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From Ukraine to Croagh Patrick 'Thank you, Ireland'



Pilgrims from the Ukrainian Catholic chaplaincy in Ireland hike up Croagh Patrick at the weekend.

Ruadhán Jones

The Ukrainian community in Ireland has praised the "outstanding" welcome they have received from Irish parishes, as the Church considers establishing mission communities to care for the influx of refugees.

There is a "huge demand for pastoral care" from the almost 40,000 refugees from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the chaplain to Ireland's Ukrainian Catholic parish Fr Vasyl Kornitsky said, adding that Irish parishes have given "great support" from the very beginning.

"The care and support the refugees have

received from Irish parishes has been outstanding, ever since the beginning of the war," Fr Kornitsky told *The Irish Catholic*.

"A lot of parishes around Dublin and Ireland have organised fundraising for humanitarian aid... so Ukrainians have received great support from our Irish friends," he continued.

His comments come as Pope Francis appointed a new apostolic visitor to Ireland, the Vatican announced on Monday.

Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski, who in January 2020 was named leader of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of the Holy Family of

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Michael Kelly's Editor's Comment will return in the autumn

Govt urged to use budget to ease cost of living crisis

Liam Fitzpatrick

Social justice agencies have urged the Government to use better-than-expected tax returns to target assistance to those most affected by the cost of living crisis.

Living crisis

The Department of Finance and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform released their Summer Economic Statement (SES) this week, proposing a €6.7 billion budget increase - €1.2 billion more than originally anticipated in last year's SES - to address the cost of living crisis.

Minister for Finance Paschal Donohue and Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform Michael McGrath proposed a plan that includes about €2.7 billion to "ensure that support is provided to households to help with the higher cost of living".

"Everybody's losing as a result of the growth in the cost of living," said Fr Sean Healy SMA, Director of Social Justice Ireland (SJI). "However, it's the bottom 20-25% of the population that lost the most and are

impacted the most.

"The Summer Economic Statement shows that there are resources available to target help to people struggling with the cost of living increases, in particular those on social welfare payment and working on low pay," said Jim Walsh, spokesperson for the Society of St Vincent de Paul.

Last year's SES included a guideline to limit spending to 5% per year. The current budget includes a 6.5% increase in public spending, attributed to a higher inflation rate.

Fr Healy said the Government's "first priority" should be to increase welfare rates by €20 a week to counter inflation.

"The level of the welfare payment is below the poverty line, and therefore isn't sufficient to provide enough to live life with dignity," he said. "And then on top of that, the value of that - what it can actually purchase - is going down."

Fr Healy also suggested that, to lift the 'working poor' into self-sufficiency, the Government must "move from a minimum wage to a living wage".

"The living wage is €12.90-per-hour," Fr Healy said, referencing SJI's living wage estimate (the Tánaiste proposed €12.17). "That's what's required to just basically pay for essentials. Now, the minimum wage is €10.50, so there's quite a gap there - that should be bridged."

Because income tax bands are fixed value, inflation could force some workers to pay additional tax on their wages, even if the real value of their pay has not increased. As such, the report stressed a "key objective" of "avoid workers paying additional tax simply because they move through higher tax brackets because of inflation".

Inflation

"What the Government is essentially trying to do is to raise those bands, which counts as a tax cut, but is actually what's required to keep the tax burden the same," said Mr Sebastian Barnes, Chairperson of the Irish Fiscal Advisory Council. "So what they're trying to do is offset the impact of inflation."

Fr Healy warned that these tax cuts have the potential to do more harm than good.

"We've got to be careful with what we do," Fr Healy said. "Some of the proposals out there would be of far greater value to the really well-off than they would be to the people just above the tax bracket."

As number of working poor rises, SVP says services open to all

Ruadhán Jones

The St Vincent de Paul Society has encouraged anybody who is working but struggling economically to come to them for help, saying that "need is their only criteria".

SVP chair of the social justice committee Nessel Vaughan said that they are seeing more people in work who are seeking assistance.

"Often the first question we get is, 'I'm working, I don't know if you'll help us or not,'" Mr Vaughan said in response to a question from *The Irish Catholic* during the Catholic charity's pre-budget submission launch.

"From that, we suspect there are far more people out there in this situation who aren't coming to us," he continued.

Mr Vaughan encouraged people who are working and find themselves in this situation to come to them, saying "our only criterion is need".

"There are many people who come feel ashamed or embarrassed, saying that 'I used to contribute to SVP'. It's an increasing number."

He added that many of them are unaware of the range of State supports that are out there for people who are in work, but warned that there are many who fall just outside the thresholds for the supports.

Dr Tricia Keilthy, Head of Social Justice and Policy for the SVP, called on the Government to extend the threshold for these supports in the upcoming Budget.

From Ukraine to Croagh Patrick 'Thank you, Ireland'

» Continued from Page 1

London, has also been given care of the Greek Catholic Ukrainian faithful residents in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

"I look forward to working closely with the bishops of Ireland in ensuring good pastoral care for the Ukrainian Catholics in Ireland," Bishop Nowakowski said in a statement.

Given the recent arrival of thousands of displaced Ukrainians, the Ukrainian Catholic bishop said he hopes he and the Irish bishops can respond in "positive ways to the humanitarian and pastoral needs of the growing Ukrainian community".

Speaking later to American-based Catholic news



A group of young Ukrainian Catholics who climbed Croagh Patrick at the weekend.

site *The Pillar*, Bishop Nowakowski said his role "probably means being able to visit our one parish in Dublin and speak with the one priest that's there and look at the possibility of establishing other communities or mission points".

The only Ukrainian Catholic parish in Ireland presently is based in Our Lady of Consolation, Donnybrook, where Fr Kornitsky ministers.

Fr Kornitsky told *The Irish Catholic* that he hopes Bishop Nowakowski will be able to build on the "good will"

shown by Irish parishes.

"Because we have the apostolic visitor, maybe we can establish some mission communities outside of Dublin - there is a big need for that," Fr Kornitsky said.

In the Eastern Catholic Church, a visitor has a long-term role in overseeing communities that do not have their own bishop.

The previous apostolic visitor for Ukrainian Greek Catholics in Ireland, Bishop Hlib Lonchyna served until September 1, 2019.

According to data from Ireland's Central Statistics Office, nearly 39,000 refugees fleeing war in Ukraine have arrived in the country.

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Fact-checking TheJournal.ie

Thousands attend 'Rally for Life'

Chai Brady

Well-known online news website TheJournal.ie, which prides itself on conducting 'fact-checks', apparently failed to check the facts about attendance at Saturday's large 'Rally for Life'.

“Mr Pope could be seen during the march walking the length of the gathering a number of times to provide an accurate estimate on the crowd”

The website reported on the march, but perhaps rather grudgingly insisted in their article that “hundreds” were in attendance. It is not clear if the online news service even had a reporter present at the event.

While a journalist with *The Irish Catholic* attended and independently ascertained the approximate number of demonstrators, there were other reporters at the march who came to the same approximations.

Conor Pope a journalist with *The Irish Times* who attended the event to report on it, noted in his article in the newspaper that: “while there was no official estimate as to how many people attended the rally, the number easily ran into the thousands with the crowd stretching the length of O’Connell Street from the monument to Charles Stewart Parnell close to the Garden of Remembrance to the statue of Daniel O’Connell by the Liffey”.



Some of the demonstrators who attended the Rally for Life in Dublin over the weekend.

Gathering

Mr Pope could be seen during the march walking the length of the gathering a number of times to provide an accurate estimate of the crowd.

Evidently, the national broadcaster was also on-the-ball. While some people have criticised RTÉ (see Page 33) for the scant coverage of the event on the evening news, RTE.ie reported accurately that “several thousand” people attended the rally – a key aim of which was to retain the three-day ‘cooling off’ waiting period for women before undergoing an abortion.

Despite its reputation for ‘fact-checking’ others, TheJournal.ie is evidently in no mood for turning when presented with the facts. A number of people who con-

“Despite its reputation for ‘fact-checking’ others, TheJournal.ie is evidently in no mood for turning when presented with the facts”

tacted the website pointing out the incorrect report have received no reply. As of the time *The Irish Catholic* went to print this week, the unrepentant article still appeared with “hundreds” rather than thousands.

VERDICT

VERDICT: So, did hundreds attend the ‘Rally for Life’ at the weekend? Well, only if you count your hundreds in tens-of-hundreds which means thousands.



A screenshot of the TheJournal.ie article on the pro-life demonstration.

Faithful invited to Knock event to help build faith formation

Staff reporter

Pilgrims have been welcomed to Knock shrine to learn about the catechism, meet with people of faith and share ideas about “how to practically plan for faith formation”.

Organised by the Catechism of the Catholic Church – Adult Studies, the free event will take place on July 30. The theme of this year's pilgrimage is: ‘The Catechism of the Catholic Church: A pearl of great price left on the shelf.’

Organisers said: “This is a wonderful opportunity to meet with people of faith, to hear how the Catechism Course has helped people grow in faith, and to share ideas about how to practically plan for faith formation.

“People who are thinking of taking up studies are encour-

aged to attend and to find out about courses in their areas. There is an opportunity to arrange for the national coordinator to travel to support those interested in establishing a study group in a cluster of parishes or deanery.”

Fr John Harris OP, prior of the Irish Dominican province, will host a workshop on the theme in St John's Rest and Care Centre on the day from 11.30am to 12.30.

There will also be outdoor Stations of the Cross and a Rosary procession at 2pm. Mass will be celebrated in the basilica at 3pm, with anointing of the sick. There will be Eucharistic Adoration and Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the day.

For more information, see www.catechism.ie, email caoi-frain@hotmail.com, or call Máirín 087 7950325.

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Tom O’Gorman inquest returns narrative verdict

Chai Brady

The inquest into the death of Catholic journalist and pro-life activist Tom O’Gorman has returned a narrative verdict – meaning that the jury confirmed the facts around the case without attributing blame.

Mr O’Gorman (39), a journalist and researcher with The Iona Institute, was killed by Italian national Saverio Bellante at his home in Castleknock in the early hours of January 12, 2014 after a row developed between the pair over a game of chess.

Mr Bellante (43), who was only identified as Mr B during the inquest, was found not guilty of Mr O’Gorman’s murder by reason of insanity by a jury at the Central Criminal Court in July 2015.

He has been detained at the Central Mental Hospital in Dundrum since being committed there following his trial.

The inquest heard that Mr Bellante had been receiving treat-

ment for schizophrenia in Ireland since arriving in 2011 but his anti-psychotic medication was being reduced over a period of 18 months. His medication was stopped completely on January 9, 2014 – just over 40 hours before he killed Mr O’Gorman.

Forensic psychiatrist Stephen Monks told the inquest that Mr Bellante’s delusional mood led him to sense some inexplicable change in his environment at the time where he felt there was “a battle between forces of good and evil”.

Dr Monks said Mr Bellante became “profoundly paranoid” and would take serious meanings out of mundane events.

He said the lodger’s acute psychosis led him to believe that Mr O’Gorman was trying to end his freedom and enslave him.

The psychiatrist, who was asked to assess Mr Bellante for the criminal trial for Mr O’Gorman’s murder, said he found the accused fit to enter a plea but his case met the criteria for a finding of not guilty due to reason

of insanity.

Former State pathologist, Marie Cassidy, who carried out a post-mortem on Mr O’Gorman’s body, said he had died as a result of blunt force trauma to the head and stab wounds to the neck and chest.

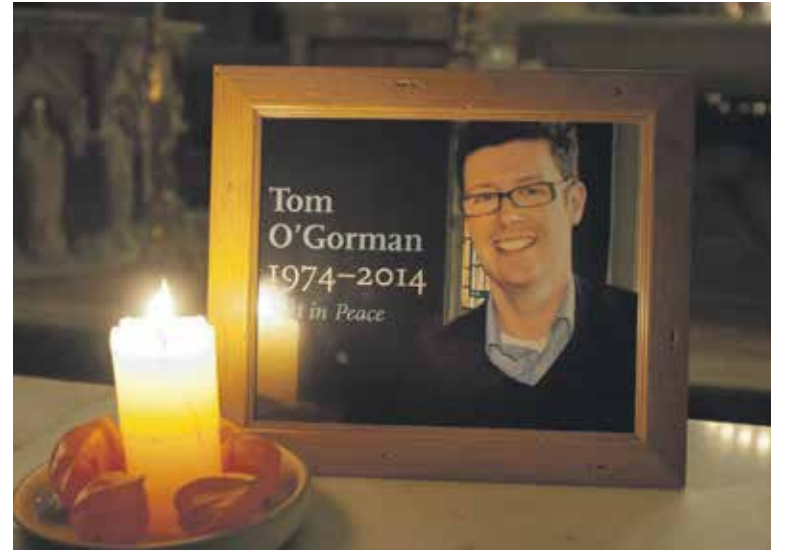
The inquest heard DNA evidence was needed to formally identify the deceased.

The first garda on the scene, Sarah Smith, said Mr Bellante appeared “very calm” when he opened the door to her at 1.56am.

She said Mr Bellante, who had blood on his jumper, jeans and boots, told her that they were playing chess before adding: “We had a fight and I stabbed him.”

Mr O’Gorman’s brother Paul – who lives outside of Dublin – admitted he was unhappy about Tom taking a lodger into the family home, but at the same time felt the company would be good for him. The witness said his late brother was just very generous and very trusting and wanted to help someone out.

An objection by a legal repre-



sentative of the HSE was raised during the inquest when questions were raised about Mr Bellante’s past medical history.

A jury of four women and three men returned a narrative verdict in accordance with the evidence includ-

ing the fact that Mr Bellante had discontinued his medicine shortly before Mr O’Gorman’s death.

The foreperson of the jury said the jurors had been “deeply impacted” by the case.

Trad music meets Christ in Irish Dominican’s album

Ruadhán Jones

Irish Dominican Fr Colm Mannion combines his musical talent with his ministry as he releases a new album of “tradoration” music.

Traditional tunes

The album, *Tradoration – With a Father’s Heart*, offers “traditional tunes in a contemplative way, but integrating real-life faith stories”, Fr Mannion said.

The idea for the album came when Fr Mannion was travelling Ireland before Covid. He began recording older Irish Catholics recalling their memories of how the Faith was once lived in Ireland.

“We hope we can connect people with something of old Ireland, that isn’t covered today, the gentleness and simplicity... the wisdom and faith,” Fr Mannion told *The Irish Catholic*. “We’re trying to tap back

into rural Ireland, into traditional culture, with a bit of storytelling, as though we were sitting around the fire.”

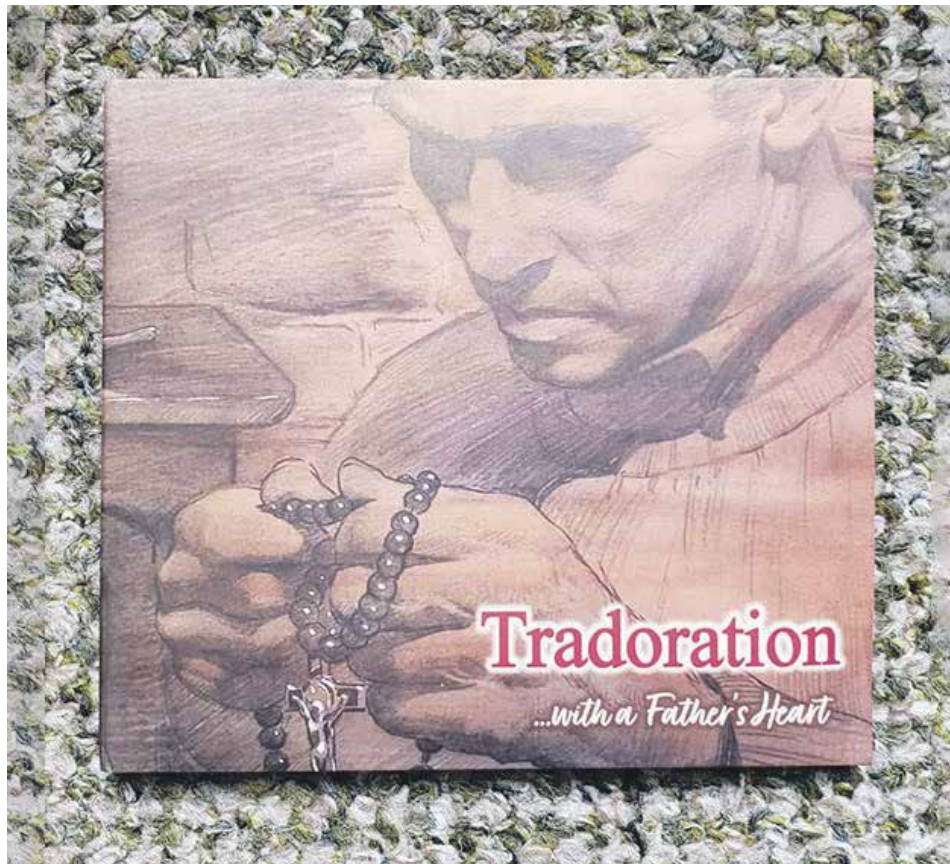
He added that as Catholics, “we really need to bring back the arts” as it is somewhere “we still need to promote and shine a light”.

The CD includes nine tracks, each one focusing on the memories of a different person, reflecting on beauty, prayer and God.

Reflections

A specially designed cover and 24-page booklet contains all the lyrics from the songs, as well as paintings and reflections.

The album is a collaboration with Trián O’Riordan, who with Fr Mannion had previously released a CD of contemplative music with an Irish traditional music flavour.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Cavan Aids committee raises €5,000 for charity

The Cavan Famine and Aids Appeal committee collected almost €5,000 for Christian charities in Africa, donating 100% of all funds collected.

At their annual general meeting, the committee reported that they had collected €4,920, despite being unable to organise their January church gate collections.

The organisation distributed €1,600 each to the Holy Rosary Sisters of Nigeria and Father James Connolly in Zambia.

They also donated €1,600 to Our Lady of Lourdes hospital in Kenya, earmarking those funds for the “education, nutrition, and health care of poor children and orphans suffering from AIDS” in Mutomo.

Irish Columban listed among UCD’s most exceptional alumni

Staff Reporter

Irish Columban Missionary Fr Michael Riordan has been listed among 20 exceptional alumni of University College Dublin.

The announcement came to mark the anniversary of UCD’s school of

Veterinary Medicine’s move to the Science Centre on Belfield campus.

Fr Riordan and his fellow alumni were nominated by staff, students and graduates because “they have all excelled in their fields, made a positive impact in others’ lives and they exemplify our values of excellence, integrity, collegiality, engagement,

creativity, diversity and innovation”.

Fr Riordan graduated from UCD in 1977 with a Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine.

After graduation, he volunteered to work for two years for the Isidore Development Association (IDA) on a farm project set up by Fr PJ McGlinchey in Korea.

In 2004, Michael was appointed to Geumak parish in Jeju where he is still parish priest.

He became a member of the board of the IDA (a non-profit-making legal body) in 2005 and in 2010, he was elected Chairman of the IDA.



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It is just silly and ignorant to describe opponents as Fascists

I suspect that many women have divided feelings on the subject of 'drag queens' – chaps who dress up in women's clothes, with an over-exaggerated presentation of female hair, make-up and gestures. Some find it amusing; others feel that it takes a mocking view of femininity – rather as black people have objected to whites using stage cosmetics to 'black up'.

Shakespeare's women were all played by boys in costume and daub

And some parents, and other concerned adults, think it inappropriate that a drag act should be chosen as a performer to read stories to young children. When Rory O'Neill, whose alter ego is 'Panti Bliss', does the gig, it's bound to raise hackles. Rory/Panti has done his best to be outrageous as part of his normal persona.

But let's go back to first principles: there is nothing inherently objectionable in cross-dressing or drag acts, known in European theatrical tradition as 'travestie'. Men have dressed as women since the Greeks first put on their theatricals: Shakespeare's women were all played by boys in costume and daub. And in a roundabout way, 'travestie' has reached us through pantomime, where the 'Dame' is blatantly a man, and, until relatively recently, the 'Principal Boy' was a thigh-slapping girl.



Mary Kenny

When it comes to 'travestie' or drag, it all depends on context. If it is entertaining and a bit daft, children perfectly understand that this is about reversing norms and muddling up identities. Stories can be told using fantasy and the absurd, and can often be meaningful.

Sexualised

But if the drag act is highly sexualised or obscene, then it surely isn't appropriate for young children. As I wasn't present at the Tertulia Bookshop in Westport, Co. Mayo, which attracted protests over such an event, I cannot judge what occurred. However, people are entitled to raise a protest if they do believe that children are at risk of being sexualised.

(On the other side of the coin, the protesters have been disparaged, by Mr O'Neill and others, as 'Fascists'. This is silly and ignorant. A Fascist is a person who advocates a corporate and militarised state, with a single all-powerful leader: but there is no evidence that Fascists object to cross-dressing, or 'travestie'. Indeed, Field-Marshal Goering was rather prone to it!)

Drag acts come in all kinds of varieties, and I have written about a pioneering Irish drag queen in my forthcoming book *The Way We Were*. He was

Daniel Patrick Carroll from Cork, who became very famous in London, and elsewhere, as 'Danny La Rue' – in his time the greatest drag queen. Yet Danny was also a devout Catholic, whose happiest days were spent as an altar boy at St Patrick's Church, Soho, where he is still fondly remembered (he made a donation of some special statues to the church, much appreciated by the parish priest, Fr Alexander Sherbrooke).

In his stage drag performances, he could be saucy, but when it came to children, Danny had complete respect for the family

Danny described himself as "a bloke in a dress", and was admired by everyone from Princess Margaret to Noel Coward. He saw no contradiction between his profession as an entertainer and his devotion to his faith. In his stage drag performances, he could be saucy, but when it came to children, Danny had complete respect for the family.

As I say, drag acts – and their actors – literally come in a range of guises. But context, and content, matter.



Daniel Patrick Carroll who performed as 'Danny La Rue'.

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'Light and Life'

Irish Travelling people are traditionally adherents of the Catholic Faith, and usually make a strong showing at First Holy Communions. But now there's a report that more Irish Travellers in England, along with British gypsies (the term they choose to use themselves) are joining Pentecostal churches.

There are said to be some 60,000 gypsies and Irish Travellers in England and Wales and it's claimed that about

40% of them have converted to Pentecostalism. These are called 'Light and Life' churches, which now have more than 30 congregations – growing from almost none in the last century.

This mirrors an international trend of Pentecostal expansion, where the key focus is on faith healings, being touched by the Holy Spirit and sometimes 'speaking in tongues'. Cheerful African music is also a feature.

But the Pentecostal Church in England and Wales also puts an emphasis on helping with literacy among travelling people, and providing free childcare. Teetotalism is also encouraged.

The Catholic Church can learn from this surge in Pentecostalism, whose services emanate an atmosphere of enthusiasm. People want to be uplifted.

- There is a folk tradition that blind individuals, or those with impaired eyesight, develop other senses in compensation. It's now been proved in scientific tests: in those who are blind from birth or an early age, the visual cortex becomes more sensitive to input from other senses, such as touch or hearing, a discovery made by the neuroscientist Sir Colin Blakemore. Folk traditions, based on long observation, often turn out to be scientifically correct.

Dublin parish apologises for flying Pride flag

Chai Brady

A parish in Dublin has apologised after breaking the Archdiocese of Dublin's policy and flying a 'pride' flag.

St Teresa's Church on Donore Avenue in Dublin 8 flew the flag on June 26 during an ecumenical LGBT+ prayer service they held.

