

The Irish Catholic

HOW WE EAT

Meat and the future of our planet
Pages 31 & 33



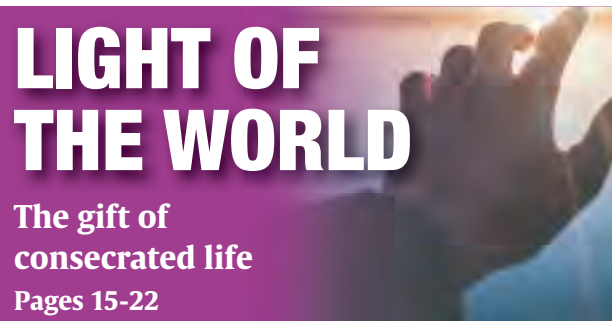
MARY KENNY

Everyone brings something to the table Page 5



LIGHT OF THE WORLD

The gift of consecrated life
Pages 15-22



Thursday, February 7, 2019

r1

€2.00 (Stg £1.70)

The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

@IrishCathNews

www.irishcatholic.com

Missionaries see hope in rise of Venezuelan people

Irish priests promise to stand by the people

EXCLUSIVE
Greg Daly

Irish missionaries in beleaguered Venezuela have said they see fresh hope in large peaceful protests against the government of President Nicolás Maduro.

Although the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart say the situation in the South American country is much worse now than even a year ago, they describe open support for opposition leader Juan Guaidó as “a miracle” and say they are determined to stand by their Venezuelan flocks.

“The people rose up, and the people are rising up all over the country,” Fr Vincent Screene, who has worked in Venezuela for over 50 years, told *The Irish Catholic*. “There were lots who were always suspicious of Chavez’ work and Maduro and they have come down from the hills and are supporting the opposition leader.”

Speaking exclusively to this newspaper, Fr Screene described the outpouring of support for

» Continued on Page 2

Finding a way in the virtual world...



First year STEM role models welcome 6th class students from Muire gan Smál to Presentation Secondary School, Castleisland to complete a workshop in virtual reality as part of the school's Digital Excellence Project. (l-r) Zara O'Connor, Sarah Keating and Katie Nolan.

‘Fat, balding Irish bishop’ doesn’t have clout

Chai Brady

Don't rely on a “fat, balding Irish bishop” to speak out and defend the Church, a US cardinal has warned.

It is unclear whether the head of the Archdiocese of New York, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, was just talking about himself, but he sent out a strong message not to rely on clergy to defend the Faith.

After facing criticism for not excommunicating New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo for signing a bill that allows abortion up until the day of birth, Cardinal Dolan said he has little “clout”.

“Don't yell at me, look at yourselves. You're the only ones that can do it, okay?” he told a US radio station.

“You do something! Okay?” said Dolan. “I don't have much clout – some fat, balding, Irish bishop talking about defending the Church, talking about how hideous this abortion bill is.”

Faced from criticism from all sides, Cardinal Dolan said it would be “counterproductive” to

» Continued on Page 2

MICHAEL KELLY

Making sense of suffering

PAGE 2



CATHOLIC EDUCATION

No school is an island

PAGE 27



DAVID QUINN

Wanted: a hierarchy fit for purpose

PAGE 9





SPECIAL CHRISTIAN SOLIDARITY PILGRIMAGE

1-9 OCTOBER 2019

6-14 OCTOBER 2019

PRICE: €1445 INCLUDING TAXES AND TIPS

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

To reserve your place: Call Dublin (01) 878 8159 or Belfast (028) 95680005 or email info@marian.ie

The Irish Catholic

MARIAN PILGRIMAGES

Inside this week

Medical Matters

When is it too old to drive?

Page 32



France on fire

Understanding why people take to the streets

Pages 36-37



Letter from Rome

Pope hopes for greater dialogue with Islam

Page 23



Managing Editor: Michael Kelly, editor@irishcatholic.ie

Assistant Editor: Greg Daly, greg@irishcatholic.ie

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

Multimedia Journalists: Chai Brady, chai@irishcatholic.ie

Colm Fitzpatrick, colm@irishcatholic.ie

Newsroom: news@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874026

Books Editor: Peter Costello, books@irishcatholic.ie

Layout: Declan Moroney

Advertising: advertising@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874094

Accounts: accounts@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874020

Magnificat: magnificat@irishcatholic.ie

Office hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
9.30am–5.30pm

Shop: shop@irishcatholic.ie

Managing Director: Garry O'Sullivan

Annual Subscription Rates: Ireland €145. Airmail €198. Six months – €75.
ISSN 1393 - 6832 - Published by The Irish Catholic,
23 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.
Printed by Webprint, Cork

Place an Advert

Phone 01 687 4094 or advertising@irishcatholic.ie

Making sense of suffering

A punch in the stomach followed by a kick in the teeth – that's how a priest described his reaction to the death of Fr John Cummins. A priest of the Kildare and Leighlin Diocese, 52-year-old Fr John died in an accident last week.

Speaking at the requiem Mass for Fr John, Bishop Denis Nulty recalled how "John loved being a priest."

"He gave his life to the Church as a priest. At a time when the Church needs more good priests on the pitch, it feels as if God scored an own goal last Wednesday evening," Bishop Denis said.

Quite apart from the overwhelming sadness felt at the tragic loss of Fr John, the Church in Ireland can ill afford to lose a youngish priest in the prime of his ministry.

It brings to mind the phrase attributed to St Teresa of Avila in a likely apocryphal exchange with God after the nun experienced a particular run of bad luck: "If this is how you treat your friends, it is no wonder you have so few!"

It's the same sentiment felt by the apostles after the death of Christ on the road to Emmaus when they addressed their questioner: "Our own hope had been..."

Religion is not magic and the friendship with God that is of the essence of Catholicism doesn't remove



Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

pain, suffering, injustice and crushing disappointment.

Those whom we love will often suffer and die. Our hearts will be broken precisely because we have loved and been loved. It's a painful truth, but the alternative – a life without love – is too unbearable to contemplate.

“Christianity is nothing if it is not the assurance that God is with us always”

CS Lewis summed up the paradox in *The Four Loves* when he wrote that "to love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness."

"But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be

vulnerable," he wrote.

Vulnerability is at the heart of the Christian vocation. We worship a God who did not come to rule the Earth in power and majesty but as a defenceless little baby. God contrasts the noisy and ostentatious power of the world with the power of love in an infant.

Quo vadis Domine? The only antidote to pain and suffering is hope – hope that God is there in the midst of the darkness. Christianity is nothing if it is not the assurance that God is with us always, and that our suffering has meaning – even if we can't see or understand that suffering.

Our Faith teaches that if we unite our suffering to Christ's, our suffering will be redemptive.

This is our hope.

See *Questions of Faith*, Page 26. Michael Kelly is co-author of a new book with Austen Ivereigh *How to Defend the Faith – Without Raising Your Voice – it is available from Columba Books, www.columbabooks.com*



Irish priests promise to stand by the people

» Continued from Page 1

35-year-old Mr Guaidó, a hitherto almost unknown figure who assumed leadership of the National Assembly last month, as miraculous.

"There's anger and a lack of confidence among the people, so it's a miracle how over the last couple of weeks the people have come out," he said, adding, "there's a lot of hope at the moment".

Fr Tom Jordan has likewise expressed amazement at the rise to prominence of Mr Guaidó as a focus for opposition to the Maduro regime.

"People really and truly are hungry and they're dying for the want of medicine, so it's sort of a godsend in a sense that this young man, Juan Guaidó, comes and appears. He's only 35 but is a member of the assembly, and he has taken the side of the people."

Maintaining that support for President Maduro and his predecessor Hugo Chávez had depended on rigged votes and intimidation from members of the armed forces, Fr Jordan described President Maduro's position as apparently secure due to backing from well-paid

high-ranking army officers.

While holding out hope that support for Juan Guaidó will lead to a fresh government and an improvement in the country's fortunes, the missionaries, who run two parishes and several parish outreach centres in Venezuela, will continue to care for the people as best they can.

"The poor are starving, and the middle classes have become impoverished. We're trying to help where we can, just to help them keep the wolf from the door," Fr Screene said. "Please God,

I'll be able to stay while my health holds up."

Funding from the order in Europe is vital for this, Fr Jordan pointed out, while lamenting that shortages of flour make helping the people increasingly difficult.

"What we have tried to do is to buy bread, but that's become virtually impossible because we cannot obtain flour – you just can't buy it, though there's a soup kitchen at least once a week on the weekend," he said. "We keep that going – some bread and soup but not much more."

At the same time, he continued, the missionaries are committed to standing by the ordinary people. "There's a lot we can do, and I still have a lot of energy yet. You have to be with the people. The last thing to go down with the ship is the captain, so to speak. And the more they need us, the more we should be there."

'Fat, balding Irish bishop' doesn't have clout

» Continued from Page 1
excommunicate the governor. He said that when "committed, thoughtful, compelling lay people are speaking up", that gets votes, but when a bishop speaks out people think: "they have to feel that way."

For Cardinal Dolan, there doesn't seem to be a future for fat, balding Irish bishops leading the Church.

LEAVE A LEGACY FOR LIFE - SUPPORT THE PRO LIFE CAMPAIGN IN YOUR WILL

Contact us today to order a copy of our Wills Information leaflet



The Pro Life Campaign promotes pro-life education and defends human life at all stages, from conception to natural death. For more info visit www.prolifecampaign.ie

prolife
campaign

Pro Life Campaign
Suite 60, Clifton House,
Lower Fitzwilliam Street,
Dublin 2
info@prolifecampaign.ie
01 6629275

What do you think?



Let us know by writing to:

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

YOUR LEGACY CAN CHANGE THE CHURCH IN IRELAND

PLEASE REMEMBER US IN YOUR WILL

ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE TO LOVE JESUS AND EMBRACE THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

NETMINISTRIES.IE
+353 74 919 0606

Massgoers asked for creative ideas to reach the unchurched

Greg Daly

Dublin parishioners are being asked to come up with creative ways to help spark faith in parents who bring their children for First Holy Communion but are not churchgoers.

In a wide-ranging consultation process launched this week, parishes will be asked to face up to the reality that of the many children who receive the Sacraments on annual days like Communion and Confirmation, they rarely if ever see the inside of the church again until their wedding day.

It's part of a survey intended to transform sacramental practice in the country's largest diocese.

The archdiocese is appealing for parents, guardians, parishes and

schools to respond to an online survey considering how the Faith is passed on, as a first step in a sacramental preparation review process.

Introducing the survey, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin said: "Ireland is changing, and Irish religious culture is changing, and we have to see how in the developing Irish religious culture we prepare people for the Sacraments, in particular for the Sacraments of initiation – Baptism, Holy Communion and Confirmation – which are the ways people are brought into the life of the Church community."

In a letter to accompany the survey, Archbishop Martin said he has become aware over the years of a "growing need" to review the preparation and celebration of

the Sacraments, with there being a widespread concern that they should be "celebrations of a vibrant faith rather than the 'conveyor belt' they are often described".

Survey

The first step in the consultation process will be a listening exercise, Dr Martin explained, beginning with a short online survey which will be online for the three weeks from February 4, after which a Review Group will contact parishes across the archdiocese to ensure that a representative sample of parishes have engaged with the process.

Done properly, the survey could help have "a transforming effect", Dr Martin said.

As well as asking for thoughts

on how many families involved in sacramental preparation are not churchgoers, the survey asks parents to consider whose responsibility it is to pass on the Faith and the role of Catholicism in their own lives. It also asks how the Faith of children and parents is enhanced by sacramental preparation, and what new directions should be considered in preparing for the Sacraments.

Describing this as "a great opportunity", Dr Martin said: "There'll be difficulties, but it's a great opportunity of renewal in the Church, and I hope that many, many people will join in this consultation so that we come up with results that will be owned by people in today's Church and in tomorrow's Church."

Parish priest condemns paramilitary threat at border

Colm Fitzpatrick

A parish priest on a border county has condemned dissident republican activity in the area, after paramilitary arms were found by gardaí over the weekend.

Around one thousand rounds of ammunition and a mortar tube were found in two hides, approximately 6km from Omeath, Co. Louth, on Saturday. The ammunition was concealed in lunch boxes stashed in a barrel, which had been buried in the ground.

Commenting on the discovery, Rosminian Fr Oliver Stansfield of St Laurence's Church, Omeath, said there has been a dissident presence in the vicinity for a "long time" and that he was unsurprised by the discovery.

"This would be the area where you would expect something like that," he said, adding that the area is a "flashpoint" for people travelling between the north and south of the border.

Activity

Fr Stansfield suggested that the paramilitary activity may be "related" to the topical discussions surrounding a hard border, but that this is difficult to discern given how such activity is already "part and parcel of the area".

Condemning the discovery, he said: "These things are not helpful for anybody. I've no time at all for this sort of carry on to be honest myself."

The finds followed a search operation by gardaí, with the aid of a digger, as a result of intelligence gathering by officers.

Ashton Kutcher praised for posting pro-life message

Chai Brady

US superstar Ashton Kutcher has been praised by pro-life groups after posting a Down syndrome advocate's powerful testimony in front of Congress.

The actor shared the video of Special Olympian Frank Stephen's pro-life message with the message: "Everyone's life is valuable."

Kutcher's post comes amid a reignited debate partly led

by New York's recent passing of a law that hugely loosens abortion regulation.

The actor appeared to row back in a new post, after receiving huge support from pro-life advocates, saying he doesn't see abortion as "a black and white issue".

However he added: "We are genetically diverse as a species by design, for generational survival, and should think very carefully about how we regulate these

sciences."

"This idea of non-dominant outcomes being inferior and non-desirable traits being negative, and then selected – is a very slippery slope that looks a lot like embryonic eugenics and that scares me."

Ashton Kutcher.



CAMINO DE SANTIAGO IN THE SPIRIT OF ST JAMES

Escorted Walking Pilgrimage

SARRIA TO SANTIAGO
The Last 100km

7 NIGHTS FROM DUBLIN

27 MAY - 3 JUNE

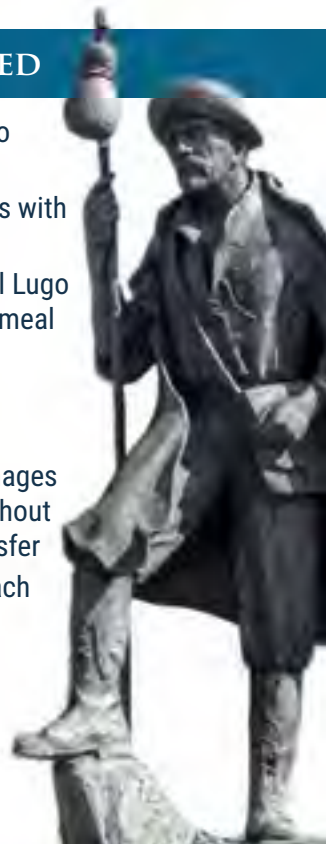
PRICE:

€895 PER PERSON
SHARING



WHAT IS INCLUDED

- Aer Lingus flights Dublin to Santiago de Compostela
- Airport and Hotel Transfers with guide assistance
- 4 nights in the Grand Hotel Lugo with breakfast and evening meal
- 3 nights in Hotel Hesperia Peregrino in Santiago with breakfast and evening meal
- Services of Marian Pilgrimages Tours representative throughout with back-up car & bag transfer
- Luxury air-conditioned coach throughout the itinerary
- Official Cathedral de Santiago Passport
- 5 Walking days approx. 20km - 5hrs each
- All taxes and charges



Calls for Friday Fast to be reintroduced

Chai Brady

Reintroducing meat-free Fridays would help Christian spirituality and the environment according to a monk and a professor.

The Friday Fast was changed in 1983 after a decree from the Irish bishops which stated Catholics could fulfil Friday Penance by abstaining from alcohol, smoking, meat or some food, by making a special effort at family prayer or participating in Mass and more. However Prof. Stephen Bullivant from St Mary's University in London told *The Irish Catholic* that this has led to Friday becoming "just another day".

The bishops of Wales and England reintroduced the Friday Fast – the abstinence of just meat – eight years ago next month. "The rationale for getting rid of Friday fasting was that it's not the only thing you can do, and people were doing it mindlessly and not really fully embracing the meaning of it," said Prof. Bullivant.

"You either do something because that's what you do, or you don't do it, as it's turned out Friday has just become another day especially in the

denuded Catholic culture that we live in now, less so in Ireland – but it's going in a certain direction."

The effectiveness in its reintroduction is still in question, in terms of the amount of people who have taken it back up which Prof. Bullivant described as "patchy".

"I suspect that for those who were already committed and quite closely embedded into the Church it has had quite a good effect, it precisely doing what it sets out to do in embedding Catholicism into everyday practice," he said.

Prof Bullivant said that it's positive especially for children, who can be informed about the practice and its significance for Christians. Catholic schools can also become involved by providing meat free meals on Friday, becoming more "intentionally Catholic" he said.

Bro. Anthony Keane OSB of Glenstal Abbey in Limerick said that fasting can have benefits both for spirituality and the environment, and welcomed the idea of bringing back the Friday Fast.

He said: "There's a joy in

eating lightly sometimes. Imposing a fast by rule or by pre-planning can be a little difficult, if it is to be fulfilled wearisomely it's not good.

Quoting English poet John Milton he said: "'Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet' suggests a fast has elements of a feast, that you're living within the joys of the spirit and joys of all creation without necessarily having to recharge your batteries every minute, you're running on the spirit alone."

"You are finding a harmony and a balance within oneself and within the world, and really we are part of the environment so it's nice to enjoy the balance and the sustainability of the environment within oneself."

See Pages 31 & 33.

Fresh clergy appointments for Cloyne

Bishop of Cloyne William Crean has announced a fresh round of clerical appointments as the vocations crisis continues to bite.

Two priests of the diocese will retire later this month, Canon Jackie Corkery of Kanturk and Fr Michael Dorgan of Castlemagner.

Bishop Crean has announced that Fr Tobias Bluit, PP Doneraile is to take on the role of PP at Kanturk and Vicar Forane of Kanturk Deanery. He is also to serve as Administrator of Castlemagner parish.

Fr Aquin Casey returns from a sabbatical to be a curate in Cobh while Fr Aidan Crowley, currently a curate in Doneraile will take over as parish priest.

Fr Paul Bennett is to leave Blarney for sabbatical leave. Fr Gabriel Burke will move from Mitchelstown to replace him while Fr Patrick O'Donoghue will move from Cobh as curate to Mitchelstown.

Suits you, madam!



Derry's bishop Donal McKeown shares his *zuchetto* with Mrs Roisin McKenna of St Colm's Highschool, Draperstown, as secondary school students from across the diocese receive their Pope John Paul II awards. Photo: Stephen Latimer

Fr Cummins recalled as a 'great man' at funeral

Staff reporter

Tributes have been pouring in after a Laois-based priest died in a tragic accident involving his car, with Bishop Denis Nulty describing his death as "heart-wrenching" in his funeral homily over the weekend.

Fr John Cummins (52) of Abbeyleix, Co. Laois, died after an incident at his home on the Ballinakill Road on January 30 at around 4.30pm. Fr Cummins had served in the parish for 18 months.

The funeral Mass took place on February 3 in the

Church of the Holy Rosary in Abbeyleix. Bishop Nulty said that messages had "poured in" since the tragedy, saying: "Every message, every tribute said the same thing. John was gentle, loyal, he was so pastoral, he was the essence of kindness. John was a great preacher."

"A great man to stay in touch with friends, as many lay as clerical, with couples he married, with former colleagues from Carlow IT, and of course with family."

"At a time when the Church needs more good priests on the pitch, it feels as

if God scored an own goal last Wednesday evening (January 30). John was not just a good priest, he was a great one as tributes of recent days vouch."

Studies

He served for four years in Naas; five years pursuing further studies in Rome; five years as Chaplain in the Institute of Technology in Carlow; twelve years in the Cathedral Parish, eleven of those years its Administrator, and "a much too short year and half here with you in Abbeyleix," added Bishop Nulty.

Focus Ireland founder

Sr Stan

reconnects us with a monastic tradition

Price:
€12.99
+ €3 (P&P)



This beautiful new book from Sr Stan is structured around the traditional monastic schedule of eight 'hours' of daily guided prayer. However, this is written for readers to dip in and out of, to find the spiritual comfort they need at any time, with short but inspiring prayers, poems and biblical quotes.



23 Merrion Sq. N., Dublin 2

To order call 01 687 4096
or email sales@columba.ie
www.columbabooks.com

Capuchin Day Care Centre

29 Bow Street, Dublin 7



Every day The Capuchin Day Care Centre provides
600 Meals for people who are homeless and each week
1000 Food Parcels for those on the poverty threshold.

Help Bro. Kevin continue providing
this caring service.

Bro. Kevin or Therese 01 8720770
www.homeless.ie



Superman star condemns US abortion law

Well-known actor Dean Cain, best known for playing the role of Superman in the TV series *Lois & Clark*, has said that the crimes of convicted abortionist Kermit Gosnell would be legal under new "healthcare" laws passed in New York.

Discussing the Reproductive Health Act passed last month, the actor who also stars in and co-produced *Gosnell: The Trial of America's Biggest Serial Killer*, said the new law removes protections from unborn children, and allows abortion up to birth in

some cases.

Appearing on 'Fox and Friends', Mr Cain compared the legislation with Dr Kermit Gosnell who was convicted on three counts of murder for the death of three infant children and also involuntary manslaughter.

"But that would be legal for New York law and what's being proposed in Vermont," Mr Cain said. "They call it 'the health of the mother', so it's a really fungible thing to say, whether it's emotional health or whatever it might be."

Everyone brings something different to the table

Some years ago, I was invited to accompany an Australian right-to-life group to a witness vigil outside a Melbourne abortion clinic. I was staying with one of the women involved in the event, so I said I would.

It was a peaceful and respectful gathering. The participants were seated on a wall, or on the pavement outside the clinic. There were some right-to-life placards. Passers-by either indicated agreement, or, indeed, disagreement. One older woman muttered at the group "you people are mad". Yet, my recollection is that it was an event where no one was harassed, but those involved felt the need to bear witness.

I have since met individuals in Britain who are part of networks such as Good Counsel and Be Here for Me, who offer their presence outside abortion clinics.

“If it is done in a spirit of being there for women in crisis pregnancies, the pro-life vigil is a valid expression of freedom of assembly”

Last year, I met a sincere young Kerrywoman, Siobhan, who has been part of a group who gather outside an Ealing abortion clinic where the local council have sought to set an exclusion zone. (The Home Secretary, the Muslim Savid Javid, said that excluding vigils would not be a "proportionate response"; people had the right to demonstrate peacefully and non-threateningly. Some British pro-choice libertarians agree with this right to



Mary Kenny

assembly, even for their opponents.)

When I asked Siobhan about why she participated in the vigils she said: "I just feel it such a privilege to be able to help women in these circumstances, whenever I can."

And the Good Counsel network say they have helped women through their pregnancies, just by being visible.

If it is peaceful, if it is non-threatening to individuals, and if it is done in a spirit of being there for women in crisis pregnancies, the pro-life vigil is a valid expression of freedom of assembly.

However, I did learn, from the Australian experience, that it was not something I feel drawn to, personally. But that's as it should be: people do things differently, and everyone brings something different to the table.

What I feel, personally, is an urge to emphasise

the positive in the pro-life story: to marvel at the developments in foetal medicine – babies now having corrective surgery in the womb, for example.

Technology

The onward march of technology which explores amazing development of life and the wonders of medicine which can support fragile pregnancies. And to explore the many ways society could be more supportive of mothers (and fathers) who are struggling; or, as we see from falling fertility all over Europe, who feel the present economic structures of society just don't validate and support motherhood in a positive way. Modern capitalism only sees mothers as "productive" if they are making money.

Each person brings something different to the table, and each person finds their own way of making a contribution to great causes.



● I was reminded, last Saturday, February 2, that it was Groundhog Day. I don't think we have the groundhog – a kind of large squirrel or marmot [pictured] – on this side of the pond, but as anyone familiar with Bill Murray's hilarious movie of the same name will know, the groundhog's appearance is a noted spring ritual in America. February 2, as I also had to be reminded, is Candlemas, or the Feast of the Presentation. It certainly is in the Church calendar but it's so under-emphasised that many of us are probably more conscious now of February 2 as Groundhog Day.

