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Disappointment across North as papal visit looks impossible

Recognition of path to peace would be 'wonderful' – bishop

Greg Daly

There is huge disappointment across the Catholic community in the North as hopes fade about the prospect of a papal visit to the region, Derry's Bishop Donal McKeown has said.

With a visit by Pope Francis to Northern Ireland now looking almost impossible, Bishop McKeown has said Protestants and Catholics would have welcomed a visit.

"There is clearly disappointment on the part of many people – that's a fact," he told *The Irish Catholic*. "There's a widespread sense that Northern Ireland has come a long way and it would be wonderful to have a papal visit – and all the Churches are saying that.

"We've come a long way, we've achieved an awful lot, and we'd be grateful to get commendation for that and

affirmation for what has happened already," he added.

The bishop's comments come against the background of numerous requests to the Vatican that the Pope visit the North. *The Irish Catholic* understands that a last-ditch effort by Irish Church leaders was unsuccessful in recent weeks; Dr McKeown explained that the Northern bishops' wish that the Pope visit the region was expressed to the papal nuncio, Archbishop Jude Okolo, on several occasions.

However, he said, at 82 years old, Pope Francis tends to make short visits in order to conserve time and energy, such that the restriction of the Pope's visit to Dublin and Knock is understandable.

Should the Pope decide on a future visit to the North he would be assured of a warm welcome, Dr McKeown added.

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Bumper opening weekend for Lough Derg



Three pilgrims from Co. Limerick at Lough Derg for the opening weekend.

Colm Fitzpatrick

Over 500 pilgrims visited St Patrick's Purgatory in Lough Derg for the opening weekend of the island shrine's 2017 Three-Day Pilgrimage season last weekend.

Speaking about the high turnout, communications officer at Lough Derg Sharon Hearty said: "The current demographic of the Three-Day Pilgrimage is better balanced than ever, between men and women, younger and older, devout and searching as well as continuing to attract international pilgrims each season."

The number of attendees for the first day alone of the opening weekend has significantly increased on last year with just under 300 visiting in 2017, whereas this year saw a turnout of 376 pilgrims.

Sharon added that the island attracts pilgrims who look forward to seeing friends they have made over the years, and that new pilgrims are often accompanied by a member of their family or a friend who have done the pilgrimage before and often find this a source of support.

"Whilst the spiritual landscape in which we live continues to change and the traditional contours of the map of pilgrimage seem less familiar – there is also a changing motive to

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DAVID QUINN

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KEEPING THE FAITH

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MARY KENNY

Is absolutely everything going to the dogs? PAGE 5



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Facing up to the dark chapters of Irish life

We've become depressingly familiar with using terms like 'dark chapter' to reflect on certain periods of Irish history – particularly the 20th Century. You'd be forgiven for thinking that until the last few years, the story of the Irish State was one solely of darkness and misery. True, the past wasn't all great – but it wasn't all terrible either.

Future historians will have a more rounded view, but that doesn't take from the current piercing need to face up to and acknowledge the appalling treatment of many people in 20th-Century Ireland. Often an unholy alliance between Church and State collaborated to institutionalise – and sometimes demonise – those who didn't quite fit in, or those who were deemed to be too embarrassing for their families, communities or wider society.

Fr Vincent Twomey, author of *The end of Irish Catholicism?*, sums it up well: "Traditional Irish Catholicism exuded a sense of superiority, an arrogance that now beggars belief... No one could teach us anything. In addition, we had a society steeped in petty snobbery, so that priesthood and religious life easily became a status symbol, while those at the bottom of the pile (the indigent poor, the parentless, farm labourers, petty thieves, etc.) were seen by Church, State and society as non-persons – just numbers.

"Clerics and religious were all powerful. They were above suspicion – and they knew it. They could act



Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

without fear of retribution. Human weaknesses of the flesh – including machismo and sadism rooted in a frustrated sexuality due to repressive Puritanism and no real vocation or spiritual training – were often combined with spiritual arrogance and narrow-mindedness. The dregs of this, the negative side of traditional Irish Catholicism, were in charge of the reformatories, industrial schools and foster homes. The result was the perversion of Our Lord's injunction: 'Suffer little children to come unto me' (Mk 10:13)," Fr Twomey writes.

“Clerics and religious were all powerful. They were above suspicion”

It's a damning critique and one that comes again to mind in a week when official Ireland is honouring those women who spent time in Magdalen laundries. While Martin McAleese in his report points out that "there is no single or simple story of the Magdalen Laundries", what is clear is that many women suffered there. The unfolding story of illegal adoptions and people denied their heritage and history is also one that will have to be faced directly – and immediately.

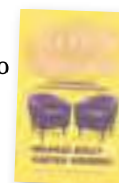
There are searching questions for both Church and State. But, we must

as a society also ask ourselves deep questions about what happened and the complicity of communities in the appalling treatment of our fellow citizens. We must be wary of the temptation to turn either Church or State into a NAMA-like 'bad bank' where all toxicity is deposited and we look with a collective 'tut, tut' and say "nothing to do with me".

The advertisements for illegal adoptions were in national newspapers. The story of Magdalen Ireland is also one of families driving their daughters to such institutions.

It was a country where, as Frank Duff put it, people were "shovelled" into institutions. As Irish people, we have a self-perception of ourselves as a universally friendly and welcoming people. Our history shows that this hasn't always been the case – and we will be all the poorer as a people if we are unwilling to address this. History, as Maya Angelou puts it, "despite its wrenching pain, cannot be un-lived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again".

Michael Kelly is co-author of a new book with Austen Ivereigh *How to Defend the Faith – Without Raising Your Voice – it is available from Columba Press www.columba.ie*



New ambassador to the Holy See appointed

Staff reporter

The Irish diplomat credited with enhancing relations between Ireland and the Vatican is to return to Dublin after completing her post in Rome, Emma Madigan – who was appointed Irish Ambassador to the Holy See in 2014 – is to be replaced by Derek Hannon who is expected to present his credentials to Pope Francis

in coming months.

Ms Madigan – along with former papal nuncio Archbishop Charles Brown – is widely acknowledged in political circles to have contributed to smoothing relations between Rome and Dublin after a tense period which saw then Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore close the Irish Embassy at the Vatican. At the time, it was reported that the move was due to

costs. However, it was widely perceived as a rebuke to the Vatican over Church mishandling of allegations of clerical abuse.

One of Ms Madigan's first tasks in Rome was to re-open a new Irish embassy to the Vatican, sited just metres from St Peter's Square. She will return to an appointment within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Dublin.

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Even non-practising Christians try to pass on faith: Pew survey

Greg Daly

The vast majority of Irish Christians are raising their children in the Faith, a new survey has found, with even non-practising Christians more inclined to have their children brought up in their religion than non-practising Christians elsewhere in Western Europe.

Almost 25,000 adults across 15 countries were interviewed last year for 'Being Christian in Western Europe', a survey by the Washington, DC-based Pew Research Centre, which found that in a typical Western European country just 64% of adults identify as Christian and only 18% of adults say they attend Christian religious services at least monthly. In Ireland, however, these figures stand at 80% and 34%, respectively.

Services

Only Italian and Portuguese Christians report higher rates of church attendance, with the former being 40% and the latter 35%, inviting comparisons with 2016's European Social Survey figures that found Irish religious practice to be the second highest of 18 surveyed countries, second only to Poland.

According to the new figures, 99% of Ireland's church-attending Christians are

raising their children as Christians, with 92% of those who identify as Christian without attending religious services even monthly doing likewise. Of non-practising Christians in the 15 surveyed countries, only Germans and Italians are as likely to have their children raised as Christians.

Strikingly, only 5% of Ireland's non-practising Christians are raising their children without any religious affiliation, according to the survey. No other surveyed country has as few non-practising Christians raising their children outside the Faith altogether, with non-practising

German Christians being the next-least likely to do so, at 7%.

In Sweden, by comparison, 31% of non-practising Christians are raising their children without a religious identity.

The poll has also revealed that non-practising Christians are the single largest religious

group in Western Europe, with many of these saying that while they identify as Christian, they believe in a higher power but not God "as described in the Bible", the vast majority of non-practising Christians favouring believing that abortion and same-sex marriage should be

legal.

It found that in Ireland, 42% of church-attending Christians favour legal abortion with 81% of non-practising Christians doing so, marginally higher than the 80% of religiously non-affiliated who do so.

Spirit aplenty with Brazilian community



Members of Dublin's Brazilian Catholic community who completed the Life in the Holy Spirit seminar in Church Street at the weekend.

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Disappointment across North at papal decision

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"It would be great if the Pope came," he said. "Certainly Derry would be very happy to have welcomed him, for example. I'm sure other places would be primary spots for him to come to, but there genuinely is hope on the ground here that it'd be great for the North for the Pope to come, and that he may plan to come some other time."

The Irish News, generally recognised as the principal voice of Nationalist opinion in Northern Ireland, has said that "Northern Catholics yearn to see the Pope in Armagh", and argued that it would hardly be an onerous addition to Pope Francis' itinerary.