The parish was contacted by the archdiocese and reminded of the

policy, which states: "Flags may be flown on special occasions such as the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Only the papal flag and/or the national flag are permitted to be flown on church grounds in the Archdiocese of Dublin."

In a statement issued to this paper the parish said "we regret and apologise for any offense caused to anyone by the flying of the flag".

The ecumenical service was hosted by Fr David Corrigan PP of

Donore Avenue parish and the Rev. Mark Gardner, rector at St Catherine's and St James' Church of Ireland. The parish stated that on the night of their ecumenical LGBT+ prayer service, the parish "flew a flag for the duration of the service on the church grounds".

"The flying of the flag symbolises that this church is a welcoming and safe place for LGBT+ to pray. However, we realise that the flying of the flag has caused offense to some

people."

Last year another Dublin parish was told to take down an LGBT+ Pride flag after an order from the Archbishop of Dublin.

The flag was raised at Ballyfermot Assumption parish after a decision by the parish pastoral council. The aim was to make LGBT+ people feel welcome, and to send a message that "God loves them", according to Fr Adrian Egan.

At the time Fr Egan said they

were aware that June is a "significant month for gay people" and there were a lot of secular events taking place.

He said they were "conscious that there are gay men and women who live in our parish, and their families, and they have often told us how hurt they've been maybe, by the language that the Church has sometimes used in regard to them and how they sometimes feel there's no place for them here and they feel excluded".

Lay leaders vital as retirements take effect, says Bishop Browne

Ruadhán Jones

It is vital that the ministry of lay pastoral leader is successful as clerical retirements take effect, Bishop of Kerry Ray Browne said in announcing this summer's clerical appointments.

Bishop Browne said that while this summer's appointments are few, they affect the four pastoral areas of the dioceses "and it will

take time for each to adjust".

Priests of all pastoral areas of the diocese take up additional responsibilities outside their own parishes and within the pastoral area, a statement from the diocese said. This will be decided and communicated locally.

Bishop Browne thanked Fr Tom Leane who retires after more than 50 years service, adding that "each year retirements means fewer

priests in our parishes".

"It is vital that our recently launched new initiative 'Ministry of lay Pastoral Leader' be successful," Bishop Browne said in his July 4 announcement.

The following are the appointments: Fr Joseph Begley Glengarriff to the Killarney Pastoral area and to minister in Killarney.

Fr Jim Lenihan Killarney to the Killarney

Pastoral area and to be PP Glenflesk.

Fr Niall Howard Killarney to the Kenmare Pastoral area and to be PP Glengarriff.

Fr Sean Jones St John's, Tralee to the Killarney Pastoral area and to minister in Killarney.

The parish of Dromtariffe will be served by the priests of the Duhallow/Sliabh Luchra Pastoral Area, with Fr Jack Fitzgerald as Moderator.

Latin Mass Knock pilgrimage announced

Staff reporter

The Latin Mass pilgrimage to Knock International Eucharistic and Marian Shrine will take place Saturday, September 3.

The pilgrimage will begin with a sung Latin Mass (Missa Cantata) in the Extraordinary Form, followed by the Stations of the Cross and Benediction.

All events will take place in the parish church in Knock. The pilgrimage makes an eagerly-anticipated return after a three-year break due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Some highlights of the trip include: visiting the Apparition Chapel; seeing the apparition mosaic; and free admission to visit the Knock museum.

The Traditional Latin Mass is celebrated monthly

in Knock on the second Sunday of the month, an initiative introduced by Archbishop-emeritus Michael Neary in 2011 in response to the pastoral needs of people wishing to worship according to the earlier liturgical norms.

The next Mass takes place Sunday, July 10. For more information visit www.knockshrine.ie or call 094 9388100.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Climate justice congregation sends candle around Ireland

The Eco-Congregation Ireland (ECI) issued a call to "shine a light" on climate justice by distributing a candle to various parish communities in Ireland, most recently St Michael's and John's Church in Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary.

Launched in 2015 at the National Ecumenical Prayer Service for COP21 and in the presence of President Higgins, the candle has travelled around Ireland, encouraging parishes to include prayers for climate justice in intercessory prayers and take action to "green" their churches.

The congregation hopes that by bringing awareness to climate change, parish communities will come together to "take actions now, and in the future, to protect God's Creation at this critical time".

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Sisters in the sun



The Sisters of Glencairn Abbey, Ireland's only community of Cistercian nuns, take advantage of the summer sunshine for a community photo. Pictured are: (bottom row from left) Sr Angela, Sr Beatrice, Sr Marifat, Sr Robert Maria, Sr Stephen, Laura (Postulant); (middle row) Sr Sarah, Sr Mary, Sr Charlotte, Sr Clothilde, Sr Gertrude, Mother Marie, Sr Agnes, Sr Lily, Sr Michele, Sr Ann, Sr Liz; (back row): Sr Fiachra, Sr Mairéad, Sr Kathleen, Sr Denise, Sr Eleanor, Sr Anna, Sr Michelle, Sr Maria Therese, Sr Mary Scholastica, Sr Josephine, Sr Benedict and Sr Nuala. Photo: Marie-Line Burguiere.

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SATURDAY 30TH JULY 2022



REV. FR. JOHN HARRIS O.P.

Prior Provincial Irish Dominican Province

WORKSHOP – Invitation to Past,
Present and Future Catechism Students

TIME 11.30a.m. - 12.30p.m.

VENUE St. John's Rest and Care Centre

SCHEDULE OF CEREMONIES

2.00pm Outdoor Stations of the Cross and
Rosary Procession

3.00pm Holy Mass in the Basilica with
Anointing of the Sick

Eucharistic Adoration and Sacrament of
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EVENT ORGANISED BY: Catechism of the Catholic Church – Adult Studies, Steering Committee

Kildare and Leighlin plans for reduction of Masses

Chai Brady

The Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin is gearing up to reduce Masses in order to alleviate pressure on priests and avoid duplication in areas where Mass is available in churches around the same time in close proximity.

Pastoral letter

Bishop Denis Nulty has said he will publish a pastoral letter on September 5 and has given a deadline of November 27 for a

response regarding the issue of Mass rationalisation and sharing of services within parish clusters and pastoral areas.

Parishes will also be asked to discuss and agree on parish groupings.

The issue was discussed during the Plenary Meeting for Clergy near the end of June. Bishop Nulty stated: "With the letter I will attach a draft map on where I feel the cluster groupings are emerging and ask each pastoral area to widen that discussion to include the lay faithful,

partners in our parishes, to agree to those groupings.

"I would ask all pastoral areas to respond to the draft cluster map by October 15. I then would hope that six weeks later by November 27, the first Sunday of Advent, every pastoral area will have agreement around rationalising of Masses within the agreed cluster and a first step at sharing of services."

Several priests of the diocese who spoke to the paper welcomed the plans, with one saying "we have to do things differently, we

have too many Masses in built up areas". He highlighted the need to focus on the welfare of priests who are overstretched and unable to have time off as there is often no one to cover for them.

Plenary meeting

Bishop Nulty also said during the plenary meeting that he envisages that diocesan changes will be "minimal over the next two years to allow the pastoral areas and cluster groupings to bed down".

"Conversations are at an early stage with Ossory and Ferns

regarding the shared training of lay people for roles that would include administration, pastoral leadership, catechists. I know such roles would very much compliment the pastoral areas and cluster groupings. I have asked the Diocesan Commission for Liturgical Formation to commence the training of teams in the autumn for leading prayer on Sundays in the sudden and unavoidable absence of a priest or to allow for holidays," he added.

Thousands benefitted from Irish missionaries' work during Covid, a new report shows

Ruadhán Jones

Almost 1 million people in some of the poorest nations around the world saw improved health conditions despite Covid due to the work of Irish missionary orders, Misesan Cara have said.

The Irish-based missionary umbrella group's annual report for 2021 shows that Irish missionaries overcame

the challenges presented by Covid, yielding "impressive results".

In addition, almost 61,000 people gained access to "quality, life-transforming education" with a drop-out rate of less than 3%, chairperson Kevin Carroll said in the report.

"These are impressive results, enabling us to demonstrate the impact of the unique missionary approach

to development," Mr Carroll said.

He also announced the development of Misesan Cara's strategic plan 2022-2026, which will take into account the decline in Irish-born missionaries.

"We recognise that there will be challenges in this period," Mr Carroll continued.

"The numbers of Irish missionaries working overseas continue to decline. However,

we also see a growing number of very capable non-Irish missionaries taking over."

There is a growing need for Misesan Cara to further diversify its income streams to reduce reliance on Irish Aid, according to the report.

Mr Carroll said that this work has already begun, as Misesan Cara seeks to build new relationships with foundations and trusts.

New developments of Belfast Catholic hospital welcome

Liam Fitzpatrick

Bishop Noel Treanor, bishop of Down and Connor, welcomed the development of Elective Overnight Stay Centres in Mater Hospital, Belfast, noting the hospital's "long and distinguished history" in providing care.

"This new service underpins the key role of the hospital as a provider of care and treatment to those in need and as a major employer in the local and wider community," according to a statement issued by Bishop Treanor on behalf of the

Trustees of the Mater Hospital.

Northern Irish Health Minister Robin Swann believes that "reshaping general surgery services will produce better, safer and more consistent care for patients across NI," according to a press release from the department's website.

By establishing a firm boundary between elective and emergency surgeries, healthcare officials hope this development can help address some of the changes in general surgery over recent years, specifically the increasing specialisation of surgeons.

Musk meets Pope



American entrepreneur and owner of Tesla Elon Musk, along with his sons, meet Pope Francis in the Vatican, July 1.

"Today the visibility of faith has for all intents and purposes vanished"

- Archbishop Dermot Farrell

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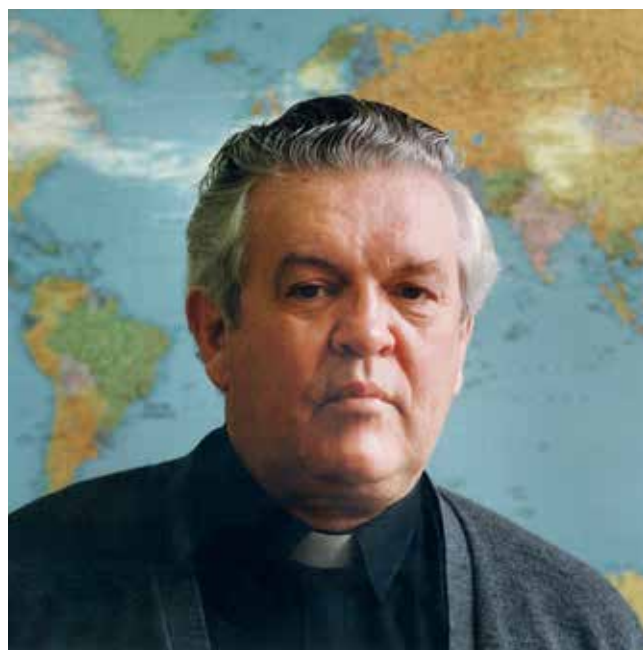
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“A legacy of *incredible* humanitarian significance”



Fr. Aengus Finucane.

The Irish Catholic looks at a rich and varied life lived in the service of others and of God.

Fr. Finucane was ordained as a Holy Ghost Priest in 1958. In his first assignment in Uli, Nigeria, Fr. Finucane found himself involved in the bitter civil war between Nigeria and Biafra.

Following Biafra's attempt to secede, this widespread conflict had displaced millions. What's more, there was a blockade of food, medicine and basic necessities by the Nigerian authorities.

At the height of the crisis in the summer of 1968, it was estimated 6,000 children died every week.

An Irish effort

In response to the Biafrans' terrible plight, Concern Worldwide – originally called Africa Concern – was founded and began raising awareness and funds to help those suffering.

On 6th September 1968, the 600 tonne, Columille set sail for Sao Tome – a Portuguese island close to West Africa. The cost of chartering the ship and its vital cargo of powdered food and medicines was all paid for with donations from the people of Ireland.

To circumvent the blockade, the supplies were then flown from Sao Tome to Biafra overnight. The following day in Uli, Fr. Finucane was among the Holy Ghost priests who would help distribute the life saving supplies.

With his commitment and

that of the Irish public and priests, this operation grew into one flight a day for 11 months.

Fr. Finucane was deeply committed to helping the poorest of the poor. So after leaving Biafra, in 1972 he became Concern's Field Director in Bangladesh after its war of independence from Pakistan – the war had left millions in desperate need of food.

The period after Fr. Finucane's time in Bangladesh was particularly testing. In Thailand's Kampuchea refugee camps he saw the desperation of Cambodians who had fled the Khmer Rouge's genocide.

And in Uganda the horror of HIV in Kampala, where even in the best hospitals one third of the children born were HIV positive.

Fr. Finucane worked tirelessly to alleviate suffering, and recognised his responsibility to help the poor and underprivileged.

Concern appointed Fr. Finucane as its Chief Executive in 1981.

During his 16 years as the head of the charity he was 'on the ground' during many of the world's worst disasters. These included the 1983-1985 famine in Ethiopia and the Rwandan genocide in 1994.

Relinquishing his post in 1997, Fr. Finucane became Honorary President of Concern Worldwide US. He held this post until his death on 6th October 2009.

Fr. Finucane's legacy

Fr. Finucane is the cornerstone behind much of what Concern has become today. It was he who expanded its aid work into 11 countries and dramatically increased its fundraising.

Tom Arnold – Concern's CEO from 2001 to 2013 – says:

“There can be few Irish people of his generation, or of any other generation, who have contributed as much to improving the lives of so much of humanity.”

“He inspired a whole generation of Concern overseas volunteers.”

Fr. Finucane continues to inspire as his legacy still influences Concern 12 years after his death.

“Do as much as you can, as well as you can, for as many as you can, for as long as you can.”
– Fr. Aengus Finucane

In 2020 Concern worked in 23 countries, responding to 78 different emergencies, helping 36.9 million of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people.

Concern's vision, mission and work continues to strive to end extreme poverty, whatever it takes. The charity believes that no-one should live in fear of not having enough food.

The devastation of climate change

Today one of the primary causes of acute food insecurity are weather extremes.

Climate change is increasing hunger levels and pushing even more people to the brink of famine. With multiple famines predicted, there are currently 41 million people teetering on the edge of starvation.

Extreme weather caused by climate change is having a devastating effect on the most vulnerable people in the world's poorest countries.

And these calamitous weather conditions are now more frequent and varied. No sooner has one disaster struck than another arrives. People don't have enough food for months, sometimes years on end.

In Malawi droughts, floods and strong weather patterns are a regular occurrence – placing huge stress

on land and crop production resulting in food shortages and hunger.

These weather extremes affect an already vulnerable population where 80% source their livelihoods from the land, 71% live below the poverty line and an estimated 20% are living in extreme poverty.

People like Yona Lambiki and his family.

Yona, a farmer, lives in Nkhambaza village with his wife and five children. He was always able to support his family with the crops and food he grew providing them with a healthy balanced diet. Any excess was sold, with some of the money used to pay for his children's schooling. But two years ago everything changed ...



Crops destroyed by Cyclone Idai.

In March 2019 Cyclone Idai caused devastating floods and loss of life in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The floods completely destroyed crops just weeks away from harvest – food people were relying on for survival.

Although his house wasn't affected, like thousands of others, the crops Yona was about to harvest were completely washed away. There was nothing for his family to eat, let alone any to sell.

Help for now and the future

But thanks to Concern's generous donors and Yona's hard work he is now able to look after his family again.

Yona immediately received a vital cash transfer from Concern. With this he bought food and other basic necessities his family needed to be safe and free from hunger.

Yona received seeds including maize, tomatoes, beans, three bundles of sweet potato vines and other vegetables to grow so he could, once again, support his family. He also received, fertilizer and a hoe to help him grow his crops. As well as five goats for milk and manure.



Photo: Jason Kennedy / Concern Worldwide.

“I would really love to meet everyone that is behind this support so I could thank them in person.” – Yona Lambiki

Like other families in his community, Yona planted the seeds he received in his home garden. What they harvest is used to feed their families, any excess is sold to improve their livelihoods.

But Concern do far more than simply give communities plants, seeds and tools. They provide training in Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) to ensure long term, inter-generational support.

providing support for years – possibly decades – to come.

On speaking about the people who support Concern and make our work possible, he said, *“I'm so very happy with the support I have received from Concern. My life and family's life is healthy and can afford everything we could not afford before. I'm so happy and thankful to Concern”.*

Will Fr. Finucane inspire you too?

There's a way you, just like Fr. Finucane, can leave the world a better place. And help improve the lives of families like Yona's both now and for future generations.

How? By leaving Concern a gift in your Will.

When you leave a gift, your legacy lives on – helping for years to come.

“I know that this is a very personal decision. But I assure you, gifts in Wills have had a phenomenal impact in reducing extreme poverty, hunger and suffering around the world. Today, as the catastrophic combination of conflict, climate change and COVID-19 have plunged so many people into the grip of crisis, your gift will help us to be there in their time of need.”

– Dominic MacSorley, CEO, Concern Worldwide

Gifts in Wills are a vital source of funding for Concern.

Your legacy will help families like Yona's reverse the many struggles caused by Climate Change ...

... will provide the tools and knowledge they need to not just survive but help themselves – a gift from you they can pass down for generations.

To find out more about how a legacy gives a safe, secure future, please request your complimentary copy of 'A World Without Hunger' – Concern's legacy booklet.

You'll learn of others who desperately needed help, and how legacies from people just like you have done so much.

There are also answers to common questions people ask about leaving a gift in their Will. And explains how to get started.

Requesting your free booklet does not oblige you to do anything else.

To receive your free, no obligation booklet – in complete confidence – please contact Concern's Legacy Manager, Siobhán O'Connor. Call **01 417 8020**, email **siobhan.oconnor@concern.net**, or write to 52-55 Lower Camden Street, Dublin 2



SVP say budget 2023 must make ‘real difference’



We have a moral responsibility to ensure a decent standard of living for all, the Catholic charity insists, writes **Ruadhán Jones**

Last year was an extraordinary one for the Society of St Vincent de Paul, according to its National President Rose McGowan.

The Catholic charity received a record 191,000 calls for help, and it expects to exceed that number in 2022 as a “perfect storm” of rising cost of living hits families.

“Many families experienced extra costs during lockdowns when children being at home increased food, digital and fuel costs,” Ms McGowan said at the launch of SVP’s pre-budget submission, June 29.

“Rather than the situation easing, they have faced escalating prices which have hit families’ budgets even harder.”

Ms McGowan went on to praise the compassion Ireland has shown helping and protecting each other from harm.

“Yet, right now, too many live in poverty and many more risk falling into the trap,” she continued. “We all share a moral responsibility to ensure that everyone in our country has a decent standard of living.”

“Lower income families have no savings and are already in debt,’ the report say”

The SVP president said the charity doesn’t underestimate the challenge facing policymakers ahead of Budget 2023, but stated firmly that “all choices must be underpinned by the principles of equality and social justice”.

In its report, the SVP laid out just some of the statistics that show starkly the difficulties facing vulnerable people and families in Ireland:

- A weekly gap of €49 between core special welfare rates and the cost of a minimum essential standard of living.

- 200,000 children living in enforced deprivation.

- Some 29% of renters worried about eviction in the next six months.

- A quarter of parents getting into debt to cover back-to-school costs.



St Vincent de Paul National President Rose McGowan, Issy Petrie SVP Research and Policy Officer and Dr Tricia Keilthy SVP Head of Social Justice and Policy.

- More than a third (37%) are cutting back on essential heating and electricity due to rising costs and over 250,000 customers in arrears on their electricity bills.

The SVP report warns that low income families have been left exposed by the pandemic to the impact of rapidly rising living costs.

“While better-off families tended to build up their savings during the pandemic, providing a shock absorber for rising prices; lower income families have no savings and are already in debt,” the report says.

In laying out their vision of a budget that could make a “real difference in the lives of those struggling in poverty”, Ms McGowan called for “immediate support” for low-income houses, to go hand-in-hand with a strengthened social welfare system.

The report summarises the priorities in its pre-budget submission as being the following:

- Providing targeted and adequate supports to low-income households most acutely impacted by inflation and properly poverty proof all decisions.

- Commit to benchmarking social welfare rates against the cost of a minimum essential standard of living.

- Introduce a living wage for workers that reflects the real costs faced by those in low paid jobs.

- Invest in quality public services including housing, childcare, education and health to reduce the high cost of living trapping people in poverty.

- Develop and resource a new strategy to combat energy poverty and establish a just transition commission without further delay.

Speaking at the launch of the report, SVP Head of Social Justice Dr Tricia Keilthy said that “investment in essential services like housing, childcare and education must go hand in hand with a social protection system that is strong enough to keep people out of poverty while out of work, living with an illness or disability, caring for a loved one, on low pay or in retirement.

“We know this is possible, but we need to see Government make

the right choices in Budget 2023,” she added.

Selection of key proposals

Housing and homelessness

Pursue a housing-led approach to the housing crisis. In order to provide secure and affordable homes for low-income households on the housing list or insecure private rented accommodation, the annual targets under Housing for All need to increase by 5,000 units annually.

End the practice of unaffordable top-ups on the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) by ensuring no one falls below Supplementary Welfare Allowance levels after housing costs.

Prevent homelessness through early intervention by ensuring the Department of Housing and Department of Social Protection work together to identify households at risk of losing their rented accommodation.

Implement the White Paper on Direct Provision and expand the Housing First programme for families experiencing homelessness.

Education and early years

Unlock free early years care and education and afterschool care to all low-income families, including one-parent families.

Provide genuinely free primary and secondary education to all students.

Support children experiencing educational disadvantage in non-DEIS schools by creating an educational equality fund.

Ensure that children with additional needs can access the supports they need in school and the community.

Make SUSI fit for purpose by reviewing the income thresholds and means test to qualify for SUSI in line with average incomes and poverty thresholds and increasing the value of the maintenance grant levels in line with the cost of living.

Income adequacy

Increase social welfare rates to provide a decent standard of living and prevent child poverty by raising the incomes of the poorest families.

Introduce an additional social welfare payment to provide for the cost of disability. We now have an evidence base that clearly sets out the extra expense people with a disability incur. The fact that this isn’t reflected by the social welfare system contributes to persistently high poverty and deprivation rates.

Address poverty amongst people seeking international protection by fully implementing the social protection measures outlined in the White Paper on Direct Provision, including extending Child Benefit to families in the international protection process.

Make work pay and address in-work poverty by increasing the thresholds for the Working Family Payment.

Ensure low-income households can meet unexpected expenses by improving the adequacy and accessibility of Additional Needs Payment Scheme (the Exceptional Needs Payment Scheme).

Energy and climate justice

Ensure support for energy costs through the Fuel Allowance is set at an adequate level.

Improve the targeting of supports for people at risk of energy poverty.

Make access to free retrofitting fully equitable for those in local authority and private rented accommodation.

Pilot a programme of Community Energy Advisors to bridge the gap between supporting households with immediate energy needs and enabling them to access longer term solutions including retrofitting.

Invest in the Rural Transport Programme to increase the range of public transport options to support social inclusion in rural areas through increased public transport use.



Nessan Vaughan, Vice-Chair of the SVP Social Justice Committee speaks during the pre-Budget 2023 submission launch, June 29.

Thousands take to the streets in pro-life protest

Jason Osborne

Thousands of people from around Ireland flocked to Dublin city centre on Saturday to urge both the Government and the Irish public to “rethink abortion”.