Roma shows how precious life is

Both moving and harrowing, the much-praised film *Roma*, set in Mexico, could well be described as a pro-life story. It follows the poignant 1970s tale of a young servant girl, Cleo, working for a middle-class white family – Cleo herself is Mexican Indian – who becomes pregnant out of wedlock. The father of her child is horribly, even violently, rejecting of her situation, though the family she works for are kind.

There's a truly heart-wrenching birthing scene which ends in tragedy, yet illuminates how desperately everyone wants a baby to live, wanted or unwanted.

The director Alfonso Cuarón previously made *The Children of Men*, from P.D. James' novel; this too focused on fertility, imagining the horrors of a dystopian world where no babies were born. The message, again, was how precious is human life.



MARIAN PILGRIMAGES

RENEW OUR SPIRIT OF LOVE, FORGIVENESS AND PEACE

FULLY ESCORTED PILGRIMAGES BY MARIAN PILGRIMAGES

SAINT PIO PILGRIMAGES



Discover the life and works of St. Pio

San Giovanni Rotondo with a full religious programme and itinerary including visits to Pietrelcina the birth place of St Pio, the English Office, capuchin friary and the Shrine of St. Michael the Archangel.

4 NIGHTS

9th April 2019 - £579pps
Departing from Belfast

6th June 2019 - €745pps
Departing from Dublin

FEAST DAY PILGRIMAGE

20th Sept 2019 - €665pps
Departing from Dublin

9th Oct 2019 - €699pps
Departing from Dublin

5 NIGHTS

19th June 2019 - €799pps
Departing from Dublin

6 NIGHTS

5th August 2019 - €885pps
Departing from Dublin Includes a stay in Benevento

7 NIGHTS

17th June 2019 - €985pps
Departing from Cork Includes stays in Benevento and Avellino

WE INCLUDE Fully Escorted Packaged Pilgrimage - Spiritual Directors - Services of Marian Pilgrimages Rep. on the Ground - Return flights - Hotel Accommodation Religious Programme - All Airport & local Taxes

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE PACKAGES

WITH DIRECT FLIGHTS TO LOURDES

3 NIGHTS

from €499pps

4 NIGHTS

from €549pps

5 NIGHTS

from €699pps

7 NIGHTS

from €739pps

WE INCLUDE Return Flights from Dublin - Coach transfers in France - 4 * Hotel Accommodation - Spiritual Directors - Services of Marian Pilgrimages Rep. on the Ground - Walking Tour of Lourdes - All Airport and local Taxes

All Pilgrimages include an expertly created itinerary with spiritual director, flights, accommodation, transport, guide and a local Marian Pilgrimages representative while abroad as standard.

Full itineraries are available at www.marian.ie or on request by phone



WWW.MARIAN.IE

(01) 878 8159 | (028) 95680005 | info@marian.ie

19 Eden Quay, Dublin 1

Fully licensed and bonded tour operator TO142

Celibacy key to full-time advocacy, priest says

Greg Daly

Well-known homelessness campaigner Fr Peter McVerry has said that celibacy has been essential to enabling him to work for Dublin's poorest and most marginalised.

"From a practical point of view, being a Jesuit you've a freedom to work in a way that you wouldn't be free to work if you had a family to look after and a wage to earn," he told *The Irish Catholic*.

"So I'm free – I'm available 24/7, I can live in Ballymun, I don't have to worry about the

kids growing up and getting into negative peer pressure. Being a Jesuit gives me a freedom to work in a way that I wouldn't be able to do if I wasn't a Jesuit," he added.

Fr McVerry described reaching out to people as "at the heart of my spirituality as a Jesuit".

Noting that there are other valuable ways of doing social justice work, he said that "obviously if you have a family and you depend on income, you do that in a different way".

The popular Jesuit's com-

ments came ahead of the posthumous publication of an article by the spiritual writer Fr Daniel O'Leary, in which he said that he had come to believe in his last days that that "compulsory celibacy is a kind of sin, an assault against God's will and nature".

In the article, published in *The Tablet*, Fr O'Leary he said "one of the fall-outs of mandatory celibate life is "the violence it does to a priest's humanity, and the wounds that it leaves on his ministry".

See Pages 16-17.

...but clerics should be able to choose

Colm Fitzpatrick

IC readers are split down the middle as to whether priestly celibacy should remain mandatory or become optional.

On the newspaper's Facebook page, online users were asked: "Pope Francis said this week that he is personally opposed to allowing priests to get married, but he also signalled an openness to married priests in some exceptions. Referring to areas suffering shortages of priests, he said 'some possibility' exists for married clergy in 'very far places', adding that when there is a 'pastoral necessity, the pastor should think

of the faithful'. "What do you think? Should celibacy be made optional, particularly in areas where there are few priests, or should celibacy remain the norm for priests in the Western Church?"

Out of the 537 people who voted, 280 respondents said that priestly celibacy should be optional, narrowly outnumbering the 257 respondents who opted for celibacy remaining mandatory.

One commenter said: "Celibacy is already optional. Anyone who doesn't want to be celibate can do something else, rather than become a priest."

See Page 24.



The Ryan family celebrate the Grandparents Day Mass for Catholic Schools Week in Doon Parish Church. (l-r) Grandmother Lena McNamara, Seán Ryan, Micheal Ryan, Judith Ryan and Joanne O'Connell, school principal Doon CBS. See Pages 12-13.

Warm welcome for hot lunches

Children at a Dublin school are delighted with an innovative hot school meals scheme being road-tested ahead of a wider pilot scheme, according to school authorities.

"The children are loving the food," Tonya Hanly, principal of Our Lady of Lourdes National School in Goldenbridge, told *The Irish Catholic*. "Certainly the children

are benefitting and there are quite a number of children who would not have a hot meal or have access to cooking facilities, so for them it's great."

Fr Louis McDermott, Parish Priest of Inchicore's St Michael's Church and a member of the school board of management, echoed this. "It'll be valuable, especially

for some families," he said. "It'll mean a lot to them to get a hot meal during the day."

"It'll be very interesting to see especially how the parents feel, and if they're happy with it," he added, noting that so far the reaction to the move "seems to be very positive from both the children and from the parents".

Emergency Appeal

Five years on since the Ebola epidemic, the impact of the crisis continues. The survivors urgently need your help.



misean cara
Mission Support from Ireland

Sr. Bernadette comforts Emma, an Ebola survivor living in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Emma lost 19 members of her family, only she and her sister are left.

The Missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary are providing a lifeline of food, health care and psycho-social support to Ebola Survivors.

DONATE NOW AT www.miseancara.ie

Martin Mansergh

The View



Commemorating the birth of a nation

January brought Ireland into the second and more difficult phase of the decade of centenaries dominated by the birth pangs of a new State. Part of the price of this or any form of Irish self-government was partition.

There are two modes of remembering. The ceremonial joint session of the Houses of the Oireachtas on January 21 in the Mansion House, where a First Dáil depleted by imprisoned members met 100 years ago, was an unequivocal celebration of our independent national democracy.

In 1919, a few hours previously, what is widely regarded as the opening shots of the War of Independence had been fired on a country road at Soloheadbeg, a few miles outside Tipperary, when an ambush by eight Volunteers to seize gelignite destined for a nearby quarry resulted in two policemen being shot dead.

The action was strongly condemned by the parish priest of Tipperary, Canon Arthur Ryan, known for his strong Redmondite sympathies. He lamented the likelihood that "where Tipperary leads Ireland follows". Opinion remains divided, many regarding leading members of the ambush party, Dan Breen and Seán Treacy, as patriotic heroes, while others regret a potentially avoidable loss of life of two police constables doing their duty.

However, in any armed confrontation, like one that occurred in Kerry in April 1918, it could as easily have been two Volunteers who laid dead afterwards.

Media interest

This centenary generated considerable media interest. Official ceremonies took place at the 1950 monument in a large open space opposite Solohead Church organised by the local parish community working in conjunction with the Third Tipperary Brigade Old IRA.

Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly conducted Sunday Mass in the large packed church with crowds waiting outside. Mass was attended by relatives of the original participants, Volunteers, council workmen and



police. All their names were listed on a new information plaque at the side of the monument, and read out.

The two principal speakers outside the church were the Culture Minister in charge of commemorations, Josepha Madigan, and Éamon Ó Cuív, de Valera's grandson. The tone was one of thoughtful commemoration, conscious of a duty of inclusion and reconciliation at such an important and defining event.

"Pearse exulted in the willingness to shed blood of those engaged in the First World War...but he was horrified with the bloodshed and destruction at the end of Easter Week"

There was a well-attended conference, including a History Ireland hedge school, the previous day at the Ballykisteen Hotel. Hagiography, certainly among historians, has given way to more dispassionate and critical examination.

As the original advice given to the Government by the Expert Advisory Group of independent historians, of which Dr Maurice Manning is chair, affirmed, "the State should not be expected to be neutral about its existence. The aim should be to broaden sympathies, without having to abandon loyalties, and in particular recognising the value of ideals and sacrifices

including their cost."

Throughout the War of Independence centenary, but much less so during its Civil War sequel, there will be many who want to celebrate – not just commemorate – the actions of local men and women, particularly where there is a family connection. Given Ireland's history, this is to be expected.

Ireland's "exaltation among the nations", which has a slightly biblical ring to it, was one of the goals of the 1916 Proclamation. Applied 100 years on to any military action that resulted in deaths, it is more debatable, however justified the cause. Certainly, restraint and respect rather than triumphalism was the tone of the Soloheadbeg commemoration outside the church.

In December 1915, Pearse exulted in the willingness to shed blood of those engaged in the First World War, for example in Belgium and the Dardanelles, but he was horrified when he came face to face with the bloodshed and destruction at the end of Easter Week, while still expressing the hope that enough had been done.

It had. Winston Churchill was thrilled in 1915 to be making history, directing part of a world war effort, but in old age, despite the credit he achieved for his leadership of Britain in the Second World War, he acknowledged the failure of his generation.

Perhaps the only time Louis XV earned the title of 'His Most Christian Majesty' was in 1745 when he toured

the body-strewn field of Fontenoy, which battle France had won with the help of the Irish Brigade, he pointed out to the Dauphin his son: "See what a victory costs. The blood of our enemies is still the blood of men. The true glory is to spare it."

"A sovereign, independent Ireland was ruled out in advance by the British Government"

The words are inscribed on a pillar to his memory erected in the cathedral city of Reims in 1818, in implied rebuke to Napoleon's reckless squandering of life in pursuit of glory. How many world leaders today think about sparing the lives

of their enemies, rather than refining weapons of last resort that could wipe out millions of people?

A sovereign, independent Ireland was ruled out in advance by the British Government, regardless of the size of the majority for it. Prising Ireland or even most of it out of Britain's grasp after centuries of being held down could not have been achieved by moral force or passive resistance alone, as Daniel O'Connell had found when he had to call off a mass Repeal meeting in Clontarf in 1843.

Most, though not all, historians would concede that even initially limited Irish independence could not have been gained without a combined strong democratically based political strategy and

armed resistance. Tens of thousands of Irish soldiers had fought in the Great War, ostensibly for the rights of small nations, amplified into self-determination after American entry into the war, only to be told that none of this applied to Ireland. Post-independence, what became a progressively isolated republic proved unsatisfactory, till the EU provided a framework in which smaller states could survive and prosper.

As sober mid-20th-Century heads realised, partition could not be terminated by the methods of the War of Independence, as events proved. It seemed that the peace process had finally brought historic conflict and old stereotypes to an end, but this is being severely stress-tested by Brexit.

HELP RAISE AWARENESS FOR EPILEPSY IRELAND

Price:
€14.99
+ €3 (P&P)



"I hope your beautiful minds will take inspiration and comfort from these beautiful thoughts."

– Miriam O'Callaghan

All royalties are being donated to:



In our increasingly busy lives, this is a book which causes us to pause and ponder. It features a unique mix of inspirational fables and parables; heart-warming original stories and positive true-life stories guaranteed to lift the spirits.



CURRACH PRESS | 23 Merrion Sq. N., Dublin 2

01 687 4096 | sales@columba.ie | www.currachbooks.com

Exploring Women's Christianity

Join us on **International Women's Day** for the launch of the revised edition of Mary T. Malone's book *Elephant in the Church* and a discussion on female Christianity.



FRIDAY MARCH 8TH

6:30PM-8:30PM

AVILA CARMELITE CENTRE
Bloomfield Avenue, Dublin 4.

SPEAKERS:



Mary T. Malone

Theologian, Author, Professor



Ursula Halligan

Former political editor of TV3,
Journalist in Residence at DCU



Dr Sharon Tighe-Mooney
Lecturer, Researcher and Author of
What About Me? Women and the Catholic Church



Angela Hanley

Author, Researcher

€20

Limited places -
Booking is essential
Includes tea and coffee

Tickets available on
www.columbabooks.com

or give us a call on
+353 (0) 1 687 4096



columba BOOKS

23 Merrion Sq. N., Dublin 2

Stressed parents forced to put work ahead of family

Colm Fitzpatrick

Two-parent families are under immense pressure to remain in the workforce, leaving them less opportunity to spend valuable time with their children, a leading theologian has said.

Dr Tom Finnegan of St Patrick's College, Thurles, told *The Irish Catholic* that the sheer expense of living is forcing parents into the workforce, meaning they can no longer spend sufficient time at home with their children.

"Just increasingly, espe-

cially with the cost of houses, mortgage pressures, commuting, all the rest of it, it's difficult for people to spend time at home. There's a lot of pressure to work in the world and earn money, to cover costs and so on – people find that difficult," he said.

Petition

His comments come after over 6,000 people signed a petition this week to extend parental leave from 18 to 26 weeks, and that parents would be able to avail of leave until a child is aged 12 rather

eight, as it currently stands.

The online petition which stands at 6,192 signatures at the time of writing states: "Parental leave is a lifeline to families with working parents. It allows them to spend time with their children and cut down on the cost of childcare, whilst permitting them to remain in employment without incurring any financial burden on employers or the tax payer."

Speaking about how "increasingly difficult" it now is for parents to find a work/life balance, Dr Finnegan said

that the idea behind Article 41.2 of the Irish Constitution which recognises the important role of mothers in the home is helpful.

"The idea is really good – that both parents, in principle, should not have to be out in the workforce just in order to keep a family afloat. But increasingly, that's what's happening in society."

"For a lot of people, mums and dads need to be working full time. That's bad news for them, their kids, and for the fabric of society itself," he said.

Responsibilities of baptised must be better explored

Chai Brady

It's not resourcing that's the real issue in parishes, but a need to recognise that all those baptised have a "right and responsibility" to use their gifts, according to a psychotherapist and lecturer in pastoral ministry and liturgy.

Mrs Jane Ferguson, who will deliver a four week course on pastoral leadership in March, said rather than looking toward priests and bishops for answers, engage them in the discussions.

"I don't think that we as a Church have really explored what that means in terms of every person – be it lay or ordained – is baptised into the priestly, prophetic and leadership ministry of Christ," she said.

Looking back at a course on Christian leadership she

gave in the past, she regretted there wasn't clergy involvement, saying: "Now looking forward it needs to be priests and people together and for me it's important to draw on the experience of all and the importance of discerning together."

Disappointment

Mrs Ferguson added that: "Unless we're all singing from the same hymn sheet people are going to be disappointed."

The focus has to be "spirit led", she said, "not priests or bishops leading, spirit led, both priests and laity working together showing the way forwards and utilising the gifts and skills of all the baptised".

The course takes place in the Newman Institute, Ballina, on each Thursday of March and costs €80.

Running an extra mile (or two)



Killaloe's Bishop Fintan Monahan takes part in the Milford Hospice 10km Run/Walk at the University of Limerick, alongside Maria McNamara and Eugene Moroney of the Clare Crusaders Charity running group.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Accused priest tries to stop trial

A priest accused of indecently assaulting a young girl over 40 years ago has launched a High Court action aimed at stopping his criminal trial from going ahead. The accused denies a charge that he indecently assaulted the girl in the mid-1970s at her home while watching a film when she was 10 years of age.

The priest, who was known to the complainant's family, is alleged to have touched the girl under her clothing when she was sitting on his knee while they and several other people were watching a film being shown on a projector. If found guilty of the offence the priest faces a maximum of two years in prison.

Cork launch suicide awareness booklet

A new booklet outlining the host of mental health supports available to young people in Cork was launched on February 5. It is targeted at teenagers aged 15 and over, and aims to provide information that is accessible, clear and youth-friendly. *The Youth Mental Health Resource* booklet is part of the Connecting for Life Cork suicide and self-harm reduction plan for the city and county. Lord Mayor Cllr Mick Finn, who launched the booklet at City Hall said: "I encourage all youth groups and organisations, as well as all secondary schools in the city and county, to ensure this information gets to its target population."

Dublin parish gifted with WMOF altar and ambo

A Dublin parish is excited for the re-opening of their church, especially since it has been announced they will be given the altar and ambo used for the papal Mass during the World Meeting of Families last summer.

St Joseph the Artisan church, in Bonnybrook parish, will welcome Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin on March 9 to celebrate Mass.

Archbishop Martin will be there to mark the opening of the church which underwent major renovation to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the parish.

The altar and ambo were both used by Pope Francis during Mass in the Phoenix Park in Dublin last August.

Wanted: a modern hierarchy



The Church in Ireland badly needs a public affairs office, writes David Quinn

The Catholic Church in Ireland needs a full-time public affairs office. At the moment, the response of the Church to issues of the moment is far too hit-and-miss and there is an almost total lack of 'joined up thinking' and 'joined up Government', to borrow terms from the sphere of politics.

The problem was illustrated last week when the Oireachtas Education Committee issued a report on how Relationships and Sexuality Education should be revamped. One of its recommendations is that the ethos of a school not be to allowed to interfere with the delivery of an 'objective' RSE programme to pupils. There was no official response from the Church.

There are a number of Catholic education bodies. There is the Joint Managerial Body, for instance, which helps out Catholic secondary schools. There is the Catholic Primary School Managers Association, whose name is self-explanatory, and there is also the Catholic Schools Partnership, set up by the Bishops to "foster coherence in Catholic education at national level".

In addition, there are various trusts overseeing schools under the patronage of various religious orders.

Then, of course, there are the country's 26 dioceses and they are independent of one other, although, technically speaking, each is in an area under the theoretical oversight of the local archbishop.

Healthcare

This shows how extremely diffuse responsibility is. You can see something similar at work in how the State delivers healthcare. It is extraordinarily complex and it is often hard to know who is responsible for what, and when this isn't clear it is hard to know who to hold



accountable when something goes wrong or even to know who is responsible for getting certain things done. This is why you need joined-up Government.

Why was there no response from any of the various Catholic educational bodies to the report by the Education Committee? One reason could be that each was waiting for the other to do it. Or maybe they believed it is too controversial an issue to become publicly involved in.

But in the case of schools under the patronage of the bishops, a bigger problem is that you have 26 bosses and anything you say in public might annoy one or more of them. If and when a response is finally coordinated, it might be too late to have any impact.

In the case of the Education Committee, it did not help that its consultation process with stakeholders and other interested parties was so rushed or that the process had the feel of having a preordained outcome intent on targeting religious ethos.

The Iona Institute (which I head up) did put in a submission, but it was very short because we had

to put it together around the time of the abortion referendum last year. The Joint Managerial Body also put in a submission, but it was very short as well, as did Elphin diocese. The JMB also appeared before the committee.

But no other Church body sent in a submission or appeared before the Education Committee, and by Church body I mean not just the Catholic ones, but also the Church of Ireland, the Methodists and the Presbyterians.

Embarrassment

Adding all these together, they are patrons of the vast majority of schools in this country, especially at primary level. It should be a source of embarrassment to the Education Committee that they were not a very big part of the RSE review process, seeing as it is their schools that will be affected. If these bodies believed that they would not receive a fair hearing from the Committee, they were probably correct, given its membership.

To return to the problem of a lack of joined-up thinking in the Church (and not just in the education area), a public affairs office

would be put in charge of coordination and planning.

Thus, when the Education Committee announced this review, such an office would have flagged it to all

relevant bodies, including all the bishops, and found out what, if anything, was being done in response. If there was a view that the process was farcical, someone should have been found to say so. This might have been an individual bishop or a member of one of the aforementioned educational bodies.

“The Church simply has to become better at responding coherently, speedily and in a well-thought out way”

Something that is clearly dysfunctional is the Bishops' Conference itself. It meets only once a quarter and too many bishops seem to delegate their individual responsibility to respond to various issues to it, or to the bishop in charge of any given area who rarely seems to say anything because it might upset his colleagues.

A public affairs office would do its best to ensure that there is a response to issues of importance

to the Church. This would mean having an excellent relationship with certain bishops who could be counted on to respond when something falling within their area of interest and knowledge comes up. Some bishops have a particular interest in family and life issues, other in immigration, others still in poverty issues.

If a public affairs office seems impractical or unworkable, that only illustrates the depth of the problem.

It would show how extremely difficult it is to bring about joined-up thinking within the Church in Ireland and this only makes the Church even less of a force in Irish life than it has become.

It simply has to become better at responding coherently, speedily and in a well-thought out way to the things that fall within its sphere of interest and expertise.

Maybe the bishops need to consider bringing in outside expertise to suggest ways of ensuring this happens more often, because the present situation cannot continue.

The Iona Institute stands up for your values

Please support our work with a donation today

What they say about us

"I see David Quinn and Breda O'Brien [of The Iona Institute] as a fundamental part of our democracy"
- Author, Colm Toibin.

"I don't agree with them [David Quinn and Breda O'Brien], but I admire their guts"
- Sunday Times columnist, Brenda Power.

"My Blood was boiling watching David Quinn"
- Ray D'Arcy



MARIA STEEN
Iona Institute

DAVID QUINN
Director, Iona Institute

The Iona Institute promotes the place of religion and traditional marriage in Ireland.

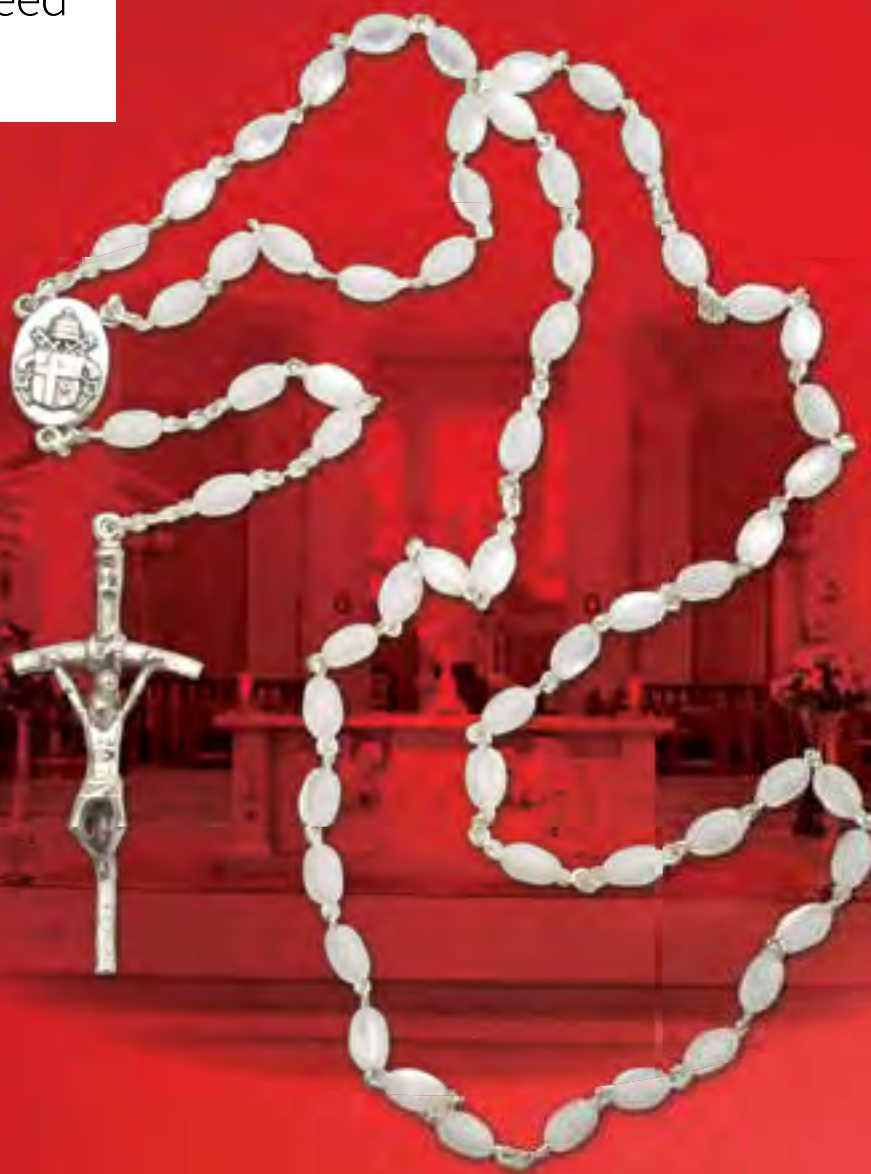
You can help the valuable work of The Iona Institute by sending a cheque or postal order in pounds or euro to:
THE IONA INSTITUTE, 23 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, Ireland.

