHURCH IN UKRAINE

The Little Way Association is supporting the church in war-torn Ukraine. A grateful bishop whom we have helped writes: "Immediately after the beginning of the war we set up 450 places for internally displaced persons (women and children) from all over Ukraine in the houses of our diocese. In each facility they receive safe accommodation, meals, as well as clothing, hygiene products, etc. A further 1,200 places have been set up in the parish and family houses throughout the diocese. We wish you and all our benefactors God's richest blessings!"

The appeals for assistance continue to arrive at Sacred Heart House. A bishop in south-west Ukraine writes: "We are united and everyone wants to help those in need. Today we have many refugees. On the ground, in every city, town and village, we receive people who have left their homes because of the war. We provide them with housing and various kinds of help (food, hygiene items, clothes, etc.).

"We try to help with humanitarian aid both in our territory and in the territory where hostilities are taking place. We share everything we can. As we are unfortunately not able to meet the current needs, we are asking you for your financial support for the procurement of the necessary items for the needy people who have been affected by the war or who have had to flee from the war zones."

This Eastertide, please give what you can for the families, clergy and religious of Ukraine. Every cent you donate will be gratefully received and sent without deduction to help the suffering people of Ukraine. To donate online go to littlwayassociation.enthouse.com/ukraine



"Jesus wills that we give alms to Him as to one poor and needy. He puts Himself as it were at our mercy; He will take nothing but what we give Him from our heart, and the very least trifle is precious in His sight." ~ St Therese

MISSIONARIES NEED YOUR MASS OFFERINGS

In these fraught times, missionary priests rely more than ever on stipends for their daily subsistence and for helping the poorest of their communities. The Little Way Association will convey your stipends and your intentions to the clergy overseas.

We like to send a minimum of €5 or more for each Mass

WELLS NEEDED

Missionaries constantly appeal to The Little Way for funds to sink wells in order to provide clean water, the lack of which causes much illness and many medical needs. On average, women in Africa and Asia walk around three hours every day to fetch water, often in scorching heat. Can you help provide a well? Your kind gift will be forwarded intact and gratefully received.



Crossed POs and cheques should be sent and made payable to:

THE LITTLE WAY ASSOCIATION
Sacred Heart House, 119 Cedars Rd, Clapham Common, London SW4 0PR
(Registered Charity No. 235703) Tel 0044 20 76 22 0466
www.littlewayassociation.com

I enclose €..... to be allocated to:

€..... **UKRAINE EMERGENCY APPEAL**
€..... **HUNGRY, SICK & DEPRIVED**
€..... **WELLS AND CLEAN WATER**
€..... **MASS OFFERINGS**
(Please state no. of Masses)
€..... **LITTLE WAY ADMIN EXPENSES**

☐ Please tick if you would like an acknowledgement

Name (Rev. Mr. Mrs. Miss)

(Block letters please)

Address

To donate online go to
www.littlewayassociation.com

DONATIONS FOR THE MISSIONS ARE SENT WITHOUT DEDUCTION FOR ANY EXPENSES.