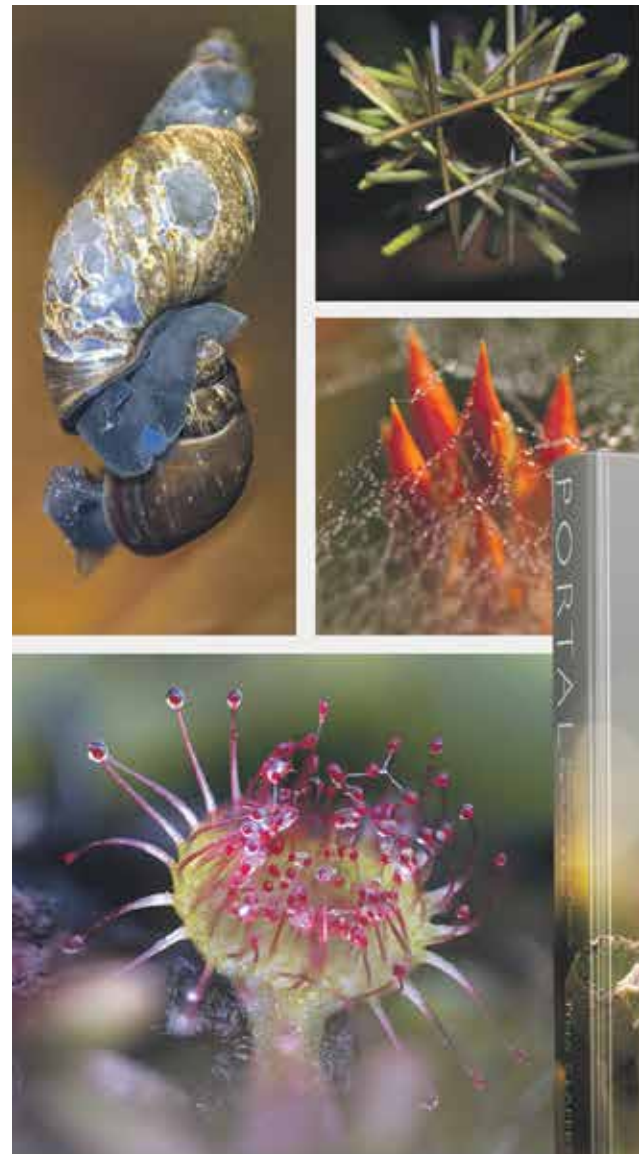
The crowd assembled at Parnell square before marching down O’Connell Street and onto Custom House Quay.

Speaking in St Saviour’s Church and Dominican priory ahead of the march, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All-Ireland Eamon Martin said that those assembled continue to have a “prophetic” mission in their pro-life efforts.

“You do this not only by words, but also by the testimony of your life. It does not always mean ‘crying out or shouting aloud in the streets’ – although sometimes, on days like this, that is important and effective,” Archbishop Martin said.

Niamh Uí Bhriain of the Life Institute told the crowd that recent events in the US, such as the overturning of Roe v Wade, have given fresh momentum to pro-life initiatives worldwide, and “shown that culture and law can be changed for the better”.

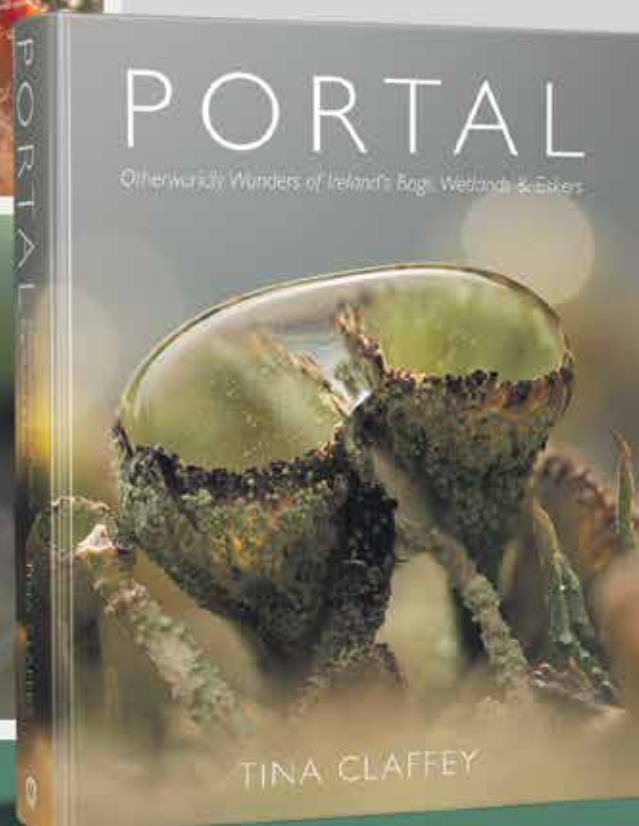
“We have renewed hope and energy and a sense of excitement, but more than that we know the importance of defiance – of refusing to bow down to the establishment, of being unafraid of being counter-cultural when that’s what it takes to end abortion,” she said.



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The synodal process cannot allow itself to be manipulated



Wherever the synodal process goes, it cannot break with core Church teachings, writes **David Quinn**

When I attended one of the synodal meetings in my parish in Dublin a number of months ago that discussed the issues facing the Church in the archdiocese, some of my initial concerns about where the whole process might go were substantially allayed. But having now read reports of what was purportedly (I stress that word) said at the parish meetings, I'm not so sure anymore.

A long time ago, the former religious affairs correspondent of RTÉ, Kieron Wood, interviewed Dr Thomas Morris, who was Archbishop of Cashel and Emly from 1959 until 1988 about the Second Vatican Council. Archbishop Morris, who died in 1997, attended the council, which ran from 1962 until 1965.

“This kind of ‘rupture’ party would be represented in Ireland by people like Fr Tony Flannery, who denies some of the most basic doctrines of the Church”

If memory serves, Archbishop Morris expressed concern to Mr Wood about the outsized role that reporters were trying to play at the council in shaping its outcomes and public perceptions of it. They were attempting to push Vatican II in a more liberal direction than it intended to go. By raising expectations among the public, and especially the Catholic public, about the kind of changes it could bring, the hope was that the Council would then follow public opinion.

Thus, anything that happened at the Council that indicated a break with tradition was emphasised and often exaggerated, while anything that promised continuity was deemphasised, or else those council participants who were on the side on tradition found themselves turned



A delegate carries a bowl of incense during a prayer walk at a pre-synodal assembly in the 6th Century monastic site of Clonmacnoise.

into villains in the media. The classic example was Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani, head of what was then called the Holy Office, who very much represented the forces of traditions (or, as critics would have it, ‘reaction’).

In the end, the Second Vatican Council brought about substantial changes to the life and thinking of the Church, but it did so in a way that respected its traditions, and its core doctrines.

Pope St John XXIII, of course, envisaged it as a pastoral council, not a doctrinal one. He wanted it to renew the life of the Church. Whether or not it has done that is arguable, given that Mass attendances and vocations across the West continued their rapid decline.

Spirit

But after the council, there were those who liked to invoke its ‘spirit’ in order to argue for much more radical change. They did not want to develop the traditions of the Church. They wanted something more like a rupture from the past. They could not really quote from any of the council’s documents to argue in favour of what they wanted, and therefore had to talk instead about a mysterious, indefinable ‘spirit’, and then confused that with the ‘Holy Spirit’.

This kind of ‘rupture’ party would be represented in Ireland by people like Fr Tony Flannery, who denies some of the most basic doctrines of the Church.

The fact that Fr Flannery approves of where the synodal process in Ireland seems to be going is a very bad sign.

Fr Flannery was at the national synod meeting in Athlone last month. Amazingly, he was one of the representative of the Association of Catholic Priests (how many of its rank-and-file members would have known this?) despite his denial of some very basic Church teachings.

After the meeting he wrote: “I sat in some amazement at what I was hearing”, adding, “a good many of the changes people are calling for would involve change in Church teaching, even doctrine.”

The media reported that there was a demand for women priests and for radical changes to Church teaching on human sexuality.

“I spoke to people who attended meetings in other parishes, and their experiences were much the same as mine”

The document from Dublin Archdiocese summarising what parish meetings discussed also mentioned these issues. But what was not at all clear is how prominent they really were.

The average parish synodal meeting in Dublin had about 35 people present. The one I attended had 70. The big issues that came up were the lack of young people in church, the lack of vocations and the need for good liturgy, music and sermons. People expressed appreciation for good priests and religious, for the faith they were handed on by their parents, for the comfort and solace they receive

from the sacraments and parish community.

At the end of the meeting in my parish, people’s contributions were tallied so we knew what emerged most strongly in each group at the event. The sort of issues favoured by the likes of the ACP or *The Irish Times* were not very prominent.

I spoke to people who attended meetings in other parishes, and their experiences were much the same as mine. They said the issue of more participation by women in the leadership of the Church did come up, and so did the issue of sexuality and celibacy, but not to anything like the same extent as the lack of vocations or young people at Mass.

It is no doubt accurate to say that hot button topics like women’s ordination did arise quite frequently, but the key question is how prominent this was compared with other issues.

Political issues

Opinion polls frequently ask the public what political issues are most important to them. Almost everyone will mention something like climate change. But this will have nothing like the same importance attached to it as issues like the cost of living or housing.

People pushing for liberal reforms and changes to the basic doctrinal teachings of the Church often invoke the ‘sense of the Faithful’. But the sense of the Faithful arising from the parish meetings might not be as some are indicating, and it is unclear whether the meeting in Athlone (or how it was reported in the secular media at any rate), was properly representative of

what happened in ordinary parishes around the country in their own synodal gatherings.

If the ‘sense of the Faithful’ is not honestly and accurately reported, or worse, is passed off as the ‘Holy Spirit’ at work, then that is a blatant attempt to distort the process.

“Therefore, the synodal process in Ireland must not raise false expectations of change”

In any case, the ‘sense of the Faithful’ is not that at all if it is intent on departing from key elements of the Catholic faith. A test of whether something comes from the Holy Spirit or not is whether it seeks to depart from basic doctrines of the Catholic Church. If it does, then it is not from the Holy Spirit.

This is why the synodal document from Edinburgh archdiocese makes clear that wherever the process goes, it cannot break with core Church teachings. It explicitly says that the male-only priesthood in one of those. Indeed, Pope Francis himself has said that matter is settled.

Therefore, the synodal process in Ireland must not raise false expectations of change. It has to be true to the teachings of the Church. It must be genuinely faithful and it should not pretend that certain demands are the result of the actions of the Holy Spirit. Renewal of the Church in Ireland, as elsewhere, will only come from genuinely faith-filled Catholics and nowhere else.

Church and political dignitaries bid Papal Nuncio Okolo farewell



Papal Nuncio Archbishop Jude Okolo greeting guests as they arrive at the Apostolic Nunciature last Wednesday, June 29. Photos: John McElroy



Archbishop-emeritus of Dublin Diarmuid Martin with the papal nuncio.

Ruadhán Jones

More than 100 people, including Church and State dignitaries, attended a farewell gathering for Papal Nuncio to Ireland Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo, June 29.

Archbishop Okolo, who spent some six years as nuncio to Ireland having arrived in 2017, is leaving soon to take up a new posting in Czechia.

The Primate of All-Ireland Archbishop Eamon Martin, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin Michael Jackson, Archbishop of Dublin Dermot Farrell and Archbishop-emeritus Diarmuid Martin offered fond farewells to the outgoing nuncio.

Members of the diplomatic corps in Ireland also turned out in force, with representatives from Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Lesotho, Algeria and Mexico in attendance.

Acting on behalf of the diplomatic corps, of which Archbishop Okolo acted as the dean for the past six years, Ambassador of Mexico Miguel Malfavon thanked the papal nuncio for his service and gave him a parting gift.

Born in Kano, Nigeria, Dr Okolo served as an apostolic nuncio to the Central African Republic and Chad in 2008, and then as the pope's diplomatic representative to the Dominican Republic in 2013.

Before becoming an apostolic nuncio, he had worked in the diplomatic service of the Holy See, where he was stationed in Sri Lanka, before going on to be a pontifical representative in Haiti, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Australia and the Antilles.



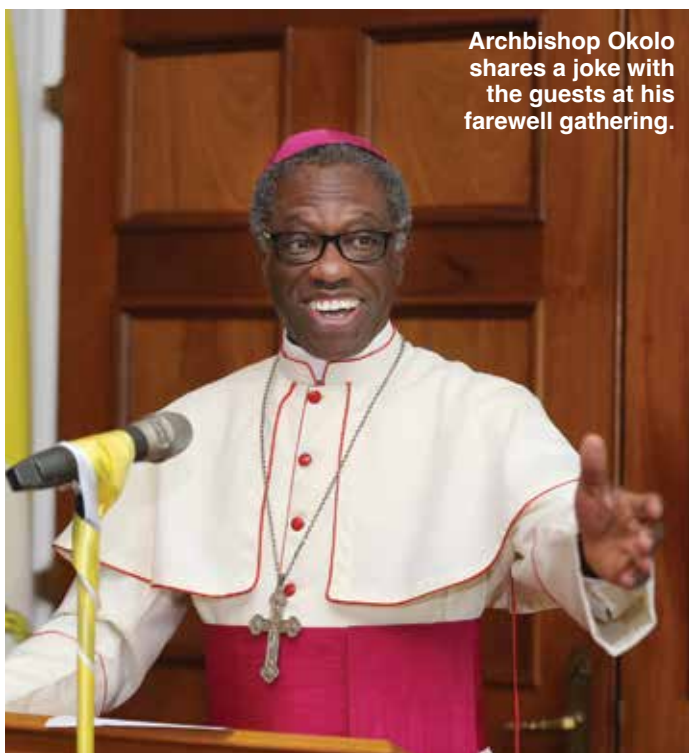
Mary Manny and Fr Jaimie Twohig at the Apostolic Nunciature last Wednesday.



Ambassadors Nail Al-Jubeir Embassy of Saudi Arabia, Sekhulumi Paul Ntsoale Embassy of the Kingdom of Lesotho and Mohammed Belaoura Embassy of Algeria.



Sheena Foy (Net Ministries) and Fr Anthony Ayoola.



Archbishop Okolo shares a joke with the guests at his farewell gathering.



Miguel Malfavon Ambassador of Mexico speaking on behalf of the Diplomatic Corps.



Archbishop Michael Jackson Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin and Fr Josip Levakovic Croatian Chaplain.



Sr Bridget O'Driscoll OP, Diver Burns and Sr Elizabeth Ferguson OP.



Miguel Malfavon Ambassador of Mexico presents Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo with a gift.



Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Okolo with Mary Irwin.





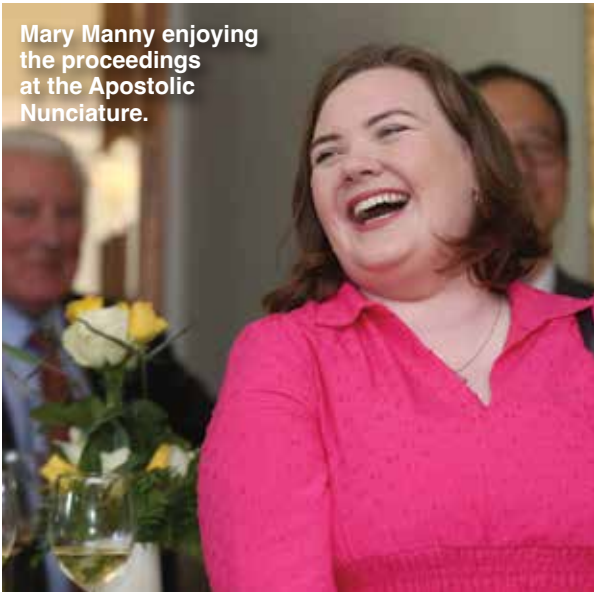
Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin Denis Nulty, head chaplain to the Irish Defence Forces Fr Paschal Hanrahan, President of the Legion of Mary Mary Murphy and Bishop of Limerick Denis Leahy are pictured at the farewell gathering, June 29.



Guests applauding Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo.



Bro. Sean Kelly, provincial of the Capuchin Franciscans of Ireland, at the event.

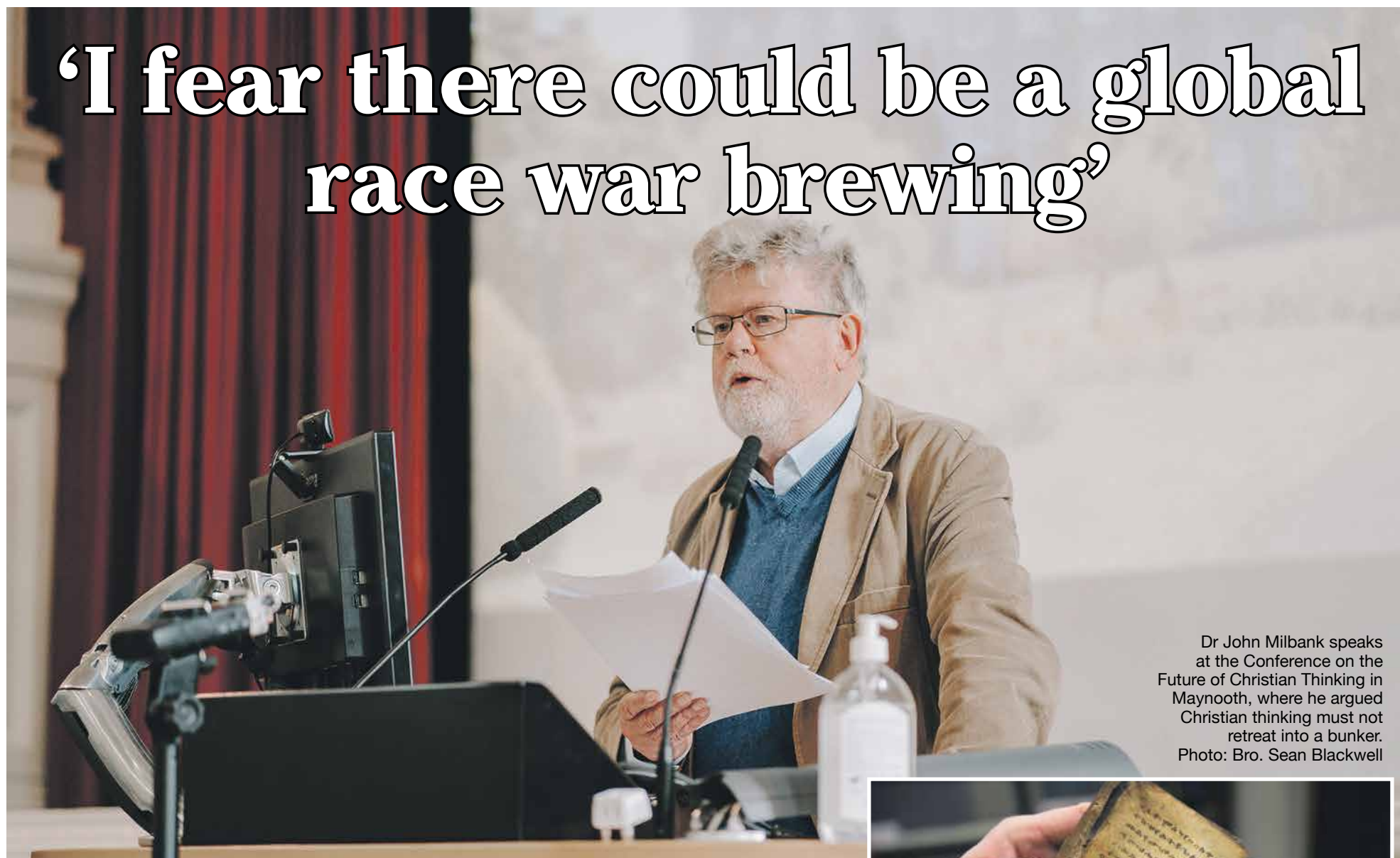


Mary Manny enjoying the proceedings at the Apostolic Nunciature.



Some of the guests at the Apostolic Nunciature last Wednesday listening to the outgoing Papal Nuncio Archbishop Okolo.

'I fear there could be a global race war brewing'



Dr John Milbank speaks at the Conference on the Future of Christian Thinking in Maynooth, where he argued Christian thinking must not retreat into a bunker. Photo: Bro. Sean Blackwell



Christianity is key to fighting racism and nationalism, John Milbank tells Ruadhán Jones

While modern secularism seeks to push religion, particularly Christianity, to the borders of society, English philosopher and theologian John Milbank says we must not go into our bunkers. Christianity is vital to tackling the modern "secular religiosities" of racism, nationalism and liberal individualism.

Dr Milbank, Emeritus Professor in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Nottingham, spoke strongly on the danger posed by the growing urban-rural divide, saying that Christianity offers "thicker" identities that encompass all people, without dismissing their individuality.

"What I mean is that on the one hand we have liberal individualism, which is predicated on the idea that we don't share anything in com-

mon, we don't agree on anything," he tells me as we sit in the historic Pugin Hall in St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

"And the danger of that is that it is completely impossible, and what comes to rule then is something like organisation. The market and organisations come to rule and to dominate. And that has its own blandishments, that creates fashions and a kind of pseudo-culture because it's ultimately about money and control and manipulation and all the rest of it."

However, Dr Milbank says that many people find this worldview completely unsatisfactory, because "it's indifferent to whether people are impoverished, it's indifferent to the destruction of people's culture and their familiar way of life. And it's getting ever more extreme today, I think, including going in a kind of transhumanist direction."

Thicker identities

"The so-called heartlands [of the United Kingdom] are rejecting that. But then their reactions can be atavistic, or racist or nationalist. So because they're not turning to religion either, they're turning to you know nationalisms, racisms – secular religiosities if you like – in that context I think religion instead should try to suggest that there are thicker identities we can all share, that there is some sense of the common good that is not closed off to the universal, it's not me against you."

Religions, particularly Catholicism, offer a way of thinking and living that can offer both a universal vision of humanity, and also a local one, he says: "There are universal visions of humanity that we can all share, and if there are particular

local cultures, those are localised versions of those things. Catholicism is probably the best example of that, it exists in different forms and different places, but with a shared concrete identity."

"If you like, we've got a kind of war at the moment between abstract people and concrete people. And what we need is symbolic concretions that religion provides alone, that are bringing people together but not in such divisive way and that kind of have a vision beyond this world."

“Dr Milbank spoke to *The Irish Catholic* during Maynooth's Conference on the Future of Christian Thinking, held in April of this year”

"They have a vision of the value of every person that is not a kind of indifference, saying you know, I respect your choice. But a genuine sort of realisation that we need everybody, we need their individuality and their particular thing and that has to be blended with what other people are doing. We're back to my idea of linkage, that this is a practical task."

Dr Milbank spoke to *The Irish Catholic* during Maynooth's Conference on the Future of Christian Thinking, held in April of this year. At a time of "crisis in theology", as Dr Milbank puts it, the conference explored Christian thinking's present importance and how it can develop in the future.



An Ethiopic manuscript containing the Gospel of John at Mullen Library, the Catholic University of America, January 25, 2017. Dr John Milbank says Christianity must not forget the strong Ethiopian Christian tradition. Photo: CNS.

The Anglican thinker's own talk at the conference was focused precisely on the crisis, namely the fact that "fewer and fewer people are studying theology". He sought to ask the question, if the field in its current form were to disappear, would that necessarily be a bad thing? Dr Milbank explains that the study of theology has been divorced from the study of philosophy and history. This, he says, is a very modern, novel development.