“It should be a source of embarrassment to the Education Committee that they were not a very big part of the RSE review process, seeing as it is their schools that will be affected”



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN IRELAND



In Ireland praying the Rosary is devotional...

acnireland.org/donate or call us on 01 837 7516

You're welcome to join



Aid to the
Church in Need

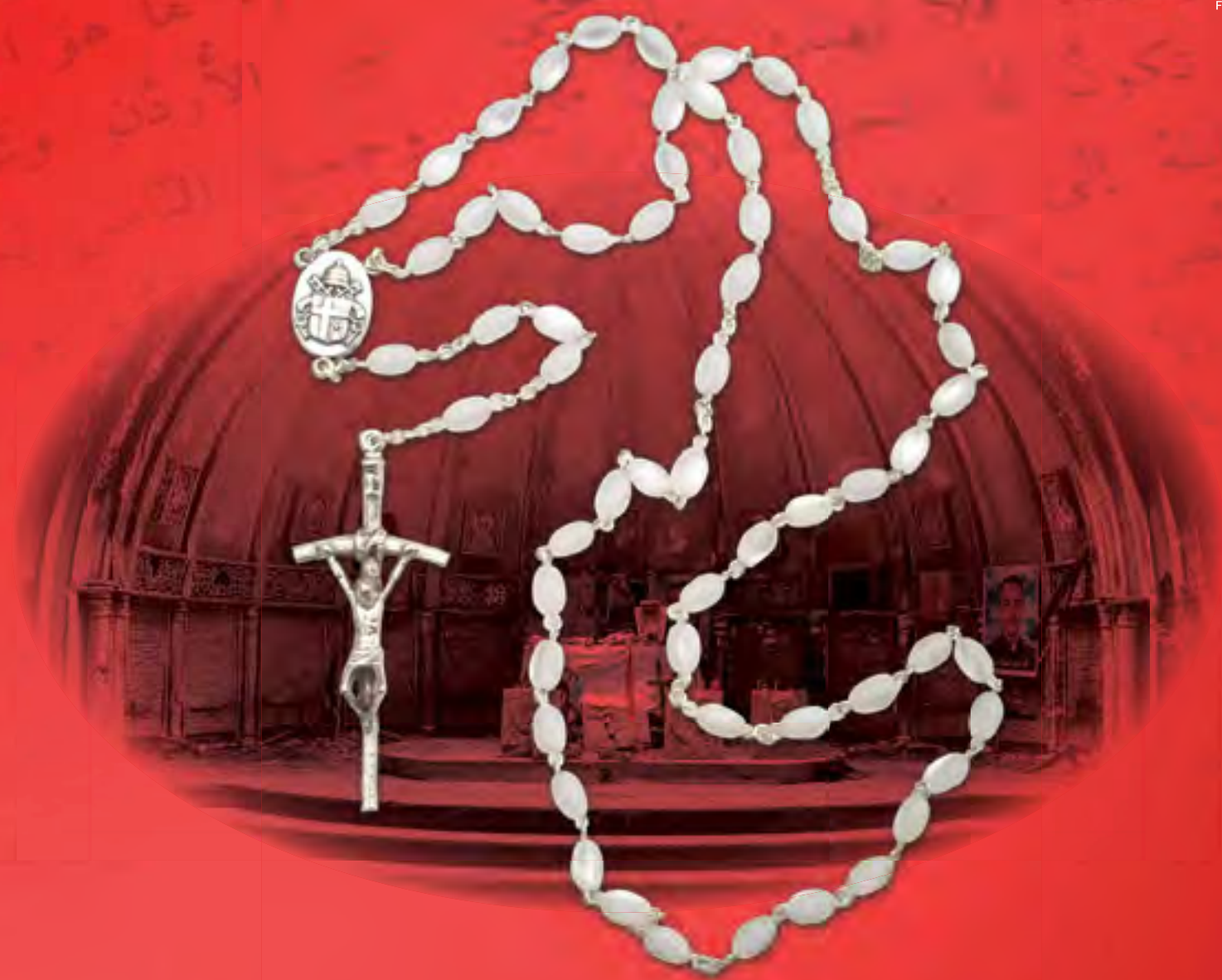
ACN IRELAND

**at the 28th
Divine Mercy Conference,
22, 23 & 24 Feb 2019
Main Hall, RDS, Dublin**

*"Proclaim that mercy is
the greatest attribute
of God. All the works
of My Hands are
crowned with
Mercy."*



Aid to the Church in Need – A world in w



...in many parts of the world,
it can mean a death sentence.

151 St. Mobhi Road, Glasnevin, Dublin 9
t (01) 837 7516 e info@acnireland.org

DONATE TO ACN

I would like to send my **Mass Stipends** to ACN.

€/£

I would like to make a donation towards the **ongoing projects** of Aid to the Church in Need.

€/£

TOTAL DONATION

€/£

I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to **Aid to the Church in Need**
OR please debit my Card.

CARD NUMBER

EXPIRY DATE

SIGNATURE STRIP CODE

SIGNATURE

FULL NAME

LAST NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE NO.

MOBILE NO.

EMAIL



Also donate at www.acnireland.org/donate,
call +353 (0)1 837 7516 or donate by bank transfer at
IBAN IE32 BOFI 9005 7890 6993 28 BIC BOFI IE2D

BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

which Christianity can thrive everywhere.

Out&About

Blessing of St Robert's newly renovated oratory in Waterford



WATERFORD: Dom Richard Purcell, Abbot at Mount Melleray Abbey, with members of the Cistercian Community, dedicates their newly renovated oratory at the Abbey to St Robert (October 4, 1542–September 17, 1621). Photo: Valerie O'Sullivan



KILDARE: St Mary's Cadette Volleyball team, Naas, become All Ireland Champions by overcoming the challenge of Rochford Manor with a score of two sets to nil.

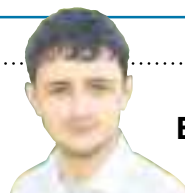


CAVAN: Chairpersons of the four Catholic schools of Kingscourt attend Mass to celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2019. (l-r) Roisin Hughes, Barbara Gaynor, Michael Donohoe and Ciara Walsh.

TYRONE: Oscar Canning, altar server at the Vigil Mass in the Oratory of Mary Mother of God, Newtownstewart, lights the candles on the refurbished wooden holders, crafted by Steven Moore. Fr Roland Colhoun blessed the restored candle-holders at the beginning of the Mass. Photo: Ashlene Canning



OSSORY: Some of the Post-Primary teachers from Ossory Diocese joined Bishop Dermot Farrell for Mass to celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2019.



Edited by Colm Fitzpatrick
colm@irishcatholic.ie

Events deadline is a week in
advance of publication



FERMANAGH: Representatives of six post-primary schools in Enniskillen participate in the Christian Unity Week Service in St Michael's Church. Young people are pictured with Msgr Joseph McGuinness, Msgr Peter O'Reilly, Rev. Lorna Dreading, Dean Kenneth Hall, Fr Kevin Malcolmson, Deacon Martin Donnelly. Also pictured are Paul Flynn Director of Music, Dr Ronald Brown and Eileen Gallagher of Fermanagh Churches Forum.

DERRY: Nuala Cooke and Charlie Doherty of St Mary's, Limavady, are two of the 40 newly commissioned diocesan ambassadors from 20 post primary schools, who will meet Bishop Donal McKeown several times a year and help with the implementation of the new Diocesan plan 'God is Love'.



LIMERICK: Pat Kearney, Mayor of Limerick City and County, James Collins, Maurice Quinlan, exhibition curator, Ralph Gelbert, exhibiting artist, Naomi O'Nolan, The Hunt Museum, Matthew Potter, Limerick City Museum and Bishop Brendan Leahy. Photo: Keith Wiseman



LIMERICK: Bishop Brendan Leahy opens Visible Reminders of Invisible Light, an exhibition that weaves together many strands of creativity around the theme of family and celebrates Limerick's long tradition in visual culture, in the Hunt Museum.

IN SHORT

Limerick museums celebrate family and culture

Artists across Limerick have given their individual interpretation of 'family' in a new exhibition curated jointly at the Hunt and Limerick museums.

In a unique collaboration, Limerick Diocese joined with the two museums to produce an inspirational art exhibition – the 'Visible Reminders of Invisible Light' – as a legacy to last year's World Meeting of Families.

The exhibition (www.visiblere reminders.com), runs until March 24 at the Hunt and Limerick museums, and weaves together many strands around the theme of family

and celebrates Limerick's long tradition in visual culture. It is curated by local artist Maurice Quinlan.

The project saw 17 contemporary artists create new works based on the historic collections held in both museums.

Bishop of Limerick Brendan Leahy, speaking at the exhibition launch in the Hunt Museum, said the genesis of the project began during the preparation for the World Meeting of Families.

"We were getting ready for the World Meeting of Families and we thought of the legacy question and 'what will we do afterwards?'. We thought why not initiate a project to do with art because artists are great people at creating works that last and can speak beyond any particular time or age."

Winnie Davern, Chairperson of the Diocesan Architecture and Heritage, said that the exhibition reflects the creativity of the Limerick arts community. "This has created a wonderful and insightful reflection of the whole theme of family. I think it's just fantastic to see contemporary interpretations of these beautiful pieces here in the Hunt museum and in the Limerick City Museum. When you see the pieces, that's when you really actually get to appreciate it."

A series of education events have been scheduled to compliment and explain the exhibition. The first will be three of the artists in conversation at 1pm on February 14. Contact: Naomi O'Nolan – email: Naomi@HuntMuseum.com Tel 061 490082 for further information.

ARMAGH

Sr Mary Roe, RSCJ will offer six sessions once per week of Lectio Divina in The Synod Hall, Armagh, beginning on Monday February 11 at 10.40am which conclude on Monday, March 18.

CLARE

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

CORK

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

'Come and See' Vocations Afternoon, 2-4.30pm on Saturday, February 9, for young women discerning a vocation at Poor Clare Monastery, College Rd.

DERRY

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

DUBLIN

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

Ewe Thina We Walk God's Way: Join other young adults aged in their 20s and 30s for reflective hikes around the Dublin Area. Monthly event. Email: st.pauls@dublindiocese.ie and <https://www.facebook.com/wewalk-godsway>

FERMANAGH

A Mass to St Peregrine for all the sick is prayed each Tuesday evening in St Patrick's Church, Derrygonnelly at 7.30pm: www.churchservices.tv/derrygonnelly. There is also a St Peregrine Novena Mass in Holy Cross Church, Lisnaskea on Tuesday nights at 7pm. www.churchservices.tv/lisnaskea

Mass in the Extraordinary Form in St Patrick's Church (opposite St Kieran's College) every Sunday at 5pm.

Our Lady of Lourdes Novena: Mass and Anointing of the Sick in Mary Immaculate Parish, Inchicore, on February 9 at 11am. Also, Torchlight procession following Mass at 7pm on February 11.

KERRY

Christian Spiritual Development Course from 7.30pm to 9pm in Ardfer. Be Still and Know: Fr Louis Hughes OP on Saturday, February 9 from 10am-4pm. Life in the Spirit: Moss and Janice Carrig on Tuesdays starting February 19 from 7.30pm-9pm.

KILKENNY

Traditional Latin Mass every Sunday at 5pm in St Patrick's Church, College Road, Kilkenny (opposite St Kieran's College).

LIMERICK

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

St Saviours Dominican Church will be offering Bishop Barron's Catholicism Series at the Church on Thursdays at 1.30pm and Fridays at 7.30pm weekly. Free of charge.

LOUTH

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

A Centre Prayer Meeting is held at Mount Oliver (near Ballymascanlon Dundalk) every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm. Contact 00353 863623361 from the North of Ireland or 0863623361 from the Republic of Ireland.

A Holy Hour with music and reflections to be held in St Mary's Church, James Street, Drogheda on Wednesday February 13 at 8.00pm.

MEATH

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

Charismatic Prayer Group: Every Thursday, 8pm, in the Boardroom, Parish Centre of the parish of Trim and Boardsmill. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Tuesdays 2-9pm, Wednesdays 10.30am-8pm, and Fridays 10.30am-9pm. Adoration is held in the Side Chapel in St Patrick's Church.

OFFALY

Clonmacnois Prayer Vigil in Cluain Chiarain Prayer Centre every third Friday. Mass at 9pm. Adoration and Prayers follow until 2.10am. Enquiries Dave: 085 7746763.

ROSCOMMON

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

TIPPERARY

Three-hour vigil in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes will be held in Pallotine chapel, Thurles, on Monday, February 11 from 7.30-10.30pm. Includes Eucharistic hour and Marian hour conducted by the Pallotine Fathers, concluding with Anointing of the Sick and prayers for healing.

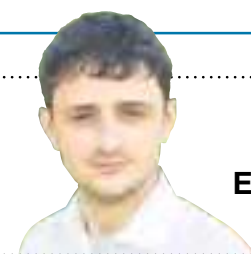
WICKLOW

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

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



World Report



Edited by Colm Fitzpatrick
colm@irishcatholic.ie

IN BRIEF

Remember God's love to endure hard times says Pope

● Being a Christian does not mean life will be just a big endless party, Pope Francis has said.

There will be good times and bad as well as moments of isolation, anguish or confusion, the Pope said in a homily last week during morning Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

Being a Christian, he said, means having encountered Jesus, feeling his love and choosing to believe in his hope and promise.

The Pope's homily focused on the day's first reading from the Book of Hebrews, in which the author urges his readers to "not throw away your confidence" and reminds them that perseverance and endurance are needed "to do the will of God and receive what he has promised".

Indian nun in adoption case denied bail

● India's Supreme Court has rejected bail for a Missionaries of Charity nun arrested nearly seven months ago on suspicion of child trafficking.

The top court turned down the plea of Sr Concilia on grounds that police had not yet pressed charges in the case. However, the court left the door open for her to file another application and told the police to file formal charges soon.

On July 5, Sr Concilia (61), who headed a home for unmarried mothers in Jharkhand's state capital, Ranchi, was arrested along with a staff member following complaints that the staff member accepted money from a childless couple to give them a baby and then failed to do so.

Venezuelan cardinal hopes Maduro will step down

● The Archbishop Emeritus of Caracas has expressed his hope that Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro would step down from office, heeding the Pope's call for peace in the country.

Maduro was sworn in for a second term as president on January 10, after winning an election in which opposition candidates were barred from running or imprisoned. Venezuela's bishops have called his

new term illegitimate, and opposition leader Juan Guaido has declared himself the country's interim president.

"I hope Maduro, who always appeals to the Pope's words, heeds those calls, and steps down from office since his administration has been absolutely harmful for the Venezuelan people," Cardinal Jorge Liberato Urosa Savino said.

China recognises underground bishop in controlled Mass

● An underground bishop in the Chinese province of Henan has become a coadjutor bishop recognised by the government at a ceremony tightly controlled by the authorities.

Underground Bishop Jin Lugang of Nanyang Diocese in Henan province was openly installed at St Joseph's Church last week.

He is the first underground bishop to be openly installed since the Sino-Vatican provisional agreement was signed in September 2018.

Over 250 people attended the Mass at which Bishop Jin (63) read his oath, saying he would assist Bishop Zhu Baoyu "to lead all clerics and Catholics in the diocese to comply with the state constitution; safeguard national unity and social stability and solidarity; love the country and love the Church; adhere to the direction on the Sinicisation of the Catholic Church in China".

Caritas forced to end Bangladesh school scheme

● Catholic charity Caritas has closed a major education scheme for poor and underprivileged children in Bangladesh after the project's term ended and donors decided to discontinue funding.

In 2012, Caritas received funding of €10 million from the EU and Caritas France to offer basic education to thousands of poor children.

The project was called Aloghor (Lighthouse).

Be 'armed' with love, Pope tells Christians on Arabian Peninsula

Meeting with tens of thousands of Catholics living in the United Arab Emirates, Pope Francis urged them to be meek, peaceful and express their Christian identity by loving others.

The UAE Catholic community, which numbers close to one million, includes foreign workers from roughly 100 nations, but particularly India and the Philippines. They filled the stadium at Abu Dhabi's Zayed Sports City and the open spaces around the complex for Pope Francis' Mass on February 5.

The United Arab Emirates is officially Muslim, but it allows members of other faiths to worship according to their beliefs.

The Muslim dignitaries at the Mass were led by Sheik Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, the government minister of tolerance.

In his homily, Pope Francis told the Catholics, "I like to quote St. Francis, when he gave his brothers instructions about approaching the Saracens and non-Christians. He wrote: 'Let them not get into arguments or disagreements, but be subject to every human creature out of love for God,



Pope Francis greets the crowd as he arrives to celebrate Mass at Zayed Sports City Stadium in Abu Dhabi. Photo: CNS

and let them profess that they are Christians."

So "neither arguments nor disagreements" are called for, the Pope said. In the 13th Century "as many people were setting out, heavily armed" to fight in the Crusades, "St Francis pointed out that Christians set out armed only with their humble faith and concrete love".

Meekness

"Meekness is important," the Pope said. "If we live in the world according to the ways of God, we will become channels of his presence; otherwise, we will not bear fruit."

The prayers of the faithful

for the Mass were written in six languages: Korean, French, Urdu, Filipino, Konkani and Malayalam.

The prayer in Filipino, acknowledging how many foreign workers come to the UAE without their families, asked God to accompany "all the migrants and workers who live in these lands; may their sacrifice and diligence blossom into goodness and sustenance for their families".

The French prayer asked God to convert "the hearts of sinners and of the violent; stop the wars, defeat hatred, help us weave bonds of justice and peace."

In his homily, Pope Francis

acknowledged the difficulties many Catholic foreign workers experience so far from their homelands, often doing very humble work for very rich families.

The Gospel reading for the Mass was the Beatitudes from the Gospel of Matthew. Pope Francis told the people that the Gospel message was for them and could be summarised as: "If you are with Jesus, if you love to listen to his word as the disciples of that time did, if you try to live out this word every day, then you are blessed. Not you will be blessed, but you are blessed."

US priests pressured as abuse scandal hits parish pockets

US Catholic priests are feeling the pinch as many say they have experienced a drop in Church collections after several sex abuse reports and scandals levelled at high ranking prelates in the country have affected parishioners' willingness to donate.

A priest from the Annunciation Church in Brazil, Indiana, has said he noticed "a pretty sharp decline" in parish weekend collections last summer, when the

national clergy sex abuse crisis exploded anew with revelations that former cardinal Theodore McCarrick was alleged to have harassed and molested minors and seminarians several decades ago.

Fr Hollowell says he has had to cut 25% of his two parishes' operating budgets for the fiscal year.

"McCarrick and friends are coming home to roost in fiscal year 2019-2020 at a parish near you," Fr Hollowell wrote

to his 8,800 Twitter followers.

"I totally get why people are doing that. For many people, money is the last form of protest they have to speak to Church authorities," he said.

Across the country, other Catholic parishes have seen fewer people donating to the Sunday collections in recent months. In some parishes, the faithful have continued to contribute to their regular collections in order to keep the lights on, but have with-

held money from collections designated for their dioceses or the national bishops' conference.

"People love their parish, but they've lost trust in the bishops," said Fr Jay Mello, the pastor of two urban parishes in Fall River, Massachusetts. Fr Mello said many parishioners have told him they give less to the second collections that go to the diocese or national organisations.

US Catholic charities tackle deadly polar vortex

A broad swath of the US Midwest experienced a deep freeze during last week with historic low temperatures impacting daily routines.

The Arctic blast forced the cancellation of flights, stopped mail delivery in several states, caused power outages and closed businesses, restaurants, schools and government offices with temperatures as low as -37°C.

Catholic schools, in the middle of Catholic Schools Week, were closed for days in several dioceses, as were several diocesan offices in Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin.

The winter blast was to blame for at least 12 deaths.

"In many ways it's a humanitarian crisis here with the severity of weather," said Msgr Michael Boland, CEO of Catholic Charities of the Chicago

Archdiocese.

He said the agency has made sure all its locations are open to the homeless. It also opened warming centres and its mobile outreach in the city has made sure that people were brought to a shelter or received needed emergency supplies.

The outreach also has delivered coats, gloves and hats to those who need them.

Daily Encounters with Christ

CONSECRATED LIFE 2019

The Irish Catholic



Greg Daly

A mosaic that

The variety of consecrated life in modern

God has created me to do him some definite service; he has committed some work to me which he has not committed to another," Blessed John Henry Newman famously wrote, and for those dazzled or baffled by the variety of consecrated life lived in Ireland alone, these are words worth remembering.

For Bro. Kevin Crowley, surely Ireland's most famous Capuchin friar, the example of St Francis of Assisi has been key to driving him in his work with Ireland's most vulnerable.

"Francis himself was a lover of the poor and the marginalised and creation," Bro. Kevin says. "That was one of the things that inspired me. When I saw the need for helping people who are in the streets during the daytime looking in dustbins trying to get food out of them, I thought of us as Capuchins and Franciscans being followers of St Francis – St Francis wouldn't be at all pleased with us if we didn't do something to help these unfortunate people."

This has encouraged him throughout his life, he says, adding that his life as a religious has empowered him to help others.

"For me without prayer life, it certainly wouldn't be possible for me to do what I'm doing, and also from the generosity and goodwill of people who have helped me along the way to provide food and the means for what we're doing here in the centre to help them in many ways," he says.

Poorest

Fr Peter McVerry similarly says his life as a religious, and in particular as a Jesuit, allows him to dedicate himself to a remarkable degree to Ireland's poorest.

"From a practical point of view, being a Jesuit you've a freedom to work in a way that you wouldn't be free to work if you had a family to look after and a wage to earn," he says.

"So I'm free – I'm available 24/7, I can live in Ballymun, I don't have to worry about the kids growing up and getting into negative peer pressure. Being a Jesuit gives me a freedom to work in a way that I wouldn't be able to do if I wasn't a Jesuit," he says, adding that it must be recognised that many people do social



“Just as the Good Shepherd leaves the 99 to go in search for the one, we seek to ensure that no-one is excluded, no one is left behind”

justice work with huge commitment without living lives like his, "but obviously if you have a family and you depend on income, you do that in a different way".

The Ignatian focus on Christ himself is key to what drives him in his work, he explains.

"From a spirituality point of view I have an understanding of the Gospels and the mission of Jesus – I wrote a book called *Jesus: Social Revolutionary*," he says. "For me Jesus had a dream and he dreamed of a world where no one would be hungry and not be given food, where no one would be thirsty and not be given water and so forth. So for me the reaching out to people, revealing the God of compassion by being the compassion of God is at the heart of my spirituality as a Jesuit."

Sr Phyllis Moynihan, vocations director for the Southern

and South-Central provinces of the Sisters of Mercy, makes a point of looking back to the example of Catherine McAuley in explaining her work in the Limerick of today, pointing out that other orders of Irish women can tell a similar story.