"A visit to Armagh, almost certainly arriving and leaving by helicopter, might take two hours at most, and, even at this stage, there is an overwhelming case for persuading senior Vatican officials to agree that it should be facilitated," according to the newspaper.

However, any papal visit to the North would have a different focus than one to the Republic, Dr McKeown noted, observing that Pope Francis may not have wanted to confuse his Irish visit by giving sharply different messages.

"I think certainly in the Republic the papal visit will be seen as primarily to a Catholic event. I think any papal visit to the North would be much more ecumenically slanted – it'd be focused I think on peacemaking and on the contribution the Churches have made and continue to make into the future," he said.

"It'd be a very different agenda: he wouldn't be coming to the North for the World Meeting of Families, and he may have thought he'd keep these two things quite separate rather than confusing them," he said.

Four appointed to the permanent Diaconate



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin stands with the four men he ordained, Gerry Malone, Noel Mc Hugh, Donald Devaney and Greg Pepper, to the permanent Diaconate in St Mary's Pro Cathedral in Dublin over the weekend. Photo: John Mc Elroy

Catholics left 'confused and bruised' in wake of referendum – priest

Colm Fitzpatrick

Catholics across Ireland are facing an identity crisis and have not been properly educated in their Faith, a prominent Irish priest has said.

Tuam priest Fr Eamonn Conway said many Catholics today are "confused" and that we have to accept the fact that formation and catechesis has been "very poor" in many respects.

The comments come after the recent referendum to remove the Eighth Amendment, and the high number of Catholics who voted to accept the proposal despite such a decision being in conflict with

the Faith.

"I don't know of any other country that has been offered a vote on abortion, it's usually politicians who get to vote so we were the legislators," Prof. Conway told *The Irish Catholic*.

"Now we have 70-odd-percent of our population self-identifying as Catholic of which a large number of people voting for something that is so counter to the core of our Faith. We definitely have an identity crisis."

Remarks

The lecturer at Limerick's Mary Immaculate College also expressed support for

remarks made by Bishop Kevin Doran who last week said that Catholics who voted 'Yes' with the knowledge and intention that abortion would be the outcome should consider going to Confession.

"Bishop Doran was asked a very specific question and I think he answered it honestly and he answered it well. He was speaking to fellow Catholics – not everybody can understand that," he said, adding that the comments also came out of a very "rich understanding" of the Sacrament of Reconciliation which is about "reorienting" ourselves towards God.

Fr Conway also stressed

that many committed Catholics have been wounded by media coverage leading up to the referendum and are unsure of what it means to be a Catholic in Ireland today.

Outpouring

"We do know, certainly in the outpouring of articles in the media over particularly maybe the last month, towards the final stages of the referendum and in the last week, a lot of hostility to people who self-identify as Christians and as Catholics and I think people are a bit bruised by that so that's what I've been picking up," he said.

Singing priest gets a hero's welcome after *Britain's Got Talent*

Chai Brady

Despite not reaching the final of *Britain's Got Talent*, Ireland's singing priest says he's got nothing but positive feedback regarding how he portrayed the Church and priesthood.

Fr Ray Kelly received a hero's welcome as he arrived back to his Church on Monday night as hundreds of people gathered to celebrate his accomplishment.

Fr Kelly wowed judges on the show after his rendition of REM's 'Everybody Hurts', with Simon Cowell describing it as one of his favourite auditions ever. The video of his performance has racked up six million views on YouTube.

Asked whether he thinks people responded warmly because he is a priest, Fr Kelly said: "You probably would have a lot of Catholic people over in the UK certainly that would identify with it."

"I think maybe a lot of people would identify with the song I sung, because we've all lost loved ones through cancer or through illness or something like that."

Difficult times

The priest told *The Irish Catholic* that many people contacted him to thank him, saying his performances helped them through difficult times.

When asked if he was disappointed Fr Kelly said that "the whole experience has been so positive in my life, that makes up for any downfall of not getting through".

"All I can say, personally, I've got nothing but positive feedback over being on the show and the way I portrayed the Church and priesthood as well, that's all I can go on," he added.

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Bumper opening weekend for Lough Derg

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to be here, the sense of peace that pervades the Island, getting away from it all, stepping away for a few days from the relentless demands of the digital and technological age and the expectation of being perpetually available to respond right now.

"Yet, on the other hand so many people also value the deep sense of connection they experience here with family members of past generations who sought and found God's presence at Lough Derg."

Voters 'intimidated' in Church-owned schools, TDs claim

Left-wing TDs Clare Daly and Richard Boyd-Barrett have complained that voters were "intimidated" when voting in the May 25 abortion referendum by being confronted with religious imagery in Church-owned schools.

Speaking in the Dáil last week, Ms Daly said there had been "strategic location of religious iconography" in order to, she had been told "influence the vote".

She said that for voters in one school in Garristown, Co. Dublin, "there was literally an altar that they had to pass", and that in Sallins national

school, "residents were very unhappy to have to go past a wall full of hand-drawn pictures of the Virgin Mary".

Mr Boyd-Barrett said that he received calls from voters in Booterstown, saying that "people complained that when they walked into a national school to vote on the referendum they were confronted with Bibles and statues of the Virgin Mary".

Claiming that voters who complained could not get such statues removed, he said: "frankly, they were intimidated by them".

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Is absolutely everything going to the dogs?

When Vincent Browne appeared last Sunday at the end of the Listowel Writers' Week festival he was greeted like a rock star. The very spacious ballroom of the Listowel Arms Hotel was crammed to bursting point with his fans, and cheers greeted almost his every *pronunciamento*. Vincent was chairing a meeting called 'The Absurdity of Irish Politics' with a panel of commentators – Rachael English, Katie Hannon and Michael O'Regan – but Vincent, in full throttle of denunciatory mode, was undoubtedly the star.

And what a woeful picture of this country the ensemble presented! Everything was wrong with Ireland today. There was general agreement that the politicians were rubbish. They thought of little else but getting elected, and then getting re-elected. Once in the Dáil all they cared about was promotion. There hadn't been a decent political leader since Seán Lemass.

“There were some modifications from the panel, but the overall view was a pretty dismal view of Ireland today”

Like a prophet of the Old Testament, Vincent waxed wroth about the sins of the establishment class. He claimed that 200,000 Irishwomen were unrecognised rape victims. We were one of the richest countries in Europe, but 900,000 people were condemned to abject poverty: “Inequality is built into our society.”

Former Finance Minister Michael Noonan came in for a special lambasting.



Mary Kenny



Vincent Browne.

He waxed wroth still about the posh boys and girls dominating the legal system and the Supreme Court, emerging from Blackrock College, Belvedere, and other bastions of privilege. How dare judges describe an accused person as “coming from a respectable family”! Sheer class discrimination!

As for the health service... it was a national disgrace. Poor people were dying of cancer because of inequality. Homelessness was a cause of shame. Class injustice was at the basis of so much that

is rotten in Irish society. The media, too, was dominated by the privileged middle class.

There were some modifications from the panel, but the overall view was a pretty dismal view of Ireland today.

Inequality

You had to admire Vincent's energy, and even, in his 70s, the righteous anger that spurs him on. He has a point about inequality but, while it makes for an impressive rant, it doesn't explore

the social complexities which can be related to a wider number of issues, from family breakdown to addiction problems.

It's not just exclusively the fault of the “privileged middle class” which came in for so much denunciation.

And too much negativity drains the soul. After the sold-out show, there were many conversations on the theme of the effects of excessive negativity around just about everything.

It may be best to say nothing...

As a school-leaver aged 16, I was advised by older members of my family to look ahead to a working life.

Some of the career advice proffered was, while well-intentioned, misdirected. Banks were regarded as a very sure bet as an institution. You had to get at least two character references and be a person of rectitude to work in a bank. Our elders were not to know that bankers would come to be despised as casino capitalists grinding the faces of the poor: and many bank jobs would be replaced by modern technology.

Secretarial work was recommended for young women: our elders were not to know that the computer would largely take over

office administration. Neither were they to know that ‘outsourcing’ and ‘the gig economy’ would feature in work practices.

And now we are being told that career advice to students today is likely to be similarly outdated. Dr Des Fitzgerald, President of Limerick University, says that parents today know little or nothing about the way the future will shape up.

Actually, nobody knows what the future may hold. I'm told that one of the steadiest of professions, accountancy, is now vulnerable to takeover by robots, while ‘human touch’ professions – from carer to cleric – are considered less likely to replacement by machine.

The cold, hard ‘reality’ of the way things were

The accepted narrative now about unmarried mothers in Ireland in the past is that they were exploited victims consigned to cruel religious institutions, where their infants were torn from their breasts to be given away (or even virtually sold) as adoptees.