Philosophy

"St Augustine never described himself as a theologian," he continues. "It was more common for people to think that they were still doing philosophy, but they were doing philosophy in light of the Bible and in light of the Gospels. And that also means that you have to have a philosophical approach that takes account that the fact that events disclose new realities, that truth is a matter of new arrivals in the world, if you like."

Dr Milbank called into question the separation of theology from philosophy and both from the study of history, saying that "the most influential modern thinkers in modern times have been people who ignored those boundaries".

“What does it mean that truth is a person, for Christians, he asks, and it transforms his whole account of what truth actually is”

"If you think of [George Wilhelm Friedrich] Hegel or [Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph] Schelling or [Søren] Kierkegaard, they're not really theologians and yet these are the very people asking, well, what's the implication of the incarnation for thinking about truth? You know, for

“The influence of Christian doctrine on influential philosophers such as these did not come to an end in the 20th century, the so-called post-Christian age, Dr Milbank continues”

Kierkegaard it points to the idea that truth is subjectivity, as he puts it – that truth is as much a matter of a lived life.

“What does it mean that truth is a person, for Christians, he asks, and it transforms his whole account of what truth actually is. And similarly, Hegel and Schelling are asking, well, how does the Trinity change our view of the absolute and how do we link eternity to time in terms of the manifestation of the Trinity?”

“Even if they were doing this in terms that we might think of as not very orthodox, nonetheless they’re trying to make these Christian doctrines central about how we think about everything.”

Influential philosophers

The influence of Christian doctrine on influential philosophers such as these did not come to an end in the 20th century, the so-called post-Christian age, Dr Milbank continues. He cites the example of the English philosopher RG Collingwood, who argued that the ultimate foundations of our civilisation are Trinitarian and Christological.

“Collingwood argues that, even if these are profoundly influenced by Greek thought and the Bible, nonetheless they’re some sort of consummation of a thinking that is very much about the mediation between the one and the many, the mediation between nature and person. So in a sense it’s very relational... even if we think that we’ve stopped being Christian, we haven’t really, would be one way of putting this.

“We imagine we can have a purely secular starting point, just recognising science and not have metaphysics – but science doesn’t give us a system of values, it doesn’t tell us what to do! And the question of what to do is linked to the question how things are. You know, you act in a certain way because you have a certain vision of reality. And by acting in a certain way that can deepen your sense of reality.”

To explain his view further, Dr Milbank turns to one of the preeminent French Catholic philosophers of the 20th century, Maurice Blondel. Blondel argued that “everything is always about how we link things together and also about how we add to the world through our actions”.

By this he means that metaphysics – our beliefs about reality as a whole – are closely linked to our everyday lives. And so simply by living and acting, “we are constantly adding to the world and linking things together in new ways”, Dr Milbank says.

“But if we’re not doing that completely arbitrarily, by doing that are we not sort of opening up a new vision of the way things are, and should be connected and completed? So that this engages, if you like, in Christian terms both a vision of creation and of eschatology, our final end. And if you say, we’re post-

Christian, we no longer believe things, there is then a profound void – it’s very hard to know how we are to live.”

Dr Milbank argues that, while the West claims to have rejected Christianity, we are in fact left with “fragmentary notions” derived from it – notions like the dignity of the person, the common good – without a metaphysical and belief structure. If we want to connect the fragments that make up the modern West’s world view, he recommends a “much more integral approach to Christian discourse”.

“We need to stop separating off Church history, systematic theology, philosophy, philosophy of religion. We need much more to see it as a single discourse and enterprise, in which in a sense we’re arguing, what are our fundamental assumptions in Western civilisation? How is it that Christianity did this kind of synthesis of the Bible and the Greeks? And how do we rethink that and reappropriate that?”

In addition to this discourse within the West, Dr Milbank says we need to reconsider how we are to relate to the rest of the world. This matter is not an abstract one, as he notes that the “terrible conflict” between Russia and Ukraine “has its ultimate roots in a division of Christendom and healing that rift is very important”.

“Sociologically, we, the West, look strange to other civilisations, Dr Milbank says, because we divide the spiritual and the secular”

Dr Milbank also points out that we must remember that Christianity is not just Western: “It has also existed especially in Africa, where for instance Ethiopia is a very ancient Christian civilisation, with its own strand of Christian thought”. Ethiopian Christianity places a strong emphasis of the “revelation of a kind of eternal incarnation and a much stronger sense of the unity of Christ’s Godhead and manhood”.

“It may be important to have that vision of the unity of God and man in Christ and the way that Christ’s body is ultimately cosmic. It fills everything, and via the incarnation there is this joining [between man and God] which is in a way an eternal joining.

“There’s sense in which you might say the African vision is more monistic – insisting on the ultimate unity of all reality – than our Western vision. And you can say the same thing about the Eurasian vision of everything, it’s more monistic.

“We can say the Western legacy



Dr John Milbank is pictured at the Conference on the Future of Christian Thinking in Maynooth in April of this year. Photo: Bro. Sean Blackwell

is more about the one and the many, the mediation between them, allowing more sense if you like of individuality. But maybe we need a balance, and you could argue that the central doctrines do have a balance between the one and the many.”

Sociologically, we, the West, look strange to other civilisations, Dr Milbank says, because we divide the spiritual and the secular. While this has good aspects, such as stopping us from endowing power with an almost sacramental import, he thinks “we forget the degree to which our vision [of the sacred and the secular] is also integral”.

Christian vision

“It is ultimately a Christian vision, and I think if in the West we more recalled this integral Christian identity, we would make sense to other civilisations more, even though obviously different religious visions are involved.

“But I think if you say to Muslims and to Hindus, well actually our strange looking doctrines are articulations of monotheism, they are articulations of a certain kind of monism, they’re not denials of those things, an inter-civilisational discourse becomes more possible.”

Dr Milbank’s view turns on its head much of modern secular thought, which acts as though religion must be sidelined to foster global understanding. His contrary belief is that only by Christians “thinking big” and asking big questions can we begin to bridge the gap between different kinds of Christianity, and also different religions.

“And so while Christian thinking is in a state of crisis, conferences like the one held in Maynooth could have a great role to play in the world’s future”

There is a degree of urgency to this vision for Dr Milbank: “I have a terrible fear that there could be a kind of global race war brewing and it’s important for Christians to mediate in that, just as it’s important for Christians to mediate between urban liberals on the one hand and the people in the heartlands who are drifting to the right on the other

hand. It’s important to offer a third way in the face of these things.”

And so while Christian thinking is in a state of crisis, conferences like the one held in Maynooth could have a great role to play in the world’s future. Dr Milbank says the conference was “extremely timely” as Christian thought is at a crossroads.

“I think it’s a very good idea, I think it’s a very good venue,” Dr Milbank says. “And I think it’s extremely timely because it’s not quite clear where Christian thinking can now go. And yet we’re also at a point where some people, like Paul Kingsnorth, the novelist who has moved to Ireland, have reembraced Christianity because they feel this is our lost missing identity.

“And so I think it’s wholly timely, and I’m glad it’s happening in Ireland which has made such an important contribution to Christianity in the past, but which today seems to be losing its Christian identity and in the process perhaps losing its soul, what has made it different from everywhere else. So I’m glad it’s happening here as well.”

Such conferences, he finishes, can help ensure Christians and Christian thinkers “don’t go into our bunkers”.

Out&About

For the love of Our Lady



LOURDES: Bishop Fintan Monahan and pilgrims from the diocese of Killaloe are pictured in Lourdes during the diocesan pilgrimage, June 28.



KERRY: The community of Manor Village, Tralee, are pictured after a community Mass celebrated recently. Photo: John Cleary



DONEGAL: At the Solemn Vigil of Pentecost in St Eunan's Cathedral, Letterkenny, Bishop of Raphoe Alan McGuckian SJ presided over the Mass where Robert was baptised, Sharon, George and Amy were received into full communion with the Church, and all of them were confirmed and received the Holy Eucharist for the first time in the company of Leonie, Sochima, and Gerard, who completed their journey of Christian Initiation by receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Pictured (from left) are Leonie, Sochima, Gerard, George, Bishop Alan McGuckian, Amy, Robert and Sharon.

IN SHORT

Major climate award for Shankill parish

An initiative of Shankill Parish in Co. Dublin has won a prestigious European Churches environmental award for its work tackling climate change.

At the recent virtual meeting of the European Christian Environmental Network (ECEN), Shankill Action for a Green Earth (SAGE) was the joint winner of the Roman Juriga award for the best Christian environmental project across the entire continent.

ECEN consists of hundreds of churches from Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox traditions, and the Roman Juriga award is presented at the assembly every two years.

The judges were impressed by SAGE's

actions in a wide range of areas, promoting biodiversity, reducing their carbon footprint in church buildings, and engaging politically by holding debates with local politicians on climate change and environmental protection.

They also highlighted the way in which environmental concerns were included in the liturgy, especially around the season of creation.

The award is named in memory of Roman Juriga, one of the founding members of ECEN and a Christian leader who worked tirelessly with his church and with partners across Europe to develop new and exciting green initiatives.

Justin Kilcullen, one of the leaders of SAGE said "We thank Catherine Brennan from Eco-Congregation Ireland, who knew Roman well,

for all her mentoring and support to us over the years".

Limerick Jesuit school undertakes building project

Crescent College Comprehensive SJ has warmly welcomed approval from the Department of Education for their new building project to begin this week. This building project will incorporate a full refurbishment of the existing school and the construction of five new state-of-the-art science laboratories.

It will be rolled out on a phased basis by the approved contractor Connick, with Thompsons Architects as the design team. The work is expected to be completed by

December 2023 at a cost of €12.5 million.

Crescent College Comprehensive SJ has provided Jesuit education in their current Dooradoyle campus since 1972.

This building project will soon allow students and staff to enjoy new facilities as they embark on their second-level Jesuit education according to Principal Diarmuid Mullins, who also said that the project, "is a fantastic chance to redevelop our school campus".

He thanked the Jesuit order and its Provincial Fr Leonard Moloney "for their generosity in making a significant financial contribution to the science block project.

"This underscores the Jesuit Order's commitment to providing an environment for academic excellence in Limerick."



DUBLIN: Ballyroan parish held a graduation Mass for primary school children of Scoil Naomh Padraig and Ballyroan parish.



ROME: Rodney Leonard KCHS and Rachel Anne Kelly celebrated their wedding at the Chapel of the Choir, St Peters Basilica in Rome recently. The principal celebrant was Papal Nuncio to Ireland Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo KC*HS and concelebrated by Fr Enda Murphy KCHS.



KERRY: The parish of Ashgrove in Tralee process through the town as they celebrate the feast of Corpus Christi. Photos: John Cleary



KOREA: Irish Ambassador to the Republic of Korea Julian Clare meets Irish Columban Sr Gerardine Ryan in Mokpo, witnessing the care and vocational training for intellectually disabled children and adults at the Myongdo Welfare centres.



KERRY: Priests of Kerry diocese and Bishop of Kerry Ray Browne concelebrated Mass on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the ordination of Fr Michael Moynihan PP of Dingle. Pictured (front from left) are Fr Eamonn Mulvihill, Fr Pádraig Walsh, Fr Séamus McKenna, Bishop Browne, Fr Michael Moynihan, Fr Gearóid Walsh, Msgr Dan Riordan; (back) Fr Mark Bennett, Fr Eugene Kiely, Fr Jim Sheehy, Fr Luke Roche, Fr Ignatius McCormack and Fr Joe Begley.



DUBLIN: Fr David Harold-Barry (right) is pictured during the launch of his book *A Mission Divided* at All Hallow's campus at DCU.



LOUTH: There were celebrations in Drogheda on Father's Day as the Corcoran family from St Mary's Villas gathered to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the ordination of their brother Fr Brian Corcoran (pictured right) as a priest at St Patrick's Missionary Society, Kiltegan, in June 1972. Fr Brian returned from the US this month to his home town to celebrate and to join his older brother Fr Pat (pictured left), also a Kiltegan missionary, who celebrated his golden jubilee two years earlier.



DONEGAL: Participants in the Cathedral Parish mission in Letterkenny adore the Blessed Sacrament.



DONEGAL: Pictured are participants and members of Holy Family Mission during the parish mission run by HFM at the Cathedral Parish in Letterkenny. The mission week ran for a full week, with Eucharistic healing nights, Marian devotion evening, healing night, youth night and family fun day.



MAYO: Archbishop of Tuam Francis Duffy concelebrated Mass for the St Joseph's Young Priests society's pilgrimage to Knock. June 25.



ENGLAND: Msgr Benedict (Benny) O'Shea – of a Co. Kilkenny family – celebrated his Golden Jubilee at his Arundel and Brighton combined Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Rottingdean and St Patrick's, Woodingdean. Photo shows Msgr O'Shea with, on the left, his brother John, and to the right, his sister Marie and brother Pat.

Edited by Ruadhán Jones
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Events deadline is a week in
advance of publication



WEXFORD: Legionaries from the Deus et Patria youth group are pictured during a parish project weekend in Wexford, which took place June 24-26.



KERRY: The community of Blackrock process through the streets to mark the feast of Corpus Christi. Photo: John Cleary



DONEGAL: Fr Roland Colhoun and parishioners of Newtownstewart are pictured at the River Derg, during their fundraising walk, June 26, to raise funds for St Eugene's Church at Glenock.



KILDARE: A large crowd from Newbridge parish gathered to celebrate the feast of Corpus Christi with a procession through the town.

ANTRIM

Singing for Boys Summer 2022 takes place August 8-12 in St Dominic's Grammar School. The 5-day course is aimed at boys aged 8-16 who want to improve their singing voice and musical skills, and concludes with a performance in St Peter's Cathedral. Contact schola@downandcon-nor.org.

ARMAGH

St Malachy's Church will be open each day from 9am - 5pm for personal/private prayer, in which time the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed.

CAVAN

Legion of Mary meetings take place on Tuesdays at 8pm in the St Clare's Chapel, Cavan town, until further notice.

CLARE

The annual service of remembrance and wreath laying will take place at the World War 1 Memorial in the Clare Peace Park (opposite Glór Theatre) on Saturday July 16 at 2pm.

CORK

A new group has started in the visitor centre of the North Cathedral in Cork to provide social activities for seniors in the parish and surrounding areas. The group meet on Wednesday mornings from 11am to 1pm.

DERRY

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Sunday from 3pm to 6pm and on Tuesday from 10.30am to 7.30pm in St Eugene's cathedral.

DONEGAL

Graveyard services will take place Sunday July 10 in Old Leck Graveyard at 3pm and in New Leck Graveyard at 4pm. During the coming fortnight, the dioceses encourages parishioners to tidy up loved ones' graves and the graveyards in general.

DUBLIN

Pure in Heart community group meets every Thursday at 7pm at 23 Merrion Square North, Dublin 2. You will see a sign on the blue door saying "Pure in Heart". The evening consists of adoration, talks and social time.

GALWAY

Galway Cathedral's annual series of international summer concerts, which have taken place online for the last two years, returns this July. Six concerts will take place on Thursday evenings at 8pm. The series finishes with a special platform concert featuring up-and-coming young musicians from the Galway area. Full details: recitals.galwaycathedral.ie

KERRY

The annual Mass at Rath cemetery, Tralee will be celebrated on Wednesday July 13 at 7.30pm. This will be in place of the 6.10pm Mass in St John's Church that evening.

KILDARE

Youth 2000 summer festival takes place August 11-14 at Clongowes Wood College, Clane. The Youth 2000 Summer Festival is a four day Catholic event run by young people for young people from all across Ireland. For more information visit youth2000.ie

LONGFORD

The Longford pilgrimage to Lourdes will take place from August 14-August 19. Anyone who would like to go should contact Sr Simon on 086 240 1295.

LOUTH

The blessing of the graves in Dowdallshill, Dundalk will take place on July 17 at 3pm.

MAYO

The next Latin Mass in the Extraordinary Form will be celebrated at Our Lady's Shrine Knock, on Sunday July 11, at 5.30pm. The

Latin Mass pilgrimage to Knock will take place September 3.

MEATH

The Meath diocese pilgrimage to Knock will take place at the start of the Knock Novena Sunday August 14. The pilgrimage will be led by Bishop Tom Deenihan. The anointing of the sick takes place outside the Basilica at 2.30pm and is followed by Mass at 3pm.

MONAGHAN

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje July 13 to July 20, led by Fr Patrick McGinn, Monaghan and Marian Kane. Flying from Dublin to Mostar, 30 minutes from Medjugorje. Evening flight. €735 all-inclusive, Limited seats available. For more information and booking, contact 087 271 3260.

TYRONE

Omagh charismatic prayer group meetings have resumed in the pastoral centre on Thursday evenings with rosary at 7.40pm and prayer meeting at 8pm.

WATERFORD

The diocese of Waterford and Lismore's youth pilgrimage to Medjugorje takes place August 3-10. It costs €725 per person and is open to those aged 16-35. For more info / to book a place contact: Roisin Browne 083 3002123 / Annmarie Browne 086 4572353 / Declan Browne 083 4865213.

WESTMEATH

Prayer meeting in the Friary Church, Athlone every Monday night from 7.30 to 8.30pm.

WEXFORD

Adoration takes place on the Main Altar, Enniscorthy Cathedral on Thursdays 10.30am to 11.30am (for Vocations), Fridays 10.30 am to 5pm and Saturdays 10.30am to 11.30am



World Report

IN BRIEF

Calls for Church solidarity following Texas truck deaths

● The archbishop of San Antonio offered prayers for dozens of people found dead as well as more than a dozen survivors discovered June 27 in sweltering conditions in a semitruck.

Authorities said June 28 the death toll had risen to at least 53. Originally, first responders pulled 16 people alive from the rig, including 12 adults and four teenagers.

"We pray for the souls of the ... people who died in such a cruel, inhuman manner this evening," Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller said in a statement soon after first responders made the gruesome discovery about 6 pm local time.

Authorities said the victims were migrants. They said the truck, found on a remote back road in San Antonio, appeared to be part of a smuggling operation.

Guatemalan president demands commission cease abortion activism

● In a June 28 protocol session of the Permanent Council of the Organisation of American States in Washington, DC, Guatemalan President Alejandro Giammattei demanded that the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) "respect the sovereignty and freedom of each state" and stop being an "activist" for abortion.

President Giammattei criticised the 2021 annual report of the IACHR, which calls out Guatemala in

Chapter IV.b.

The commission noted that Guatemala joined "the 'Geneva Consensus to Promote Women's Health and the Promotion of the Family,'" which "expressly excludes abortion as an integral part of women's right to sexual and reproductive health" and affirms "there is no international obligation of the states to guarantee or facilitate its access."

Church in Germany facing resignation crisis

● For the first time in the history of Germany, less than half the German population registered as members of one of the two large churches: Catholic and Protestant.

New figures on Church membership resignations have come as a shock to many, reported the German Catholic news agency KNA.

"The figures for 2021 show the profound crisis in which we find ourselves as the Catholic Church in Germany. There is no way to sugarcoat it," said Bishop Georg Bätzing, president of the German bishops' conference.

The Catholic Church counted 21.6 million members last year, according to its statistics published June 27. That corresponds to about 26% of the population.

Malawi priest sentenced to 30 years for murder of man

● The Church will let justice take its course after the High Court in Malawi sentenced a priest to 30 years in prison for the murder of a man with albinism, said Archbishop George Desmond Tambala, president of the Malawian bishops' conference.

Five other suspects were handed life sentences. One of them was the victim's brother.

"We were shocked and we stand by the victims of that very terrible crime," Archbishop Tambala told *Catholic News Service* June 29.

"We have offered all the cooperation to see justice is done. We are shocked and we are at pains. We as a Church always preach about justice," he added.

"We have always stood by the people who are victims. We will let justice take its course. We stand by the rule of the law."

The court handed down the sentence June 27.

Pope Francis rejects resignation rumours

Pope Francis has dismissed rampant rumours that his resignation is imminent in a recent Reuters interview, saying that he's on course to visit Canada this month and that he hopes to be able to visit both Moscow and Kyiv after that.

Speaking to the Reuters reporter in the Vatican Philip Pullella, Pope Francis also denied reports that he has cancer, joking that his doctors "didn't tell me anything about it".

Speaking to Mr Pullella for 90-minutes Saturday afternoon, the Pope reiterated his condemnation of abortion following the US Supreme Court ruling late last month.

When asked whether a Catholic politician who supports the right to choose abortion can receive the Sacrament of Communion, he warned of bishops losing their "pastoral nature".

The Pope said he respected the ruling in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organisation* case, though he did not know enough to speak about the juridical aspects.

The interview, published July 4, said Francis compared abortion to "hiring a hit man".

"I ask: Is it legitimate, is it right, to eliminate a human life to resolve a problem?" Pope Francis said.

He was also asked about the debate over whether Catholic politicians who promote legal abortion should



Two members of the Congolese community in Rome present the offertory gifts to Pope Francis during Mass in St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican July 3. Photo: CNS.

be admitted to Holy Communion.

In May, US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was barred from receiving Communion in her home diocese of San Francisco by Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone because of her advocacy of abortion.

Pelosi reportedly received Holy Communion at a Mass with Pope Francis at the Vatican on June 29. It is not clear if the Pope was aware that Pelosi attended, though the Vatican issued a photo showing the two greeting each other in St Peter's Basilica.

Pope Francis told Reuters: "When the Church loses its pastoral nature, when a bishop loses his pastoral nature, it causes a political problem. That's all I can say."

On his resignation, rumours have circulated in the media that a series of events in late August, such as meetings with the world's cardinals to discuss a new Vatican constitution, a ceremony to induct new cardinals, and a visit to the Italian city of L'Aquila, could foreshadow his resignation announcement.

But Pope Francis report-

edly laughed the issue off.

"All of these coincidences made some think that the same 'liturgy' would happen," he said. "But it never entered my mind. For the moment no, for the moment, no. Really!"

The Pope did, however, repeat his position that he might resign someday if failing health made it impossible for him to run the Church – something that had been almost unthinkable before Benedict XVI.

Asked when he thought that might be, he said: "We don't know. God will say."

Ortega gov orders dissolution of Missionaries of Charity in Nicaragua

The Nicaraguan Ministry of the Interior has ordered the closure of 101 nongovernmental organisations, including the Missionaries of Charity, the congregation founded by St Teresa of Calcutta that is dedicated to serving the poorest of the poor.

The order to shut down the 101 NGOs was requested by Sandinista legislator Filiberto Rodríguez in a June 22 letter presented to the National Assembly, the country's legislature.

The document submitted by Mr Rodríguez and released by the Nicaraguan media outlet *Confidencial* is titled "The Legislative Decree Initiative for the Cancellation of the Legal Personality of Vari-

ous Associations/Foundations, requested by the National Directorate of Registration and Control of Non-Profit Organisations following due process of law."

The text, which could be debated by the National Assembly in the coming days, states that the Missionaries of Charity "has failed to comply with its obligations" according to the law that regulates nonprofit organisations, the money-laundering law, the financing of terrorism, and the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

According to the government of Daniel Ortega, the missionaries are not accredited "by the Ministry for the Family to function as a nursery-centre for

childhood development, home for girls, and home for the elderly," nor "do they have an operating permit from the Ministry of Education to provide remedial education for students" and their "financial statements reported to the Ministry of the Interior don't agree" with other documents presented for review.