"The Sisters of Mercy were started over 150 years ago, and at the time Catherine McAuley set about responding to the unmet needs of her day, when there was great poverty, and one of her main concerns at the time was education for women and children."

Over the years, she says, the sisters have maintained a focus on disadvantaged people on the margins wherever they live and work, and though they have generally moved out of education and nursing they remain side by side with the marginalised in Ireland.

"You will always find us

living with the people in parishes, working with them," she says. "Here in Limerick we're working with prisoners and their families, and with Travellers. You will find us under the radar working away and being with the people in various areas regardless of age."

Experience

The congregation may be aging, but that doesn't necessarily stop them, she stresses, pointing out that the sisters currently have two women in their 90s who are still actively involved in ministry, and speaking with pleasure of how a new sister, Maire Hearty, made first profession just in October and is currently studying theology and spiritual direction while getting pastoral experience in the Darndale in Dublin.

Care for the poorest isn't simply a matter of social services, Sr Phyllis explains,

citing Catherine McAuley's observation that "our centre is God, from whom all our actions spring as from their source". The order continues to matter, she says, "because people are always in need of mercy and compassion".

Similarly based in Limerick, Sr Margaret Lynch of the Good Shepherd Sisters explains that apostolic religious life is characterised by the centrality of their distinct mission to our lives, and with her congregation focused on women, with a mission of reconciliation and compassion.

"For me this means that it is a mission to bring to wholeness," she says.

"Just as the Good Shepherd leaves the 99 to go in search for the one, we seek to ensure that no-one is excluded, no one is left behind. It is a call to life, the life of radical inclusion that Jesus lived as he ate with tax collectors, touched

lepers, and spoke with women, which was unacceptable for a good Jewish man at his time.

"For us as a congregation this leads to work with the homeless, the refugees, to work in prisons, with people suffering from addictions, with people all over the world who are considered outsiders from their society in any way. We live this mission out of our own experience of a God who

loves us and calls us into wholeness ourselves as he teaches us to love and accept ourselves, integrating all our weakness as well as our



Sr Maire Fahy.

shines

Ireland is dazzling

strengths."

Describing this form of consecrated life as "an integral part of the Church's life", she says it's a way consecrated religious can preach the Gospel with their lives to people of all religions and none.

With apostolic religious in Ireland now having in the main left their roles in hospitals and schools etc, as the State has now taken up that baron, Sr Margaret says that in seeking to serve new needs they increasingly are called to work in advocacy and justice work, "naming the injustices in society that keep people marginalised and excluded and calling for change at every level from poverty, to global warming to the call for women's voices to be heard at every level of the Church".

Not everyone is called to such a life, of course, and there are those who are called to live lives serving God largely separate from the world.

Sr Marie Fahy, abbess of the Cistercian community at Co. Waterford's Glencairn Abbey explains that her community, in following the Rule of St Benedict and the traditions of the Cistercian Order, "continue a long line of monastic living from the Desert Fathers, Celtic monasticism and 12th-Century Cistercian life right up to the present day".

“Everything else the monks do to fund their lives is simply to enable them to fulfil that task, he says, adding that the vow of stability is an important witness too”

"The point of monastic life is to seek God's face, to know Christ Jesus, to be conformed to him, and so become our true and best selves," she explains. "The means offered by monasticism to attain this goal are: silence and community; liturgy and *lectio divina*; manual labour and creative industry, with a strong emphasis on hospitality."

In explaining how people might feel called to such a life, she says: "God takes the initiative and touches the individual person so that this desire for intimacy with God is born in their hearts. Then the person looks around for a place where they feel they



Sr Louise O'Rourke with Fr Bryan Shortall OFM Cap.

can best respond to God's call to a deeper love and fuller life."

Such lives, dedicated to continuous prayer and continuous conversion, contribute profoundly to the life of the Church, she maintains.

"Growth in holiness enhances the whole Church in a hidden way," she says, adding: "Monastic life also offers a witness of stability, simplicity, chastity, care of the environment, and provides a place of prayer for all who come."

Bro. Martin Browne of Co. Limerick's Glenstal Abbey makes a similar point, noting that the classic definition of Benedictine life is that it's the search for God under a rule and an abbot. "The regulation, literally, the application of the Rule, is about providing some sort of scaffolding for that to happen," he says.

Different monasteries do this differently, he says, with different monks having a range of different tasks.

"Some people in a monastery are engaged in very public ministerial work, some are involved in pretty mundane administrative and opera-

tional things inside their houses, some – obviously – are old and retired and do little formal work, but for us the Hours of the Divine Office that we sing during the day are described by St Benedict as the *Opus Dei*, the work of God.

"So that is our first work; regardless of what other tasks we might have in the monastery or what works or ministries the monastery might have, our fundamental job is to be in the choir several times a day, singing the Psalms together," he says.

"Clearly it isn't something for everybody – it's a particular calling," he continues, dismissing the notion that monastic life is a flight from the world and pointing out that today's monks tend to be very much in touch with people in the world at large.

Modern society

"By being here and praying, first of all we're saying that God is important and that giving time to God is really important," he says. "I think that's a really important witness for modern society,

where God is easily forgotten and the idea of taking faith seriously can seem less reasonable and less obvious than it did in the past.

"So, there's an importance about the fact that there are people who are literally consecrated to pray."

Everything else the monks do to fund their lives is simply to enable them to fulfil that task, he says, adding that the vow of stability is an important witness too.

"One of the vows we take is a vow of stability: we bind ourselves not just to consecrated life in this place, and again in the modern world where lots of things are transitory, there's an important witness there, in binding ourselves to this place, in sticking at the life, in sticking at being here at a time often when culture tells you to move on more often and to move on if things become challenging."

Monasteries have always been places of hospitality, he adds, pointing out that today's emphases on mindfulness and meditation testify to a deep need for places of

quietness and stillness, where attentiveness matters.

"Monasteries have always been places of stillness and attentiveness," he says. "The first word of St Benedict's Rule is 'listen'."

Sr Louise O'Rourke of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master is a member of a pontifical congregation that has a Benedictine spirituality but is driven to be communicators after the fashion of St Paul.

"We are Benedictine in inspiration in that we follow the Benedictine motto: *ora et labora*, work and pray," she says. "But our family is part of the larger Pauline Family, inspired by the figure and teachings of St Paul. We're called to be communicators to the people of today like St Paul was in his time."

"Our form of consecrated life is that we are an apostolic congregation but with strong contemplative tones, we like to say we are contemplative in action, and active in contemplation."

The sisters were founded in 1924 by an Italian priest, Blessed Fr James Alberione, who had seen the power of media in the world of Mussolini, and who over time established 10 different religious families – "so there was something for everybody, but the main issue was to bring Jesus through the most effective and fastest means of communication".

Tasked especially with Eucharistic adoration and with an emphasis on liturgical beauty, the sisters have a special role in praying for the more active religious and clergy, Sr Louise says.

"The beauty, I suppose, of religious life is that there's something for every mission of the Church, and the Holy Spirit always rises up a group be it big or small for some kind of need in the Church," she says, adding that "as Mary walked with Jesus, we were called to walk along with priests".

“We’re at the coalface of the city: St Benedict went away from the sin of the city, but St Dominic went into it, and brought the elements of the monastic life into the heart of the city”

Nowadays, she adds, it tends to be recognised that priesthood is not simply a clerical role but is a baptismal calling shared by everyone.

One especially attractive feature of the order, she says, is how close it is to its roots: new members study in the

formation house in Italy, and even now can speak to older sisters who knew Blessed James, who was alive as recently as 1973.

"I know that people have this thing at the moment of trying to discover and retrace your roots, but for us it's very easy because we have it all at our fingertips in Italy," she says. "We try to keep out students together because, again, in having a peer group you can live together and pray together and form each other."

Heritage

If the Disciples of the Divine Master has the advantage of being able to remain in such direct personal contact with their founder, Ireland's Dominicans, meanwhile, can point to a heritage stretching back over 800 years.

Fr John Walsh OP, prior of the Irish province's student house on St Saviour's on Dublin's Dominick Street, notes how the late Dublin-born Archbishop William Barden of Ispahan in Iran, used to say Dominican life was like walking on a tightrope.

"It's a tightrope between the contemplative and the apostolic life," Fr John says, "because the daily life is the monastic element – dedication to the choral office, the observances in the house, the cloister, the habit, refectory prayers, silences, and there's study and contemplative prayer, that pushes us out to preach."

This life of study and prayer pushes Dominicans out to preach in the world, Fr John says, explaining that the monastic regular life at home is a key way in which Dominicans differ from Jesuits and others.

There's a real need for such vocations in the modern Church, he says, contrasting this with the 'Benedict Option' as famously promoted by American author Rod Dreher.

"We're the reverse of what he was saying: we're the contemplatives in the city," he says. "We're at the coalface of the city: St Benedict went away from the sin of the city, but St Dominic went into it, and brought the elements of the monastic life into the heart of the city."

Maintaining that the monastic structures equip young men of today to engage with and respond to modern ways of thinking, Fr John says "there's a Dominican option".

There are Carmelite options too, and Vincentian ones, Oblate ones and Pallo-tine ones, and many more.

Consecrated life in Ireland is a mosaic, and even now it's a mosaic that shines.

Poor Clares Carlow

Castlecomer Road, Graiguecullen, County Carlow, Ireland

VISION AND MISSION

Our Mission is the living of the Holy Gospel according to the charism of St. Francis and St. Clare, living in obedience, without anything of our own, in chastity and enclosure and in total dependence on the Providence of God. Our life is dedicated and committed to a life of prayer for the Church and the world. This is the fount and focus of our life. Our vision is to be co-workers with God and a support for the frail and failing members of His Glorious Body through a committed life of prayer and union of mind and heart among ourselves. This is our vocation as Enclosed Poor Clares and we rejoice in it.



🌐 www.poorclarescarlow.ie

📘 www.facebook.com/PoorClaresCarlow/

🐦 twitter.com/PoorClaresCarl

Religious of Jesus and Mary

Religious of Jesus and Mary (RJM) was founded in 1818 by Claudine Thevenet in Lyons, France to promote the education of the young.

They came to Ireland in 1912 and currently have 7 communities in Dublin, Mayo, Galway and Sligo. The sisters work in schools, catechesis, chaplaincy, counselling and prayer guides. RJM work in 28 countries. The Irish Sisters are presently in Africa, Haiti and Pakistan.



JM Sisters working in various areas of education in Gabon and Cameroon



Jesus and Mary Novices and postulants in formation in Yaounde, Cameroon



Sisters involved in Youth Ministry



Sisters Rose Kelly and Nazareth, recipients of the 2019 William Jefferson Clinton Haven Award for their work in Haiti

Religious of Jesus and Mary - IRELAND | 110 Errew House, Goatstown Rd, Dublin 14

Phone : (01) 2993130 / (01) 2966059 / 0877203649

Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles

*Ready to risk it all
for the Lord!*

*Called to witness, sent by God,
to serve in love.*

A Life Set Apart

Consecrated means “set apart.” Those called to consecrated life are “set apart” by God for a particular way of life in which “we see the hand of God who, in his Spirit, calls certain individuals to follow Christ more closely, to translate the Gospel into a particular way of life, to read the signs for the times with the eyes of faith and to respond creatively to the needs of the Church”. (Pope Francis, “Apostolic Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis to all Consecrated People”)

Henry Blackaby's oft-cited quote, “The reality is that the Lord never calls the qualified; He qualifies the called,” has certainly held true for the OLA sisters. They were founded in 1876 when the SMA missions in Africa had developed to a point that it became necessary to have a community of Women Religious to cater specifically to the needs of the African women.

The death toll on those early missions was high and the young women who were called to Africa left, knowing that there was very little chance that they would ever return. The SMA priests who wrote from Lagos inviting the Sisters did so with brutal honesty, “In Lagos you die. Let them come quickly, those who wish to give souls to Jesus and Jesus to souls.”

Yet, they went; following a call that could not be ignored.

“It is a radical calling to a radical life; but the hand of God is evident in each individual journey.”

Each person's call toward consecrated life is unique, and the response to that call is seldom an easy one. As has been noted by many, it is a radical calling to a radical life; but the hand of God is evident in each individual journey. It is evident in the small, hesitant steps and the large, confident steps. It is evident in the stumbling and the falling and in the getting back up. God's hand

directs the path towards discovering where the Spirit is leading.

This discernment of God's calling on their lives requires more than just listening or looking for signs, it requires grave consideration, prayer and sacrifice. It also requires direction from a trusted guide who can assist with identifying truth from wishful thinking. The process of discernment is tough, unrelenting and ongoing. It is all too easy to weave God's will into the shallow needs of the ego.

In Sr Mary Usifoh's case, confirmation of her calling came in many forms, including conversations she had as a young girl, “Two different people at two separate times told me that it would be good for me to be a Sister.”

For some it is an easy decision, with little doubt as to what the voice of God is saying. Sister Anne Cahill had always dreamed of helping the disadvantaged in Africa and, being a good mathematics student, thought that she could marry these skills with her dream by assisting those who were weak in the area of math. As she advanced through secondary school, another dream took over, “I fell in love with God, or rather God's love for me became an overwhelming experience.”

“It is no trivial thing to interrupt the path you are on and radically change the direction of your life.”

For others it can be a confusing time, a time of doubt and questioning. It is no trivial thing to interrupt the path you are on and radically change the direction of your life. This is evident in the surprise expressed by some of the sisters when you speak to them of their vocation, “God wants me to do what?” is often the initial response.

Consecrated life throughout history has always been sensitive to the great needs of humanity, specifically the poor, the helpless, the innocent, the victims of violence.

Spending time with the sisters, it becomes clear that consecrated life

is not an end in itself, but it serves to sanctify the individual and to build the body of Christ. These sisters are missionaries, and this adds another dimension to consecrated life. They are ‘set apart’ especially for Africa's women and marginalised; called to the peripheries, pushing back the frontiers and bringing Christ to the very edge.

When you suggest that they have led, and are leading extraordinary lives, they seem baffled, surprised that anyone would consider their experiences to be extraordinary in any way.

These remarkable women are profoundly humble. Discretion is a way of life and the grace of their charism is evident in all that they do. They act with a powerful gentility, so clearly touched by the Spirit, that they think nothing of the fact that they are involved in works that would leave an ordinary person exhausted and broken hearted.

Contemplatives in action

They are teachers and doctors and psychotherapists; they hold Honours degrees, Masters degrees and PhDs. They work on the fringes, spreading the gospel, not from the pulpit, but by the very acts of their lives. They describe themselves as contemplatives in action, each action taken directed towards their interior relationship with God, allowing the Spirit to effectively shape the entirety of their lives.

Be it teaching children and ministering to the sick in Ghana, building schools and running HIV/AIDs programmes in Tanzania, working with migrants and refugees in Ireland, their focus is always on the women of Africa.

Sr Ann Fallola OLA, in a recent essay noted: “[The OLA sisters] defied all odds, even death, and their mission opened the road to education and social inclusion of women in many parts of Africa; I myself am a direct beneficiary of the heroic sacrifices of these valiant women missionaries.”



Sharing in Our Mission

Interested in volunteering overseas?

Email: volunteering@olaireland.ie

Interested in joining our Lay Mission Movement?

Email: Imm@olaireland.ie

Do you feel God is calling you to be an OLA sister

Email: vocations@olaireland.ie

www.olaireland.ie

info@olaireland.ie

Ardfoyle Convent, Ballintemple, Cork

Facebook: OLAsisters | Twitter: @OLAireland | Instagram: OLAsistersireland

CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY

Opening The Door to Mercy...

The ministry of the Sisters of Mercy is to be a compassionate presence in our world



To feed the hungry



To give water to the thirsty



To clothe the naked



To shelter the homeless



Are you interested in
**Knocking at the door of the Sisters of Mercy
to help us in carrying out our mission?**

For information and contact details go to:
www.sistersofmercy.ie



To welcome the stranger



To visit the sick



To visit those in prison



To bury the dead



Centre image is of Sr Cecelia Cadogan knocking on the door of mercy at Mercy International Centre, Dublin

ESCAPE TO GLENCAIRN ABBEY AND SUPPORT THE MONASTERY'S RENOVATION

A Year in the Life: Glencairn Abbey

With photographs by Valerie O'Sullivan

PRICE:

€24.99

+ €4.50 P&P
(ROI)



A Year in the Life: Glencairn Abbey portrays the mysticism and rhythm of the lives of the Sisters of St Mary's Abbey. Having answered the desire to dedicate their life to God with others, the Sisters follow the Rule of St Benedict, which consists of a balance of contemplation, community, work and reading. This beautifully produced book intertwines the seasons of nature and liturgies of the year. The royalties go towards the Abbey's building project.

THE CAPUCHINS

A life of Prayer and Service in the footsteps of St Francis of Assisi



OVER 400 YEARS OF SERVICE IN IRELAND

The Capuchin Franciscan Friars were founded in Italy in 1536 with the desire to return to a closer living of the rule of St Francis of Assisi. Capuchins arrived in Ireland in 1616 and since then have become an intrinsic part of the Irish story.

Today in Ireland we have Friaries in Cork, Dublin, Donegal, Carlow and Kilkenny as well as Irish Friars serving overseas in Zambia, South Africa, New Zealand, South Korea and California. Wherever we are found our mission is the same, to be an authentic Gospel presence as Brothers of the People.

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I know if I am called to be a Capuchin Friar?

The process of discovering what God is calling you to is called discernment. It oftentimes begins with a feeling or an experience or encounter that invites and compels us to seek deeper relationship with God, others, and all of Creation. This takes time, patience, prayer and guidance. It requires of us that we open our hearts and begin to trust in God in a whole new way. In many ways, it requires a step into the unknown.

Who can help me discern my vocation?

The Irish Province of the Capuchin Franciscans takes the discernment process very seriously. We are committed to helping men discover their call by means of a comprehensive vocation accompaniment programme. This programme enables people explore the questions they have and to discover some new ones. The aim of accompaniment is to walk with you as a brother as you discern, listen and reflect, offering sound guidance and practical support. Each and every vocation journey is blessed and unique.

Do you wear a habit?

Yes! Capuchins wear a simple brown habit and white chord. The cord has three knots that serve as a reminder of the three vows we profess.

What are the vows that you take?

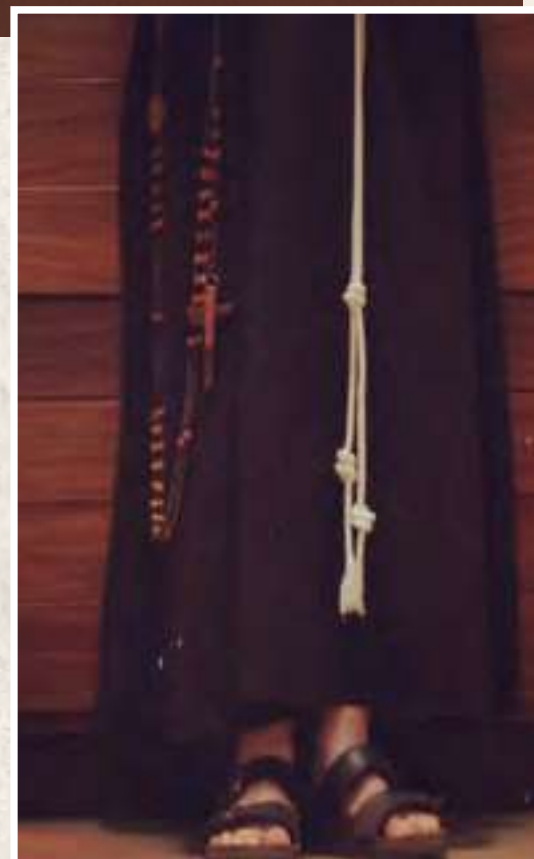
We take three vows: poverty, chastity and obedience. Poverty allows us to develop a deeper respect for the world around us and for all the good things that God provides. Chastity encourages us to live with hearts centred on God and obedience invites us to listen deeply to God's plan for us.

How long does it take to train as a Capuchin Friar?

Our training is known as formation and usually takes between six to eight years. A Friar in formation will study, work, pray and minister while growing into what it means to be a Capuchin Friar in the world today. Formation is an exciting and deeply meaningful time.

Was Padre Pio a Capuchin Friar?

Yes, the Capuchin Franciscan Order are blessed to have many saints and St Pio is certainly one of the best known, particularly in Ireland. Saints like Pio, all went through a time of discernment, in fact it was something they did throughout their lives. As St John Paul II reminds us 'we are all called to be Saints'.



That's great, what do I do now? I'd like to find out some more.

To arrange a conversation with our Vocation Promoter, simply e-mail: capuchinvocation@gmail.com

You can also visit the vocation page of our website www.capuchinfranciscans.ie



Missionaries without borders



Irish religious are still making a difference around the world, **Greg Daly** is told

Being a missionary is a life choice, and it is a choice for life – the notion of retiring doesn't even enter into the equation," Heydi Foster, CEO of Misesan Cara, tells *The Irish Catholic*. Citing the example of one 90-year-old sister who in the last decade has set up internationally recognised schools in Haiti, she continues: "Missionaries do not retire at 65 – they keep working to make a difference in the world."

Misesan Cara means 'friend of missions' and Heydi explains that the Faith-based organisation is tasked with supporting 91 Irish missionary organisations around the world, channelling funding from the Government and private donations to help missionaries in the work worldwide.

"We accompany our members to work with the most vulnerable and marginalised – we were set up to work with the vulnerable," she explains, citing how last year Misesan Cara supported 263 projects in 51 countries, working with 1.5 million direct beneficiaries. The knock-on effect of this is, of course, incalculable.

Support

"It was very surreal to come back to Ireland after being in Sierra Leone," Heydi observes of a recent trip. "I was there visiting the Sisters of the Holy Rosary and the Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny. We wanted to visit them and see how communities are rebuilding their lives after the Ebola outbreak that started in 2013."

The effects of this outbreak have been devastating, she says, citing the example of one 19-year-old who lost 19 family members, and pointing out that Sierra Leone is one of the world's poorest countries anyway. While support from the Irish Government is vital for the religious working there, she stresses "We need additional support – there are so many orphans."

"It is one of the things that the Sisters of the Holy Rosary are doing. They are working with a lot of the communities, working with families who have lost everything."

The ebola virus didn't just kill individual people, she reiterates. "It destroyed entire communities, whole families and communities," she says, detailing how missionaries such as the Holy Rosary and Cluny sisters are helping rebuild the ravaged society.

While none of the seven Holy Rosary Sisters currently working in the slums of Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital, are Irish, being instead from Nigeria and Kenya, Heydi is quick to underline how the community is an example of Ireland's missionary activity and its legacy.

“In Sierra Leone, like in many other countries, a child who has a disability is seen as a burden on the family”

"They were set up by Irish sisters, so Irish missionaries are still making a difference around the world," she says, adding that "they still have the Irish connection".

Some distance away, meanwhile, Irish sisters are hard at work in rural Sierra Leone.

"The Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny have a school for the hearing-impaired in Makeni, which is, depending on the traffic, about three to four hours from Freetown – it's very rural," she says. "They're running this school that addresses the needs of children that are hearing-impaired, some of them are deaf, and they have been there for a very long time. It's run by Sr Mary Sweeney, a lovely Irish woman from Dunloe in Co. Donegal, with a group of volunteers. She has been training teachers there to work with children that have disabilities. It's a fantastic school."



Sr Mary Sweeney and Heydi Foster (facing away from camera) chat with pupils at the Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny School for the Hearing Impaired in Makeni, Sierra Leone. Photo: Sam Whelan-Curtin

“Missionaries do development a little bit differently: for us it's about the long-term approach, it's about dealing with the whole person”



Heydi Foster.

Such schools are especially needed given how disabilities can lead to children being shunned in the country.

"In Sierra Leone, like in many other countries, a child who has a disability is seen as a burden on the family and often times these children are abandoned, so then imagine a child who already has a disability having survived ebola!"

“Heydi emphasises that such religious carry on with their work heedless of their age”

Both groups of sisters have been playing vital roles in the country since the ebola outbreak, she explains.

"I was visiting them because during the ebola outbreak, both the Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny and the Sisters of the Holy Rosary supported families that had absolutely lost everything," she says. "The Sisters of the Holy Rosary provided a number of life-saving services in the form of medical care, food, social support, and – really important – ebola prevention information."