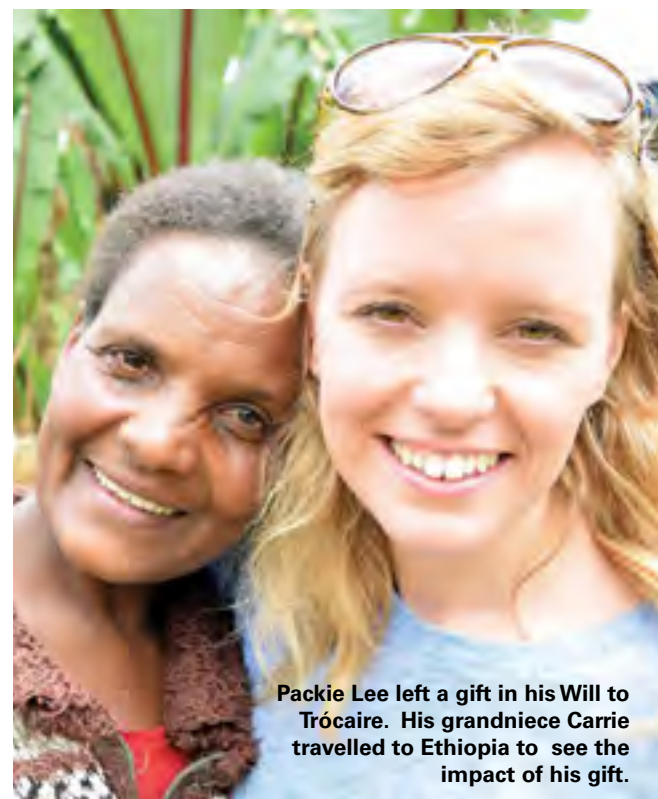
But things weren't always seen that way. A British social worker and a medical pathologist, writing to *The*

Times of London in 1962, expressed a more judgemental perspective.

Commenting on out-of-wedlock births, they remarked: “There is a considerable minority of stupid, self-neglectful unmarried Irish girls who appear to come to England to obtain maternity care and to have the baby adopted.” (Quoted in the academic Clair Wills' social history of immigrants to the UK, *Lovers and Strangers*.)

We look back and see past adoptions as a sadness and a grief to the natural mother (which they surely must have been), but sometimes a more matter-of-fact approach prevailed at the time. These British social professionals evidently thought that some of the young women were exploiting the system rather than the other way about.

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Boy to walk Camino in aid of hospice care

Colm Fitzpatrick

A young Irish boy is getting ready to walk hundreds of kilometres across Spain to raise funds for those most vulnerable in our society.

Eight-year-old Christopher Nugent is walking 300km from the city of Leon to Santiago de Compostela in the hope of raising funds for hospice care across Ireland, after having walked 200km to the region last year.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic*, his father Robert Nugent said that he had been walking the Camino for a number of years and that Christopher decided to join him on the venture last year, with the aim of raising awareness for hos-

pice care in Ireland and in particular their local North West Hospice near Ballina.

"I suppose the current trend in Ireland is that the young and the old are disposable, you know, 'out of sight, out of mind'," Robert explained, adding that in light of the current "push" for the legalisation of euthanasia in Ireland, we should be doing "better" for people in our society.

Robert also said that parents should be good role models for their children, and that his son Christopher "loves" walking but that it's important its borne out of his own desire to do it rather than being forced upon him.

"Anyone that knew about it

thought it was great...a lot of parents were saying 'I wish I was doing that with my kids' and others were saying 'my children would never walk it'.

"It's not an initiative I'm driving, he wants to do the walk and I want to do the fundraising," Robert explained, noting that he'd like to make a "difference".

Having climbed Croagh Patrick numerous times and ventured on "lots" of hikes across Poland, Robert says that his son is looking forward to the long walk in the coming weeks.

i To donate to this cause, see: <https://give.everydayhero.com/ie/father-son-camino-de-santiago>



Christopher Nugent shows his Camino passport and certificate.

'Reflect thoughtfully' priest asks young in wake of teen tragedy

Chai Brady

The Parish Priest of a teen who was murdered in Louth has appealed for people with information concerning Cameron O'Reilly's death to come forward.

Hundreds of mourners gathered at the 18-year-old's funeral on Monday morning. Fr Murtagh said the community were in "deep dismay" in his homily. "People were wondering out loud how he should have succumbed to such a cruel twist of faith. The old, it is said, go to their death. Death comes to the young. It seldom comes as shockingly, as cruelly, or as poignantly as it has to Cameron."

Mr O'Reilly's body was found beaten and strangled in a field on May 26. It is understood Garda are close to making arrests in connection with the case.

Fr Murtagh said: "I ask and appeal to our young people today to reflect thoughtfully on what has happened and to learn lessons from it.

"I ask those who are privileged to be parents to listen and to learn as well. I challenge our young people to examine the patterns of their lives and the direction in which their lives are going. I ask them to reflect on the kind of people they are turning out to be."

As his remains left the funeral home for the short journey to St Brigid's Church, guards of honour were formed by local sporting clubs.

Pilgrimage unites Christians and remembers WWI

Chai Brady

During a pilgrimage with the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh to the Somme in Belgium, Archbishop Eamon Martin pledged to reach out in friendship and "build trust and lasting peace on the island of Ireland".

During a series of tweets about the ecumenical pilgrimage which aimed to mark the centenary of the end of World War I, the archbishop documented the 'Pilgrimage of Hope' which included 36 people.

There were also 16 young people representing both the Protestant and Catholic traditions.

The sites on the pilgrimage especially focused on the Battle of Messines and the areas in which soldiers from the 16th (Irish), 10th (Irish) and 36th (Ulster) Divisions fought and died in Belgium and France.

They visited cemeteries and

memorials including Thiepval Wood, Guillemont and the Ulster Tower.

The final stop of the pilgrimage, on June 1, was Tyne Cot Cemetery which is the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world and is the final resting place of nearly 12,000 men, of whom more than 8,300 remain unidentified.

Apology

In one tweet Archbishop Eamon Martin said: "As Protestants and Catholics, we apologise for the terrible deeds we have done to each other and ask forgiveness..." At #Messines we remembered Protestant and Catholic soldiers from the island of Ireland who were 'united in death' during #WWI #pilgrimageofhope."

The two archbishops previously led a cross-community delegation of young people from across the island of Ireland to the battle sites of the Somme two years ago.



Does Archbishop Eamon Martin like butter? Cathal and Lucy Fegan find out with buttercups at the launch of the World Meeting of Families Festival in the Diocese of Armagh at the Dromantine Conference Centre in Co. Down. Photo: www.LiamMcArdle.com

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'Baptism barrier' removal plan is unconstitutional 'game of bluff'

Greg Daly

Government plans to ban oversubscribed Catholic schools from favouring Catholic applicants over non-Catholic ones may be unconstitutional, and are likely to be challenged in the courts, a leading expert on the Constitution has warned.

Explaining that Irish law allows justifiable and proportionate discrimination in certain circumstances, UCC's Dr Seán Ó Conaill told *The Irish Catholic*, adding that he doubted such a case could credibly be made for the Government's plans.

"They could come up with some justification for that, but in cold hard terms, it's very hard to see how they can say 'just the Catholic Church and no other Churches'," he said, adding that there would definitely be "arguable case" against any such move. "You'd imagine somebody would take the case – that'd be very interesting," he said.

Admission

His comments come in the aftermath of legislation to remove the so-called "baptism barrier" on schools admission being passed by the Dáil. Minister for Education Richard Bruton has said the provision in the Education (Admission to Schools) would remove baptism as a require-

ment for school entry from most schools, retaining it only where a child of a minority needs access to a school of their ethos.

The Catholic Primary Schools Management Association has said that fewer than 0.4% of all applications received by Dublin schools are refused on religious grounds, with the real problem facing Irish schools being a lack of resources.

"It's a game of bluff, and the real question is how could they enforce it? They can say they're removing the baptismal barrier, but they don't own these schools," Dr Seán Ó Conaill said.

"One of the most annoying things we see right across the media is the line about removing the Church from State schools: we don't have State schools. Our country was bankrupt – it couldn't afford schools, so it relied on predominantly the Catholic Church and the Church of Ireland to provide schools for us," he continued, explaining that Church bodies own school lands and the schools themselves, as well as running their schools.

The only real way the State could enforce the proposed rule is by threatening to withdraw funding, but if Church-owned schools held their ground in such a situation, "the entire education system would collapse overnight".

Tuam ordination



Newly ordained priest Fr Gerard Quirke with his siblings Christina Quirke, Carmel Marley, Caroline Higgins and Joseph Quirke. Photo: Fr Stephen Farragher

We must stop talk of 'battering' Church, Senator urges

Staff reporter

Attacks on the Church in the aftermath of the abortion referendum are misplaced, a yes-voting senator has said. Speaking in the Seanad last week, Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell said while she had voted to repeal Ireland's constitutional protections for the unborn, talk of how "we will batter" the Church should cease.

"I was educated and minded by the Catholic Church. My mother is being minded as a resident by Catholic nuns," she said, adding that she admires the Church and

believes it has done "great work and deeds".

"I am articulate here because of the nuns," she said, continuing, "interestingly, when I was pregnant and on my own, it was the nuns who took me in and gave me the psychological ability to move on."

Stressing that she favoured women being able to choose to have abortions, she nonetheless said the Church has made "a distinctive and distinguished" contribution to Ireland.