The list of organisations the government has ordered to shut down also includes the Catholic Foundation for Human Development Assistance for Nicaraguans, the Spirituality Foundation for Children of Nicaragua, the My Childhood Mothers Foundation, and the Diriomito Children's Care Home Association, among others.

Nigerian church where massacre occurred to reopen by autumn

Bishop Jude Ayodeji Arogundade of Ondo, Nigeria, is resolute in the wake of tragedy. St Francis Xavier Church in Ondo, where at least 40 worshippers were slain by terrorists June 5 during Pentecost Mass, will reopen by autumn.

"We'll resume full activities as it has always been," Bishop

Arogundade told *Catholic News Service* June 28 in Washington, where he attended the International Religious Freedom Summit.

No arrests have been made in relation to the massacre. Nigeria has only a federal police system; there are no local or state police investigators.

Nigerian bishops have criticised government officials for doing nothing to stem the nation's increasing violence. Many Nigerians believe ethnic Fulani, who are predominantly Muslim, were responsible for the attack, the first in Nigeria's Christian-majority South.

Fulani extremists have killed

Christian farmers in the country's north and central sections. Bishop Arogundade said Ondo Gov. Rotimi Akeredolu has been an outspoken opponent of the extremists' plans to turn Nigeria into a Muslim caliphate, and they have been unable to negotiate with the governor.



Edited by Jason Osborne
jason@irishcatholic.ie

Prayers for 'Bonbong'



A supporter of President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr holds a statue of Mary before the leader's arrival at the inauguration at the National Museum in Manila, Philippines, June 30. Photo: CNS.

Churches and pro-life pregnancy centres attacked in US

Since the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization decision June 24, attacks on Catholic churches and pro-life pregnancy centres have been reported in West Virginia, Washington, Virginia, Louisiana, Colorado, California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Indiana.

Below are the latest recorded attacks since the decision.

St Patrick Catholic Church in Philadelphia was defaced with pro-abortion spray paint June 25.

Fr Hyacinth Cordell, OP, pastor of the church, told CNA that the graffiti, which said "Abort the Church," was

on a corner on the outside of the church. It is cleaned off, he said.

A pro-life sign at St Teresa of Avila Catholic Church in Hutchinson, Kansas, about 50 miles northwest of Wichita, was vandalised over the weekend.

The sign which shows a mother holding a baby says, "Vote Yes August 2nd" and "ValueThemBoth.com" below. The sign is encouraging people to vote yes on an amendment to the state constitution that would allow regulations on abortion.

Matt Vainer, a spokesperson for the Diocese of Wichita, said that the perpetrator

was followed by a witness who called the police. The perpetrator was arrested, he said.

The pastor of St Teresa of Avila, Fr Aaron Spexarth, placed the sign underneath a crucifix in the church, as he believed it was most appropriate to place it at Christ's feet, Mr Vainer confirmed to CNA.

All Saints Catholic Church in Portland, Oregon had its sign defaced with pro-abortion graffiti June 25.

A photo of the vandalism shows the words "If abortions aren't safe, neither are you! -XOXO Jane." The FBI is investigating, Barbara Custer, a par-

ish secretary at the church, told CNA.

A Woman's Friend Pregnancy Resource Clinic in Yuba City, California was vandalised June 27.

The clinic had one of its windows smashed by what seems to be one perpetrator according to video footage, the clinic's executive director Kristen Bird told CNA.

Video shows the perpetrator throwing three rocks at the window until it broke. Repairs will cost anywhere between \$700 and \$900. The FBI is investigating, Ms Bird said.

Central African Republic bishops fear Ukraine war fallout

Catholic bishops in the Central African Republic have warned that disrupted food and fuel supplies during the war in Ukraine are undermining the quest for peace and stability.

They said the Central African Republic was not becoming economically self-sufficient and, "like the other countries, it is undergoing convulsions from the Ukrainian crisis. Marked by our own experiences of military-political unrest, we consider the war in Ukraine intolerable

and call on the two parties in conflict, as well as their allies, to immediately stop the fighting and seek the path of dialogue for an effective peace," the bishops said in a 10-page message published after their June 20-27 plenary meeting.

The bishops said the involvement of Russian troops in neighbouring Rwanda, as well as in helping the CAR's armed forces "reconquer and pacify" national territory, had placed the country in a "delicate position at the level of interna-

tional diplomacy".

They said their government should continue "finding solutions to alleviate suffering," aided by the discernment and witness of Christians.

"War means human and material destruction, abuse and rape, the violation of human rights, property and places of worship, the instrumentalisation of religious beliefs – when one has experienced this, one cannot wish such horror on any people," the bishops said.

Vatican roundup

Pope pens new liturgy letter

● Pope Francis published a letter on the liturgy June 29, nearly one year after he issued the motu proprio *Traditionis custodes*, restricting the celebration of the Traditional Latin Mass.

In the 15-page apostolic letter, *Desiderio Desideravi*, the Pope said he wanted "to invite the whole Church to rediscover, to safeguard, and to live the truth and power of the Christian celebration".

"I want the beauty of the Christian celebration and its necessary consequences for the life of the Church not to be spoiled by a superficial and foreshortened understanding of its value or, worse yet, by its being exploited in service of some ideological vision, no matter what the hue," he said in the document, published on June 29, the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul.

The title of the letter is taken from the Latin text of Luke 22:15: *Desiderio desideravi hoc Pascha manducare vobiscum, antequam patiar* — "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."

Pope Francis said, after writing a letter to bishops to accompany *Traditionis custodes*, he wished to address all Catholics with some reflections on liturgical formation, the theological importance of the Mass, and acceptance of the liturgical documents of the Second Vatican Council.

Official Jubilee logo unveiled

● The official logo of the upcoming Jubilee due to be held in 2025 has been unveiled.

In a press conference held June 28 in the Sala Regia of the Vatican's Apostolic Palace, the Vatican revealed the official Logo for the upcoming Jubilee year.

The then-Pontifical Council for the New Evangelisation, now contained within the new Dicastery for Evangelisation, was entrusted with coordinating the Holy See's preparations for the Holy Year 2025 with the motto: "Pilgrims of Hope."

The former Council's President, Archbishop Rino Fisichella, revealed the logo and reminded that as preparations begin within the Church for the

Holy Year, their Dicastery launched a competition, open to all, for the Logo's creation.

A total of 294 entries were received from 213 cities and 48 different countries, he said, noting participants ranged in age from 6 to 83.

During the judging, the works were identified only by a number so that the author remained anonymous.

On June 11, Archbishop Fisichella submitted the three final projects to Pope Francis to select the one that struck him the most.

"After looking at the projects several times and expressing his preference, the project of Giacomo Trivisani was chosen," Archbishop Fisichella said.

Elderly called to be 'teachers of tenderness'

● The elderly can find purpose in their old age by teaching future generations about the value and importance of tenderness, Pope Francis said.

Elderly men and women often have "a special sensitivity for care, for reflection and affection" that is sorely needed in today's war-torn world, the Pope said in a video message released by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network June 30.

"We are, or we can become, teachers of tenderness. And indeed, we can!" he said. "In this world accustomed to war, we need a true revolution of tenderness."

At the start of each month, the network posts a short video of the Pope offering his specific prayer intention. For the month of July, the Pope dedicated his prayer intention to the elderly.



Letter from Rome



John L. Allen Jr

To no one's real surprise, US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi received Communion during a papal Mass yesterday marking the traditional feast of Sts Peter and Paul. Pelosi, her husband Paul, and other family members happened to be in Rome on vacation and decided to attend the Mass.

The act of receiving Communion, first reported by *Crux*, came after a meeting between Pope Francis and Pelosi earlier in the morning in which Pelosi reportedly received a papal blessing.

To be clear, Pelosi did not receive Communion directly from Pope Francis, who did not preside over the liturgy due to his ongoing knee issues, but rather restricted himself to delivering the homily. Instead, like everyone else, Pelosi took Communion from an unidentified priest assisting at the Mass, who very well may not even have known who she was.

Nevertheless, the fact that Pelosi received Communion at a papal liturgy will doubtless be seen as an indirect rebuke of Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of San Francisco, who recently banned Pelosi from Communion in the archdiocese over her support for abortion rights. Of course, Archbishop Cordileone's edict applies only to the Archdiocese of San Francisco, and does not dictate policy in the Vatican itself.

“There is a longstanding contrast between European and American Catholic sensibilities when it comes to the abortion issue”

The contrast between “banned in San Fran” yet “welcome in Rome” is destined to mark another twist in the ongoing tensions in the United States, and between the US and Rome, over how the Catholic Church should respond to members of its own flock in positions of political leadership who defy Church teaching, which is especially keen in the wake of the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision of the Supreme Court overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

Three observations suggest themselves.

First, whatever one makes of Pelosi getting Communion, it's hardly unprecedented.

For instance, during the Great Jubilee year of 2000 presided over by Pope John Paul II, the mayor of Rome was a centre-left practicing Catholic named Francesco Rutelli. He took the standard Catholic

Communion for Pelosi at the Vatican no surprise, but possibly a harbinger



Pope Francis greets US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, accompanied by her husband, Paul, before Mass on the feast of Sts Peter and Paul in St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican June 29. Photo: CNS

“Pelosi did not receive Communion directly from Pope Francis, who did not preside over the liturgy due to his ongoing knee issues”

Democrat line, which was personal opposition to abortion but unwillingness to criminalise it. Mr Rutelli attended virtually all of the important papal Masses during the Jubilee and always received Communion, sometimes from the hands of John Paul II himself.

Contrast

Second, there is a longstanding contrast between European and American Catholic sensibilities when it comes to the abortion issue. To put it simply, in America abortion remains a “live issue,” one over which both the general population and the political class remain bitterly divided.

In Europe, on the other hand, the legalisation of abortion was decided democratically long ago, and it's now considered largely a settled question. Italy, for instance, legalised abortion in 1978 and went through a tumultuous popular referendum on the subject in 1981, which ended by upholding the new law. Since then, the motto of Italian politics has been that the abortion law *non si tocca*,

meaning “it's not to be touched,” because it's perceived as representing a social consensus. That position, more or less, is shared by both left and right.

Were Italian bishops to begin denying Communion to every political leader unwilling to challenge that consensus, it's hard to know where it might stop. So far there's little indication that the US Supreme Court decision, which has energised the pro-life movement in the States, has significantly affected the European political landscape.

Leadership

Third, it's clear that Pope Francis and the figures who make up his leadership team are conceptually opposed to the idea of deploying the Eucharist as a weapon in what they perceive to be essentially political causes.

Prior to a vote by the US bishops last May to move forward on a document on the Eucharist, in which some felt the bishops might adopt language hostile to giving Communion

to politicians such as Pelosi and US President Joe Biden, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith dispatched a letter warning that such a policy could become “a source of discord rather than unity within the episcopate and the larger Church in the United States”.

“Whatever one makes of Pelosi getting Communion, it's hardly unprecedented”

Pope Francis himself has said that he's never denied Communion to anyone, during one of his airborne news conferences later in 2021. The clear thrust of messaging coming from the Vatican under Francis is against Communion bans, an impression reinforced by the bishops and cardinals Francis has elevated in the United States, all of whom take a more moderate position on the issue than Archbishop Cordileone.

What's important to note now is that the recent, apparent rift between Vatican practice and the Archdiocese of San Francisco is hardly the last time this issue is likely to emerge. The net effect of the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision is to remove the abortion debate from the judicial sphere and place it squarely in the political, especially at the state and local level.

Pressured

As a result, American bishops who heretofore have been able to sit out the Communion ban question will now be pressured to make decisions about Catholic governors, state legislators, potentially even mayors and city council members.

In theory, Pope Francis could make things simpler by issuing a decree one way or the other – either pro-choice Catholic politicians should, or should not, be denied Communion. Yet he's shown no appetite to do so, insisting that such decisions have to be made by local pastors.

As a result, the short-term prognosis probably is for heartache ahead. The one fixed point is that, should other American bishops opt to take the same stand as Archbishop Cordileone with their own local political class, they probably shouldn't expect explicit Vatican support for doing so.

Church leaders push to expand their peacekeeping role in Africa



Jonathan Luxmoore

Church representatives from French-speaking Africa have urged closer regional cooperation in Catholic peacebuilding to offset mounting economic and security challenges across the continent.

"The Church frequently speaks out against government corruption and failure to settle conflicts – but it's simply ignored," explained Stephen Hilbert, adviser for Africa and global development for the US bishops' conference.

"Meanwhile, the Church often isn't even invited to peace negotiations. Given that it's the most vibrant, trusted, balanced and non-partisan entity in Africa, this is very frustrating," he said June 27, after chairing a panel of peace-making experts from Burundi, Niger and Congo during a four-day online conference.

He said the Catholic Church in much of Africa was uniquely placed to assist peace-making, but also found its proposals routinely ignored by international organisations and Western governments, including the United States.

"Many NGOs could achieve great things with Church support, but with their secular outlook, they often don't see this," said Mr Hilbert, who spent 22 years in Africa with Catholic Relief Services.

“The US government gives a lot to the Church, but usually for concrete projects in such fields as health”

Mr Hilbert told *Catholic News Service* numerous Catholic and interfaith peace-making initiatives tended to be “small-scale and geographically limited,” adding that governments in Nigeria and elsewhere had faced accusations of “unwillingness and inaction” when it came to engaging with the Church.

“The US government gives a lot to the Church, but usually for concrete projects in such fields as health, water and sanitation. When it comes to anything political, it's concerned to avoid accusations of one-sidedness,” he added.

The June 20-24 conference, “Catholic Peacebuilding in Times of Crisis,” was attended online by around 1,000 people and addressed by 75 experts from 30 countries, including Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, the Holy See's representative to the United Nations; Archbishop



A convoy of Nigerian soldiers patrol outside the town of Ouallam, July 6. Church leaders are pushing to expand their peacekeeping role in Africa. Photo: CNS

Luis José Rueda Aparicio, president of the Colombian bishops' conference; and Cardinal Charles Bo of Yangon, Myanmar, president of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences.

It was hosted by the Catholic Peacebuilding Network, housed at Notre Dame University, in collaboration with the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, Caritas Internationalis and two dozen Catholic universities and organisations. The conference took place as problems of climate change, economic dislocation and armed rebellion looked set to be exacerbated by crippling food shortages because of the war in Ukraine.

Absence

Jesuit Fr Rigobert Minani, regional coordinator of the Ecclesial Network of the Congo Basin Forest, told the conference the Church's frequent absence from regional peace conferences in Central Africa and the Sahel region prevented it from raising key issues such as human rights violations, victim protection, justice and war reparations.

“In most conflicts, the actors aren't just armed groups, but governments themselves,” said Fr Minani, who also heads the social

apostolate of the Jesuits' Central Africa province.

“Difficulties arise where bishops' conferences don't have the same capacity to influence political and social leaders, thus creating imbalances in the Church's national and regional engagement.” He said in Congo, Burundi and Rwanda, the Church has been very active at grassroots level, but had little impact on the major state actors at a regional level.

“In most conflicts, the actors aren't just armed groups, but governments themselves”

Archbishop Djalwana Laurent Lompo of Niamey, Niger, was installed in June 2015, six months after most churches were destroyed in anti-Catholic riots. He said his own church was working through the Catholic charitable agency Caritas “to make people actors for peace at all levels”.

However, he added that social and economic activity remained impossible in areas bordering Mali and Burkina Faso, where Islamist attacks had left 1.5 million people displaced with little access to aid.

“The violence here has complicated interreligious dialogue, but also impelled us to be actors for peace, harmonising efforts and preparing hearts for avoiding future conflict,” said the archbishop.

Attacked

“We are all being attacked now by the same forces, using the same strategy, and our political authorities have seen the importance of Christian-Muslim dialogue in struggling against this scourge, especially when ignorance about our own religious faith and practices led to such violence in the past. But we still need to do more, moving from words to action in our search for peace.”

Church organisations have repeatedly demanded greater civil society involvement in tackling problems such as poverty and inequality, resource exploitation, migration, debt and biodiversity loss.

Dominican Fr Emmanuel Ntakarutimana, who directs the Burundi-based World Forum of Civil Society Networks, said the Congolese bishops' conference had worked to exchange experiences on human rights, political systems and interethnic ties with counter-

parts in other African countries, while also promoting common peace-making platforms.

However, he added that each country “understood its internal situation differently,” and he said shared projects often ended when conditions outwardly improved, leaving deeper issues unresolved.

“Church organisations have repeatedly demanded greater civil society involvement in tackling problems such as poverty and inequality”

“Some countries have experienced terrible events for decades, without having any capacity to take charge and formulate solutions,” the Dominican told the conference.

“In their mission of human and spiritual accompaniment, Churches and religious confessions, even if lacking technical means, have had to work for a healing of memories, while mediating against political manipulation and fostering civic education through advocacy and common action.”

Letters

Letter of the week

Roe vs Wade does not show US support for pro-life philosophy

Dear Editor, Before we all get carried away with the decision of the US Supreme Court in its setting aside of the Roe vs Wade judgement, let's not think that this means it shows US support for a pro-life philosophy. Regrettably, we are a long way from this. For pro-life to be authentic, it must reflect a respect for life from conception to natural death. This is the same US Supreme Court that in the last week alone, and within weeks of the latest school shooting, upheld the right of people to carry arms – and in the stated case, it was not in some

wilderness location but in New York. This is the same US Supreme Court that time and again, upholds sentences of execution. Now is not a time to shower praise in the direction of the court or of the southern US States. This is politics, plain and simple.

Many of the southern States have immediately triggered laws prohibiting abortion, with their Governors and (Republican) lawmakers pontificating about how they are protecting life. Yet these same States execute the most people, some with intellectual disabilities,

and they are the most ardent opponents of gun control – which would save thousands of lives.

I am pro-life and I for one am not fooled into thinking that the decision of the US Supreme Court is anything other than a twisted sense of respect for life. Life, all life, is sacred. It is a pity that these Supreme Court jurists, state governors, and state lawmakers are unable to understand this.

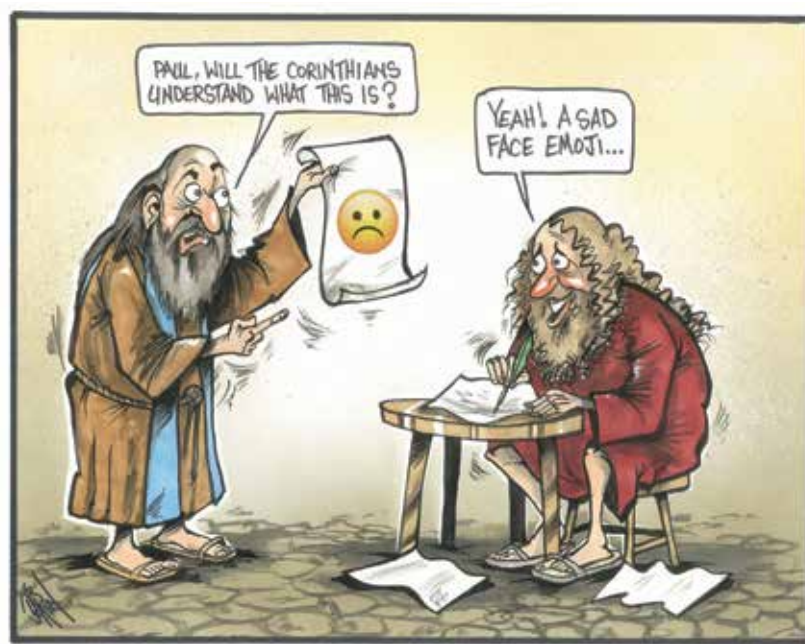
*Yours etc.,
T. Gerard Bennett
Bunbrosna, Co. Westmeath*

Every diocese should organise major Corpus Christi processions

Dear Editor, Now that Covid is over there is no reason why every diocese should not organise a major Corpus Christi procession from the cathedral each year led by the local bishop. This could include a marching band playing popular hymns. Every parish could easily organise transport to this event.

If members of all Catholic organisations (Legion of Mary, SVP, Pioneers etc) turned up plus parish councils, altar servers, parents of children who have received Holy Communion and Confirmation plus their children then this would be a great way to promote our faith and belief in the real presence.

These children in the Holy Communion outfits could be given pride of place and sprinkle flower petals before the Blessed Sacrament. I notice from Twitter that well attended Corpus Christi processions are



still taking place in Australia, USA etc. So, time for action and preparation, let us proudly fly the flag for Jesus.

*Yours etc.,
Liam de Paor
Carrickane, Co. Cavan*

Church's future lies wherever there is personal repentance

Dear Editor, Declan Sweeney [The Irish Catholic – June 16, 2022] tells your readers that Pope Francis knows that the future of Christianity lies in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

But surely the future lies in personal repentance, loving one's neighbour and carrying one cross in imitation of Christ, regardless of nationality or location. The future of the Church is guaranteed wherever there is an abundance of personal repentance. No alternative programme suffices.

*Yours etc,
John Skelly
Castleknock, Dublin 15*

And theology makes them sinful

Dear Editor, Cindy Wooden [The Irish Catholic – June 23, 2022] reports on the meeting of Pope Francis with the editors of ten Jesuit magazines. In this wide-ranging article, she refers to the insight of Pope Francis into what he sees as the refusal of some bishops to accept the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.

When referring to the Church in Germany and the synodal path, Pope Francis said: "The problem arises when the synodal path comes from the intellectual,

theological elites and is much influenced by external pressures."

Recalling the words of Martin Luther "Medicine makes people ill, mathematics makes them sad and theology makes them sinful", illustrates that this is not a new problem.

Thus, it is important that we pray that the synodal path will be guided by the Holy Spirit.

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

Josepha Madigan should not throw schools under the bus

Dear Editor, It was shameful for Josepha Madigan to publicly name and shame those four Catholic schools, claiming they were not cooperating with the department in relation to special education places, as highlighted on your front page [The Irish Catholic – June 30, 2022].

It seemed that rather than engaging in a positive, constructive way, through dialogue and support, the minister bizarrely thought it would be more beneficial to shame them publicly into providing spaces they are clearly struggling to create.

The story became even more outrageous when the schools offered details

of their recent engagements with the department. Some of the schools named already had special education classes.

The secretary general of the Catholic Primary School Management Association Seamus Mulconry hit the nail on the head when he said on your front page: "The Government would be far better advised to look at the very real challenges faced by schools opening special classes rather than subjecting some schools to trial by media."

This is exactly what was happening. An attempt to throw the schools to the mercy of the media. The tactic

is absolutely outrageous and beneath a minister in her position.

The minister needs to understand that you cannot just make wild demands and expect immediate results. There is a clear need for an increased number of special needs classes which are also accessible to students in the area. Difficult problems need creative solutions, and if the ideas you have are not or will not work, and you run out of ideas, this does not mean you start throwing people under the bus.