Noting how Sr Mary Sweeney has been in Makeni for over 40 years, Heydi emphasises that such religious carry on with their work heedless of their age, and says that they go where they're needed.

"Missionaries don't see a border, they don't see barriers," she says. "They overcome all of that. Missionaries do development a little bit

differently: for us it's about the long-term approach, it's about dealing with the whole person."

As an example of this this, she points to one sister who has worked in Haiti, Gambia, and Sierra Leone.

"Sr Louis Marie O'Connor, who is 90 years old, is an absolute powerhouse. She has set up a number of schools with connections in Sierra Leone and Haiti. After the earthquake she went to Haiti and realised there was absolute devastation, and decided to set up not one or two but three schools, starting in 2010," she says.

"Right now she's back in Ireland getting ready to go back to Sierra Leone – she's incredible," she adds. "Sr Louis Marie was one of the first Cluny sisters I met when I first started working with Misesan Cara, and during the ebola outbreak she was the one securing funding to send to Sr Mary in Makeni, and five years on Sr Mary is working to support survivors, because there's a lot of social stigma around ebola, and people need help to access vital services."

The list of missionaries and missionary groups that Misesan Cara is working to support around the world is genuinely staggering, a powerful reminder of the good religious can achieve when working as Christ's hands in the world.

Heydi cites the examples of the Jesuit Fr Tony O'Riordan, a proud Corkman who is fondly remembered in Limerick and now based in South Sudan.

"He is working in four of the most remote, isolated, and perhaps dangerous parts of the world. He's working with refugees and internally displaced persons in Maban County, around the Blue Nile," Heydi says. "When I was there in June of 2018, there were around 154,000 people, now it's just under 200,000 people."

In the same country, she adds, another prominent Irish religious is Sr Orla Treacy. "She's a Loreto sister who continues to dedicate her life to working with refugees and educating girls in South Sudan," she says.

Sr Gina Herrity, meanwhile, is in Haiti with Viatores Christi. "She is working with children who have been abandoned because they have a disability. She is doing remarkable, life-changing work in Haiti," she says.

"In Peru we have the Columbans, we have the Good Shepherd Sisters working in India, we have the Presentation Sisters," she says, adding that the Daughters of Charity are "doing absolutely brilliant work in Kenya" where they are helping to care for those suffering from HIV and AIDS. "There are so many both male and female congregations," she says.

"The Irish know both sides of this story: we know what it's like to be displaced, we know what it's like to have lost everything, and Ireland as a country, for such a small country is such a generous country, with a very long and proud tradition of supporting poorer countries."

"It's that Irish legacy," she says.



Letter from Rome



Inés San Martín

Pope opens first-ever trip to Arabian Peninsula touting dialogue and peace

A Pope, a prince and an Imam walk side by side at an airport on the red carpet. It seems like the beginning of a bad bar joke, but instead, it was the start of a historic, first-ever papal visit to the Arabian Peninsula on February 3.

It's a subcontinent where the Pope's own Christian flock, despite having been rooted in the area for more than 2,000 years – longer, actually, than their Muslim neighbours, since Islam as a faith is six centuries younger – are often treated as second class citizens or actively persecuted, particularly in places such as Syria, Iran and Iraq.

Though many have questioned Pope Francis's February 3-5 trip to Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab Emirates to participate in an interreligious gathering organised within the frame of the country's 'Year of Tolerance', others have praised it as a unique opportunity to offer a sign of fraternity and tolerance, and a reminder of Francis' oft-repeated mantra that killing in the name of God is never justified.

The prince and de facto leader of the UAE, Mohamed bin Zayed al Nahyan, and Professor Ahmed a-Tayyeb, Great Imam of Al-Azhar University in Cairo and a key Islamic theologian, welcomed Pope Francis to the UAE upon his arrival Sunday night.

The fact that this is arguably the least demanding trip of his pontificate – only two scheduled speeches in over 40 hours, one of them a homily – does not take away from the fact that it could have a long-standing impact on Muslim-Christian dialogue.

Friendship

In a sign of friendship, the Pope and the Grand Imam travelled together in a minivan to Mushrif's palace, where both were staying as state guests. Throughout the visit, Francis left the traditional Popemobile behind, favouring a small bus.

The prince and the Imam are seen as highly regarded figures within the Muslim world, and the fact that they shared the red carpet with the Pontiff, together with the car, represents one of those occasions in which the meeting is the message.

According to Anwar Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, the papal visit to the UAE adds a new page in the country's history of tolerance, carrying a "great humanitarian worth".

The country has a Muslim majority population but around



Pope Francis attends a welcoming ceremony with Sheik Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, vice president and prime minister of the United Arab Emirates and ruler of Dubai, at the entrance to the presidential palace in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, on February 4. Photo: CNS

10% are Christians, with an estimated one million Catholics – virtually all of whom, including some 60 priests, are immigrants from the Philippines, India and other places, working in the oil and construction industries or cleaning residences.

"The visit affirms to the world the UAE's approach to tolerance and peaceful coexistence, the founding principles of the UAE since the founding of the union, guided by the legacy of our late founder Sheikh Zayed," Gargash said on Twitter, referring to Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

Opening the Global Conference of Human Fraternity, attended by some 700 people from around the world and concluding with an interreligious meeting headed by the Pontiff and the imam, UAE's Minister of Tolerance, Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak, urged the world to join together in tolerance and fraternity to achieve peace and reduce political conflict.

"We live in difficult times with new and unforeseen challenges confronting local communities," said Sheikh Nahyan.

"Many adults lack even the most basic literacy skills," he noted. "Many children are not in school. Sadly, there are conflicts

over geography, water, religion and political beliefs. But tolerance and human fraternity have the power to deal with these challenges."

Nahyan said the UAE was honoured by the visit of the Pope and Grand Imam, and that both are global figures for compassion.

“Our responsibility is to work together under the banner of peace and preservation of human dignity”

"Tolerance and human fraternity have the power to improve health and safety," Nahyan said in his opening address. "Tolerance and human fraternity can help us heal the environment. Tolerance and human fraternity will make us champions for human rights and obligations."

Francis' schedule included a meeting with Al Tayeb, who also serves as the chairman of the Muslim Council of Elders, on Monday. Together they closed the conference at the Founder's Memorial, an installation dedicated to Zayed, who's credited with turning seven mostly rural emirates into one modern, oil-based country committed to religious tolerance,

a contrast from Saudi Arabia's extreme Wahhabism.

Also participating in the conference were delegates from other Christian denominations as well as Jewish, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist leaders. They were scheduled to explore topics such as interreligious dialogue, oppression of religious communities and ways to tackle extremism.

"Our responsibility is to work together under the banner of peace and preservation of human dignity," Nayan said on Sunday.

The papal trip has been welcomed by locals, with people from some 200 nationalities living here and relatively tolerant of religious minorities. Despite this perceived tolerance, there are severe limitations to religious freedom, including the fact that Christians are not allowed to be public about their faith.

Many hope Francis's visit will press for change, perhaps including opening a local office of the papal charitable foundation Caritas, present in over 100 countries.

On Monday, the Pontiff had a private meeting with the Muslim Council of Elders at the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Center.

The body was created by the government and is presided over by the Grand Imam to promote tolerance and a pacific vision of Islam.

The behind closed-doors meeting allowed participants to speak freely, including prince Ghazi bin Muhammed bin Talal from Jordan. He and the Pope met in 2017, when the King of Jordan visited the Vatican. Jordan is today one of the countries with the largest migrant population per-capita, hosting millions of Syrian refugees.

As Francis was headed to the airport, the Pontiff's Twitter account shared a message to his more than 40 million followers saying that he's visiting the country as a "brother, in order to write a page of dialogue together, and to travel paths of peace together. Pray for me!".

Residents of UAE may feel those prayers got an early answer on Sunday, as the Pontiff's arrival brought rain. While that might be considered an annoyance in many places, it was seen as a blessing here, where desert conditions and years of drought make fresh water a precious commodity.

📍 Inés San Martín is Rome Bureau Chief of Cruxnow.com

Letters

Letter of the week

Call 'censorship zones' by their proper name

Dear Editor, Mary Kenny's discussion of the pros and cons of censorship, and how her own views on the subject have varied over the years (IC 31/1/2019) was the sort of honest analysis Ireland's media sees too little of.

Too often our airwaves and newspapers are rife with dogmatic claims that censorship is never right, and never acceptable, and indeed such claims were rife in the short and shallow Oireachtas debates ahead of last year's blasphemy referendum. The fact that those scorning any limitations on blasphemy tended to be

silent around the issue of limitations on pornography was a powerful testimony, for those who were genuinely paying attention, to how poorly thought-out arguments around freedom of expression typically were.

The failure to think through this issue looks set to come back and bite its advocates now, however, as Ireland's chattering classes clutch their pearls at the prospect of pro-life witnesses outside clinics where abortions are performed. Should people holding vigils there be allowed to show the reality of abortion, be allowed remind people that human

lives are at stake, be allowed offer help to women who feel forced to seek abortions, be allowed stand and pray quietly?

If the answer to any of these questions is 'no', then we are talking about censorship, and anybody who supports 'exclusion zones', as they've tried calling them in the UK, is really an advocate of 'censorship zones'. I doubt there's a case for that, but let's be honest about what's being discussed.

*Yours etc.,
Deirdre Connolly,
Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.*

'Consent' and the trivialisation of relationships

Dear Editor, Recent proposals to impose 'Consent' courses upon schools, irrespective of parental wishes or the ethos of the school, are totally repugnant to the Constitutional rights of parents to be the primary educators of their children.

'Consent' is a lie, deceptive to its very core. It trivialises sexual relationships as no more than transactions, divorced from love, any concern for the wellbeing of the other and any child conceived. Aspiring to marital life and preparation for this, by

keeping oneself for one's spouse alone, is presented as neither desirable nor possible. It normalises promiscuity.

Catholic teaching based on Jesus Christ, emphasises the three M's. Marriage – founded upon fidelity, faithfulness, and fruitfulness, where any betrayal before or after the wedding, poaches from the happiness of that marriage. Modesty – an awareness of our immense value, that our bodies are special, to be treasured, and we are curators of them; here the emphasis is upon the 3 R's

Respect, Responsibility, and Resilience. Morality – where every talent, endowment, e.g. our fertility, is seen as a gift not to be rejected or suppressed, every baby conceived is to be welcomed, irrespective of the circumstance in which he or she was conceived.

'Consent' places the onus of decision making entirely upon individuals, perhaps 19-year-olds, with impaired lucidity due to alcohol, where peer and social expectations can be overwhelming.

It must be noted that every initiative so far, to take

relationships and sexuality education out of the context of family commitments and a supportive religious perspective on life, has exacerbated STDs and diminished the esteem for marriage among young people.

All of us aspire to happiness. But this cannot come about without integrity. Without living responsibly, we can neither enter nor sustain relationships, nor develop fully as persons.

*Yours etc.,
Gearóid Duffy,
Lee Road, Cork.*

Most of our spuds are Irish

Dear Editor, Almost every week *The Irish Catholic* makes a contribution to the man-made climate change and global warming ideological propaganda. The latest under the heading of 'environmental catastrophe' in Mary Kenny's column (24/1/2019). No evidence is ever produced in support of the propaganda. Mary Kenny's assertion that "Ireland imports nearly all its potatoes, mainly from Cyprus" is arrant nonsense (but par for the course for articles on climate change).

The truth is Ireland has about

9,000 hectares devoted to potato production. The yield per hectare is about 40 tonnes, giving a total annual production of 360,000 tonnes. Exports are negligible. Imports are 72,000 tonnes of which two-thirds comes from the UK. Total annual Irish consumption of potatoes is about 430,000 tonnes which is 4.5 times the annual production of potatoes in Cyprus.

*Yours etc.,
Patrick Slevin,
Waterford.*



Our Faith's difficulty with the Book of Common Prayer

Dear Editor, I am writing in response to the book review of the *Book of Common Prayer* by Peter Costello in your January 17 issue. Mr Costello is quite mistaken in his inference that Catholics belonging to the Ordinariates established in accordance with Pope Benedict XVI's 2009 apostolic constitution *Anglicanorum coetibus* can use the *Book of Common Prayer* as an official text for public liturgies or sacramental celebrations within the Roman Catholic Church.

This is simply not the case. The *Book of Common Prayer* is a venerable source of spirituality and an example of poetic beauty. I don't want to criticise it or cast any aspersions on those Christians belonging to the Anglican communion

that use it, however, it is unsuitable for Roman Catholic worship and the valid celebration of many of the Sacraments as understood by the Roman Catholic Church.

Those Catholics who belong to the Ordinariates are full members of the Roman Catholic Church and can attend any Catholic parish for their sacramental needs. However, when there is a community of these Catholics they have the option of forming their own parish that would belong to one of the Ordinariates, which function like military dioceses.

When one of these personal parishes has been properly and canonically set up their priest is welcome to celebrate using the Ordinary or Extraordinary

Forms of the Roman Rite, as any other Latin rite parish.

The parish also has the option of using a new form of the Roman Rite that is often called the Anglican Use. This liturgical usage is a sub-section of the Roman Rite that retains certain elements of the Anglican liturgical and spiritual heritage and has entailed the composition of a completely new set of liturgical books that are approved by the Congregation for Divine Worship in Rome and have no legitimate standing in the Anglican Communion.

*Yours etc.,
Fr Neil Xavier O'Donoghue,
St Patrick's College, Maynooth,
Co. Kildare.*

facebook community

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

Should celibacy be made optional, particularly in areas where there are very few priests, or should it remain the norm?

Make celibacy optional? What is this? We are turning Anglican? – **João Pedro Vieira Feliciano Malveira**

Celibacy is already optional. Anyone who doesn't want to be celibate can do something else, rather than become a priest. – **Robert Bautista**

Let them marry and be happy as family men. Celibacy came into effect in 1139, over 1,000 years after the Church was established, the apostles were married. God said this in Genesis: "It's not good for the Man to be alone; I'll make him a helper, a companion." – **Peter McCaughey**

I am with the Pope on this that celibacy should remain but that exceptions should be made in jurisdictions where there is a lack of vocations. In the East the celibacy rule works fine as they're a less sexualized culture. I do believe God was protecting the Church of the West by implementing this rule as far back as the 4th Century. I think there would be more scandals with a relaxed celibacy rule and that exceptions should only be made for the outstanding married members of the community that's suffering from vocations, like Ireland for example. – **Stephen McElligott**

About time. On my desk are index cards from debate I had in debate class at Marquette in the fall of 1969. Resolved that the secular clergy be granted optional celibacy. I won both sides of the argument. There was support for celibacy as a charism, a gift freely chosen and responded to...but not to have the force of law! – **John Jay Comerford**

A lot of young men would become priests if they could marry. – **Linda Corrigan**

I'm married to a Permanent Deacon for the Archdiocese of Birmingham in England and he puts his all into everything but the wife has to be supportive. My mom would be so proud of him – the Church was her life. – **Marina O'Connor**

Since Vatican II, almost every 'exception' has become the rule. It need not be the case, but it is. I am totally opposed to a rupture with tradition in this regard. God will grant any graces needed to men who answer his call. – **John Kehoe**

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.

Around the world



▲ **UAE:** Muslim Ali al Sayed, and his wife Mina Liccione, a Catholic, play with their son at their home in Jebel Ali. While the law permits a Muslim man to marry a non-Muslim woman, it does not allow a Muslim woman to marry a non-Muslim man without proof of his conversion to Islam.

◀ **BRAZIL:** A view of the aftermath from a failed iron ore tailings dam in Brumadinho. Photos: CNS



USA: Frozen trousers stand by themselves in St Anthony Village, Minnesota, during the polar vortex that hit the US last week which saw temperatures plummet to -40C last week.



VATICAN: Coptic Orthodox Auxiliary Bishop Kyrillos of Los Angeles addresses Pope Francis and members of the International Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches during a meeting.



ZIMBABWE: Men stand behind a burning barricade during protests in Harare. The Zimbabwe bishops' justice and peace commission is collecting information on violence and human rights abuses in dioceses across the country.



USA: Arthur Burton speaks outside the residence of Virginia governor Ralph Northam in Richmond during a demonstration demanding he resign after a racist photo from the governor's 1984 medical school yearbook emerged.



Pope Francis with other Faith leaders.

I was very blessed during my theological formation to have had the privilege of taking classes from two very renowned Catholic scholars, Avery Dulles and Raymond E. Brown. The former was an ecclesiolgologist whose books often became textbooks which were prescribed reading in seminaries and theology schools. The latter was a Scripture scholar whose scholarship stands out, almost singularly, still nearly 30 years after his death. Nobody questions the scholarship, the personal integrity, or the faith-commitment of these men.

They were in different theological disciplines but what they shared, beyond the high respect of scholars and Church persons everywhere, was a passion for ecumenism and a capacity to form deep friendships and invite warm dialogue across every kind of denominational and interreligious line.

Their books are studied not just in Roman Catholic circles, but in Protestant, Evangelical, Mormon and Jewish theological schools and seminaries as well.

Both were deeply respected for their openness, friendship, and graciousness towards those who held religious views different than their own. Indeed, Raymond Brown spent of his most productive years teaching at Union Theological Seminary in New York, even as he, a Sulpician priest, more than anything else cherished his Roman Catholic identity and priesthood.

One altar

After losing his own father and mother, he spoke of the Roman Catholic Church and his Sulpician community as "the family that still remains for me".

What these two shared in their vision for ecumenism was this: the path towards

Ecumenism – the path forward



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

Christian unity, the road that will eventually bring all sincere Christians together into one community, around one altar, is not the way of somehow winning the other over to our own particular denomination, of getting others to admit that they are wrong and that we are right and of them returning to the true flock, namely, our particular denomination. In their view, that's not the route forward, practically or theologically.

“We must all begin by each of us admitting that do not possess the full truth”

The path forward needs to be, as Avery Dulles puts it, the path of “progressive convergence”. What is this path?

It begins with the honest admission by each of us that none of us, no one denomination, has the full truth, incarnates the full expression of Church, and is fully faithful to the Gospel. We are all deficient in some ways and each of us in some ways is selective in terms of which parts of the Gospels we value and incarnate and which parts we ignore.

And so the path forward is the path of conversion, personal and ecclesial, of admitting our selectiveness, of recognising and valuing

what other churches have incarnated, of reading scripture more deeply in search of what we have ignored and absented ourselves from, and of individually and collectively trying to live lives that are truer to Jesus Christ.

By doing this, by each of us and each Church living the Gospel more fully, we will “progressively converge”, that is, as we grow closer to Christ we will grow closer to each other and thus “progressively converge” around Christ and, as we do that, we will eventually find ourselves around one common altar and will see each other as part of the same community.

The path to unity then lies not in converting each other over, but in each of us living the Gospel more faithfully so as to grow closer to each other in Christ.

This doesn't mean that we do not take our divisions seriously, that we simplistically assert that all denominations are equal, or that we justify our divisions today by pointing to divisions that already existed in the New Testament churches.

Rather we must all begin by each of us admitting that we do not possess the full truth and that we are in fact far from being fully faithful.

Given that starting point, Raymond E. Brown then gives this challenge to all the churches: “Recognition of the range of New Testament

ecclesiological diversity makes the claim of any Church to be absolutely faithful to the Scriptures much more complex.

“The path to unity then lies not in converting each other over, but in each of us living the Gospel more faithfully”

“We are faithful but in our own specific way; and both ecumenics and biblical studies should make us aware that there are other ways of being faithful to which we do not do justice...in short, a frank study of the New Testament ecclesiologies should convince every Christian community that it is neglecting part of the New Testament witness...I contend that in a divided Christianity, instead of reading the Bible to assure ourselves that we are right, we would do better to read it to discover where we have not been listening.

“As we Christians of different churches try to give hearing to the previously muffled voices, our views of the church will grow larger; and we will come closer to sharing common views.

“Then the Bible will be doing for us what Jesus did in his time, namely, convincing those who have ears to hear that all is not right, for God is asking of them more than they thought.”

Indeed; God is asking more of us than we think.

QUESTIONS of faith

Each week Colm Fitzpatrick looks at interesting and sometimes controversial questions people have about Catholicism...

Why does suffering occur?

The problem of suffering, sometimes academically referred to as ‘theodicy’, is a troublesome topic everybody wrestles with, both spiritually and intellectually.

It's been phrased in many different ways, but the most famous version of the question is attributed to the ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus: “Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is not omnipotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing? Then whence cometh evil? Is he neither able nor willing? Then why call him God?” Of course, Christians are acutely aware of this problem in their own tradition – the Book of Job, for example, explores humanity's suffering and God's relationship to it.

It's certainly a question that has stood the test of time. Many atheists have suggested that the co-existence of a perfect God and suffering is logically incoherent, meaning that such a deity could not exist. It's an alluring argument, but in reality, there a plenty of ways to understand the harmonious relationship between God and suffering.

Objective

The first argument goes something like this: If suffering exists, then the objective bad exists. If the objective bad exists, then the objective good exists. If the objective good exists, then God must exist. While this is a neat proof for the existence of God based on the problem of suffering, it still doesn't address why God allows suffering to happen.

The most common answer is that God has given human beings free will, and individuals can choose what life decisions they make, whether this be setting up an orphanage or becoming a murderer. God

doesn't control or coerce and so allows us to commit sin even if this means the result causes suffering.

This answer places suffering in the context of human agency, but what about natural disasters where nobody is responsible?

Firstly, many have argued that we are responsible for natural disasters because of our ecological activity on earth. Putting that aside, it has been suggested that the physical world we inhabit, with all of its complexities like rocks colliding or waves rising, is the only one by which humans could have existed and flourished.

Natural disasters are really just an unfortunate by-product of our ability to exist.

Another way of looking at the problem is by realising that God too entered into humanity and suffered on the Cross. God is not far away from pain and anguish, but suffered more than most humans ever have or will. This response doesn't answer the question fully, but offers us an inkling into how God is not averse to suffering.

When it comes to grappling with this problem, our understanding of it is often couched in emotive language leaving the matter very difficult to tackle in an objective way. As a result, many people abandon the Faith because of the perceived irreconcilability between a perfect God and a seemingly broken and unjust world.

While these emotive reactions need to be heard in a pastoral context, they play no helpful role in addressing the higher discussion of whether sin and evil in our world is inconsistent with an all-good God. Hopefully, some of the ideas suggested will prompt you to think about this idea in a deeper and more comprehensive way.

**Got a question or comment?
Email colm@irishcatholic.ie**

Cornerstone

Building tomorrow's parish today

Book recommendation:



Homily hints
and prayers

Page 29



No school is an island

Le Chéile Secondary School, Tyrrelstown, was one of the first schools to work with ACE Ireland (Alliance for Catholic Education, Notre Dame University), and have developed a strong bond with St. Luke's parish, Mulhuddart.

Ian Corbett and Jonathan Tiernan

Our Catholic schools should not be islands, serving their students and families in isolation and cut off from the wider parish context. Likewise,

our parishes will not thrive if they do not engage with the local school. It is vital therefore, to the mission of both school and parish, that strong and meaningful links are developed between the two or strengthened where they already exist.

A generation ago the local parish priest was synonymous with the

local parish school. The reality now is that in many parishes the priest does not have the time to serve on the Board of Management, let alone make regular visits to classrooms or be available to celebrate a regular School Mass. All this means that the age-old link between our local school and the parish is in danger

of rupturing and will require both school and parish to recommit to the shared mission of evangelisation.

Many of our Catholic schools have regressed into places that are culturally Catholic, rather than intentionally Catholic. An intentionally Catholic school has clear indicators of a living connection to the faith

tradition of the patron. These indicators will include among other things a common language for beliefs and values, a principal fulfilling the dual role of pastoral leader as well leader of teaching and learning, and importantly a meaningful link to the parish.

» Continued on Page 28

Welcome to this week's Cornerstone

Scripture:

Second Reading
This week's reading is
from 1 Corinthians

Page 28



Dr. Ryan's series on the sacraments:

We pray, we beseech, we remember

Page 30

PPCs:

Donal Harrington continues
his series for PPCs: the 'how'

Page 29



Please spread the word and join us on the journey of the building tomorrow's parish today – a familial community of faith, fostering authentic, intentional discipleship. If your parish is engaged in something exciting or innovative, contact us and let us know! Email me on eoin@irishcatholic.