"We should be quiet about how we will batter it and take it down," she said.

New proposals could lead to abortion on demand – pro-life group

A prominent pro-life group has criticised proposals made by Labour MP, Stella Creasy, to remove any criminal sanction for those involved with abortion.

Commenting on the June 5 Westminster emergency debate on abortion, Dawn McAvoy, co-founder of Both Lives Matter said: "Stella Creasy wants full decriminalisation which would leave abortion largely unregulated. It could allow anyone to have an abortion, anywhere, for any reason, by any method."

She added that the pro-life group are deeply concerned about attempts from Westminster to change the law on abortion in Northern Ireland as it could remove "critical" protection from the life of the unborn child.

Former UK politician jailed for perjury to be ordained

Chai Brady

A former MP in the UK, who was imprisoned for perjury, is to be ordained by a Church of England bishop.

Jonathan Aitken (75) was a Conservative politician before being convicted of perjury and perverting the course of justice in 1999. He is to be ordained by the first female bishop of London Dame Sarah Mullally and plans to become a prison chaplain.

In an interview with *The Sunday Times*, he said he was looking forward to it: "I am having a slight struggle

tempering my enthusiasm with proper Christian humility."

Mr Aitken served seven months in jail before being released in 2000.

His ordination will take place later this month, June 30, and will serve at St Paul's Cathedral.

Statement

In a statement the diocese of London said: "There are due to be 38 candidates ordained as deacons at St Paul's Cathedral this Petertide.

"They all come from widely varying backgrounds, which have brought them together on the path to ordination.

"Jonathan Aitken, like his fellow candidates, has been through the process of discernment. He has carried out theological studies and, per the Diocese's formal procedures, a risk assessment and the other necessary checks have been carried out.

"Once ordained, his specific focus will be on prison ministry."

While he was in prison Mr Aitken became part of a prayer group which included an armed robber, a blower (someone who cracks safes), a kiter (a cheque forger), two murderers and a dipper (a pickpocket).

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Money raised for Irish missionary attacked in Peru

A fund for an Irish priest who was beaten, shot and robbed as a missionary in Peru earlier this year has been set up to recoup the stolen parish money used to pay workers.

Columban Fr Gerry Desmond was attacked in Lima in April while returning from a local bank to pay the wages of builders who were working on the only primary school in the district.

After receiving a blow to his head and two gunshots to both legs, the perpetrators managed to steal \$2,000 – the equivalent of €1,655 – before escaping.

However, in response to the attack a nephew of the Columban priest, Michael Kelleher, has set up a Go Fund Me page to repay the builders with the surplus being spent on improving school facilities.

€1,643 of a €1,700 target had been donated by 29 people in nine days via the internet fundraising website.

Priest warns of life-threatening water dangers

Staff reporter

A Wexford priest has warned public about the many hazards related to water he sees each summer as temperatures rise.

Fr Tom Dalton, volunteer at the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) highlighted the need to be vigilant around water which can often appear safe but is actually

very dangerous.

“The thing about our coastline is that the water is very unpredictable and also very cold. [People] really do need to be very careful, especially at this time of the year, it can be so lovely and sunny and people are feeling the warmth and it’s been such a long winter – they really want to enjoy the sea and it looks so attractive. We just need to

be careful,” Fr Dalton told *The Irish Catholic*.

The comments come in the wake of two 15-year-old friends, Jack Kenneally and Shay Moloney, drowning while swimming in a lake in a quarry near Ennis last week.

Avoid panic

It is believed that one of the boys got into difficulty while swimming

from one bank to another and his friend swam out to help him. A third teenager is believed to have tried to help them but had to return to the shore.

Fr Dalton added that in a water crisis situation it is important to fight the temptation to panic and that the safest option for swimmers is to bathe in a safe area where a lifeguard is present.

‘Disability amendment’ proposal based on fears of workarounds

Greg Daly

Proposals that abortion legislation ensure there are explicit protections for unborn children with disabilities are driven by the experience of countries where disabled children have been targeted on other grounds, an independent TD has said.

“From my discussions with people in countries where this has not been grounds for abortion, they have found a way around the system,” Michael Collins TD told *The Irish Catholic*, noting that while the Government’s proposed abortion legislation does not permit disability as a grounds for termi-

nation it nonetheless offers no specific protections.

“That is something that is a worry to us and it is something that can be clarified in discussions. It is vital to ensure that we put something in there to be sure that we look after the people that would have disabilities,” the Cork South West TD said.

In line with a Government commitment that abortions will be legal without specific indication in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, something that an RTE exit poll suggests is backed by just 52% of voters, Health Minister Simon Harris has signalled he will oppose the move by Mr Harris and other TDs including Fianna Fáil’s Mary Butler.

Mr Collins, a member of the Rural Independent Group (RIG), said there are no plans to delay legislation for the sake of delay, and that the decision of the people in the May 25 referendum must be respected.

Promise

“I have promised – and I continue to promise this – that I will not be holding up legislation going forward in relation to abortion after the abortion referendum,” he said.

“There was a very clear democratic decision made by the people and we have to be respectful for that.

“There might be areas where we would have concerns, and we want more concrete guarantees and on that basis we may put forward some amendments there,” he said.

Pointing out that while over 26,000 people voted ‘Yes’ in his constituency, he said there had been almost 15,000 people who voted ‘No’ there, “and they need a voice also going forward”.

Any amendments put forward, he said, would be “very focused on certain aspects and certain worries people have”.

Welcome aboard!



Bishop Fintan Monahan welcomes Fr Martin Shanahan to the priesthood after his ordination in Mullagh.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tipperary charity offering bereavement support

Anam Cara Tipperary, an organization that assists bereaved parents will be hosting its monthly meeting on Monday, June 18.

Anam Cara provides a safe and comfortable space where bereaved parents can connect with others who understand the depth of their grief and loss.

Anam Cara CEO Sharon Vard has encouraged bereaved parents to attend even if just to listen and feel support no matter what their situation might be.

The meeting will be held from 7.30-9pm in the Horse and Jockey Hotel, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

We are called to be witnesses to the Faith – bishop

An Irish bishop has said that our Faith can never be a private matter but must always be lived publicly.

Kildare and Leighlin’s bishop, Denis Nulty, said on Sunday at the Mass for the diocese’s pilgrimage to the national Marian Shrine in Knock that all of us are challenged to become like the 15 witnesses who sighted Our Lady in 1879.

“We are challenged to join the ranks of those fifteen witnesses this day, tomorrow and the coming weeks. Witnesses to the love, the mercy and the embrace of a loving and forgiving God and so we pray for the strength we need to face the journey ahead.”



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A double standard lies at the heart of reaction to the adoption scandal, writes David Quinn

In November 2016, ITV aired a programme called *Breaking the Silence: Britain's Adoption Scandal*. It interviewed seven women who became pregnant decades ago while unmarried and were forced by the state, the Churches, their families and their GPs to give up their babies for adoption.

The programme resulted in apologies from the Church of England and the Catholic Church, but none from the state.

Unmarried mothers were treated tremendously harshly by society in the past. The Churches combined with parents and the state and the wider community to ensure their 'unwanted' children were dealt with, meaning, in many cases, adopted. For a long time, many died in infancy.

In Sweden, ruled continuously by the Social Democrats from the 1930s until the 1970s, 60,000 women were sterilised during those decades, in some cases because they had children out of wedlock. The same thing happened in parts of America.

Attitude

The attitude goes back a long way. One of the great philosophers and founders of modernity, Immanuel Kant, was particularly harsh about children born outside of marriage.

Kant, who lived in the 18th Century, said: "A child that comes into the world apart from marriage is born outside the law (for the law is marriage) and therefore outside the protection of the law. It has, as it were, stolen into the commonwealth (like contraband merchandise), so that the commonwealth can ignore its existence (since it rightly should not have come to exist in this way), and can therefore also ignore its annihilation."

Countries like Ireland

Denying nature's ties



and Britain ran networks of mother and baby homes. These had mostly closed by the 1970s because of changing attitudes to unwed motherhood and also because of abortion.

Several former residents of mother and baby homes here in Ireland spoke out in favour of keeping the Eighth Amendment on the grounds that had abortion been available in Ireland in decades past, they might have been aborted rather than placed for adoption.

“In the past, it was believed that the best way to practice adoption was to achieve a ‘clean break’ between the child and its natural family”

Walter Francis and a man named 'Patrick', who spent part of their lives in the Tuam mother and baby home, told this newspaper last year: "We wish to see the Eighth Amendment retained in the Constitution. If abortion was legal back in the day, we mightn't be here today."

In the past, it was believed that the best way to practice adoption was to achieve a 'clean break' between the child and its natural family. Sometimes the mother wanted this. She wanted to be able to get on with her life. Often, she would go on to marry and have more children and did not want to think about the past.

But a lot of the time

it was the mother's own parents who wanted the 'clean break'. They received the full cooperation of the Church and the State. The baby was often removed forcibly from the mother. She might have signed a form authorising the adoption but it frequently happened under duress.