*Yours etc.,
John Murphy
Ballyfermot, Dublin*

facebook community

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

US Supreme Court has overturned the Roe vs Wade judgement

On the Feast of the Sacred Heart! The Sacred Heart who is surely outpouring his love for us. And a double one as it is the Feast of St John Baptist also. The first child within the womb to recognise Our Lord. – **Deirdre Nic Eanruig**

Great for the unborn baby. Pro-life. – **Jacinta Newell**

A turning point... let us pray that great good will come from this. We need to educate people on how important family life is, give us all the gift of moral courage. – **Margaret Griffin**

Nigeria massacre: Murdered Nigerians found suffering 'at foot of cross'

God rest them all and grant peace to Nigeria. – **Declan McSweeney**

Yes, no outcry for them they are all in Heaven claiming the crown they deserve RIP to them all. – **Eilish Higgins**

UK government sanctions head of Russian Orthodox Church

Kirill needs to feel the heat. He cannot expect to sit behind the new iron curtain and not be held accountable for his actions of advocating a war. Especially a war that is neither justified or needed. And when his own faithful are against it as it has plunged their country into chaos. Ireland needs to act and do the same! – **Gearóid Pyne**

At last. He has been giving moral cover to potential war crimes! – **Kevo Meehan**

'Great joy' for the Faithful as Corpus Christi processions return

We need more public witness to our Faith. Corpus Christi back on our main streets again and in every parish please. – **Margaret Griffin**

Wonderful, I miss Corpus Christi processions. – **Claire Stanton Cleary**

Sadly where Corpus Christi procession is not very well planned and organised it is an insult to our Divine Saviour. There should be annual evaluations and improvements made where necessary. – **Alan Whelan**

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

Unhelpful to snipe at coalition on non-social issues

Dear Editor, Aontú is religious Fianna Fáil. It is very unhelpful for it to snipe at the coalition on non-social issues when there is no fight to be fought and where one is trying to support and convince TDs on the merits of their views on traditional issues. Thanks.

*Yours etc.,
Colm O'Connor
Dublin 14*

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.

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, July 7, 2022

Personal Profile

Fanning the fire
of young faith

Page 32



Dealing with internet addiction



The weather this summer has left an awful lot to be desired and as a result, we may be inclined to spend more time indoors and on the internet than we would otherwise. Though a very recent innovation, the internet pervades our lives utterly these days – although the precise degree to which it penetrates your daily life depends on both your age and your inclination.

CSO statistics for 2020 show that 92% of Irish households have an internet connection, while recent data from the Pew Research Center in America showed that 77% of Americans connect to the internet on a daily basis. The ways



The internet is a very recent development and not one without its dangers, writes Jason Osborne

in which we interact with it are many and varied, with people rarely using it exactly the same way. Emailing, online banking, social networking, researching, shopping, video gaming and more are all on offer, and have become thoroughly ingrained into the fabric of our society.

Despite the degree of integration we've achieved with

this particular technology and its many appendages, such as smartphones, tablets, computers and consoles, there has been relatively little research into the effect all of this is having on our well-being, be it psychologically or otherwise. While it undoubtedly has its benefits – convenience being the primary one I can think of – to think it doesn't have

downsides is naïve.

One of the foremost among those is internet addiction which, despite not being listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) yet, has already caused many voices to express concern. While sending emails or watching a Youtube video is harmless enough, there are already people who spend so much time on the internet that its begun to interfere with their daily lives.

Technology, and the internet in particular, has caused the blurring of the line between work, education, recreation and personal life. The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated this, as work came home

with us and the bedroom became the office. As a result, it's possible for people to spend more time on the internet than ever before.

While there is no agreed upon definition for internet addiction, it's generally understood that when someone begins to find it a hindrance to daily life and functioning because it's starting to take precedence over these things, it could be becoming an addiction.

Internet addiction

While 'internet addiction' is a broad umbrella covering a range of behaviours, there are generally understood to be four main types

» Continued on Page 31

Family News



AND EVENTS

AIRBNB MAKES PARTY-BAN PERMANENT

Holiday rental company Airbnb is to make permanent its ban on parties in homes listed on its platform after it saw a significant drop in reports of unauthorised parties since the ban was put in place in August 2020.

Airbnb announced that it had seen a 44% annual drop in the rate of party reports since it put the policy in place.

The San Francisco-based company had introduced the ban during Covid lockdowns and extended it in an effort to slow the spread of Covid-19 infections.

However, the company now wants to make the ban permanent as the travel season begins in earnest.

"This is an issue where I don't know if I'd say there's a finish line," said Ben Breit, a spokesperson for the company.

He said that Airbnb will keep working to address the issue.

Airbnb will also remove the 16-person limit, which will allow larger homes listed on their platform to be booked to full occupancy.

AUSTRALIAN BEE 'VAMPIRE' SPREADS DESPITE HIVE LOCKDOWN

Over six million bees have been euthanised across Australia's east coast in an effort to eliminate a parasite which has been spreading across the region despite a hive 'lockdown'.

Six hundred hives were destroyed since the "Varroa destructor" mite was detected, with each hive containing between 10,000 and 30,000 bees, New South Wales agriculture minister Dugald Saunders said.

"It's a lot of bees," he said, adding that the number was likely to grow.

Bee ecologist Jay Iwasaki from the University of Adelaide described the Varroa mites as "a little vampire" that feeds on larval honey bees.

They can also spread some "very serious viruses" through honey bee colonies, which are not native to Australia but which are vital to the country's agriculture industry.

Australia is the only major honey-producing country where the mite is not already endemic, which prompted a lockdown of hives after it was detected at the country's border.

CAVE WOMAN ONE MILLION YEARS OLDER THAN THOUGHT

According to new research, fossilised remains belonging to some of humanity's oldest ancestors are far older than scientists originally thought, the BBC has reported.

The fossils, including one belonging to ancient cave woman Mrs Ples, were buried for thousands of years in South African caves known as the 'Cradle of Humankind'.

Modern testing methods suggest the group of early humans walked the earth between 3.4 and 3.7 million years ago.

The new timeline could reshape understandings of human evolution, as it means there are now more possible ways by which our ancestors could have evolved into the earliest humans.

Scientists have believed for years that the *Australopithecus africanus* species, whose fossils were discovered in the Sterkfontein caves near Johannesburg, had been less than 2.6 million years old.

Pope Francis and the vital role of mothers



Pope Francis is a great champion of mothers. I'm sure his latest advice brought a smile to many faces. Speaking at a Mass to mark the conclusion of the 10th World Meeting of Families, he urged mothers to stop ironing their sons' shirts and to encourage them to get married.

I don't think Pope Francis had any particular problem with mothers showing their love through small acts of kindness and service. His focus was on the role of mothers in encouraging their sons to have the courage to leave the family nest and to take on the adult commitment of marriage and family. He told young men not to "take the easy road" by returning to their mothers in times of marital difficulty but to move ahead resolutely with this "courageous gamble". He portrayed mothers in their role as supporters of their children as they make key adult decisions but never in a spirit of possessiveness saying that familial love is "not possessive, it's for freedom always".

“The Pope appreciates that mothers are leaders in their own right walking a fine line between nurturing their child while helping them to find their wings”

Pope Francis has regularly spoken passionately about the importance of mothers and their really vital role in family life and specifically in the lives of their children. It's really refreshing, in a world where a lot of the focus around mothers is on encouraging them to contribute to the paid workforce, to see Pope Francis putting such importance on the primary role of mothers. It's a role that requires strength, patience, cour-



A parent's perspective Maria Byrne

age and endurance. He says that "a life without challenge doesn't exist" and that's one reason why every child needs a mother, outlining the fact that mothers help children to "look realistically at life's problems" without "getting lost in them".

Rather than a mother being merely viewed as a cook, cleaner or taxi-driver, Pope Francis gets to the heart of what parenting is all about. The Pope appreciates that mothers are leaders in their own right walking a fine line between nurturing their child while helping them to find their wings. St Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei, often spoke about the importance of freedom and independence in relation to how he treated his own sons and daughters in Opus Dei. He compared it to a mother duck giving their little ones independence: "Watching over them discreetly so that they learn to exercise their freedom - so that, as soon as possible, they start swimming on their own." That is the role of human mothers and one that Pope Francis often compares to Mary's motherhood.

Even with the great emphasis Catholicism puts on motherhood, when it comes to daily life and practical applications, we can sometimes fall short. How often, when a mother is required to speak at a parenting conference or on family life, there's an attitude that "just being a mother" isn't enough. Women are sought out who have some sort of formal qualification or who have excelled in the work world. Even better is a mother who has studied child development and

psychology or who was a teacher, nurse, lawyer or social worker. Of course it's important to have a range of different types of speakers - education and experience in a workplace, as well as further studies, are to be lauded, but we often underestimate the on-the-job experience of nurturing, loving, teaching and guiding children



to adulthood.

Women often hide their light under a bushel and murmur that they're "only" stay-at-home mothers even when they have 20 or more years of experience of caring for their children with all that involves. Workplaces still fail to recognise running a home as any sort of experience when it comes to applying for jobs but even religious organisations and initiatives can make the same mistake. A full time nanny or childcare worker is considered employed while a mother who's at home is sometimes viewed as someone who is letting down the side. Even children may make throwaway comments like "Mammy doesn't work". If we don't impress on them the noble job mothers do, it's easy

for them to only see value in what puts money in the bank. During his address recently at The World Meeting of Families in Rome, Pope Francis spoke of the lessons that are learnt in the family, often lessons taught from the time a baby is on his mother's knee. He talked of how living in a family together with others who are different to ourselves, "we learn to be brothers and sisters". It is mothers and fathers who teach children about overcoming divisions, prejudices and narrow-mindedness and who help children "to build together something grand, something beautiful". If one parent supports a family by being in the paid workplace, the other parent contributes by taking on the heroic task of being there for their children in the home. When President Mary Robinson made her acceptance speech in 1990, she praised the women of Ireland who "instead of rocking the cradle rocked the system".

“It's time to start valuing them more for all they do for their children and for their unique contribution to a better world”

I'd like women and mothers to embrace a different approach where "rocking the cradle" isn't seen as somehow restricting their development or placing them on the fringes of society. We need to reassess our attitude to mothers and remember the words of Pope Francis when he said that "a society without mothers would be a dehumanised society, for mothers are always, even in the worst moments, witnesses of tenderness, dedication and moral strength".

It's time to start valuing them more for all they do for their children and for their unique contribution to a better world.

» Continued from Page 31



of technology or internet addiction:

- **Net compulsions:** Net compulsions refer to interactive activities online that can become harmful, such as an addiction to online shopping, gambling, trading or otherwise. This kind of behaviour can have a detrimental effect on a person's stability – financial, emotional, mental and relational.

- **Cyber-relationships:** An addiction to cyber-relationships can see a person prioritise their online relationships over their real-life, physically present family and friends. These relationships are typically formed over social media, chat rooms or gaming.

- **Gaming:** This involves video games, and can refer to an addiction to either on- or off-line gaming. China has recently taken steps to combat this, with strict new laws introduced last year to limit the amount of time those under the age of 18 can play online games.

- **Information-seeking:** With so much information readily available on the internet, some can be sucked down the rabbit hole of compulsive knowledge and data gathering. As with the other kinds of potentially compulsive behaviour above, an excessive amount of time spent trawling the internet for information can have a detrimental effect on a person's life and responsibilities.

Reasons

People become addicted to the internet for a variety of reasons, with it affecting different people differently. However, as suggested by the Duke University Personal Assistance Service, a couple of factors make internet addiction an easy pitfall to stumble into.

The accessibility of the internet is considered one of the ways in which people develop an addiction to the internet. With the marriage of the internet with omnipresent smartphone technology, it's easier than ever to be online permanently – at any time of the day or night.

Control is listed as another factor that continuously draws people in. With life often being difficult and

unpredictable, the “safe” haven of the internet provides a reason for people to keep going online.

Excitement is suggested as a final ingredient in this potent cocktail, with the internet affording many easy “highs” today. Whereas daily, routine “offline” life can seem bland and drab by comparison, the internet – and social media in particular – is full of bright colours, notifications. And stimulation that often result in dopamine release, which results in a sense of pleasure as part of the brain's reward system.

Effects addiction

While research is still in its infancy on this issue, preliminary studies have shown those deemed as having an addiction to the internet have much more difficulty managing daily life, be it at home, school or the office. The ability to socialise is often effected by an internet addiction, and is associated with higher levels of depression and anxiety (although whether it's a cause or a consequence of internet addiction hasn't yet been established).

Treatment

There's no one way to treat this range of behaviours, but the goal should be to create boundaries around internet usage rather than cutting it out entirely. If there is a particular game,

app or site that is causing deeper problems though, it can be best to cut that out entirely.

So how does one at least start to take control of an over-dependence on the internet? There are a few methods:

- **Track internet usage:** Start keeping a record of how much time you spend on the internet, in whatever form your usage takes. Browsing, emailing, shopping and whatever else you do should be logged. The final result might be a shock, but can provide an impulse to fritter away less time online.

- **Note 'triggers':** Do you retreat to the internet when bored? Depressed? As with above, try to keep track of how you're feeling when you overuse the internet. Identifying your triggers can help you to put safeguards in place.

- **Accountability:** Ask a trusted friend or family member to become something of an ‘accountability partner’, so that if they notice you're compulsively using the internet, they can call you back into the land of the living.

- **Keep busy:** When you have free time, or are granted a slot that doesn't necessitate internet usage, do something that keeps you occupied. A bike ride, hiking, running, playing sports and other kinds of physical activity are particularly well suited to focusing your mind in the moment and taking you offline.

- **Take breaks:** Implement a new plan of taking breaks as you use the internet. If you're engaged online for some reason or other for 45 minutes, try taking a 15 minute break if possible.

While internet addiction is a modern problem and isn't fully understood yet, healthy boundaries placed around our use of it can help us to address it already.

Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



It's good to have one-on-one time with the kids. In a family where four active kids so often compete to be heard, suddenly one child has an adult all to themselves. Even if it's just a drive to the shop, or a walk with the dogs, it's something the kids always relish. In our family, we call it “special time”.

During “special time”, the child can suddenly choose what they want to talk about, and maybe what to do, with no fractious negotiation with their siblings required. They feel very looked after and the atmosphere becomes strangely calm. It's nice for me too, to be able to simply hang out with one kid, and to really reconnect with one child at a time. It makes for a distinct change of pace from the constant ruckus and mental multitasking involved in living in a household with a wife, four kids, two dogs, two cats and a mother-in-law.

This special time leads to the strangest phenomenon: uninterrupted conversations. These that can go off on any tangent. It means you get to hear their jokes, their stories, their worries and their joys. Over time, everything comes out and there is a new connection with the child, and a deeper knowledge about their life.

Only having one little person on your hands means you get more into their rhythm, and you can do what they desire, instead of finding compromises, or having your attention shunted away by the latest accident, argument or interjection.

Special time can be beneficially snatched for a few

minutes at a time, but proper special time involves a night away with a kid, perhaps camping, or going to my dad's, or the boat. I recently took my seven-year-old away to my father's for the night. Along with our Ukrainian guest, there were three attentive adults in the house, all at her beck and call. This is pretty much an inversion of the typical adult to child ratios that pertain in our house.

She relished the chats and the attention, the stories read to her, the treats, and being allowed to stay up late for a movie. Yet, while we had lots of fun, from a seven-year-old's perspective, we're never going to be quite as much fun as actual kids.

After breakfast the next morning she announced frankly: “I want to go home. There aren't enough kids here. Actually, there aren't any kids here!”

She'd had a wonderful time, but she'd also plainly had quite enough special time for now. She missed her brothers and sisters and her pets. She was missing all the chaos and the fun of home.

Then, she reflected a little more on her statement and promptly announced to the three of us, “Well, actually, everyone is someone's kid, so you are kids. But you are old kids.”

Well, this kid is old enough to drive, so I drove the young kid home, as ordered. As soon as we arrived, she leapt out of the car and melted again into the undergrowth, to find the happy melee of animals and children which inhabit our overgrown garden.



Fanning the fire of young faith

Personal Profile



Liam Fitzpatrick

Stepping off the plane at Dublin Airport and making his way to Shannon, Fr Francis Kochuveetil was nervous. He'd lived in India all his life, giving Mass 2-3 times a day, and heard horror stories about declining attendance and vigour in European churches.

“Fr Kochuveetil is one of many international priests that have come to Ireland in recent years to fill the ranks of declining Irish-born priests”

What he saw in Shannon, however, shocked him.

“I still remember the Sunday I celebrated [my first] Mass, and all the people welcomed me and they gifted me a Clare jersey and they said ‘Oh Francis, you are now a Clare man!’”

Fr Kochuveetil is one of many international priests that have come to Ireland in recent years to fill the ranks of declining Irish-born



priests. In his time, he's noticed that although he thinks the Church can still do more to bring young people in, the community of Catholic faith and love in Ireland is extremely strong.

Fr Kochuveetil grew up in Kerala, located on India's southern coast. Though they represent a small minority (between 1-2%) of the population, 20 million Catholics live in India, mostly in the south and solidly dwarfing the Irish Catholic population at around 3.7 million.

He belongs to the Missionary Fathers of Incarnation, a religious order based in India's Cochin Diocese. Fr Kochuveetil did most of his missionary work in Northern India, where the Catholic population is virtually non-existent.

“In the North, the people actually need the different kind of help in education, medical and social assistance,” he said. “It's really challenging; that area.”

Fr Kochuveetil remarks that even though it was “his wish” to be a missionary in Northern India, he believes that he was meant to end up in Ireland.

“My superiors actually, they sent me here to Ireland,” he said. “I believe that it's the plan of God.”

Culture shock

Travelling from India, Fr Kochuveetil experienced some culture shock, but noted that the warmth and accepting nature of his Irish community made him feel very comfortable in an unfamiliar place.

“The first time [I came], the food, the weather, the culture... Everything was quite new to me,” Fr Kochuveetil said. “The people in Shannon helped me a lot. They supported me a lot.”

He, like many international priests, had heard from friends working in other European countries that membership in religious communities was diminishing faster and faster.

“Before I came to Ireland, I had in mind that in Europe the Faith was kind of declining. [I imagined that] the people, they didn't go to church at all, the churches were closing...”

But Fr Kochuveetil has not experienced that here. In fact, he says he delivers about two Masses each weekday, and anywhere from five to seven Masses on Sunday – something that gives him a lot of “pastoral satisfaction”.

“Fr Kochuveetil believes that the best way to engage young people is to build their connection with Jesus first and foremost”

“I'm really enjoying it here,” Fr Kochuveetil said. “I'm very happy here.”

Though he might be pastorally satisfied, he thinks there is much more work to be done in the Church. He believes in the power of the synodal process to bring ordinary people into the conversation about Church conduct.

“People... share whatever they have in their minds here very openly,” he said. “It's not the decision of some bishops or the Pope or something, but this actually comes from the roots, from the grass level.”

Fr Kochuveetil believes that the best way to engage young people is to build their connection with Jesus first and foremost. “If you really want to bring a change to the Church, we need the people who have a kind of personal encounter with Jesus,” he said. “Otherwise, we cannot bring people into the Church. We need some living witnesses in our Church.”

“We should have Jesus in our heart,” Fr Kochuveetil recommends. “Then, the young people will come to us and we can do great things with them.”

He spoke about the impact building a “network” of faith can have on young people's acceptance of Catholicism.

“We may have some prayer time, but it's not a kind of prayer in the church, a kind of kneeling down... it's not that kind of prayer,” he advised. “Mix it with songs, or fun and games, you know, it's all mixed. Then the college students gather, they get a kind of happiness in those groups.”

That approach has been successful. At a morning Mass last Thursday, Fr Kochuveetil recalled “seven young Indian couples in the church, with their babies and all”.

“All the Irish people in my parish, they would all make the comment ‘Oh Francis, it's because of you that a good number of young people, young couples are coming to the church now!’ Actually, I didn't do anything...” he laughed.

Even with his youth-focused approach to community development, Fr Kochuveetil believes that the “fire” inside elders can be used to light the flames of faith inside young people.

“The older people in the Church, when I see their faith and their prayer and their commitment... I can say that I'm actually learning so many things from them because of their faith and their behaviour in the church,” he said. “They are ready to do anything for the Church without expecting anything in return.”

“There is fire, fire in everyone's heart. The elderly people, I can see very evidently that fire. But the young people, the fire is still there in their heart... It may be in a dormant stage, the fire in the young people, but still that fire is there. We need to ignite; we need to fan it.”

Do you know someone who we should profile? Send an email to ruadhan@irishcatholic.ie



Children's Corner

Chai Brady

A clever consideration of capillary action

Water can certainly move in mysterious ways. It is paramount to life on earth and humans would certainly not

be able to survive without it considering about 60% of our bodies are made up of the liquid! There are hundreds of experiments examining the miracle that is water and how it interacts with our bodies but also the world and how it has formed the planet over millions of years.

Why not conduct your own experiment to examine one of the interesting characteristics of water? The aim will be to get water from one cup to make its way upwards and back down into a second empty cup with the help of kitchen roll and an interesting scientific process.

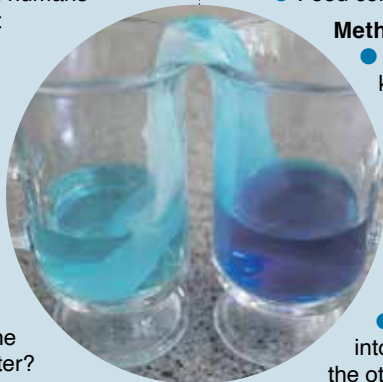
Apparatus:

- A glass of water

- An empty glass
- Some kitchen roll
- Food colouring

Method:

- Twist a couple of pieces of kitchen roll together until it forms something that looks a little like a piece of rope, this will be the ‘wick’ that will absorb and transfer the water (a bit like the wick on a candle transferring the wax to the flame).
 - Put your food colouring into the glass with water in it and mix.
 - Place one end of the kitchen roll into the glass filled with water and the other into the empty glass.
 - Watch what happens (this experiment takes a little bit of patience).
- Your kitchen roll rope (or wick) starts getting wet, after a few minutes you will notice that the empty glass is starting to fill with water, it keeps filling until there is an even amount of water in



each glass, how does this happen? This action will be easier to see as the food colouring will make the path of the water obvious.

This process is called ‘capillary action’, the water uses this process to move along the tiny gaps in the fibre of the kitchen roll. It occurs due to the adhesive force between the water and the kitchen roll being stronger than the cohesive forces inside the water itself. This process can also be seen in plants where moisture travels from the roots to the rest of the plant.

How does capillary action work in the real world? A concrete example can be seen in plants and trees which couldn't thrive without capillary action. Plants put down roots into the soil which are capable of carrying water from the soil up into the plant. Water, which contains dissolved nutrients, gets inside the roots and starts climbing up the plant tissue. Capillary action helps bring water up into the roots.

Capillary action can be seen everywhere and is a very interesting phenomenon that certainly requires further investigation!



TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



A sober reflection on a time no-one wants to celebrate

Last week saw the 100th anniversary of the start of Ireland's Civil War. It's not something most of us would want to celebrate, but it's appropriate to mark or commemorate it – it was a significant event that we can still learn from, and an event that, unbelievably, still influences our politics today.

It's a long time since I read a book on the Civil War, so I learned a lot and was reminded of a lot, on **Morning Ireland** (RTÉ Radio One, Tuesday). I was particularly intrigued by the peace-making efforts that ultimately failed, but at least some people were trying. Others resorted too quickly to violence, a legacy of the War of Independence. Maybe the surprising thing is that we have such a relatively stable democracy (for all its faults!) and achieved it so relatively quickly. On that programme we heard from Shane McElhatton who was given the job of being editor of RTÉ's coverage of the decade of centenaries. His conversation with historians Eve Morrison and John Dorney was informative and fascinating. It was disturbing to hear of 2,000 lives lost, the equivalent of €3 billion in damage, the divisions and splits, even among those republicans who took over the Four Courts. The deaths and divisions involved so many heartbreaking personal stories, but this was for



Dublin's Four Courts, scene of the first shots in the Civil War.

another type of programme – I hope we'll hear more along these lines.