No school is an island

» Continued from Page 27

Ian Corbett and Jonathan Tiernan stress the importance on building strong links between school and parish.

Through ACE Ireland's work with schools involved in our School Culture initiative, which supports schools to strengthen and sustain the Catholic culture of their schools, we have observed how a strong link between school and parish can nourish both. Where such a link exists, it is typically marked by a relationship of trust and mutual between the school and parish leaders, most often in the person of the principal and parish priest.

When this key relationship is strong one finds that the school is celebrated in the parish context and given prominence as a matter of course in the life of the parish. Likewise, staff and student connection with the parish is strengthened through regular opportunities to connect with the wider faith community of which they are a part. Significantly, a strong link between school and parish also provides opportunities for both

to deepen their relationship with the families of students.

"Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him (Matthew 9:9-13). The teachings of Jesus show how open and welcoming he is to others, extending his arms, inviting all into an intimate relationship with him. Building the relational triad between school, parish and family is fundamental to the future of both our schools and our parishes.

Just as Jesus invites us into a relationship with him through prayer, Catholic schools must extend this invitation to families and parish communities. Catholic education is not the sole responsibility of schools and its teachers, but rather a symbiotic relationship with parents and parish, working in cooperation, hand in hand on each child's "journey of learning."

The most effective way to form a symbiotic relationship between school, parish and family is to recognise the mission that unites anyone involved in ministry: the salvation of souls and the total formation of each human. The starting point of the relationship is to understand we are united in one mission.

Catholicism is our differentiator and a lens through which we view the world. In an increasingly secular society burdened by spiritual poverty, where the title 'traditional family' is disputed and parish structures are under-resourced, the values of Catholic school may not seem relevant. There is how-



Students from Le Chéile Secondary School enjoying hospitality with Fr. Eoin Tynne after the Vigil Mass in St. Luke's Mulhuddart.

ever, an ever-present need in society for the ideals which are enshrined by the Church such as truth, justice, service and love of neighbour.

As it pertains to schools, what is our image of the perfect relationship between priests and Catholic schools? While recognising the current scope of a priest's daily work, and the significant demands being put on them, every effort should be made to help the parish priest engage with school life. Practical steps that can be taken include:

Prayer: Pray for and with your parish priest as a school community for their continued service in the parish community.

Gratitude: Part of enhancing your school's Catholicity will require a priest. Be thankful for him and his service. Follow up with thank you cards, especially from kids, and mark significant

dates such as his ordination or birthday.

Presence: Ask your local priest to visit the school and meet with classes on a regular basis, to discuss gospel stories, or carry out a specific blessing. This will create an integral link to school-parish life.

Innovation: Be creative, help your parish priest to become involved in school life in unconventional ways, helping with sports teams, art lessons or extra-curricular activities.

The broader parish presence in the school can be fostered through a programme like Faith Families, hosting a

Grandparents Mass or organising parishioners to volunteer in the school through reading/knitting/music/art. Strengthening the school presence in the parish can be achieved through hosting a monthly school-led Sunday Mass, encouraging weekly Mass attendance, and having joint parish-school sacrament services.

Joint initiatives like a parent support group that explores the values they wish to instil in their children and how to integrate faith in family life provides a concrete link between the key triune in a Catholic child's life.

The future of our Catho-

lic schools is one that is uncertain, but it is likely to bring fewer schools, serving a smaller community. It should also see stronger links with the parish and be unapologetic about its ethos and confidently fosters a Catholic school culture. A vital element in achieving this will be ensuring that parish links are meaningful. Both parish and school must meet halfway, fostering encounter and invitation with one another.

Ian Corbett is a primary school teacher based in county Clare and serves as Leadership Programme Advisor to the University of Notre Dame's Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) Ireland. Jonathan Tiernan is a former primary school teacher who now serves as the Director of ACE Ireland.



Scripture

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

1 Corinthians 15:3-8,11

Brothers, in the first place I taught you what I had been taught myself, namely that Christ died for our sins, in accordance with the scriptures; that he was buried; and that he was raised to life on the third day, in accordance with the scriptures; that he appeared first to Cephas and secondly to the Twelve. Next he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died; then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles; and last of all he appeared to me too; it was as though I was born when no one expected it. But what matters is that I preach what they preach, and this is what you all believed.

Copyright © 1996-2018 Universalis Publishing Limited: see www.universalis.com. Scripture readings from the Jerusalem Bible are published and copyright © 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton, Longman & Todd, Ltd and Doubleday, a division of Random House, Inc, and used by permission of the publishers. Text of the Psalms: Copyright © 1963, The Grail (England). Used with permission of A.P. Watt Ltd. All rights reserved

Spend some time in prayer with the reading.

1. Find a quiet place, and give yourself fifteen minutes without distractions. Read the section once, and then pause for reflection. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your thoughts and response to the passage.

2. Read the passage a second time. Ask yourself: What do I find challenging about this reading? Is there anything that I can try to do differently in my life as a response to it? What is the message in this reading for our parish? Write down anything that comes to your head.

3. Pause in silent reflection, and then read the passage a third time.



The 'how'

Taking Care of Ourselves

If the people in a parish group enjoy being together, they will do good work. If they enjoy each other's company, if they look forward to it, they will find that the work is more than a chore. But this will not come about automatically.

It necessitates that the group pays attention to itself. Groups that fixate on the task miss this and flounder as a result.

What is required is straightforward. First, there needs to be some team building, getting to know each other, becoming comfortable with each other and comfortable with the role.

Then there has to be ongoing attention to this.

For instance there could be an occasional cup of tea, or even a cup of tea before or after each meeting. Again, I am thinking of at least one social occasion each year, and of occasional time away for prayer.

It is like the proverb, 'all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy'. If there is the work and nothing more, the work itself will weigh people down. The group might even appoint one or two of its members to take a responsibility here. Their job would be simply to ensure that the group is caring for itself in an ongoing way.

“The check-in is a kind of safety valve, to release tension that could otherwise build up and do damage.”

'Checking in' is a useful part of the caring process. Once or twice a year, the chairperson invites everyone to say how they are finding things. It might be that nothing comes up and that everybody is content. It is worth it just to find out that. But it might be that some are not so content. Maybe the meetings never start on time; or some are dominating and others feel left out; or the prayer is rushed; or the agenda is never completed. The check-in is a kind of safety valve, to release tension that could otherwise build up and do damage.

ings as possible; the real action takes place elsewhere.

We tend to think of the PPC as a committee. But we would do well to think of it less as a committee and more as a team. Obviously it is a bit of both. Since it operates mainly through the monthly meeting, it is a committee. But it would make a big difference to inject more of a team mentality.

This would put the emphasis on the work done outside meetings. But most importantly, it would place more importance on the 'how'. Think of phrases like 'team spirit'. Team spirit can make all the difference.

“How members relate to each other has to be an example in itself of the kind of faith community they want to build.”

In the case of the PPC, there is a further dimension. It is made up of people of faith. They have come together to do the work of the Lord, to help build the body of Christ. The way they operate has to reflect who they are. Who they are has to be evident in how they are as a group. Ultimately, being on the PPC is itself an experience of being the body of Christ. How members relate to each other has to be an example in itself of the kind of faith community they want to build.

The following are different aspects of what is involved in this. The topics we will address are: the group taking care of itself; the quality of participation; the quality of listening; appreciating gifts; building trust, praying together; the style of decision making. These are specific ways in which the group grows stronger as a group.



Donal Harrington continues his series for PPCs, focusing on the 'how' this week.

The attention of the PPC is focused on what it is doing, the task at hand. But no less important than the 'what' is the 'how'. I refer here to how the PPC is as a group; the ethos, the quality of relationships, the spirit and the spirituality. It is far more likely that this 'how' will be neglected than the 'what'. It can even be completely missed. And yet, if the 'how' is not right, the 'what' will struggle, and the group will find it hard to be effective.

This section discusses different aspects of how the group is as a group. Ideally, what is being set out here should be addressed right from the beginning when the group is being set up. It is an essential part of the group's formation. It sets the right tone from the start. It sets the expectations that the group has of itself as a group. It is quite difficult to address these issues later on, when bad habits may have been picked up and poor ways of relating may have set in.

A good question to begin with is this: is the PPC a team or a committee? The word 'council' suggests a committee, like the city council or the county council. A committee works through meetings, with an agenda and procedures and voting and so on. 'Team', as in a football team, suggests something quite different. There are as few meet-



Fish & Tips

Daily Ideas for Disciples

THE KIDS' BULLETIN

A fun way for Catholic kids to learn about the Faith every week.



The Kids' Bulletins are a resource for Catholic kids who would like to have some fun while learning about the readings from the Sunday Mass every week. (Ordinary Form) They are made by a mam in Canada who is happy to share them with anyone who can use them to help learn or teach about the truth and beauty of the Faith. Feel free to use the puzzles and/or comics separately, but acknowledgement of the source would be appreciated.

There is no cost to using and printing the bulletins, but if you would like to donate, there is more information on the website: www.thekids-bulletin.com. As well as the weekly bulletin, there are also other resources like a comic strip Stations of the Cross and a Lent calendar. The hope of the Kids' Bulletins is to help you (your kids and grandkids) to know, love and serve God better every day. All for the glory of God!

BOOK RECOMMENDATION

HOMILY HINTS AND PRAYERS



Time is a problem, but every problem is a possibility. The possibility lies in the challenge to come straight to the point of a message.

Pope Francis has taken the advice of Pope Paul VI to be simple, clear and direct, and his daily homilies have a worldwide appeal.

This book offers two very short reflections on the daily gospels. These simple and clear reflections would take two minutes at most and a preacher might use either one or both. They are called homily hints because a preacher can use them to trigger his own thoughts, and the best book is the one that makes you do your own thinking.

Where there is no priest avail-

able, this book would be an invaluable help to any group who gathers to pray with the day's Mass Readings.

Silvester O'Flynn OFM Cap. is well-known for his reflections on the three cycles of Sunday Mass Readings. He also wrote Sunday Seeds and The Responsorial Psalms of Sunday. These books are deeply appreciated by preachers preparing homilies as well as being used in prayer groups. He has frequently been asked for reflections on the daily Mass Readings and especially for Prayers of the Faithful related to the Gospel.

Homily Hints and Prayers is available from Columba Books (www.columbabooks.com).



EVANGELISATION

Sit down and keep quiet



Fr Joe McDonald writes about why humiliation should not be dressed up as character building

‘Sit there and keep quiet!’ How often did you hear that as a child? Or a variation of it. ‘Children should be seen and not heard’. Sometimes it might have been more specific. ‘You haven’t a note in your head’ or ‘you can’t dance, you have no rhythm’. Most of us have some experience of having been shut up or shut down. It is likely that when it first happened it was an unpleasant experience. This could range from mild embarrassment to deep hurt. In some instances, this was made worse because the ‘put down’ was done in public, say in a classroom,

or worse still in the school assembly hall.

It would be easy to be hard on the adults who behaved in this way, particularly when we apply today’s standards and awareness to what happened back then. Whether this is fair or not is debatable. What is objectively true is that such an approach was not good educational practice. Humiliation cannot be dressed up as character building. Even if we accept that we all have different talents and abilities and we cannot be good at everything there is a way of communicating that. We are not all good footballers. We are not all good singers. We are not all good artists. However, we are all entitled to our dignity. Just as we would react to someone’s good name being damaged so too we acknowledge that anything that damages our self-esteem is also reprehensible.

On the other hand, we can never underestimate the power of the word of encouragement. The psychologist Carl Rogers has a great phrase, he speaks of ‘unconditional positive regard’. In English, we have the notion of more bees being caught by a spoonful of honey than the barrel of vinegar. Of course, in our own Irish vocabulary we have the beautiful ‘Mol an Óige agus tióchfaidh sí!’ (literally: Praise youth and they come with you).

On the question of being shut down or shut up I have been wondering recently about the way things have gone in many of our churches

in relation to both noise and silence. The more I thought about it, the more it started to look like a riddle or a conundrum. It might go something like this:

How come in Church today there is great chat about anything and everything and a deafening silence in place of the sacred responses?

In a sense pagan babble has ousted the sacred dialogue. Or is this too harsh? Is this too simplistic? I do not have a secret readymade answer that I want to lead you to. I do have questions, considerations and possibly some theory about this very interesting phenomenon. This is something I have experienced on a number of occasions in various churches around the country. It goes something like this:

As people gather before Mass there is a growing cho-

rus of chat. With some it’s just a few quick murmured sentences of greeting or a brief mutual update, whilst with others it’s more sustained and continues apace all the while growing in volume.

Whatever about the first of these things being understandable, and arguably acceptable, the latter is more akin to the market place.

It’s not so much that the growing din is in some vague way disrespectful to the

sacred space, it’s much more serious than that. As this din grows it causes two very specific, and in my view, very serious problems. The first of these problems is that those who are trying to talk to the Lord, who

engage in the serious business of prayer, find it increasingly difficult to do so. I say serious business because often-times it is actually life and death. A loved one dying, a dear one missing or in trouble or sometimes the person

themselves desperately needing the Divine ear. The second problem is at least as serious and perhaps more so. This is where the Lord is speaking to the person and it’s almost impossible to hear him over the deafening din.

Now I totally accept that there is no intended malice in any of this. I think it’s more likely a mixture of ignorance, in the best sense of that word, and thoughtlessness. However, neither of these, nor the combination of both, detract from the seriousness of the problem. Further to this when it comes to the silence that meets the sacred greetings, such as ‘The Lord be with you’, again there is no intended malice. Again, but evidence of the growing gap between faith and practice.



Sacraments

We pray, we beseech, we remember

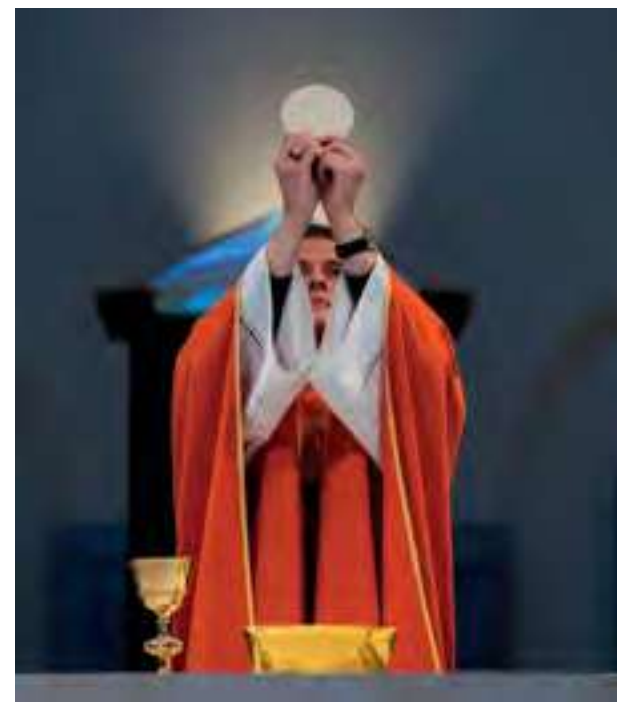
Dr Fáinche Ryan

This phase of the Eucharist begins with the procession of the gifts of bread and wine to the altar. We return to God what God has gifted to us, but we return them to God after we have made them our own. God created them, as God has created all that is, and we have been invited into God’s work, we have become co-creators, or perhaps better put ‘makers’. From grain and grape we have made bread and wine, and now we pray that they will become for us, spiritual food and spiritual drink. We have our beautiful Eucharistic Prayers, a rich inheritance with roots in the Jewish tradition, and in the early Christian Church. While things have changed a little with the passage of time, and so we cannot truthfully identify the ‘original’ words,

and aware that we are always working with translated texts, what we do has largely remained the same since earliest times. It is ‘we’ who do it. At times it can seem that, because from now on the presider (priest) does most of the talking, we might as well not be there, our role is not important. This is not the case. We are part of the Body of Christ and our absence leaves the Body bereft, in some way deficient. Full active participation, the expressed desire of the Second Vatican Council does not mean that everyone does everything. During the Eucharistic prayer while one person vocalises most of the words, he speaks on our behalf. The prayers are in the plural – ‘we make humble prayer and petition’, ‘we celebrate the memorial of the blessed Passion’, ‘Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray’, ‘Have mercy on us all,

we pray’, ‘May he make of us an eternal offering to you’, ‘We give you praise, Father most holy, for you are great’. It is the People of God, the baptised, who have gathered to give thanks to God, who now beseech the Holy One to accept our offering of bread and wine and to send the Holy Spirit to sanctify, to make holy these gifts, so that they ‘may become the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ’. We ask for no small thing, we ask for a miracle, and we ask confident that the ‘miracle’ will occur, for God is faithful. This we do, this we can do, because of the Last Meal that Jesus shared with his followers, his disciples.

More to follow on this in next week’s Cornerstone.



Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, February 7, 2019

Personal Profile

Through battles and tragedy in struggle for life

Page 34



Meal plan mix-up



We're constantly hearing that the planet is on the verge of a precipice, that a veritable apocalypse will befall future generations once the earth's temperatures rise above a catastrophic level, and the human race is railroading itself with its irresponsible actions – doomed to its fate.

Despite the grand scale of the issue, many have taken to making small changes in their daily lives, playing their part to secure our common home.

With a leading scientific journal, *The Lancet*, publishing a report highlighting the impact the meat industry has on the environment last week, many people are saying it's time to



A varied diet could save the planet, writes Chai Brady

start varying the Irish diet. The report went as far as to call for a 90% reduction of meat eating worldwide to combat the world's climate crisis.

For one parish pastoral worker in the Archdiocese of Dublin, all Catholics have an obligation to care for the planet and to alleviate the suffering of those already being affected by changing climates around the world, saying that perhaps

reintroducing old traditions could be the best way to respond.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic*, Jane Mellett said that bringing back the Friday Fast might be a great way to help the environment for one, but would also benefit Catholics spiritually.

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales restored the Friday Fast eight years ago in May, and while Ms Mellett welcomed this on a spiritual

level, she regrets they didn't take the opportunity to make it even more obviously significant.

"The only thing was, it was a missed opportunity because they didn't link it to any justice issue. Now it's good in itself, but it could easily be linked to how much we have in this part of the world, how much we consume, and also climate, so I thought it's a great idea, it's just a missed opportunity in terms of linking it to our relationship with our brothers and sisters around the world," she says.

Spiritual level

"As Catholics we used to be great at fasting, no meat on a Friday, there's a benefit to fasting on a spiritual level, but it's also good

for the environment so I think it's good in both spheres to do that."

Ms Mellett elaborates by saying it's not about going without food altogether, but cutting out meat every now and again could have a big impact.

She says: "Even the science that's out there showing the connection between meat and its climate impacts at the moment, for me I would usually do as much as I can to fix this problem."

"There are people on the planet suffering because of the climate crisis so if we can do as much as possible from our side of the world to reduce that – I think we have a moral obligation."

Ms Mellett describes herself as a 'flexitarian', basically

» Continued on Page 33

Family News

AND EVENTS

Tiny Tots Tuesday: Gymboree!

Bring your little ones along for a morning of music, dance and games in an interactive workshop on Tuesday February 12.

EPIC, the Irish Emigration Museum, is located at the heart of Dublin at Custom House Quay on the River Liffey – the original departure point for so many of Ireland's emigrants. They will hold 'Tiny Tots Tuesday'.

In February EPIC "are delighted" to welcome the Gymboree team to Tiny Tots Tuesday and tea and coffee will be provided by Bakehouse, as well as some treats on the day.

The event is suitable for children aged six months to 3.5 years. Participants can also avail of a 20% discount on tickets to the museum and in the museum gift shop – simply show a staff member your Eventbrite ticket to avail of the offer. It will be held at the CHQ, Customs House Quay, Dublin 1 from 10.30am to 12.00pm. Tickets cost €12 and can be purchased via Eventbrite at <https://epicchq.com/tiny-tots-tuesday-gymboree/>

DO YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC? Magic brings intrigue, comedy brings laughter, this winning duo are sure to keep the kids entertained with the Kids Comedy Magic Show Tour 2019 coming to Athlone this month.

After comedy legend Tommy Cooper popularised the art of comedy magic, it's no wonder it has been recreated by performers around the world.

Not to be missed there will only be one show held in the county at the Radisson Blu Hotel with organisers advising to book in advance to avoid disappointment.

They say: "This show is not to be missed. Perfect for audiences young and old with magic, comedy and entertainment to suit all ages."

The event takes place on Sunday, February 24. Admission is free for adults and doors open at 2.30pm, with the show beginning at 3pm. For more information contact: 0863930929

There are a limited amount of tickets available which can be booked at: <https://kidscomedymagicshowtickets.eventbrite.ie/>

Kids who eat well breathe better

Obesity is a major preventable cause of childhood asthma according to the authors of a study published in an online pharmaceutical journal.

The research reported on in the *Pharmaceutical Journal* used data from 507,496 children aged 2–17 years with asthma at baseline, who were followed-up for an average of 10 years.

Those classified as overweight had a 17% greater risk, and those classified as obese had a 26% greater risk of asthma, compared with healthy-weight children. The risk of spirometry-confirmed asthma was not significantly increased in overweight children, but was increased by 29% in obese children.

The researchers explained that obesity had been linked to incident asthma in adults, but the relationship in children was less clear.

Overall, they said that reducing the onset of obesity in childhood would significantly reduce the public health burden of asthma in children, and that 10% of all asthma cases could be avoided.



Can someone be 'too old' to drive?

The issue of fitness to drive has garnered some media attention in recent weeks after Britain's Prince Philip was involved in a road traffic accident that came close to inflicting serious injury. Undoubtedly, if he had youth on his side and wasn't in his 98th year many eyebrows may not have been raised as regards his suitability to drive.

Nonetheless, it has brought into focus the regulations that govern the issuance of driver licenses in older adults and prohibitions or restrictions that are in place for a variety of medical reasons.

In Ireland, the first guidelines were produced in 2013 by the Road Safety Authority in collaboration with the Royal College of Physicians and are updated every year.

For older adults, there is no upper limit as to when a person can't drive. Licenses for car drivers can be issued for up to 10 years until the age of 70. However, those 70 or older must renew their license at least every three years and require a medical certificate. In practise, this is usually completed by their GP though may require specialist expertise in those with certain medical conditions.

Contentious

This has been a contentious issue for many as only self-declaration regarding health is required for younger drivers who must report on a list of 23 medical conditions. Indeed, the director of National Office of Traffic Medicine recommended last year that the current mandatory doctor certification should be banned for older drivers.

If you drive when medically unfit you can be convicted under the Road Traffic Act

Medical Matters

Dr Kevin McCarroll



1961 and there also insurance implications.

So how many older drivers are there? In 2016, 10.2% of all full driving license holders in Ireland were aged 70+ and of those 65,000 were aged 80+.

“By the age of 80 about 15% of adults have dementia and a further 15-20% have some degree of cognitive impairment”

Despite concerns, older drivers are less likely to be involved in road traffic accidents which is probably explained by a few important factors. Firstly, they tend to travel shorter distances but also are more likely to follow the rules of the road, not speed or 'drink and drive'. In fact, they may have three to four times fewer accidents than young males.

However, by the age of 80 about 15% of adults have dementia and a further 15-20% have some degree of cognitive impairment. This can lead to impaired judgement, perception and reduced reaction times.

While dementia in its early stages does not necessarily preclude one from driving, it is usually recommended but not

mandatory that an "on road assessment" is undertaken. This involves a qualified assessor observing the person drive in their own car and making an objective evaluation. Even when completed satisfactorily, restrictions may be advised such as to drive only in your local area, during the daytime and on minor roads and also to have a repeat assessment within six to 12 months.

Ultimately, it is up to your doctor to make the final decision. In particular, a once off assessment may not adequately capture a true picture. Indeed, expressed concerns by close family regarding driving often counts for more. Things to look out for are scrapes and dents on



Prince Philip.

the car, hitting curbs, difficulty at exits and turns and poor control of speed.