Furthermore, the birth certificate of the child was sometimes illegally altered. The name of the biological mother was removed, and the names of the adoptive parents written into the birth cert instead. That is, they were recorded as being the child's natural parents.

The child might never be told and would grow up never knowing his or her origins, something that is totally wrong and unjustifiable by any standards. The fact that the practice was illegal even at the time shows this. The realisation that this is wrong didn't simply dawn on us until recently.

Shamefully, the Churches and the State, and every other adoption agency too, cooperated in this terrible practice.

The spotlight has turned again to what we once did because Children's Minister, Katherine Zappone, last week announced that at least 126 children adopted out by the St Patrick's Guild adoption society between 1946 and 1969 had their birth certs illegally changed.

Minister Zappone said: "This is a very serious and sensitive issue. People have the right to know of their true origins and, where we have clear evidence, I believe we have an obligation to tell the people affected. Some

may know already, but for others it will be entirely new and very difficult information indeed."

Various commentators have spoken about how these children, the youngest

of whom is now 49, have been robbed of their identities, robbed because they were uprooted from the natural families and never told of that fact, robbed because people like to know their origins and know where they are from.

There is, however, a huge contradiction at work because a growing number of countries today allow birth certificates to be deliberately falsified where a couple or an individual have used donor sperm or a donor egg to bring a child into the world.

Donations

A couple might arrive at a maternity hospital to have a baby and never tell the doctors that they conceived the child via sperm donation and that the man is not, in fact, the biological father of the child.

The Children and Family Relationships Act, passed in 2015, allows birth certs to be altered so that the couple or individual who have a child using donor sperm (say) are recorded as the child's parents. The name of the

sperm donor father or egg donor mother is supposed to be recorded, but the child has no right to obtain that information until the age of 18, and then is quite likely to find out that the donor lives overseas. (Much of the donor sperm used here comes from Denmark.)

A State that permits this does not really think the natural ties are important and worries little about the possible identity problems the donor-conceived child might encounter in later life.

This means a lot of our current and justifiable anger at past adoption practice shows a huge double standard at work.

The fact is, the natural ties do matter and should never be broken without very good cause. When they are broken, the child must, whenever possible, have a meaningful way of finding their natural parents again and developing a relationship with them. Anything less is an attack on the rights of the child, something our Children's Minister ought to appreciate.

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- Sunday Times columnist, Brenda Power.

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- Ray D'Arcy



Don't write off the 'bouncy castle Catholics'

There are some grains of hope for the Irish Church in a new survey, writes **Greg Daly**

Perhaps one of the great ironies of the huge donations from the New York-based Open Society Foundation (OSF) to help three groups push for a referendum in Ireland on repealing our constitutional protections for the unborn is that in some ways the groups appear to have been pushing at an open door. It is, after all, difficult to

interpret otherwise a two-to-one referendum result, especially one in which exit polls suggest three quarters of voters had long known how they intended to vote. It's striking that according to the RTÉ exit poll on the day of the referendum, just 30% of the 3,779 voters surveyed by Behaviour & Attitudes said they attended religious services at least weekly, with this figure rising to 44% when those attending at least monthly are included.

And yet, according to comments on Ireland in a leaked OSF strategy document for the 2016-2019 period: "With one of the most restrictive abortion laws in the world, a win there could impact other strongly Catholic countries in Europe, such as Poland, and provide much-needed proof that change is possible, even

in highly conservative places."

Strongly Catholic? Highly conservative? After the 2015 referendum on redefining marriage went through with 62.1% support on a turnout of 60.5%? In hindsight, should anyone have been surprised that 66.4% of voters in a 64.1% turnout should have been willing to vote in such a way that the Oireachtas is free to introduce abortion on demand?

Curiously, however, if new numbers from the Washington, DC-based Pew Research Centre are to be trusted, Ireland still remains one of the most Christian countries in Western Europe, both in terms of religious practice and in terms of religious identification, with the latter being a surprisingly meaningful phenomenon even among those who do not regularly practice the Faith to which they claim affiliation.

The Pew survey quizzed almost 25,000 adults across 15 countries last year, and found that while in a typical Western European country just 64% of adults identify as Christian with only 18% of adults saying they attend Christian religious services at least monthly, in Ireland these figures stand at 80% and 34%, respectively.

According to the poll, only Italy and Portugal report higher rates of church attendance, with the former being 40% and the latter 35%.

The Irish figures compare reasonably closely with 2016 Census figures suggesting that 83.5% of those living in the State identify as Christian, with the vast majority of these – 78.8% – identifying as Catholic.

“According to the poll, only Italy and Portugal report higher rates of church attendance”

They also invite comparisons with European Social Survey figures that found in 2016, for example, that 36% of Irish people attend religious services at least weekly, a figure that across 18 European countries was second only to Poland, with just 12.8% of people typically attending services at least weekly across the 18 countries.

In some respects, the Pew figures are unsurprising, though the questions they ask are fascinating. Do people see themselves as spiritual,



religious, both or neither? Do people believe in God as described in the Bible, in some other 'higher power' or no higher power at all? Does science make religion unnecessary in your life? Does religion cause more harm than good? Do you believe in fate, astrology, the 'evil eye', yoga as a spiritual practice, or reincarnation? Are you proud of your national identity? Your European identity? Your Christian identity? Should the number of immigrants to your country be increased, stay the same, or be reduced? Is Islam fundamentally compatible or incompatible with your country's national values?

There isn't scope here to analyse the report's findings in full – the 168-page report can be read at pewforum.org – but it's worth skimming through some of the above questions.

In Ireland 23% of people reject spirituality altogether, while 34% believe in fate, 20% in astrology, 19% in the 'evil eye', 24% in yoga as a spiritual practice and 20% in reincarnation.

Proud

Religion is thought to do more harm than good by 33% of Irish people, which doesn't stop 72% of people being proud of their Christian identity; 85% of Irish people are, meanwhile, proud of being Irish and 72% are proud of being European.

It seems 47% of Irish people would like to see immigration stay at current levels, with 15% wanting it increased and 31% wanting it decreased,

while 41% see Islam as incompatible with Irish values and 45% believe there is no fundamental contradiction between Irish values and Islam.

Across Western Europe as a whole, the survey found self-identified Christians to be more likely than religiously unaffiliated people to express negative views of immigrants, Muslims and Jews, raising questions of whether and how a constant stream of Church exhortations to 'welcome the stranger' are being heard.

“99% of Ireland's church-attending Christians intend to raise their children in the Faith”

Asked whether they would be inclined to agree with the statement "science makes religion unnecessary in my life", 63% of Ireland's religiously unaffiliated people say this is the case, a figure that stands at just 25% of non-practising Christians and 17% of practising ones.

When asked if they believe Churches and other religious organisations play an important role in helping the poor and needy, 78% of church-attending Christians said yes, with 56% of non-practising Christians agreeing, though just 40% of religiously unaffiliated people apparently thought so.

Perhaps the remarkable thing here is that all three numbers are so low. Do people not think of Trócaire,

the Society of St Vincent de Paul, Focus Ireland, the Peter McVerry Trust, the Capuchin Day Centre, Crosscare, Merchants Quay Ireland and so many others as religious organisations?

At any rate, this certainly suggests that there's scope for our religiously-rooted charities to do more to remind people of the soil from which their good deeds spring, not least as this could prove a powerful means of sharing the Gospel.

Asked whether the State should support religious values and beliefs, it seems 58% of church-attending Christians say 'Yes', as do 37% of non-practising Christians, against a perhaps surprisingly high 14% of religiously unaffiliated people.

On the face of it, this suggests that barely two in five Irish people believe in Government support for religious policies, which might not bode well for continued State subsidisation of the country's network of religiously-owned schools, but digging deeper into the data reveals something very curious.

Nobody should be surprised to learn that 99% of Ireland's church-attending Christians intend to raise their children in the Faith, according to the poll, with the remainder perhaps being those who are married to non-Christians, but it's striking that among those who identify as Christian without attending services, 92% are raising their children as Christians while only 5% are raising them without any religious affiliation.

Only Germany and Italy match Ireland in their percentage of non-practising Christians raising their children to be Christian, while no other country has as few non-practising Christians raising their children outside the Faith altogether.

This is the kind of detail that should give those most inclined to be critical of 'lukewarm' Christians or to dismiss them in Communion season as 'bouncy castle Catholics' pause for thought.

Yes, Matthew's Gospel indeed has Jesus saying "he who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters", but Mark and Luke, it is worth remembering, records Our Lord as saying "anyone who is not against us is for us".

Our grounds for hope may be slight, but they're real for all that.

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The sacraments cannot be treated as mere rituals that can be approached regardless of one's beliefs or morality, writes **Fr John McKeever**

Many have described the landslide in the abortion referendum result as 'a wake-up call for 'the Church', presumably meaning 'the hierarchy'. However, the Church in reality is all the baptised, including those who rarely if ever practise their Faith.