Global conflicts

There was resonance for current global conflicts – war was not inevitable, but there was a 'terrifying momentum' building up to it, with a hardening of positions, failures of diplomacy and provocative violence, like the assassination of Sir Henry Wilson in London. I'd like to have heard to what extent the religious faith of the participants influenced their actions and choices. I suspect ideology trumped faith in many cases. Maybe we'll get a book about that too.

Some peripheral faith elements surfaced when

the Civil War was discussed soon after on **The Pat Kenny Show** (Newstalk). This time the focus was on Cathal Brugha, killed like Harry Boland by the Free State side (as Michael Collins was by the Republicans). A businessman he had founded Lalor's religious supplies company. He sought spiritual advice before his death in relation to his intention not to surrender. Whatever the advice, he did refuse to surrender and apparently gained some 'inner peace' around his defence of the Republic. Perhaps seeking a 'deliberate martyrdom' (contradiction in terms?) he thought his death would be worthwhile if it brought an end to the war, but it didn't. Biographer

Daithí Ó Coráin described him as "the king zealot" in a "movement of zealots".

I'm more than wary of using funerals for political purposes – his widow Caitlín used his as a weapon to attack the Free State government. While there were tributes from all sides, there was significance in who attended (e.g. Harry Boland) and who didn't (Éamon de Valera).

Back in the present, **The Church Universal** (EWTN, Friday) featured a thought-provoking interview with Michael Wee, member of the Pontifical Academy for Life, and researcher with the Anscombe Bioethical Centre, which dealt with ethical questions raised by medical advances. He

PICK OF THE WEEK

SUNDAY

BBC Radio 4 Sunday July 10, 7am

Detailed look at some current religious and ethical topics.

EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND

Channel 4 Sunday July 10, 7.30am

Debra's hippy sister shows up unexpectedly and announces that she's decided to become a nun

MASS FROM KNOCK

EWTN Sunday July 10, 3pm

Live from Knock – Mass from the pilgrimage site and national shrine known worldwide for the apparitions in 1879.

was young, thoughtful and good-humoured – always a help when dealing with such issues.

The questions and answers he dealt with were different from those of the scientists – asking if various procedures were compatible with human dignity, respectful of all parties involved and if there might be unwanted effects.

He didn't want the Church to be always seen as condemning things, and favoured 'affirmative orthodoxy' that "emphasises the yes". Staying true to Catholic doctrine was "non-negotiable", but in proposing the relevant principles it was important to use "the language of natural reason".

In the West, media debates (e.g. about euthanasia or assisted suicide) were usually framed by people

who were not of a Catholic viewpoint (to put it mildly!) but who often acted with the best of intentions – genuinely wanting to reduce suffering in end-of-life care – and so, the elusive common ground, so hard to find on such controversial issues!

On a related matter, while their web reporting was reasonable, I thought RTÉ's TV news coverage of Saturday's 'Rally for Life' in Dublin was mean-spirited. On both **Six One** and **Nine News** that evening they gave it all of 15 seconds, and added, on the earlier of these, 20 seconds about President Joe Biden's concerns about access to abortion after the reversal of *Roe vs Wade*. Dismal.

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Film

Aubrey Malone



Sequel to much-loved classic hits the screen

Nobody expected *The Railway Children* to capture the public imagination the way it did in 1970. Films about displaced children in wartime usually go down well (especially if they're tearjerkers, as this was) but its appeal went off-the-scale. People were still talking about it half a century later.

It makes you wonder why they took so long to make a sequel. *The Railway Children Return* (G) is another opportunity to traipse down Memory Lane and renew our acquaintance with members of the original cast and their offspring.

Directed by Morgan Matthews, it brings us back to the world of tooting trains, pastoral countrysides and winsome

children operating somewhere between excitement and fear as they teeter on the cusp of change.

Jenny Agutter reprises her role of Bobbie Waterbury. When I saw her in the original, I thought she was going to be a major star. That didn't happen, though recent years have given her a profile courtesy of her appearance in that other 'retro' offering, *Call the Midwife*.

In *The Railway Children* a family had to move from their London home to a house near a railway station in Yorkshire after their father was (wrongly) accused of spying. The sequel features a new generation of children evacuated to a Yorkshire village during World War II.



A trip down memory lane.

Meeting them at the station are Agutter with her daughter and grandson. The children later discover an injured American soldier hiding in the railway yard. He becomes the spine

of the story.

Will this film enrapture people as the original did or have we lost our capacity to be held in thrall by the exploits of a slew of Enid Blyton-style

children becoming embroiled in adolescent exploits? Who knows, but the time seems right to re-heat the soufflé.

Other films currently on release will hardly have the pulling power of Mr Matthews' valentine to a bygone era, but a season of Ukrainian films running at the Irish Film Institute until July 27 should intrigue. Details are available from chynes@irishfilm.ie

Brian and Charles (PG) is an eccentric story about a man who builds a robot to try to deal with his loneliness – as you would. It's reminiscent of Robin Williams' *Bicentennial Man*.

It Snows in Benidorm (PG) has a recently retired man

from Manchester (Timothy Spall) travelling to a holiday resort to visit his brother only to find he's disappeared.

Mrs Harris Goes to Paris (PG) is another peripatetic tale, this time about a cleaning lady from the 1950s (Lesley Manville) who falls in love with a dress and travels to the headquarters of its maker to procure one for herself. Before she knows where she is she's hobnobbing with the top brass at Dior plc. It's the kind of thing that suits Manville down to the ground. She's been brilliant in so many of Mike Leigh's similarly quirky parables.

Rumble (G) is an animated film about, you've guessed it, monster wrestling. We're in the silly season all right.

The Good Samaritan saw, felt compassion and acted

On the road to Jerusalem Jesus taught the way of discipleship. The spiritual life has been compared to a tripod supported on the legs of prayer, study of our religion and practical action. Today's Gospel, the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 15: 10-37), is about love in action.

On the Sundays in Ordinary Time, the first reading is chosen for its connection with the Gospel, and it sometimes alerts one to something in the Gospel that might otherwise be overlooked. Today's passage from Deuteronomy reminds us that the great commandment of loving God with all our heart and mind is "not beyond your strength or beyond your reach." As St John put it, how can we say that we love God whom we have never seen if we do not love the people that we do see? Charity begins at home.

“Compassion literally means feeling-with, responding to the pain of the other person”

Love is a word that is very often used but is seldom understood. The purpose of religious laws is to guide us towards total love of God and love of people. The parable of the Good Samaritan brings out the practical nature of authentic charity. There are three steps in his response to the plight of the man dumped in the ditch. He saw with his eyes: his heart opened up in compassion: and he acted with his hands.

The first step in love is to see people, to be aware of them and attentive. Our eyes open the shutters of our aloofness when we take notice of people. Being attentive we hear them knocking on our doors, seeking entry into our lives. But so often we are experts at ignoring people and keeping them out. Certain people are barred because of prejudice or discrimination. Or we shrink from the demands on our time so we are too busy to attend to their knock. We might even shelter behind a rule.

The second step is to answer the knock and let the person in. The Good Samaritan was moved with compassion for the injured traveller.

The Sunday Gospel

Fr Silvester O'Flynn OFM Cap.



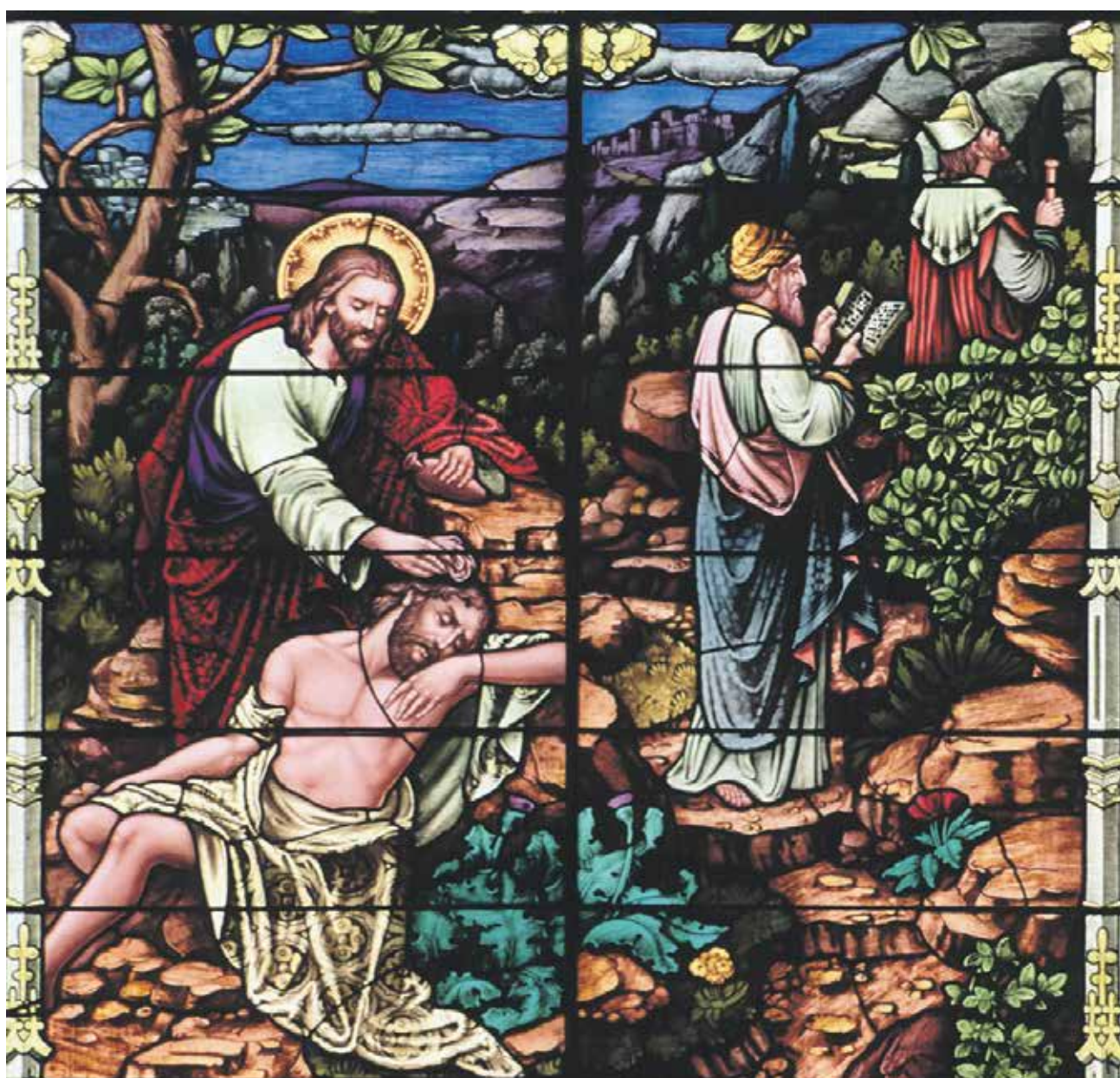
Compassion is resident in the heart, the home of feeling. Compassion literally means feeling-with, responding to the pain of the other person. When others knock at the door, compassion lets them in and is willing to reach out to them, whether it is in sharing tears in their sorrow, or celebrating with their joy or giving to their emptiness.

Deep attentiveness to others will enable us to be sensitive not only to what they say, but more importantly, to what they need to say but are unable. This is typical of victims of abuse. Just as Jesus not only heard the question, 'Who is my neighbour?' but he was also sensitive to the restricted mind behind the question. So, instead of a straightforward answer to the question, he told a story which gently invited the man to find the answer in himself.

The third step in charity is to translate feeling into practical action. The man who asked the question was an expert in Jewish law. Jesus dropped a bombshell in choosing a Samaritan, a despised, half-pagan outsider, as the one who fulfilled God's law of love more than the priest and Levite, the churchy people of that time. In their defence one might suggest that they had a good excuse because any contact with blood would have barred them from working in the temple until they completed a purification. It is amazing how many excuses we can find to avoid helping somebody in need. But really, there is no excuse to justify failing to assist somebody in a case of life or death. The two churchy men were guided by harsh legalism to pass by on the other side.

Compassion

But when the Samaritan came to the scene, he was moved with compassion at what he saw. His hands sprang into practical action. He bandaged the wounds, pouring oil and wine on them, lifted the poor victim on to his own mount, carried him to an inn, put his hand into his pocket to pay for the wounded victim's keep, and promised to come back



A stained-glass window at Sacred Heart Church in Freeport, Minnesota in the US depicts the Good Samaritan. Photo: CNS.

to pay any extra expense. Now, Mr Questioner, which of the three proved himself to be a neighbour?

Going back to the first reading, God's law is not beyond your strength or beyond your reach...not up there in heaven or beyond the seas, but the Word is very near to you.

“When we live out in a spirituality of drawing nearer to others and seeking their welfare, our hearts are opened wide to the Lord's greatest and most beautiful gifts”

Pope Francis described the nightmare scene in his fear of a Church "remaining shut up within structures which give a false sense of security, within rules which make us harsh judges, within habits which make us feel safe, while at our door are people who are starving and Jesus does not tire of

saying to us: 'Give them something to eat'." It was the churchy people who passed by on the other side. Later, it was they who plotted the death of Jesus. Some people are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good!

Spirituality

In contrast to his nightmare, Pope Francis wrote: "When we live out in a spirituality of drawing nearer to others and seeking their welfare, our hearts are opened wide to the Lord's greatest and most beautiful gifts. Whenever we encounter another person in love, we learn something new about God. Whenever our eyes are opened to acknowledge the other, we grow in the light of faith and knowledge of God. If we want to advance in the spiritual life, we must constantly be missionaries" (*The Joy of the Gospel*, 272).

As St Augustine said, there are many in the Church who are not in the Kingdom, and many in the Kingdom who are not in the Church.

Prayer

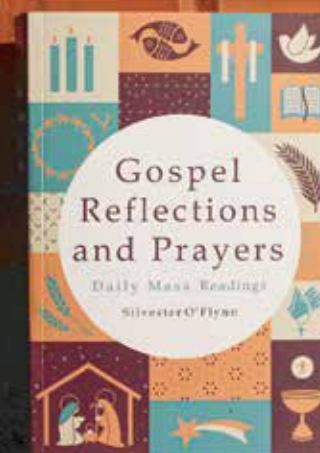
O God of love and compassion, open our eyes to make us aware of others and their needs.

Enkindle our hearts so that we are moved with warm compassion towards all who need us.

Bless our hands that they will bring help to those in need.

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Our fellow believers

– friends not foes

Denominational identity in me runs deep. Born, baptised, and raised a Roman Catholic, Roman Catholicism is my second nature, like a brand on my skin. I have no regrets about the congenital grip this has on me, even though now I think of it more as a foundation than as an endpoint in my faith journey.

“Several years ago, I met with a group of Divinity students at Yale University”

The Roman Catholicism in which I was raised inserted me into the mystery of Christ – Jesus, the Church, the Sacraments, the Sermon on the Mount. For this, I couldn't be more grateful. It also taught me to be slow in judging anyone. However, it also taught me (with some allowances for Protestants) that basically only Roman Catholics would go to heaven, that the Roman Catholic Eucharist is the only one that yields the full “real presence”, and that Roman Catholicism is the only fully authentic way of being Christian. Moreover, non-Christians (those not baptised) could not go to heaven, except by grave exception. Only later did I learn that a number of other Christian denominations and world religions returned the favour and saw Roman Catholicism as deviant.

Things have changed for me and for many others. I am still unwaveringly a Roman Catholic, but now I am living out my faith and my Roman Catholicism in communion



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

with Anglicans, Episcopalians, Protestants, Evangelicals, Jewish believers, and Muslims, all of whom are now cherished faith companions for me. At this stage of my life I appreciate very deeply the truth (that Ephesians affirms) that ultimately there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God who is Father of all, especially as I come more and more to appreciate that all of us who share this one God also share the same heartaches.

Yale University

Several years ago, I met with a group of Divinity students at Yale University. The students came from a variety of Christian backgrounds and denominations, but shared a common goal; all were training for some kind of ministry, lay or ordained, in their particular denomination. It was an open discussion where they asked me questions. Two questions domi-

nated the discussion. The first was a practical one, “How do you get a job in the Church?”

“Can I be at one and the same time a Protestant Evangelical Roman Catholic if I value aspects of all three faith traditions?”

The second pertained to our topic. A number of the students asked this question, “Can I belong to more than one denomination at the same time? Can I be an Evangelical and Roman Catholic at the same time? Can I be at one and the same time a Protestant Evangelical Roman Catholic if I value aspects of all three faith traditions?”

I was without hard answers and their questions left me with my own questions which I am

encountering daily in the school where I teach. The Oblate School of Theology where I teach has a PhD programme in spirituality that draws students from a variety of Christian denominations. These students are together in the same classes, the same dining halls, and the same social circles for the years they are studying here, all within a Roman Catholic institution. Very quickly, in months rather than years, as they study, pray, socialise, and share with each other their common ideals and struggles, denominational issues basically disappear. Nobody quite cares what denomination anyone else belongs to anymore. Not that they make light of it and that there is some generic melting down of the various denominational identities. That hasn't been happening. The opposite – in the ten years we have had this programme, not a single student has converted to another denomination.

Other denominations

However, their view of other denominations and of their own denomination has changed; in essence, it has been enlarged. There is a universal respect for each

other's denominations, and more than that. As these students focus on spirituality, they find that this can take them to a place where each can be affectively supportive of other denominations, even while more deeply valuing his or her own.

The deep lesson is this: there is a fellowship and an intimacy in faith that we can have with each other, and an affective support we can give each other that lies beyond our denominational differences. By studying together and sharing a common faith (one that lies beyond denominational differences) we are realising that what is common to us is infinitely greater (and more important) than what separates us. We are also realising that we all have the same heartaches.

Moreover, this isn't just a rarefied experience happening in some divinity schools. More and more, this is becoming the common Christian experience.

So why the continued suspicion of each other? Why are we defending more our own denominational specificity than proactively moving towards embracing each other in a common faith, especially since this can be done without threatening our own denominations and separate ecclesiologies?

The invitation here is not to move towards an uncritical syncretism that blinds itself to genuine denominational differences, but rather to begin more and more to embrace all of our brothers and sisters in the faith, and not just our own kind.

“Not that they make light of it and that there is some generic melting down of the various denominational identities”



BookReviews

Peter Costello



Recent books in brief

Dear England: Finding Hope, Taking Heart and Changing the World

by Stephen Cottrell
(Hodder Faith, €11.50/£9.99)

This little book, by the Anglican Archbishop of York, might provide an object lesson to some Irish Catholic bishops. It is basically a letter answering a query to him by a complete stranger: 'What made you become a priest?'

He certainly answers this in a very straightforward way the reasons why for him and so many others, Christianity or perhaps just the figure and person of Christ, is still very relevant, very much the answer to the fears and needs so many have in these often desolating days.

Of course he writes in a British setting, which is very different to what we have in Ireland and getting more different every day, as the long accepted conventions of British society seem to be withering away in a climate of crude opportunism.

But the lesson from the Irish clerical leaders is different. It is hard to imagine many of them opening their hearts in this way. Over the years I met Archbishop-emeritus Diarmuid Martin many times, but found him a difficult man to make a personal contact with; he seemed very remote.

Yet after his retirement he made an extraordinary little documentary with RTÉ about his Dublin working class childhood. This was deeply personal and revealing, and altogether admirable. Where was this inner man hiding all these years, one asks. If Stephen Cottrell can find the words and the inner spirit and freedom to express himself as a real person to explain his vocation, surely the bishops of Ireland can too. Reading this book might help them understand what might work for them too.

Willie Doyle SJ: 'Much in the Presence of God'

by Patrick Corkery SJ
(A Messenger Booklet / Messenger Publications, €4.95/£4.50)

To earlier generations after the Great War, 'Father Willie' was an uncanonised saint. But with changing times and attitudes all that changed.

He seems to be little mentioned these days, and in some way he has been overshadowed by Blessed John Sullivan. Patrick Corkery recognises this change, but he has written this little booklet (very much like the old CTS pamphlets) to give a more realistic image of the man, who he reminds his readers was "an arch-prankster, both loved and loving".

He develops an image of Willie Doyle as "a complex and moving figure for our time". Some see Willie Doyle as on the path to sainthood. Fr Corkery will give a younger generation a sense of why this might be so.

Called into Light: Meditations with Bishop Richard Challoner for the Christian Year

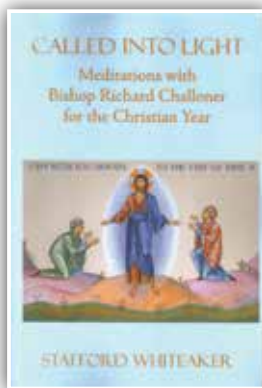
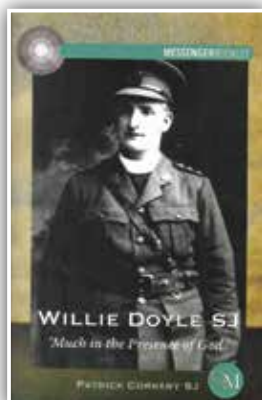
Stafford Whiteaker
(Gracewing, €29.00/£25.00)

The other week visiting a friend's house she showed me a family heirloom the leather binding of which had been professionally repaired. It was an early 19th century copy of Bishop Challoner's great book about the English Martyrs.

Did I know anything about the author? I said I knew a little, and filled out the historical relevance of his one famous edition of the Douai-Rheims Bible for my friend.

The book under review here was inspired by another book of Challoner's, a volume of meditations for the course of the Christian year. Let there be no confusion, this volume is not a text by Challoner, but a new book of meditations inspired by the spirit of the original work.

Some 600 pages long, it looks formidable. But of course you are only meant to read it a day at a time. The outlook is very traditional (though I can see it dismaying many others too, as perhaps outdated). It is worth remembering that Bishop Challoner lived in an earlier conflicted era for the Church in Britain.



Journeys through the lands that Jesus walked

An Irish Pilgrimage Guide to the Holy Land

by Michael Kelly
(Columba Books, €16.99/£14.99)

Peter Costello

Michael has led some dozen pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and he is well aware of what information pilgrims would like to have, and what information they really need. The usual range of guide books are these days very internationalised and provide little that is really useful to the religious traveller or tourist.

This book rightly contains sensible advice on many aspects of travel in the Middle East. But the focus is on places

of pilgrimage rather than the beaches of Tel-Aviv. It begins with an essay on the historical Jesus which reminds readers of essential facts and beliefs relating to the Christian faith.

Travelogue

The travelogue falls into four parts with the emphasis on Christian sites and shrines in Galilee, in the desert, around Bethlehem, and in Jerusalem, some 41 locations in all. If a pilgrim wishes to explore more than those, they would be as well to emigrate to the Holy Land, which is indeed what many devout Christians have done since the first century.

But Christianity in the Holy Land is essentially the faith

of a people whose ancestors have lived there before the Romans came. Alas today many of local Christians are leaving the country; more of their nation live abroad than at home today.