Of course, prohibiting driving can have major implications for all ages and in many instances clinical discretion needs to be applied. There are, however, a variety of clearly defined medical conditions where driving cannot be allowed and some must be reported to the National Driver License Service.

For example, if you have epilepsy (which affects about 40,000 people) you must be seizure free for at least one year before you can drive. Indeed, epilepsy is the most common reason for collapse at the wheel of a car.

There are also a number

of cardiac conditions which impact on driving too. You should not drive if you have unstable angina and must wait for at least one week after a heart attack and a month after bypass surgery. When there is a high degree of suspicion that blackouts or dizzy spells are due to a cardiac cause, driving must cease until investigations are completed and/or the condition identified and treated.

“There are, however, a variety of clearly defined medical conditions where driving cannot be allowed”

A mini-stroke will also result in a one-month ban and diabetics who have suffered with more than one episode of a significantly low blood sugar in the last year will be restricted. There are also clear and minimum requirements set for vision.

Use of alcohol and psychoactive drugs also falls within the guidelines. In those who have alcohol dependent syndrome, a ban for six months is advised and similar recommendations when there is a proven dependency on drugs such as cocaine, heroin and also cannabis.

To summarise, it's not so much an issue of age but of medical fitness to drive and hence a pragmatic approach should be taken. Indeed, until recently the oldest driver in the UK was using her car at the ripe old age of 107!

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

» Continued from Page 31



meaning someone who takes an environmentally sustainable approach to what they eat, including reducing meat consumption.

"I think it's healthy in lots of ways, my motivation is climate impact but also in terms of our own spiritual codes and developments, fasting is a really good practice and we're not going to starve – there's things we can eat on a Friday – so I think it would be worth thinking about."

Families

Particularly focusing on families, Ms Mellett says it's beneficial to explain to children the reason they might fast from meat and why it's good to "go without something every now and again".

"We consume so much meat in this part of the world and in other parts of the world it's very little. Just even entering into that conversation with families and discussing the impact on the environment as well," she says.

The report which appeared in *The Lancet* on January 28 has been lambasted by the farming community, who have said their methods of farming are carbon efficient.

However Emeritus Professor John Sweeney of Maynooth University says that the sector is the "single largest contributor to Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions" and that it is getting worse, with projections predicting an upward trend for the next 20 years.

“There is definitely a growing number of people choosing to go without meat completely or just every now and again”

The academic is part of the Irish Climate Analysis and Research Unit, and says the current and predicted carbon emissions from agriculture "run counter" to Ireland's pledge regarding the Paris Agreement, in which countries from around the world said they would work to reduce their emissions and reach certain targets.

Plants use energy from the sun to grow, and animals eat plants to create energy for themselves, Prof. Sweeney explains, thus a huge

amount of "food energy" is wasted when humans eat meat rather than plants.

"The implications are quite clear in terms of food to support a large global population, we know that you can't support 10-12 billion people if they all have diets based on meat consumption because of the loss of energy along the way," he says.

Speaking about China and India, where meat consumption per capita is on a much smaller scale compared to Ireland, he says: "If they were to acquire a taste for western food then there could be a problem down the road regarding the planet's ability to sustain the world."

"If the world consumed meat such as we do here in Ireland, we'd need something like four planets to support the global population."

Regarding *The Lancet* report he says phasing out meat completely is not what it is directing, but that a balanced diet is both healthier for humans and the planet.

"I think there's a need for Irish agriculture to reinvent itself and move towards a more balanced and diverse production system and move away from simply the monoculture of game cattle," he adds.

As more and more vegetarian and vegan options appear on Irish menus and with vegetarian and vegan restaurants and shops cropping up particularly in urban areas, there is definitely a growing number of people choosing to go without meat completely or just every now and again.

Young people in particular, Prof.



John Sweeney says, appear to be "voting with their feet" and steering the market. A few decades ago an alternative to milk would have been seen as preposterous, now for those who prefer to avoid it, or indulge from time to time, there's oat milk, almond milk, rice milk, soya milk and more.

However, as these products do not have all the same nutrients as milk, perhaps having more or less of one thing or another, it's always advisable to be aware of nutritional needs before choosing an alternative diet or even just planning on cutting down on certain foods.

“Rather than parents taking children off meat, just consider the implication of an imbalanced diet in children”

Prof. Sweeney says: "We can get the necessary nutrients from non-meat food, it takes a bit more creativity and imagination but it can be done as vegetarians and vegans demonstrate."

"I think one shouldn't be alarmist about what's been advocated by *The Lancet*, a very respected journal, simply a more balanced diet, one which addresses the issues of obesity in young people."

"I think it's common sense, rather than parents taking children off meat, just consider the implication of an imbalanced diet in children as you would think of a lack of exercise or education."

With Prof. Sweeney remarking that over the years there may be increased worries regarding water shortages, he says it takes 1,500 litres of water to produce one kilogram of beef and "as water becomes a valuable resource in years ahead, again we have to think about how you use that more efficiently in food production".

Changing attitudes regarding a diet founded in a long tradition of farming in Ireland, and with an economy based hugely on the agricultural sector, it seems like cutting out meat for some may be a far-fetched notion, but treating meat as a treat rather than a staple may be the way forward.

Faith — IN THE — family

Bairbre Cahill



News of the death of Fr Daniel O'Leary [pictured] has saddened me. Like many people around the world I am blessed to be able to say that Daniel was my friend.

As a woman working within the Church, writing and speaking, involved in theology and spirituality I have often found the Church a difficult place to be. Daniel gave me the inspiration and confidence to believe that I was not mad and that it was worth sticking my neck out and talking about the spirituality of family life, the encounter with God in the every day.

I feel that our Church and our world has lost a prophet, one who was filled with the Spirit, who saw the world through God's eyes and called us to realise the dream God has for us.

For Daniel that dream was one of love – that we would know how deeply and passionately we are loved by God and in knowing that, we too would love others deeply and passionately. Daniel was under no illusion about how fragile and broken we can be as human beings. He was not naïve and spoke honestly about the poor and damaging choices we can make.

What he did not do however was define us by that brokenness – rather he defined us in terms of the Incarnation. Throughout his writings Daniel comes back to the theme of Incarnation – that God loves us so deeply his desire is to be with us. So, for Daniel – as for many theologians and people of prayer before him – Jesus becoming one like us is not a plan B to 'fix' what went wrong in the Garden of Eden.

No, from the beginning God's desire to love has meant that Creation and Incarnation go hand in hand. From the beginning God desired to send his Word, his Son to be one like us so that we would know God face to face.

Implications

If we actually take the Incarnation as seriously as Daniel is suggesting then that will have implications for – well,

everything! It is challenging to think that in our faith we have put the emphasis too much on ideas of fall and sin and banishment from paradise and not enough on the idea that we are created in the image and likeness of God and carry that image within us, waiting to shine out, even when we are broken and fragile.

We are invited to consider every aspect of creation, every experience in our daily lives as an encounter with God. And so, he can say: "Our humanity, like that of Jesus, is the womb of the divine."

We are all God-carriers, always giving birth to a new vision, forever revealing Infinite Love in the most unlikely places" (*Already Within*, Page 9).

That idea of encountering Infinite Love in "unlikely places" can be threatening. There is a clerical mindset – which can exist among laypeople as well as clergy – which seeks to control access to God and restrict it to those who are 'worthy'.

“I want my children and yours to believe that God loves them passionately”

In that mentality God is seen as residing in the Church, accessible only through the Eucharist and the sacraments. Daniel encourages us to be open to the liturgy of everyday life and so appreciate even more what is offered to us in the Church, but a clerical mentality kicks out against those ideas. It is easy to see why Pope Francis refers to clericalism as a perversion of the Church.

I want my children and yours to believe that God loves them passionately. I want them to know they carry within themselves the image of God and for them to be part of a Church which nourishes that image. I don't want them stifled by clericalism.

I will leave you with a benediction Daniel sent me just a few months ago: "May you shine like the Sun for that is what you were created from the beginning to do."



Through battles and tragedy in struggle for life

Personal Profile



Chai Brady speaks to a pro-life prodigy

When disaster strikes it can be a severe test to Faith, and for one of the most devout and well-known figures in the pro-life movement, this was when she lost her mother at the tender age of 19.

Bernadette Smyth, the Director of of Precious Life, a group which continues battling to retain legislation making abortion illegal in the North of Ireland, has certainly been on a testing journey

From Ballymena, Co. Antrim, her parents raised the family of six daughters and two sons in a household characterised by a "very strong Faith".

This grounded Mrs Smyth in her Faith, but this was soon put to the test when she was still a teenager. Her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer and died only a few weeks afterwards.

"That's when I really was challenged in a big way as to whether God existed and if he did, why did he take my mother so tragically," Mrs Smyth says.

Controversial

"For about a year I fell away from my Faith, and it was during that time after my mother's death that I met my husband."

Just a year after meeting Derek they were married, but it was a marriage that many would see as controversial in the 1980s in the



North, as she was a Catholic and he was Protestant. They were married both in the Church of Ireland and the Catholic Church – after a priest assisted in her return to the Faith.

“It was there for the first time in my whole life I looked at an image of a baby that had been aborted”

However, after 19 years of marriage, her husband converted to Catholicism. Mrs Smyth says: "I'd always prayed that he'd have a conversion to the Faith, it wasn't

something I bombarded him with or said he must do, I really prayed it would be something God would give him the Grace to do.

But still it was the "biggest shock to her" when he announced it one day unexpectedly. Since Mrs Smyth was in her 20s she has been a daily communicant, she says: "So that was a 30-year journey of Faith, of being a daily communicant, praying the rosary every day, and that's the sort of home then that we had for our children that was handed on to me from my home."

"I've been blessed by such a great husband who does bless everything I do. He is my right

hand man, he is there through thick and thin and I suppose I couldn't do it without his support, and I do listen to him he's a great wise person," she says. Derek now works with her in Precious Life.

Derek hasn't been the only very supportive figure in her life, Mrs Smyth's father Francis gave a "substantial donation" towards the establishment of Precious life.

Francis was imprisoned in a POW (Prisoner of War) camp in North Korea while fighting with the British army in the 1950s. Despite his wife fearing she might be a widow, he was freed and managed to make it home, not long after Mrs Smyth was born behind her two older sisters.

His regiment was awarded by the US government for their involvement in the war. He died nine years ago.

"When you grow up with a father like that you hear the war stories, I've only realised what a father I had after I started to look at the background of the war, myself and family, and we were thinking we had such an amazing father when he was on this earth," says Mrs Smyth.

“I'm attracting a lot of good young people and they are young people of Faith which is encouraging for me”

Her journey in the pro-life movement began when she was a young mother. Always deeply devoted to the Divine Mercy, Mrs Smyth went to Dublin for the first time to see a talk by Ugo Festa, an Italian man who went to Lourdes with serious health issues and is said to have been miraculously healed in front of a shrine to the Divine Mercy.

At the event she picked up some pro-life literature and "it was there for the first time in my whole life I looked at an image of a baby that had been aborted", she says.

"In that moment my life had

been transformed in a split second, because I knew there and then my life was never going to be the same, it was like as if god ordained that moment for me, to transform me."

Mrs Smyth went back to the prayer group she ran in her parish in Ballymena, and they prayed over the literature. It was from that prayer group the seeds of Precious Life were planted.

Looking towards the future Mrs Smyth said: "I'm not ready to give up the ministry but I am training more young people, I feel that God is directing me in handing on the baton to a younger generation. In many ways, it's not that I'm slowing down, I sometimes feel I'm getting a bit tired."

"Because in Northern Ireland, like all the pro-life groups in the south of Ireland up until last year, it was relentless. Campaign after campaign, threat after threat, and that hasn't stopped for the 22 years that I've been involved."

"I feel that there is a new generation of young people, I'm attracting a lot of good young people and they are young people of Faith which is encouraging for me."

Politics

Although Mrs Smyth says she may focus on pregnancy healthcare and crisis pregnancy in the future – Precious Life established Stanton Healthcare in Belfast which is a women's healthcare clinic – she is also considering politics.

She has been asked numerous times to stand in the NI elections as a pro-life Catholic. "I would consider it, I am considering it, but I can't honestly say that I feel that that's what I'd be happy to do because that would be a pressuring position as well," Mrs Smyth said.

Who knows what may happen in the future, but as her pro-life battle continues, Mrs Smyth has certainly earned her stripes as one of Northern Ireland's most well-known campaigners.

Sweet Treats

Laura Anderson

Strawberry Swirl Cheesecake – a perfect dessert

This indulgent no-bake cheesecake is ideal for treating your special someone this coming Valentine's Day. Although the method is lengthy, it is simple and no baking means there's no chance you can burn it! Don't be tempted to add any extra ingredients to the filling though, as this could prevent the cheesecake from setting properly.

Ingredients

For the base:

- 250g digestive biscuits
- 100g butter, melted.

For the filling:

- 580g full-fat cream cheese
- 100g icing sugar
- 2 tps vanilla extract
- 250ml double cream.

For the strawberry sauce:

- 140g strawberries, hulled
- 3 tpsps maple syrup
- 200g extra strawberries for decoration.

Method

Grease and line a 20cm loose bottomed tin with

baking paper.

For the base, put the biscuits into a ziplock bag and using a rolling pin crush them to a fine crumb consistency. Then in a bowl, mix together the crumbs with the melted butter until they are evenly coated. Press this mixture firmly into the bottom of your tin to create an even base. Leave this to set for one hour in the fridge.

Beat together the cream cheese, icing sugar and vanilla extract for the filling with an electric mixer until smooth (a good tip is to make sure the cheese is at room temperature; it will help the cake to set). Add the double cream and continue to beat until an even, thick consistency is reached.

To make the sauce for the swirls, blend the strawberries and maple syrup until smooth. Using a small saucepan bring this mixture to the boil then allow to simmer for about five

minutes until it thickens. Leave this to cool slightly as you prepare the filling. Line the outside of the tin with a ring of sliced strawberries. Then, starting from the outside and working your way in, spoon in the cheesecake filling, ensuring that there are no air bubbles. Use a spatula or the back of a spoon to make a smooth, even top.

Syrup

To achieve the swirls on top of the cake, dollop teaspoons of the strawberry syrup across the surface. Then, using a thin knife or a skewer, start from a dollop of syrup and drag it across the top of the cheesecake to create a swirl. Clean your skewer between swirls. You can make it as bold or as feathery as you like. Once you're finished designing, it's time to pop the cheesecake into the fridge overnight to set.

The following day to successfully remove your cheesecake from the tin set it on top of a tin can, open the side of the tin and pull it downwards slowly. Then gently work a pallet knife under the base to slide the cake onto the serving plate. Serve with some more fresh strawberries!



TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Tapping into education for everyone

There's usually a positive response when people whose background becomes an obstacle to education manage to access it despite the challenges, and sometimes later in life.

Last Friday night's **Nation-wide** (RTE 1) was quite uplifting, focusing as it did on the Trinity Access Programme (TAP). We heard from several people, young and older, who had made their way into college under this scheme and finally and successfully reached graduation day, often surrounded by proud parents who never had that chance themselves.

It wasn't all roses either. For example, one graduate, Dr Katriona O'Sullivan who had gone on to do a PhD and is now a psychology tutor, spoke of the distance that had come between herself and other family members because of the difference it made for her to be so highly educated. It was as if they were now moving in different worlds – she spoke of a bridge neither can cross.

Gavin Boyne from Ring-send spoke of inequalities in the education system, e.g. a 90% progression rate to college in Dublin 6, compared to a rate of 22% in Dublin 17. I thought he looked familiar and sure enough he played a significant role in the campaign to retain the Eighth Amendment, crediting the



Ryan Tubridy, presenter of RTÉ's *Late Late Show*.

Eighth with saving his very life. Justine Halpin was a cheerful guest presenter whose enthusiasm for TAP was infectious. We didn't learn a lot about the type of courses undertaken, and I did cringe a bit at the "privilege walk" exercise, but it was a short programme and I was happy for the emphasis to be on the individuals and their stories.

A similarly inspiring theme was taken up on that night's **Late Late Show** (RTE 1), when Ryan Tubridy interviewed Gillian Quinn (wife of footballer Niall). She had left school at 14 because of family circumstances and her desire to pursue a career in drama and modelling. She described how she felt inadequate in various gatherings, but was inspired by the mature grad-

uates she encountered at an Open University graduation – this led her to pursue a degree in psychology, when she had her own proud graduation day and has now moved on to study for a Ph.D.

A more controversial angle on education was taken up on **Lunchtime Live** (Newstalk) on Tuesday of last week when host Ciara Kelly spoke to David Quinn on an Oireachtas Committee report suggesting changes to sex education in schools. Quinn argued for parents' choice in the matter to be primary, a reasonable and moderate point I would have thought, and perfectly in line with the pro-choice ethos of our times. And it's also more in line with the Constitution – Quinn suggested that it would be unconstitutional if the State said that no school

can have religious ethos in Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE).

I was tickled to hear this from Kelly at one stage: "Surprisingly David Quinn I agree with you." He was suggesting that many parents would be unhappy with a model based solely on 'consent', and that



Ciara Kelly (Newstalk).

it should be accompanied by promoting knowledge of a person, trust, respect and emotional fulfilment ("consent plus" he called it). Of course, he also pointed out that this wasn't the full Catholic teaching.

Kelly thought religion shouldn't have any role in RSE as sex was not a moral issue, but she was confusing morality and religion. Quinn assumed rightly she'd want some values like respect, and therefore morality was involved, morality being about how we treat others. She preferred talking terms of ethics, but gave the game away when she said "you bring a certain ethos to your whole life". In other words ethos does come into it...it's just a matter of whose ethos applies.

That issue surfaced again last Monday morning on **Today With Seán O'Rourke** (RTÉ Radio 1) when the host spoke with *The Irish Catholic* Managing Editor Michael Kelly and Maria Steen of the Iona Institute. Steen feared Catholic schools wouldn't be allowed to teach Catholic values, while Kelly was concerned about how authentically Catholic the existing Catholic schools really were.

There was a divergence – Steen seemed to favour the Church selling off a large number of schools to the state while maintaining some genuinely Catholic schools.

PICK OF THE WEEK

BRAINWASHING STACEY: ANTI-ABORTION CAMP
BBC1, Tuesday, February 12, 11.35 pm

Stacey Dooley travels to California to meet Survivors, one of America's anti-abortion groups.

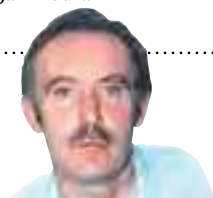
BIAFRA – MISEAN DEARMADTA
TG4, Wednesday, February 13, 9.30pm
Repeat of fine film about the role of Irish missionaries in the Nigerian civil war of the 60's.

THE TREE OF LIFE
Channel 4, Wednesday (night), February 13, 1.45 am

(2011) Terrence Malick explores the tension between brute nature and spiritual grace, with Biblical quotes to reinforce its leitmotif. With Brad Pitt, Sean Penn and Jessica Chastain.

Kelly didn't think it was time to go that far, yet highlighted the problems created by the Church being the default provider of education for most students. Well worth listening back to.

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



Aubrey Malone

Film

Mother-to-be rocked by fiancé's arrest

If Beale Street Could Talk (15A)

Anyone who saw Barry Jenkins' *Moonlight* would have been impressed by the quiet charm Trevante Rhodes brought to the role of the character called Chiron. (As you may remember, three actors played him in various stages of his life).

Stephan James reminded me a lot of him as Alonzo in Jenkins' latest opus. He scripted it from a James Baldwin novel set in Harlem in the 1970s. Jenkins' direction is also very reminiscent of the earlier film, playing itself out like a symphony in a series of leisurely vignettes that in a



Fonny (Stephan James) and Tish (Kiki Layne) in *If Beale Street Could Talk*.

Excellent
★★★★★

lesser director's hands might have clashed with the incendiary nature of the plot.

This is really quite slim. Alonzo, nicknamed Fonny, has impregnated his childhood sweetheart Tish (Kiki Layne). This foments tensions between the two families. Jen-

kins conveys the bitterness of this to us in a powerful early scene. As the couple await the birth of their baby, Fonny is arrested on a trumped-up charge of rape spearheaded by a racist policeman.

The remainder of the film – intercut with flashbacks –

concerns the efforts of the two sets of parents to track down the raped woman. She's understandably traumatised and has fled to Puerto Rico.

They resort to desperate measures to get enough money together to mount a defence for Fonny. This is being handled by one of the few white people in the film who are sympathetic to the African-American pair. (Another is their landlord.)

Message

The film is reminiscent of Kathryn Bigelow's *Detroit* in some ways. The anti-racist message was handled very forcibly there. Here it's more muted, Jenkins' direction going where it will in a series of evocative scenes that dwell

tantalisingly on faces, gestures, impressionistic chiaroscuro.

At times his propensity for visualising images from Baldwin's text is too insistent – one's imagination usually works better in such instances – but this is a small caveat in a film characterised by a plethora of beautifully modulated performances.

It's a lush undertaking with a languorous charm that flies in the face of the poverty and deprivation on view. Jenkins doesn't put a foot wrong, bestowing great devotion to each multi-layered scene.

Everything is understated in the film, making you suspect the ending will be too – and it is. It's almost as if he doesn't need to tell us what

happens to his characters. Showing their reactions to the events is enough.

The voiceover takes care of the 'business' of the film, leaving everything else to style and virtuosity.

Regina King is getting most of the plaudits for the power with which she plays Sharon, Fonny's feisty mother, but for me Layne was just as effective in a more difficult role.

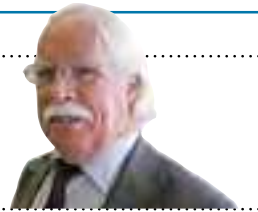
The bewildered victim of a bigoted society, she resembles the young Whitney Houston as she blossoms into womanhood against the backdrop of the chaos surrounding her.

See this film at all costs but be prepared for some sexual material and strong language.



BookReviews

Peter Costello



Excavating the roots of the yellow vest movement



Michael Kelly

En finir avec Eddy Bellegueule
by Édouard Louis
(published in English as *The End of Eddy*)

The World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland has become a staple of the international political agenda. It is a gathering of the great and good in the picturesque setting of the Alps and brings together the world of politics, technology and high finance.

For supporters, it is an occasion to see the world as an interconnected village where what happens in one place inevitably affects those elsewhere. On the other hand, critics describe it as an elitist meeting that is shrouded in secrecy and pushes a globalist agenda.

While Taoiseach Leo Varadkar was amongst those participating this year, the French President Emmanuel Macron sat this year out due to political instability at home. France has been convulsed by protests from the so-called *Mouvement des gilets jaunes*.

The yellow vest demonstrations have often been marked by violence directed against both public and private property and has been described as an odd amalgam of the political far-right and extreme-left. The one thing they have in common is a widely-held dissatisfaction with the economic direction of Fifth Republic.

Landslide

Elected with a landslide in 2017 aged just 39, many people expected Monsieur Macron to be the leader that France had been waiting for. However, he has failed to embody *l'esprit de la nation* in the way his followers hoped.

The protests have ventilated long-held resentments and dissatisfaction felt by



A gilets jaunes protestor close to the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

many French voters – particularly those in the regions.

The issue on which the French movement centred at first was the projected 2019 increase in fuel taxes, particularly on diesel fuel. The yellow vest became the symbol of the protests, as the French are required by law to have a yellow vest in their vehicles in case of road traffic accidents requiring people to leave their vehicles.

As President Macron struggled to get the budget deficit

under control, protesters soon dubbed him the *président des très riches*, and his initial popularity is unlikely to easily be restored.

Ferocity

While the ferocity of the protests – 10 people have lost their lives – has surprised many outsiders, a deep unease has been bubbling under the surface in France for many decades.

One young literary voice who has given expression to

this dissatisfaction is 26-year-old Édouard Louis. Born and raised in the town of Hallencourt in the north of France, Mr Louis has lifted the lid on the effects of grinding poverty in many working class areas of France.

In his autobiographical novel *En Finir avec Eddy Bellegueule* published in 2014, Mr Louis links poverty and violence and gives piercing insights into the lives of people who have been left behind by the decline in France's

manufacturing industry.