While bishops and those charged with catechesis will have to re-examine how the teachings of the Church are communicated more clearly and successfully, all those who regard themselves as Catholics – laypeople, religious and clergy – will also have to reflect on what it means to be part of the Church, especially in the context of participation in its sacramental life.

The sacraments are our richest treasure. The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls them "the masterworks of God" in which Christ himself acts powerfully to communicate his grace to souls.

To benefit from them, however, we must celebrate them worthily and with Faith. Bishop Kevin Doran expressed this mildly but clearly when he invited those who voted 'Yes' to come to Confession, as did Fr Damien Quigley in Newry when he sought to engage pastorally with a couple preparing for the sacrament of marriage.

The visceral reaction in both cases shows the need to pause and reflect on what it means to receive a sacrament.

The Catholic Church is first and foremost a community of Faith. It

“Our current situation is a wake-up call for many people to learn (and priests to teach) that the sacraments cannot be treated as mere rituals that can be approached regardless of one's beliefs or morality”

The Church wants to seek out and save the lost, not exclude them



received the gift of this Faith from Christ himself and must preserve it intact. To receive a sacrament fruitfully, especially Holy Communion, one must also share in this Faith.

Our current situation is a wake-up call for many people to learn (and priests to teach) that the sacraments cannot be treated as mere rituals that can be approached regardless of one's beliefs or morality.

“Those who publicly and obstinately promote abortion...have possibly incurred the penalty of automatic excommunication”

While the Church teaches many matters of Faith and morals, there's a small number of core teachings which one must accept in order to be a full member of this faith community. To obstinately deny any of them is heresy.

These teachings, founded on the Word of God and taught by the Church to be divinely revealed, are contained in the Church's official 'Profession of Faith'. Prior to his election as Benedict XVI, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger stated that among those teachings which must be believed

and held by all the faithful is "the doctrine of the grave immorality of direct and voluntary killing of an innocent human being." To vote in favour of abortion is thus clearly incompatible with the Catholic faith.

Reconciliation

That is why those who voted 'Yes' need to be reconciled with God and the Church through Confession before receiving Holy Communion (Canon 916).

Moreover, those who publicly and obstinately promote abortion, whether by writing, speech or posting on social media, have possibly incurred the penalty of automatic excommunication (Canon 1364) if they acted freely and knew the gravity of the offence and the Church's penalty for heresy (Canons 1321-1324).

An excommunicated person cannot celebrate or receive the sacraments, nor can they hold any office or ministry within the Church (Canon 1331).

If someone publicly advocated or promoted abortion, the only way a priest could determine whether they were excommunicated or not would be to meet them and discuss their thinking and motivation on the matter.

His aim in such a meeting would be to help them recognise the truth of the Lord's teaching on the

sanctity of human life and be reconciled with God and the Church so that they could indeed continue to receive the sacraments. After the example of Christ the Good

Shepherd, his aim would always be to seek out and save the lost, not to exclude them.

Regrettably, however, should the person persist

in rejecting God's word in this matter, simple honesty would demand that they not participate in the sacraments until such time, with the help of prayer and God's grace, they return to the fullness of the Faith.

The Church more than ever needs intentional disciples. Without the intentionality, one inevitably loses the disciple. By renewing the Church's ancient and constant discipline regarding access to the sacraments may we stir up again that sense of intentionality so that this time of crisis can become a time of genuine renewal.

Fr John McKeever is assistant Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Armagh.

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Out&About

Armagh launch

DOWN: Enjoying a tune at Dromantine Conference Centre are (l-r): Martin Hughes, Niamh Hughes, Aoife Hughes, Archbishop Eamon Martin, Cormac Hughes, Michéal Hughes, Annette Hughes and KIELTY HUGHES at the Launch of World Meeting of Families Festival Armagh. Photo: www.LiamMcArdle.com



DUBLIN: Fr Tom O’Keeffe, retired parish priest of Cabinteely, celebrates the 58th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood which took place last week. Fr Tom is pictured with parishioners Barbara Ann Mullen and Jim Kirwin.



KERRY: Rev. Phyllis Jones, Richard Swindell, Ellen Knapp, Helen Martin and her grandchild from the Church of Ireland community in Castlegregory stand outside St Brendan’s Church in Killiney. The community have linked with the Diocese of Kerry to share stories for the Horizons Radio Kerry religious and social Sunday morning programme.



CARLOW: Bishop Denis Nulty celebrates Mass with the Poor Clares in Carlow on the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



DUBLIN: The Abbey Group – (l-r) Katie Mooney, Ylenia Parolin and Martina Cina, with Sinead Christian of Trócaire, Aurelie Gegout, Jennifer McGuire and Ray Queeney – present Trócaire with a cheque for €2,000 for the Water Fund, which aims to bring clean drinking water to communities in southern Zimbabwe.

Edited by **Chai Brady**
chai@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



▲ **WICKLOW:** Back row (l-r) Fr Bernard Kennedy, Declan Curry, Rosie Ambrose, Emma King, Mary Conroy, accompany Holy Communicants from St Patrick's National School in Curtlestown in the front row: (l-r) Ben Austin, Vincenzo Di Biasi, Euan Kocikowski, Simon Coleman, Jamie Smith, Tomás O'Conrí, Sophie Hassett, Rachel Farrell, Sophie Quinn, Isabel Gordon and Kaitlyn Molloy.

► **DUBLIN:** Trócaire campaigners highlight the work of human rights defenders at Trócaire's Bloom 2018 garden. Trócaire won a Gold medal for their garden, which was designed by Barry Kavanagh. Photo: Garry Walsh



◀ **DERRY:** The Chorale, the University of Notre Dame's choir, visit Guildhall and meet with Deputy Mayor Cllr John Boyle.

IN SHORT

Church-charity Trócaire's bloomin' good time

Trócaire has won gold at Bloom 2018 for its garden that brings to life the stories of human rights defenders in Palestine, Guatemala and Zimbabwe.

'Resistance, a Garden for Trócaire' tells the stories of courageous people Trócaire works with who speak-up in defence of people, land and the environment.

The garden won gold in the medium-size Concept Garden category.

Trócaire's garden of resistance represents the plight of human rights defenders who are risking their lives and safety to protect their homes, way of life and communities from exploitation and eviction.

The garden is broken up into three areas of geographical representation; Palestine, Guatemala and Zimbabwe. Each section represents how human rights defenders in those countries are standing up for people at threat of eviction and violence.

The Zimbabwe section illustrates a water resource being polluted by a mining company, while the

Guatemala area is dominated by a scorched piece of land to represent how indigenous communities are evicted to make way for private businesses.

The Palestine section features a stunning mural by Ciaran 'Yohan' Brennan of an Israeli man and Palestinian woman standing together to protect an olive tree, a symbol of peace in the region. The garden is surrounded by Irish plants, representing people in Ireland embracing the people who are at the forefront of the struggle for justice in Palestine, Guatemala and Zimbabwe.

A digital screen depicts

those who have lost their lives while defending both human and environmental rights.

Designer Barry Kavanagh said: "I'm delighted to win a gold for not only myself but for Trócaire and all the people they support," he said. "I'm passionate about the environment and after reading the Trócaire brief I couldn't turn it down. I'm grateful for the support of my friends, family and those who worked on the garden with me in the short timeframe."

Bloom, Ireland's largest garden festival, was held in Dublin's Phoenix Park from Thursday May 31 to Monday June 4.

CLARE

Nurses for Lourdes: The Annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes needs nurses to help with the sick during this year's pilgrimage from June 26 to July 1. Retired or active nurses are equally welcome and will help to give the sick a memorable experience. Volunteers can contact Michael: 086 381 3677

CORK

Annual Novena in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus began in Mogeely Church on Thursday, May 31, continuing until Friday, June 8. Rosary Novena Prayer with reflection and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament each evening at 8pm. Mass celebrated on final night of Novena.

Cloyne Diocesan Pioneer Total Abstinence Association's annual Mass will be held on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, Friday June 8, from 7.30-8.30pm in the Church of the Immaculate Conception.

DUBLIN

An afternoon of prayer will be held in the Church of the Mother of Divine Grace, Ballygall Road East, on Saturday June 9 from 2-5pm. Fr Thaddeus Doyle will conduct the event. Contact: 01 8379596.

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

Sacred Heart Novena at St John Vianney on Ardlea Road from May 31-June 8. Mass with invited preacher at 10am each day and at 7.30 pm on Friday, June 1 and 8, also at Sunday, Masses at 6pm, 9.30am and 11.30am. Holy Hour on Thursdays, May 31 and June 7 at 7.30 pm. Contact: 01847 4123.

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

FERMANAGH

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

KILKENNY

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

LIMERICK

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

LOUTH

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

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

St Anthony's Novena from Tuesday June 5-13 with Fr Liam McCarthy OFM in St Peter's Church, West Street in Drogheda. Masses: 10.30am and 7.30pm daily except Saturday, June 9 which is 10.30am and 6.15pm. Sunday: Mass at 11am and Holy Hour at 7.30pm.

MAYO

The next Latin Mass in the Extraordinary Form will take place in the Parish Church Knock on Sunday June 10 at 5.30pm.