“Christianity in the Holy Land is essentially the faith of a people whose ancestors have lived there before the Romans came”

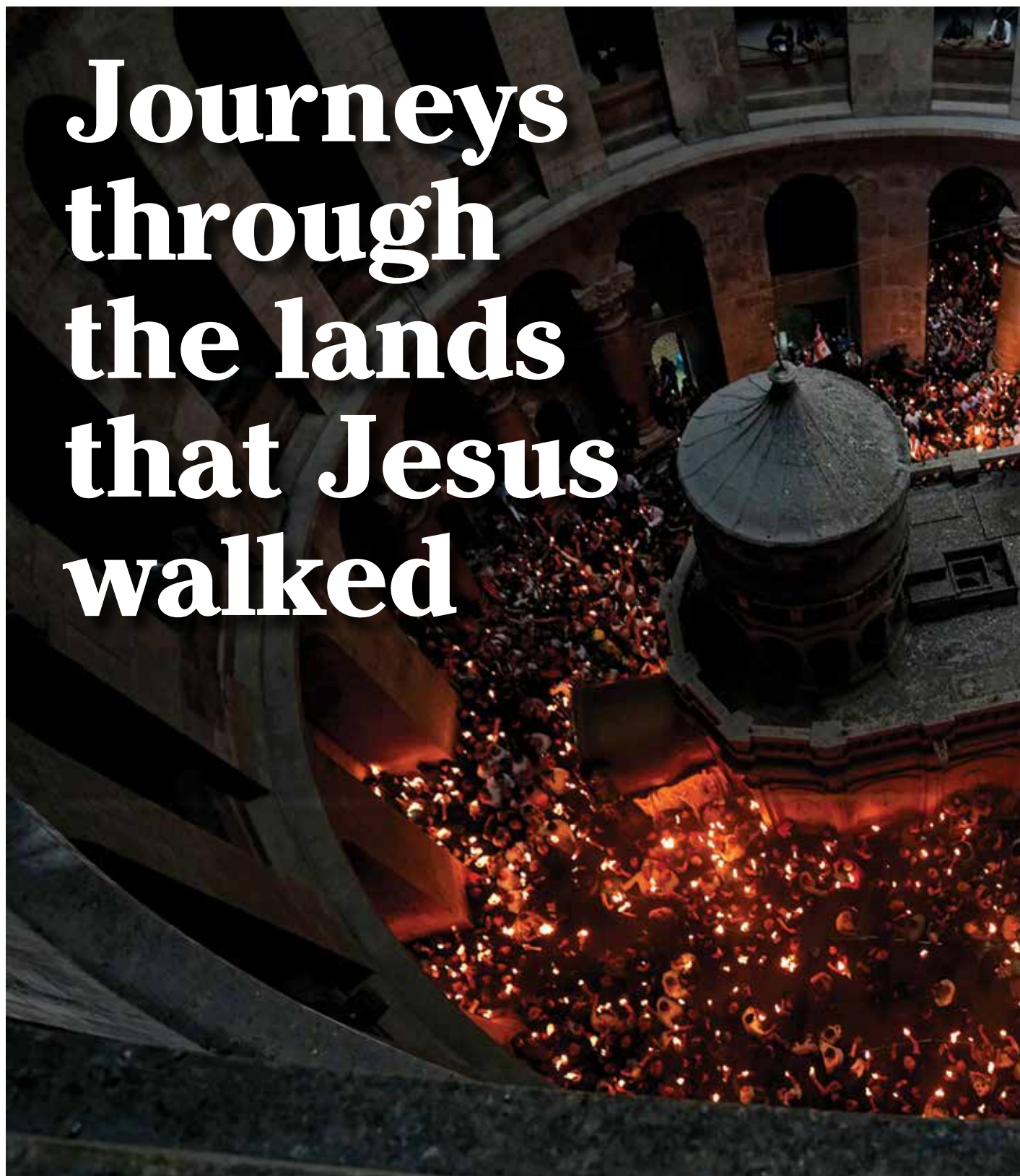
Michael Kelly pays tribute to the books of Fr Murphy-O'Connor, the Irish prelate who wrote the best and full-

est account of all these places and more.

Readers should also be aware of the Franciscan guide by Fr Eugene Hoade, based on older guides by his order that Fr Hoade revised and published continually in new editions over nearly half a century from 1942, which is full of recondite information.

That has been replaced by *The New Pilgrims Guide to the Holy Land*, by Fr Stephen Doyle, and that too can be commended.

However, Michael Kelly provides an accessible guide which is accurate and informative, without being over scholarly or over detailed. In fact it is the ideal *vade mecum* for the Irish pil-



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.



Thousands of pilgrims raise their candles at midnight in celebration of the Resurrection at Easter time in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem.

grim as it is expressly written for a person of Irish culture.

It has two special features: a chapter on the food of the Holy Land – you never really visit a country unless you eat the local food. Irish steak eaters will have to adapt.

Cultures

There is also a chapter on the peoples and cultures of the Holy Land which many visitors, rightly confused about the conflicting claims of different cultures, will find very useful – it even has a section on the Druzes, which demonstrates the author's eye for important detail.

Altogether into less than 200 pages Michael Kelly compresses a great deal of his own

well – informed experiences over so many years. If you are off to Bethlehem for Christmas this is the book to carry.

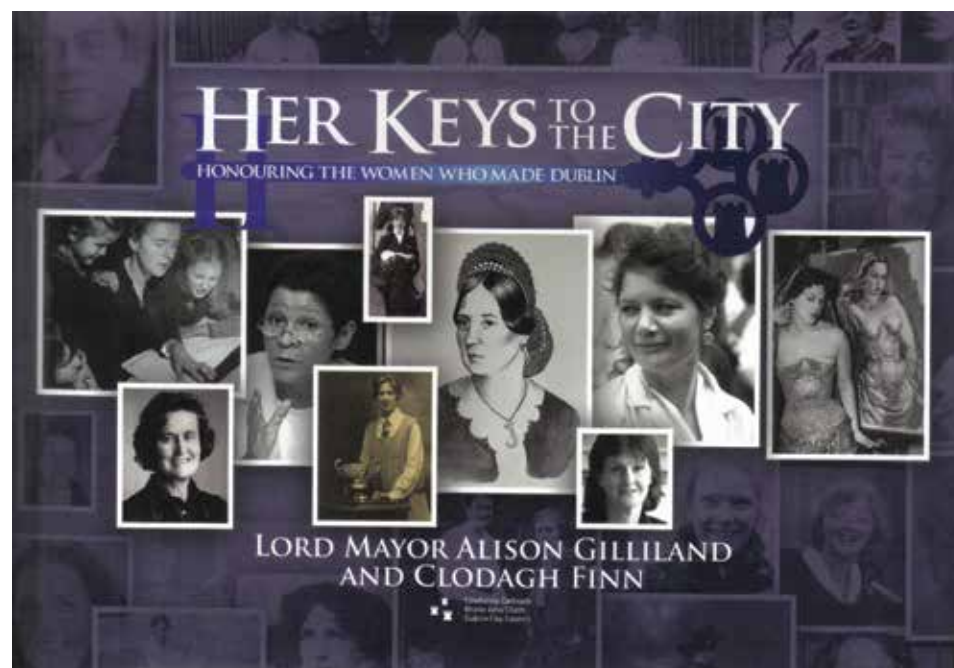
“Michael Kelly provides an accessible guide which is accurate and informative, without being over scholarly or over detailed”

He also has a section on Yad Vashem, the Israeli National Memorial to the Holocaust. He speaks of the “warped theology” that contributed to anti-Semitism. But I recall

being taught that when the crowd below Pilate calling for Jesus to die, spoke as representative of sinful humanity, and not as Jews, a reminder that the burden of the sins Christ carried were our sins. In redeeming humanity Christ redeemed also the Jews.

One last word. Readers should be advised that the best time to read a guide book is before you leave home, when in comfort you can really absorb the information at leisure rather than in the brisk hurly-burly of the tour itself. When you arrive it will be essentially a matter of reminding yourself of what you have already learned, rather like “revising” for one's Leaving Cert.

The honoured women of Dublin



Her Keys to the City: Honouring the Women Who Made Dublin
Alison Gilliland and Clodagh Finn
(Dublin City Council / Four Courts Press, €19.99/£17.20)

The old Thom's Directory, which down to the end of the 1960s was the essential reference work for nearly every aspect of Dublin life, used to print a list of the Freemen of the City. As can be imagined most of those honoured there were male political and patriotic figures, beginning with Isaac Butt in 1876.

The first woman was Lady Sandhurst, who had been the first ever woman city councillor in the United Kingdom, but was removed when action was taken against her simply because *she was a woman*. Dublin honoured her in September 1889 as “a friend of Ireland”, not (as the text suggests) as a mere adjunct to her important husband, who in any case

was 13 years dead. A Liberal suffragist she was also an eminent spiritualist, not such an odd combination then as it would be now. She was the first of the handful of women honourees up to June 2022.

“As can be imagined most of those honoured there were male political and patriotic figures, beginning with Isaac Butt in 1876”

Allison Gilliland on becoming Lord Mayor decided with the help of journalist Clodagh Finn to do something about this odd situation by taking public advice on an informal roster of eminent Dublin connected women. The resulting book is not a compendium of Freewomen, but of

women who deserved to be honoured in the past and in more recent days. It is a calendar of courageous and talented people. The women indeed are presented as more active, more engaged than that host of male worthies, many of whom seem to have been honoured because they were current celebrities.

Emerged

These names emerged from a public consultation back in February 2022, so they are very much the “People's Choice”.

This is the sort of book which should certainly be in every Dublin school library. Every one of them will, in some way, be an inspiration to those young women looking around for role models. The authors and their collaborators have done a fine job of putting together a book which will be widely read, and which hopefully will have a great effect.

To save those in danger at sea

Search and Rescue. True Stories of Irish Air-Sea Rescues and the Loss of R116

Lorna Siggins
(Merrion Press, Price €16.95)

Joe Carroll

Lorna Siggins's update of her book *Mayday*, covers the huge expansion of Ireland's air-sea rescue services since 2004.

The time when mariners in distress off our coasts were almost entirely dependent on the Royal Air Force when a helicopter was needed is now long past. The Irish Air Corps provided an efficient service with their Alouette and Dauphin helicopters until they were replaced by the much bigger Sikorsky models now leased from the Canadian Helicopter Corporation but flown by Irish crews.

The Coastguard service staffed unselfishly by local volunteers has also been upgraded and has carried out over 30,000 rescue operations since 1991. The RNLI has continued its mission of saving lives

in even the worst of weathers, again with unpaid volunteers.

Tragedies

Unfortunately, there will always be fatal tragedies and Siggins begins her comprehensive account of many thrilling rescues with two tragedies where the rescuers were the victims. These were the crash of the R116 helicopter in Blacksod Bay with the loss of all four crew in March 2017 and the death of Coastguard Catriona Lucas in September 2016 during a search for a missing man off Kilkee.

Fortunately most of the rescues recounted in the book were successful thanks to the bravery of the helicopter and lifeboat crews and the dedication of the volunteer coastguards. Such voluntary service to others is a sign of a healthy community. Siggins's own expert knowledge of maritime matters makes this an authoritative record of heroism at sea.

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

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Image: Roge Wavio (29) of Kalacha, Marsabit, Kenya holds produce she has grown with support from Concern. Photographer: Jennifer Nolan / Concern Worldwide

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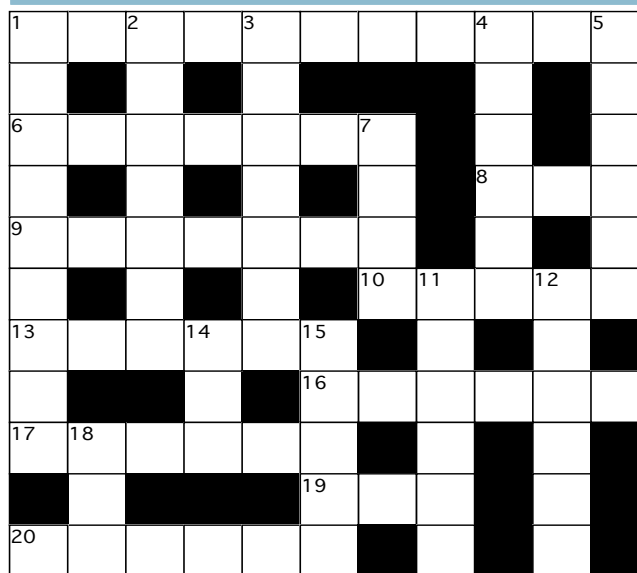
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Crossword Junior

Children's 440



Across

- 1 What a goal is worth in hurling or Gaelic football (5,6)
6 Very old (7)
8 A soldier will say this to an officer (3)
9 Made a garment with needles and wool (7)
10 Artist's stand (5)
13 Messy, not neat (6)
16 As much as is needed (6)
17 Cars can drive through this to go under a river (6)
19 The top of a bin or saucepan (3)
20 Person who is extremely brainy (6)

Down

- 1 You may wear this over your

other sports gear (9)

- 2 You get this piece of paper when you pay for something (7)
3 Voted someone into power (7)
4 These people often work in hospitals (6)
5 A _____ staircase goes round and round (6)
7 The coming and going of the sea (4)
11 Dodges, gets out of the way of (6)
12 Machine or motor (6)
14 There was no room here the night Jesus was born (3)
15 Shouts (5)
18 Employ something (3)

SOLUTIONS, JUNE 30

GORDIUS NO. 565

Across — 1 Church mice 6 Spot 10 Infer 11 Soap opera 12 Neglect 15 Later 17 Redo 18 Acid 19 Peril 21 Onerous 23 Angel 24 Tyre 25 Dram 26 Altos 28 Emerald 33 Camel hair coat 34 Zilch 36 High priest

Down — 1 Coin 2 Unfeeling 3 Coral reef 4 Music 7 Pleat 8 Tea trolley 9 Dollops 13 Eton 14 Tirreme 16 Madagascar 20 Royal blue 21 Old salt 22 Urge 27 Tomme 29 Marsh 30 Razor 31 Bali 32 Chat

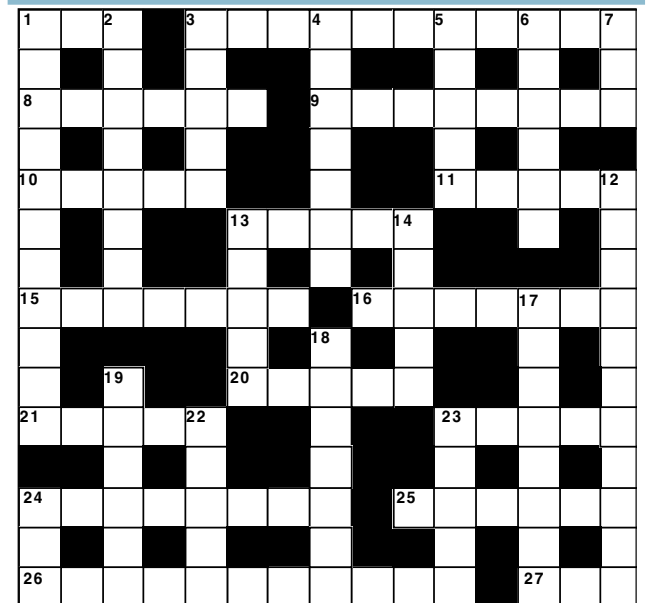
CHILDREN'S No. 439

Across — 1 Stable door 7 Imitate 8 Toe 9 Sue 10 Stale 12 Nap 14 Lassie 15 Sand 17 Agents 19 Eel 20 Boar 21 Poison 22 SOS

Down — 1 Scissors 2 Animal 3 Leaves 4 Dressing 5 Often 6 Help 11 Ladders 13 Auction 16 Atom 17 Alps 18 Exit

Crossword

Gordius 566



Across

- 1 A quick swim (3)
3 Three-horned dinosaur (11)
8 Place of perfection written about by Sir Thomas More (6)
9 In a friendly way (8)
10 Illegal alcohol (5)
11 & 23a Native American structures (5,5)
13 Find a total by adding, and get a child out of bed! (3,2)
15 Took it easy (7)
16 Made a witty remark (7)
20 River flowing through Paris (5)
21 & 12d He composed 'Fingal's Cave' (5,11)
23 See 11 across
24 Variety of French wine (8)
25 Hitchcock movie set in the Bates Motel (6)
26 Ospreys, owls and falcons, for example (5,2,4)
27 Religious sister (3)

Down

- 1 & 4d Religious order founded by St Vincent de Paul and St Louise de

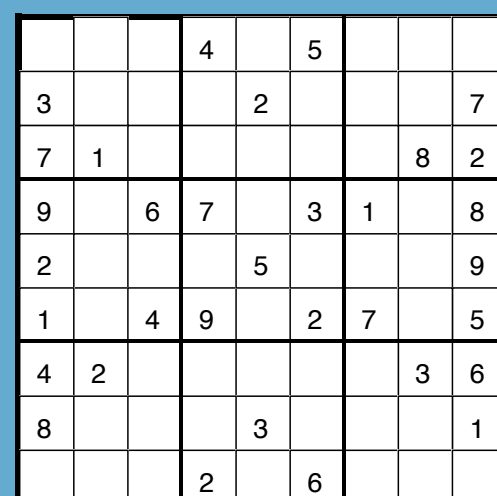
Marillac (9,2,7)

- 2 The standard official procedure ensures cool port is distributed (8)
3 Upper leg (5)
4 See 1 down
5 Royal English racecourse (5)
6 Goes around as a planet does (6)
7 Secret agent (3)
12 See 21 across
13 Arduous journeys (5)
14 Dried plum (5)
17 In modern parlance, a barman; in Biblical times, a tax collector (8)
18 The crest of a knoll (7)
19 Nearer (6)
22 Diagnostic images (1-4)
23 Wan (5)
24 Unruly group; rabble (3)

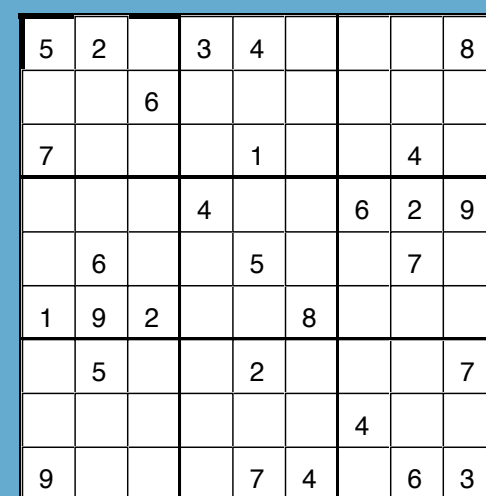
Sudoku Corner

440

Easy



Hard



Last week's Easy 439

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

Last week's Hard 439

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

A brother reflects on a decision: The prodigal son

“WHY DID YOU NOT GO in to join the celebrations?”

It is a fair question! There was jealousy at work. Yes, he had gone away and left us all in the lurch. Yes, he had eaten into my father’s property but there was more to it than that.

I resented him, not just because he had gone away but more-so because he came back. At least when he was gone, I had my father’s ear and could impress him with all the work I did around the place.

Strange, for though I had his ear, I knew his mind wandered to where the brother was and how he was doing. I knew his heart was broken and that part of him died that day he watched him fade into the distance

The waster

That said, he never ignored me or made me feel he didn’t love me deeply, but I couldn’t get my head around the fact that he still missed “the waster” as I called him. There was no denying it though, my father was heartbroken.

There were times when I missed him too of course. I wondered what he was doing and



who he was with. That’s when I let my mind wander and I wrote stories in my head that most likely weren’t real at all. I imagined him with women, getting

drunk “letting the family down” and it never crossed my mind that he was sitting alone and hungry, surrounded by pigs who ate what he’d have eaten “though nobody offered him anything”.

Novels

It’s strange the way we write novels in our heads about other people and never, even for a second, try to get into their hearts or allow their hurt touch ours.

There was part of me that always felt he’d come back. For my father’s sake, I hoped he would. It was heart-breaking to see him stand and look to the distance. Though he never said what he was looking for, I knew exactly not the ‘what’ but the ‘who’ for whom he longed; my brother.

And despite that, I couldn’t share my father’s joy when someone told me “Your brother is back”. The stuff about the “fatted calf” and the celebrations weren’t a concern to me but I just couldn’t bring myself to rise above my small-mindedness and see the bigger picture. We were “family again”.

When my father asked me to join the celebrations, I couldn’t do it. I’ve regretted that so often because I knew it’s what my father wanted more than anything. “All I have is yours” he told me, and he meant it. He never denied me anything.

I’m haunted, haunted by that moment. I should have gone in.

Welcome to the table

In the diocese of Achonry a youth gathering is being organised for Sunday July 17. It will take place in St Nathy’s College Ballaghaderreen, beginning at 5pm. The evening will include words of encouragement from Andy Moran, former Mayo Footballer and current manager of Leitrim Senior Team. There will be time for sharing, prayer and Bishop Paul Dempsey will celebrate Mass. The evening will conclude with a BBQ and music. Young people, aged 18-30 from the diocese are welcome and hopefully many of them will be there. Perhaps you could extend the invitation to some of your younger relatives and friends. If interested visit: <https://achonrydiocese.org/youthministry>

Trusting in God's love on the synodal pathway

It is easy to see why we should be working more as one and exploring possibilities for our Church. It is easy to see that too many are walking away. It is easy to see that vocations are in decline, that clergy and religious are aging and that parishes will have to find prayerful and effective ways to function in the absence of a resident priest. It is easy to conclude we need to do something meaningful and life-giving to preserve what is so sacred. It is easy to see, to hear and to believe these truths. Why then is it so difficult to explore change? Let us do all in our power, in our hearts and in our shared love of Church to make this a journey of hope and a moment of trust in God’s love and guiding hand as we take to the road together.



PLEASE HELP MANY ABANDONED ELDERLY MEN AND WOMEN IN PERU



Sr Elsa Reyes Mejia, of the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, has written to The Little Way Association from the region of Cusco in Peru appealing for funds. “We arrived in the parish of San Pedro in 2018”, Sr Elsa tells us, “and soon found, during our pastoral work, that many elderly people are living alone and abandoned, their children having moved to the city or gone abroad for work or study. The local community gave us a 6,000 sq. m. plot of land and since then we have been raising funds for the building of a large Home for many lonely aged people. Some organisations have helped us and we trust in God that the Home will gradually be built.

“Many die alone, having no one to care for them. We take Holy Communion to many, and sometimes food. The cost of the Home is fairly high, and we still need much financial help. We are confident The Little Way Association will assist us.”

Please send whatever you can for this special project.

The Little Way Association will send your gift, without deduction, to the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception for this much-needed Home for the abandoned elderly in Peru.



“A word or a smile is often enough to put fresh life in a despondent soul.”
~ St Therese

WELLS NEEDED

Missionaries constantly appeal to The Little Way for funds to sink wells in order to provide clean water, the lack of which causes much illness and many medical needs. On average, women in Africa and Asia walk around three hours every day to fetch water, often in scorching heat.

Can you help provide a well?

Your kind gift will be forwarded intact and gratefully received.

MISSIONARIES NEED YOUR MASS OFFERINGS

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

We like to send a minimum of €6 or more for each Mass

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:

- €..... **HOME FOR ABANDONED ELDERLY, PERU**
- €..... **UKRAINE APPEAL**
- €..... **WELLS AND CLEAN WATER**
- €..... **MASS OFFERINGS**
(Please state no. of Masses _____)
- €..... **LITTLE WAY ADMIN EXPENSES**

☐ Please tick if you would like an acknowledgement

Name (Rev. Mr. Mrs. Miss)

(Block letters please)

Address

To donate online go to
www.littlewayassociation.com

DONATIONS FOR THE MISSIONS ARE SENT WITHOUT DEDUCTION FOR ANY EXPENSES.