Looking at his own poverty-stricken childhood, Mr Louis reveals the lives of a class of former workers who now exist solely on welfare benefits. The height of sophistication is seen as choosing American-sounding Christian names for children and alcoholism, racism and prejudice is par for the course.

It is a brutal portrait where people feel forced to extract their own teeth with pliers and day turns into night in

a haze of alcohol. The only whiff of fleeting pleasure is the thought of a drunken sexual fumble.

Hallencourt, like hundreds of towns across France, suffers from post-industrial malaise that politicians seem unwilling or unable to do anything about.

To add to the distress, Mr Louis is gay in a culture where homosexuality is, at best, frowned upon. He recalls feeling made to suffer habitual shame and abuse.

Education proves to be his way out, and as a teenager when he manages to escape, so to speak, to the nearby city of Amiens he blossoms and changes his name to Édouard Louis, thus the death of Eddy Bellegueule.

Mr Louis holds up a mir-

“Mr Louis reveals the lives of a class of former workers who now exist solely on welfare benefits. The height of sophistication is seen as choosing American-sounding Christian names for children and alcoholism, racism and prejudice is par for the course”

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.



Author
Eddy
Louis.

ror to modern-day France where he traces the rise of parties such as the Rassemblement national to the fact that working-class people have been all-but-abandoned by the establishment parties.

The scene is set in the opening lines of *En finir avec Eddy Bellegueule* – later published in English as *The End of Eddy* – when Mr Louis writes: “From my childhood I have no happy memories. I don’t mean to say that I never, in all of those years, felt any happiness or joy. But suffering is all-consuming: it somehow gets rid of anything that doesn’t fit into its system”.

But, Mr Louis’ opening offering is much more than mere ‘misery lit’ or yet another tale of an unhappy childhood. It is a searing insight to the world of *des gilets jaunes*.

Mr Louis argues that the rise in popularity of nationalist and right wing politicians among working class and poor voters in France was a result of changing priorities on the left.

His portrait of his family is unflattering (they have disputed large parts of the account which Mr Louis insists is all true), but points to the way that poverty and neglect by the state has deformed their lives.

Of his mother, he writes of a woman “torn between an absolute submission to power and an enduring sense of revolt who stormed Versailles at the start of the French Revolution only to salute the King”.

His writing is a letter sent from a forgotten place. A place where the elites in Paris and the other large cities have little or no knowledge of. *En finir avec Eddy Bellegueule* has shaped the national conversation in France in a way that every writer dreams of. The fact that Mr Louis was only 22 when his first book

was published makes the impact all the more remarkable.

His debut work was followed in 2016 by *Histoire de la Violence* and last year by *Qui a tué mon Père*.

In the latter, he expands on the sense of abandonment many working-class French people feel through the deteriorating health of his father, who had been injured in an industrial accident, and the additional bodily harm he endures as a result of political decisions which have reduced his welfare support and forced him back to work.

“When I was a kid, my parents, and especially my mother, always said, ‘No one is talking about us’...”

The *gilets jaunes* consists, at least in part, of people like Mr Louis’s family and neighbours, who are sick, sore and tired with a government they think has forgotten and exploited them.

On Twitter recently, Mr Louis expressed frustration that the grievances of the *gilets jaunes* had been met with sensationalism by the press and disdain by politicians. “Something about the extreme violence and class contempt that is being unleashed on this movement paralyses me,” he wrote.

In the protesters, Mr Louis sees “very poor people, people like my mother, people like my father, exhausted people, extremely poor people.”

“I was able to read it on their faces, because I know those people. I recognised, suddenly, a body, in the noblest sense of the term. A body that I’m not used to seeing in the media. And I felt that these images were crying out to me,” he told *The New Yorker* in a recent interview.

Expanding on the corporal

theme, he sees the protests as “the body of social exclusion...it’s the body of poverty. It’s the body of people who are living in precarity, people from the north of France, or from the south of France, who don’t have money, who come from the kinds of families that haven’t gotten an education in five generations – families like mine. I grew up in a family of seven, and we had to live on €700 a month. Five kids and two adults. Maybe you have to really come from that world to immediately identify it”.

Impression

It was to make real in the eyes of society people like this that Mr Louis says he began to write. “I had the impression that these kinds of bodies were never depicted. And, when I was a kid, my parents, and especially my mother, always said, ‘No one is talking about us. No one cares about us.’ One of the most violent feelings we had was this feeling of not existing in the public discourse, in the eyes and voices of others. It was like an obsession.

“There was not one day where my mother didn’t say, ‘No one is talking about us. The whole world could care less.’ And so, for example, elections were the moment when she tried to fight against that kind of invisibility. *Voilà*.”

Voilà indeed, and Mr Louis’ writings and the *gilets jaunes* are a symptom of a dissatisfaction that is not only felt in France.

Literature is, perhaps, at its most powerful when it gives voice to that which cannot – or dare not – be said. Mr Louis has shown himself to be a prophet of sorts and his is a voice that should be heard, particularly by anyone wanting to understand the roots of France’s current political woes.

1 Peter Costello is away.

WebWatch

Greg Daly

What is Church without children?

Should young children be allowed in Church? Too many have commented on this question in recent times to skate through them here, but it’s been a big debate on the Catholic internet, with serious questions being raised about what actually happens at Mass, what we believe Mass is about and about whether a Church without children is a living

Church at all.

For American comedian Jeremy McClellan, who tweets at the rather conveniently titled **@JeremyMcClellan**, the question’s a rich source of humour, as the video he posted on the subject on February 1 shows well.

In terms of the extent to which the Church is living, it’s well worth looking at the brutally

realistic take of Fr Matt Fish – **@FrMattFish** – who on January 31 observed: “Said it before, and I’ll say it again: working for the Catholic Church in America in 2019 feels something like working for Blockbuster Movies in 2005. We’re still arguing about how we should display the DVDs, and meanwhile our current model and customer base is about to collapse.”

Holding desperately to true teaching?

Sadly, analysis of the modern Church is too often skewed by what Mike Lewis, on the **wherepeteris.com** blogsite, describes as a devotion to the ‘*Imagisterium*’.

Pointing out that “the Magisterium is the teaching office of the Church” and that the Church holds that “orthodox teaching is to be found in the official teachings of the pope and the bishops in communion with him”, Lewis draws attention to a bizarre and dangerous version of dissent too common in the current Church, where opposition to the Pope and bishops relies on claims that the Pope and bishops are wrong, and that those opposing them are holding to the Church’s true teaching.

“They proudly insist



Pope Francis: used to criticism.

upon their doctrinal orthodoxy, while boldly asserting that official teachings from the Church are not orthodox,” Lewis writes. “Rather than listening to the Magisterium and simply assenting to the teachings in the way that the Church instructs us, many Catholics instead adhere to a different authoritative body of teaching, which I’ll call the ‘imagisterium’.”

Lewis’ analysis of this

‘imaginary magisterium’ sketches out how those who clearly despise the Pope while claiming loyalty to the Church’s teaching office kick away the logical foundations upon which apologists have always claimed to stand. Sedevacantist in effect if not in name, too often nowadays ‘loyal to the magisterium’ is a slippery euphemism for ‘waiting eagerly for a new Pope’.

Desert monks ‘tame the demon’

Elsewhere on the Catholic internet, ‘Taming the Demon: How desert monks put work in its place’ by Jonathan Malesic at **commonwealmagazine.org** is an enthralling piece on how a group of American web designer monks got their priorities right, and what we can learn from them.

“Abbot Philip and his brother monks manage to tame the demon of this work ethic, though, by limiting their labour while they pursue higher goods,” the article notes

“We who live in what monks simply call ‘the world’ need to learn their strategies for spiritual combat. I don’t think we all have to join monasteries to live the good life. But the monastic principles of constraining work and subordinating it to moral and spiritual well-being might help us keep our demons at bay and recover the dignity in our labour and in ourselves.”

Staying with the positive to finish up, when these islands’ leading young Catholic sociologist of religion says something

testifies to the “most cheering signs of hope” he’s seen in the Irish Church in a long time, it’s definitely worth paying attention.

Writing from his **@SSBullivant Twitter** account, Prof. Stephen Bullivant has given a powerful imprimatur to ‘Risking Enchantment’, an impressively thoughtful podcast at <https://www.rachelsherlock.com/podcast>.

Each episode entails Rachel Sherlock – who tweets at **@seekingwatson** – and a friend discussing an aspect of art, literature or culture and how it informs their Catholic Faith.

“Hugely enjoying this: binge-listened most of afternoon,” says Prof. Bullivant. “Engaging and erudite – worn lightly and supremely likably – Catholic commentary on all manner of bits of culture. A wonderful (and v cheering) initiative coming out of Dublin. Massively recommended.”

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



A beacon of hope to shine, because of you...

For Ireland's homeless and hungry, Merchants Quay Ireland's Riverbank Centre is first to open in the morning and among the last to close at night. Those with nowhere to turn can find a good meal, medical care, a helping hand, and a fresh start, thanks to donations and legacies.

Come for Tea and a Tour, in private while Riverbank is closed for a couple of hours. See confidentially how Merchants Quay Ireland uses donations and legacies to bring relief and hope. All welcome, bring a guest if you wish.

Ring Emma Murphy at 01-5240965 to be included on the guest list for the February 14th Tour.

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

Please remember

THE IRISH HOSPICE FOUNDATION

when making your will so that everyone in Ireland will have access to hospice care one day.

Tel: 01 679 3188

E-mail: info@hospicefoundation.ie
www.hospicefoundation.ie



LITTLE FLOWER PENNY DINNERS



Little Flower Penny Dinners have been providing meals and services to the homeless and the elderly for over 100 years. Please help us continue and donate what you can on our website www.LFPD.ie or by phoning us with your credit/debit card details or by post to Little Flower Penny Dinners, 11 Meath St, DB. Phone 01 4536521 or 01 4546795 e-mail: sibrid@littleflower.ie

St Therese Pilgrimages

Divine Mercy Pilgrimage Krakow
25 April – 30 April

Price from
£479/€529

Contact Danny 02890245547
Daniel.morgan5@btconnect.com

ALL PROCEEDS TO CHARITY

Leave a Legacy of Hope

When you are making your Will, please remember the vulnerable families you can save from homelessness. Contact Saoirse at Threshold in strictest confidence.



Call: 01 6353629 Email: Saoirse@threshold.ie Visit: www.threshold.ie

BÓTHAR

PLEASE REMEMBER BÓTHAR IN YOUR WILL. €1,800 will allow us to give an Irish, in-calf, dairy heifer to a struggling family in Rwanda, completely transforming their lives. Your gift will live on for generations. Phone the office on 061 414142 or info@bothar.ie

Classified Ads

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.

HOUSE FOR SALE IN KNOCK

KNOCK - 3 Bed Semi Detached House. Half a mile from the Shrine. Complete with furnishings, conservatory, patio, etc. Phone 087 9451378.

CATHOLIC CONNECTIONS

LADY SEEKS female travelling companion for short holiday/pilgrimage abroad. 40-60s age group. Please reply to box number 5057.

ACCOMMODATION

MEDJUGORJE – Family accommodation, groups welcome too. Mobile: 0044 77142 64849, viber, whats-up. Email: ostojic.ivan@tel.net.ba

PILGRIMAGE

WALSINGHAM, Irish group pilgrimage to Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Norfolk. England's National Shrine of Our Lady. Friday 26th - Tuesday 29th April 2019 (4 nights with full board €427). Group accompanied by Spiritual Director. Pilgrims make their own travel arrangement on Ryanair flights* to/from Stansted. Private coach from/to Stansted and for Day's Outing. Accommodation in Pilgrim Hostel. Insurance NOT included. Deposit €50 for place. Details from *Martin O'Brien 086 8254680 or Margaret Golden 086 855 4665.

PILGRIMAGE

18th MEATH DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE to the Holy Land, supporting Christian families, led by Bishop

Deenihan from Nov 4th - 12th with MAP Travel. Fare €1525. Bookings with MAP Travel 01 8783171. Enquire to Fr Gerry Mac Cormack, Pilgrimage Director at 042 9667314.



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 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.

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

1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					€24.60
7					€29.52
					€34.44

Name and contact detail form MUST be filled out

Name

Address

Landline Mobile

The Irish Catholic, 23 Merrion Square North, Dublin 2.

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

Please make a little room
in your will for people
who are homeless

Contact our Fundraising
Department in strictest
confidence

Tel. 01 8815 900
Email: info@focusireland.ie
www.focusireland.ie





Everything Family & Life does to save babies and strengthen the family relies on you and our other generous friends. This work has never been more needed.

A gift in your Will ensures that the most effective pro-life / pro-family organisations will continue working for the kind of society we all desire, and will leave a loving mark on countless lives for years to come.

For further advice or to avail of our Solicitor's free Wills service, please contact us today on

01-8552790

Family & Life

26 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1
Ph: 01 8552790 | email: fandl@iol.ie
www.familyandlife.org

Will the MSC Missions

Missionaries of the Sacred Heart work in poor parishes in Africa, Russia and Venezuela

Please remember them in your Will

Contact:
Mission Support Centre, Western Road, Cork.
Tel: 021 - 4543988

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

Gordius 268



- ACROSS**

1 These birds are in the movie 'Happy Feet' (8)
7 Green jewel (7)
8 The backs of the feet (5)
12 Everyone or everything (3)
13 Especially lovely (9)
16 Simple house, shack (3)
17 Travel by boat (4)
18 Quick or speedy (4)
19 You hope to win a prize in this (6)
20 On this kind of night, you can see the constellations (6)
- 2 Pleasant (4)
3 Employs something (4)
4 Have to have (4)
5 Centre (6)
6 You might see a barge sailing along this (5)
9 Animal with a trunk (8)
10 The sound of people enjoying a joke (8)
11 In this, we learn about the past (7)
14 Risky or dangerous (6)
15 Type of gun (5)

SOLUTIONS, JANUARY 31

GORDIUS No.388

Across – 1 Imp 3 Lancastrian 8 Gerund 9 Monument 10 Ogles 11 Hoose 13 Saudi 15 Ailment 16 Up-tempo 20 Dealt 21 Hazel 23 Badge 24 Bar stool 25 Fleece 26 No-score draw 27 Set

Down – 1 In good faith 2 Parallel lines 4 Cumulus 5 Truth 6 Ice box 7 Net 12 Endorsement 13 Synod 14 Input 17 Mindless 18 Cajoled 19 Azores 22 Let go 23 Bylaw 24 Bun

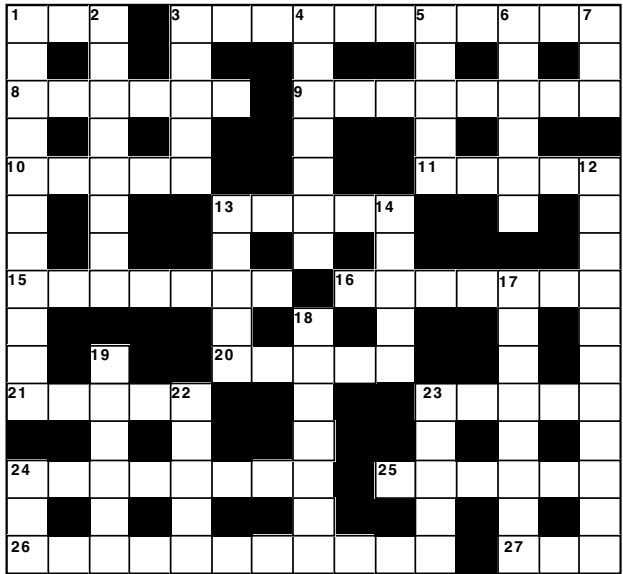
CHILDREN'S No.267

Across – 1 Car ferry 6 Oliver 7 Shop 10 Operation 11 Shepherd 15 Turn 16 Organ 17 Exit 18 Mint 19 Try

Down – 1 Chocolate 2 Raider 3 Eyelash 4 Yes 5 Applaud 8 Hinge 9 Limp 11 Snout 12 Eight 13 Honey 14 Radio

Crossword

Gordius 389




- ACROSS**

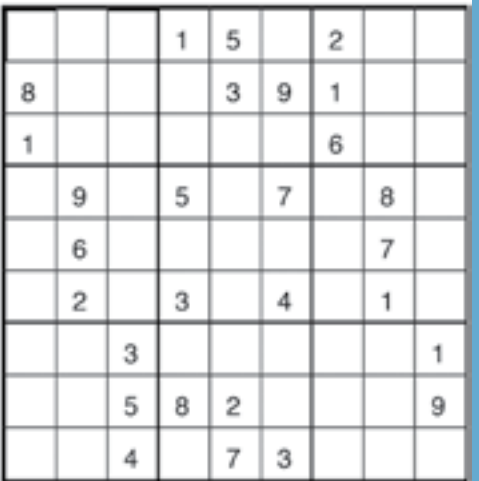
1 He provides a cardinal with identification (3)
3 Where Sherlock Holmes lived - with a deranged brake tester (5,6)
8 Put your money to work - in underwear (6)
9 Unlikeable fictional character with an unusual hair tone (8)
10 A sum for baby Capone (5)
11 Vote into office (5)
13 Performing a dingo dissection (5)
15 Sleep-inducing song (7)
16 The combatant can redistribute freight (7)
20 It's right, in diplomacy, to have a piece of Scripture (5)
21 One of The Three Musketeers (5)
23 A falsehood about, for example, a Belgian city (5)
24 Here, I jam loosely with an Old Testament prophet... (8)
25 ...to damage devilish music (6)
26 One may prepare a place for you, finally! (11)
27 Golf peg (3)
- 3 Herb? Mr Fawcett to you! (5)
4 Stretchable (7)
5 In an instant, one finds part of the matrices (5)
6 A number of soccer players taken in by Pele, Venables, etc (6)
7 Also, as well (3)
12 Strenuous interrogation - regarding the fruits of university course number three? (5,6)
13 Charge for reassembling the bidet (5)
14 Culpability, lack of innocence (5)
17 Change later, not to become easy-going (8)
18 A growth may be found on this creature (7)
19 How can he spar with a Himalayan guide? (6)
22 French river, scene of a terrible World War I battle (5)
23 An animal from Madagascar is the making of the wall in France (5)
24 Traditional Irish and Scottish dance (3)

Sudoku Corner

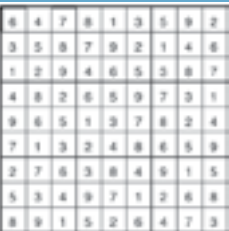
267

Easy Hard

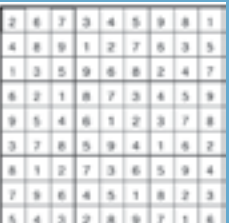




Last week's Easy 266



Last week's Hard 266



Notebook

Fr Vincent Sherlock



To err is but human, to forgive is simply divine...

SOME TIME ago I received a text from a parishioner, telling me that there was no need to visit her mother on my First Friday calls since her mother was in hospital for a few days. The level of devotion this daughter showed in caring for her mother remains a constant reminder to me of all the kindness that is lived within families in the care of the aged and the sick.

Thank God, as I was about to click 'send', I glanced at the text I'd quickly typed in response and read what I had written: "Thanks for letting me know, hope she dies okay." Of course that was meant to be "does" okay. Luckily the text wasn't sent and I was able to correct it. Months later, I shared this with the daughter and we laughed but, had I sent it, I'm not sure I'd ever have been able to explain.

I heard once of a notice in a parish bulletin, reaching out to people who might have been bereaved or separated, inviting them to six sessions in a local pastoral centre. Alas, the news item invited them to a series of "sex" sessions in the local Pastoral Centre. A friend commented the centre might not be able for the crowd! I heard of another priest



SOME CHURCH BOARD SIGNS

'What is hell like? Come hear our preacher.'

'Come hear our pastor. He's not very good but he's quick.'

'Keep using my name in vain. I'll make rush hour longer – God.'

'We are still open between Christmas and Easter.'

putting a piece in the bulletin about a meeting taking place in a local hotel which he mistakenly typed as "hovel"! What a difference a letter can make!

Weekly bulletin

You might well wonder "where is he going with this?" I think it's something to do with parish bulletins or local publications and mistakes. Most parishes now have a weekly bulletin and, generally speaking, they are sought after by the people who want to know something of what is going on in the parish, Mass Intentions during the week, the local Lotto numbers, most likely a reflection and all the other bits and pieces that go into the weekly bulletin.

Thankfully I enjoy trying to put our own one together each week. Like many other priests throughout the country, I haven't a big secretarial team – or a small one, for that matter. Usually the bulletin is the work of the priest in the parish, unless he is lucky enough to have someone to do it for him. Even if he is that lucky, that person is usually depending totally on what information the priest has been given or passes on.

Sometimes there are mistakes! Maybe a Mass intention gets overlooked, a name misspelt or a date confused. More often than not, that's when you know people are reading the Parish Bulletin. A phone call: "What happened to Mass for Maggie on Saturday

night? I booked it with you a few months ago." The blood drains to your feet as you check the diary and realise the caller is right! Thankfully, more often than not, people are very understanding and another date can be made or some outcome arrived at that is acceptable to all. Occasionally it might not go so well.

“Thankfully, more often than not, people are very understanding”

At the end of the day, mistakes are made. They are not intentional and should never be seen as such or taken, in any way, as a slight or intent to hurt. I would never have wished the death of my elderly parishioner but had I clicked "send" that day, could I have explained what happened? The six sessions went ahead in the pastoral centre and the meeting took place in the hotel. The bulletin was discarded in the weekly bin and replaced by another the following Sunday.

So, if there's a mistake in your parish bulletin this week, unless it's an emergency, take it as that – a mistake, human error with no intention of hurt or offence!

The Rosary priest

Fr Peyton, a native of our diocese from the parish of Attymass, spent his priestly life promoting the message of the Rosary and, in so doing, enlisted the help of some of Hollywood's leading stars. "The family that prays together, stays together" and "A world at prayer is a world at peace" are among two of his most remembered slogans.

Fr Tom Mulligan, a priest of Achonry Diocese, has just published Fr Peyton's Biography and the book brings his story to a new generation and is well worth a read. *The Rosary Priest* by Fr Tom Mulligan, published by Veritas.



Photo: Water from the lake being brought to the health centre by use of hired donkey carts.

A CATHOLIC HEALTH CENTRE IN TANZANIA NEEDS CLEAN WATER

The Sisters of the Incarnate Word administer a mission health centre, primary school and school hostel in the Catholic Diocese of Musoma, Tanzania. Sister Irene recently contacted The Little Way Association for financial help to install a desperately needed new water system for the health centre. "Water supply has been an issue since the mission started to expand", she wrote. "Initially the water supplied by water mills was enough to serve the small community, but now we are experiencing great water shortage to the point of hiring donkey carts to fetch water from the lake. This is very expensive and unhygienic. With a solar powered water supply system our health centre patients will get constant, clean water for their use, and the whole community will benefit."



Can you help the Sisters in their life-saving work for disadvantaged mothers, babies and the sick?

A reliable supply of clean water will make such a difference. Every donation that we receive in response to this Appeal will be sent, without deduction, to this project or a project in similar need.



"True glory is that which will last eternally, and to reach it, it isn't necessary to perform striking works but to hide oneself and practice virtue in such a way that the left hand knows not what the right is doing." - St Therese

In our modern age of materialism and selfishness, when so many are searching for an authentic spirituality, Therese's little way of simple love for God and others has a powerful appeal. Perhaps we too can join her on the 'little way'.

All Little Way benefactors share in a daily Mass offered for their intentions in the Missions.

HELP FEED THE HUNGRY

Please spare a thought for the thousands who die each year of hunger and disease in mission lands. Your donation will relieve the pangs of starvation, and every euro you send will be forwarded to a missionary for food and medicines for the hungry and sick.

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:

€..... **CLEAN WATER PROJECT**
€..... **HUNGRY, SICK AND DEPRIVED**
€..... **MASS OFFERINGS**
(Please state number)
€..... **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
tinyurl.com/lwadonations

DONATIONS FOR THE MISSIONS ARE SENT WITHOUT DEDUCTION FOR ANY EXPENSES.