MEATH

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

OFFALY

Clonmacnois Prayer Vigil in Cluain Chiarain Prayer Centre on Friday June 15 and every third Friday. Mass at 9pm. Adoration and Prayers follow until 2.10am. Enquiries Dave: 085-7746763.

ROSCOMMON

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

Annual Jubilee of Marriages takes place on June 10 from 3pm-8pm in the Sacred Heart Church, Parish Office on Abbey Street, followed by an optional celebratory meal at the Abbey Hotel. Further info: 090 6626298 or email: rosparof@eircom.net

TIPPERARY

A day of prayer for families at Rackett Hall Hotel, Roscrea. Date: Saturday, June 9; Time 9.30am-5pm. Rosaries, Confession, Mass, Adoration, guest speakers, healing ministry. For more info, please call 061 380382.

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

WICKLOW

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

Corpus Christi Procession and picnic unites families in Trim

Chai Brady

At a time when Catholics are feeling "disheartened" the World Meeting of Families comes at no better time according to a parish priest in Meath after a special family event.

Trim and Boardsmill Parish's annual Corpus Christi Procession was held on Sunday last, the Feast of Corpus Christi.

The procession this year had a distinctly family theme as the parish are preparing for the WMOF and the visit of Pope Francis in August. Fr Seán Henry told *The Irish Catholic*.

For this reason the people of Trim and Boardsmill were joined by priests and parishioners from the surrounding parishes in the Athboy Deanery last Sunday.

The procession, held in brilliant sunshine, was attended by a few hundred people and many children who made their First Holy Communion joined in.

The procession began with prayers in St Patrick's Church, Fr Warren Collier, CC was cross bearer followed by the First Communion children and parents, Special Ministers of the Eucharist and



Readers and parishioners. Members of the Knights of St Columbanus were present and walked alongside Fr Seán Henry, parish priest who carried the Blessed Sacrament. Other priests present were Fr Pat O'Connor, the Vicar of the Deanery, Fr Michael Whitaker, Fr Michael Meade and Fr Michael Kilmartin.

Procession

The procession made its way through the extensive Church grounds and returned to the church for Benediction. Trim Church Choir under the direction of Miriam Mooney led the singing, and prayers were led by members of the readers.

"Even though times have changed, I think the Corpus Christi procession is a reminder to all of us that we are members of the Catholic family and we are drawn together as Jesus intended us



A view of St John's Castle in Trim as the family picnic was underway in the grounds of St Patrick's Church.

to by the real presence," Fr Henry said.

"As a family we are invited to sit around and share as the first disciples did with the Lord. The bread of life which we share is the gift of Jesus Himself. He gives Himself

to us that we might come together. The invitation to adore and partake of the Body of Christ is to have life in us and share it with our neighbour."

After the procession people sat on the grass and shared

food and water. Many families brought picnic baskets with them, they sat down together and enjoyed themselves. Refreshments were available in the Parish Centre organised by the Parish Pastoral Council. Chairs were provided for older people who sat in the sunshine.

Music was provided by local musicians and singers, a carnival atmosphere prevailed, and tourists to Trim Castle stopped and enjoyed the music as well. It was a beautiful day, and all who came enjoyed the occasion but most of all the coming together was praised by all.

"I think the World Meeting of Families and the visit of Pope Francis comes at a good time for our Catholic Community. Many faithful Catholics are disheartened, some are floundering in a sea of doubt and disappointment. We all need to realise that we are not a national Church but part of the universal Catholic Family. It is a privilege for the Irish Church to host this meeting and in particular to welcome Pope Francis our Leader and Spiritual Father on earth. I am confident he will give us a lift and inspire us to steady the ship and follow our Lord as he calls us to do."

KandLe Diocese calls families to join in Knock pilgrimage

Families in particular are encouraged to take part in Kildare and Leighlin diocesan pilgrimage to Knock Shrine as the diocese prepares for the World Meeting of Families this August.

Organisers have said they hope that, as in previous years, the diocese will be represented with "as many pilgrims as possible" travelling from parishes on June 3.

The notice says: "As we prepare for the World Meeting of Families and the visit of Pope Francis in August our pilgrimage might be promoted as an opportunity for families from around the diocese to make the pilgrimage to our National Shrine. Every parish is encouraged to make every effort to participate in our Diocesan pilgrimage."

Useful information for pilgrims include:

- Buses travelling from various parishes around the diocese will arrive into Knock between 11am and 12.30pm depending on time of departure.
- Upon arrival: pilgrims

may use this time for lunch, shopping, availing of Confession, visiting the Chapel of Adoration or making the Way of the Cross.

- Anointing of the Sick takes place at 2.30pm.
- Pilgrimage Mass takes place at 3pm and will be celebrated by Bishop Denis Nulty with the Diocesan Choir in attendance and led by Fr Liam Lawton.
- Ceremonies are usually concluded by 5pm.
- Please advise pilgrims travelling with you about the time of departure.
- Pilgrims are invited to bring their parish banner and assign someone to carry it in the Rosary procession. The person with the banner should make their way to the basilica sacristy by 2.15pm for instructions. Please contact Faith Development Services to make arrangements regarding your parish banner.

For further queries contact Fr Ger Ahern, Baltinglass on 087-6288891 or email aherngerard@eircom.net



Ciara Nichol and Eugene Duff, members of Ashbourne-Donaghmore Parish Pastoral Council, along with Fr Derek Darby presented a donation of €2,150 to Niall O'Shea, Head of Financial Development and Brenda Drumm, WMOF Communications Manager in support of the Solidarity Fund of the World Meeting of Families.

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

email chai@irishcatholic.ie • 01 6874020
Twitter @ChaiBradyIC

Wondering what to do on Father's Day?

Excitement is ramping up for a day of fun in Innovate Wexford Park with music and sports for all the family in preparation for the World Meeting of Families on Father's Day.

A number of bands will be taking part and plenty of sporting activities for dads, mums and kids have been arranged. Participants are invited to take part in a fitness challenge designed by hurling manager Davy Fitzgerald, or try a penalty shootout while meeting some of our top Wexford sports people like Lee Chin and Mark Fanning.

Take a tour of the dressing rooms, as the kids talk to Mickey, Minnie Mouse and Paws or play with Bricks for Kidz Lego, or attend story-telling or even get their faces painted.

For the artistic there will be flower arranging and musical entertainment.

The event in Innovate Wexford Park takes place on Sunday, June 17 at 2.30pm to 4.30pm for an afternoon of fun, frolics and sporting challenges with free ice cream for the children!

For further details contact Fr Jim Fegan – the Ferns Diocesan Delegate for WMOF2018 – at +353 (87) 239 5087.

Archdiocese announces big event to kick-off WMOF

To launch the World Meeting of Families the Archdiocese of Armagh and Armagh City will host a kick off opening festival on Tuesday, August 21, starting at 5pm sharp in the Shambles Market.

Free to all, the festival promises to be a joyful, fun celebration of family, of all ages and includes live music, dance, bouncy castles, face painting and a other fun activities.

At 7pm there'll be a procession from the Shambles Market to St Patrick's Cathedral, followed by more music and Evening Prayer from 7.30-8.15pm.

For more details contact Mrs Sharon Dunne, the Armagh Diocesan Delegate for WMOF 2018 at: Tel: 00353 (0) 42 933 6393 or Mob: 00353 (0) 87 641 7334
Email: dunnesharon.pastoralcentre@gmail.com



STUDY GUIDE

Blueprint for the Church



Chapter 1 Background and context

It is almost 50 years since the closing of the Second Vatican Council, when bishops from all over the world gathered and drew up a 'charter' for communicating the unchanging message of the Gospel in a language and manner that would touch our hearts and minds and call us to conversion.

In the intervening period, there have been many calls for Church renewal. Apart from the documents of the Council itself, however, hardly any other papal document has received as much attention, whether inside or outside the Catholic Church, as Pope Francis's Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* (*The Joy of the Gospel*), published in 2013.

With *The Joy of the Gospel* we encounter the distinctive approach of Pope Francis and the direction in which he wishes to lead the Church. Pope Francis' open, straightforward and 'down to earth' style of communication, visible at his weekly audiences at the Vatican and in the reports from his daily masses, has made *The Joy of the Gospel* an international bestseller.

A Pope committed to conversion and renewal

The Synod that preceded the publication of *The Joy of the Gospel* took place from October 7-28, 2012 in Rome with the theme: 'The New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Christian Faith'. It was convened by Pope Benedict XVI and was attended by almost 350 bishops, heads of religious orders, experts and observers.

The Joy of the Gospel is generally referred to as a Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, but this is not entirely accurate because nowhere does the document describe itself as such. Pope Francis says in paragraph 16 that it follows on from the Synod, and draws upon the Synod's work, but officially it is an "Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father, Francis, to the Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithful on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World".

“Brimming with enthusiasm for mission, the Pope exudes passion for the transmission of the Faith on every page”

Pope Francis was not at the Synod on the New Evangelisation, and while he clearly draws upon its conclusions, he also draws extensively upon his previous work among the Latin American Bishops, and especially a charter for renewal they

With just weeks until Pope Francis is in Dublin for the World Meeting of Families, attention is focusing on his teachings and what his message will be to the Church in Ireland. Over the next four weeks, *The Irish Catholic* will publish study guides to the Pope's landmark documents – this week, *Blueprint for the Church*.



drew up in 2007 at a major conference at Aparecida in Brazil.

At Aparecida, the two key issues for renewal were identified as replenishing the vigour and enthusiasm of pastoral workers, priests and lay, and putting the entire Church on a missionary footing. As we will see, these are also the two key objectives of *The Joy of the Gospel*. Pope Francis is also heavily influenced by an earlier post-synodal exhortation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Paul VI, 1975), which he has described as "the greatest pastoral document that has ever been written to this day" and as having not lost any of its timeliness. It is no accident that his exhortation

bears a similar name to this earlier one.

The key word in the subtitle, "the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world", is proclamation. The focus is upon the joy of proclaiming the Gospel, the urgency of doing so, an identification of the obstacles that prevent us proclaiming the Good News, and concrete proposals in regard to how these might be tackled. For people engaged in the mission of the Church these proposals are radical, challenging and potentially life-changing.

Brimming with enthusiasm for mission, the Pope exudes passion for the transmission of the Faith on

every page. Littered with colloquial phrases, metaphors and musings, *The Joy of the Gospel* is written very much in Pope Francis' distinctly personal style.

Pope Francis is interested in identifying and pointing the way in terms of the transformation, personal and structural, we must all undergo if the Church is to remain faithful to its mission of proclaiming the Gospel. He outlines several concrete guidelines, which "can encourage and guide the whole Church in a new phase of evangelisation, one marked by enthusiasm and vitality".

In this context, the Pope discusses at length the following questions:

- the reform of the Church in her missionary outreach;
- the temptations faced by pastoral workers;
- the Church, understood as the entire People of God which evangelises;
- the homily and its preparation;
- the inclusion of the poor in society; peace and dialogue within society;
- (the) spiritual motivations for mission.

Chapter 1 focuses on the missionary renewal of the Church, including the papacy. It is a call to concentrate on the essentials of faith. When we look at the Church through the lens of mission, certain priorities come clearly into focus and other matters we come to recognise as being of secondary importance.

Chapter 2 provides in the first part an overview of the realities affecting the majority of people on our planet who live in poverty, and economic and social exclusion. It is a prophetic call to all Catholics to solidarity and shared commitment. The second part of this chapter details the temptations faced by pastoral workers that weaken commitment and undermine vocation.

“The focus is upon the joy of proclaiming the Gospel, the urgency of doing so...”

Chapter 3 takes up the Exhortation's subtitle: it is about proclaiming the Gospel, a proclamation that is intended to reach all, and in which all Christians have a part to play.

Chapter 4 explores the social dimensions of evangelisation and how the Good News challenges injustices and social exclusion. Here Pope Francis also outlines principles for advancing dialogue and mutual understanding that have developed in the course of his ministry.

Chapter 5, the final chapter, challenges us to have a living, spirit-filled faith, open and responsive to the Church's mission, and reflects on Mary as the Mother of Evangelisation.

The Joy of the Gospel is a truly remarkable and radical document, one that ranges widely and challenges complacency at every level. It offers us powerful challenges and shows that in Francis we have a Pope who cannot be neatly slotted into narrow categories. Ultimately it is Francis' manifesto, a Magna Carta for Church renewal, a renewal underway since Vatican II but which received a new and distinctive impetus in the 2013 conclave when the cardinals elected Jorge Mario Bergoglio who took the name Francis.

» Continued on Page 16

A clergyman hears confession from Pope Francis during a penitential liturgy in St Peter's Basilica. Pope Francis surprised his liturgical adviser by going to confession during the service.



Chapter 2 Francis, in his own words

Jesus Christ

"I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day..."

The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realise that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms." (3)

Divine love and forgiveness

"How good it feels to come back to him whenever we are lost! Let me say this once more: God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy..."

"Time and time again he bears us on his shoulders. No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by (God's) boundless and unfailing love. With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, he makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew. Let us not flee from the resurrection of Jesus, let us never give up, come what will. May nothing inspire more than his life, which impels us onwards..." (3)

A permanent state of mission

"... 'today missionary activity still represents the greatest challenge for the Church' and 'the missionary task must remain foremost'. What

would happen if we were to take these words seriously? ... We 'cannot passively and calmly wait in our church buildings'; we need to move 'from a pastoral ministry of mere conservation to a decidedly missionary pastoral ministry.'" (15)

"I dream of a 'missionary option', that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelisation of today's world rather than for her self-preservation." (27)

“Frequently, we act as controllers of grace rather than its facilitators. But the Church is not a tollhouse”

"I hope that all communities will devote the necessary effort to advancing along the path of a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are. 'Mere administration' can no longer be enough. Throughout the world, let us be 'permanently in a state of mission.'" (25)

"Pastoral ministry in a missionary key seeks to abandon the complacent attitude that says: 'We have always done it this way'. I invite everyone to be bold and creative in this task of rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization in their respective communities." (33)

Invitation into the Church's sacramental life

"The Church is called to be the house

of the Father, with doors always wide open. One concrete sign of such openness is that our church doors should always be open, so that if someone, moved by the Spirit, comes there looking for God, he or she will not find a closed door. This is especially true of the sacrament which is itself 'the door': baptism..."

"The Eucharist, although it is the fullness of sacramental life, is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak. These convictions have pastoral consequences that we are called to consider with prudence and boldness..."

"Frequently, we act as controllers of grace rather than its facilitators. But the Church is not a tollhouse; it is the house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems." (47)

Conversion of the Papacy

"Since I am called to put into practice what I ask of others, I too must think about a conversion of the papacy. It is my duty, as the Bishop of Rome, to be open to suggestions which can help make the exercise of my ministry more faithful to the meaning which Jesus Christ wished to give it and to the present needs of evangelisation..."(32)

A Church of the streets

"I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security...I do not want a Church concerned with being at the centre and then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures."(49)

Overcoming defeatism

"One of the more serious temptations which stifles boldness and zeal is a defeatism which turns us into querulous and disillusioned pessimists, 'sourpusses'. Nobody can go off to battle unless he is fully convinced of victory beforehand. If we start without confidence, we have already lost half the battle and we bury our talents." (85)

Overcoming internal divisions

"It always pains me greatly to discover how some Christian communities, and even consecrated persons, can tolerate different forms of enmity, division, calumny, defamation, vendetta, jealousy and the desire to impose certain ideas at all costs, even to persecutions which appear as veritable witch hunts. Whom are we going to evangelise if this is the way we act?" (100)

The indispensable contribution of women

"The Church acknowledges the indispensable contribution which women make to society through the sensitivity, intuition and other distinctive skill sets which they, more than men, tend to possess. I think, for example, of the special concern which women show to others, which finds a particular, even if not exclusive, expression in motherhood. I readily acknowledge that many women share pastoral responsibilities with priests, helping to guide people, families and groups and offering new contributions to theological reflection. But we need to create still broader opportunities for a more incisive female presence in the Church..." (103)



Then US President Barack Obama shakes hands with Pope Francis during a private audience at the Vatican in March, 2014.

A Church which is 'poor and for the poor'

"They have much to teach us. Not only do they share in the sensus fidei, but in their difficulties they know the suffering Christ. We need to let ourselves be evangelised by them. The new evangelisation is an invitation to acknowledge the saving power at work in their lives and to put them at the centre of the Church's pilgrim way. We are called to find Christ in them, to lend our voice to their causes, but also to be their friends, to listen to them, to speak for them and to embrace the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them." (198)





"No one must say that they cannot be close to the poor because their own lifestyle demands more attention to other areas. This is an excuse commonly heard in academic, business or professional, and even ecclesial circles. While it is quite true that the essential vocation and mission of the lay faithful is to strive that earthly realities and all human activity may be transformed by the Gospel, none of us can think we are exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice..." (201)

"Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God's voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades." (2)

The Parish: community of communities

"The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration..."

"It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach..."

"We must admit, though, that the call to review and renew our parishes has not yet sufficed to bring them nearer to people, to make them environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely mission-oriented." (28)

Ecclesial movements

"Frequently they bring a new evangelising fervour and a new capacity for dialogue with the world whereby the Church is renewed..."

"But it will prove beneficial for them not to lose contact with the rich reality of the local parish and to participate readily in the overall pastoral activity of the particular Church. This kind of integration will prevent them from concentrating

only on part of the Gospel or the Church, or becoming nomads without roots." (29)

Bishops to foster communion

"The bishop must always foster this missionary communion in his diocesan Church, following the ideal of the first Christian communities, in which the believers were of one heart and one soul. To do so, he will sometimes go before his people, pointing the way and keeping their hope vibrant. At other times, he will simply be in their midst with his unassuming and merciful presence. At yet other times, he will have to walk after them, helping those who lag behind and – above all – allowing the flock to strike out on new paths." (31)

The family in crisis

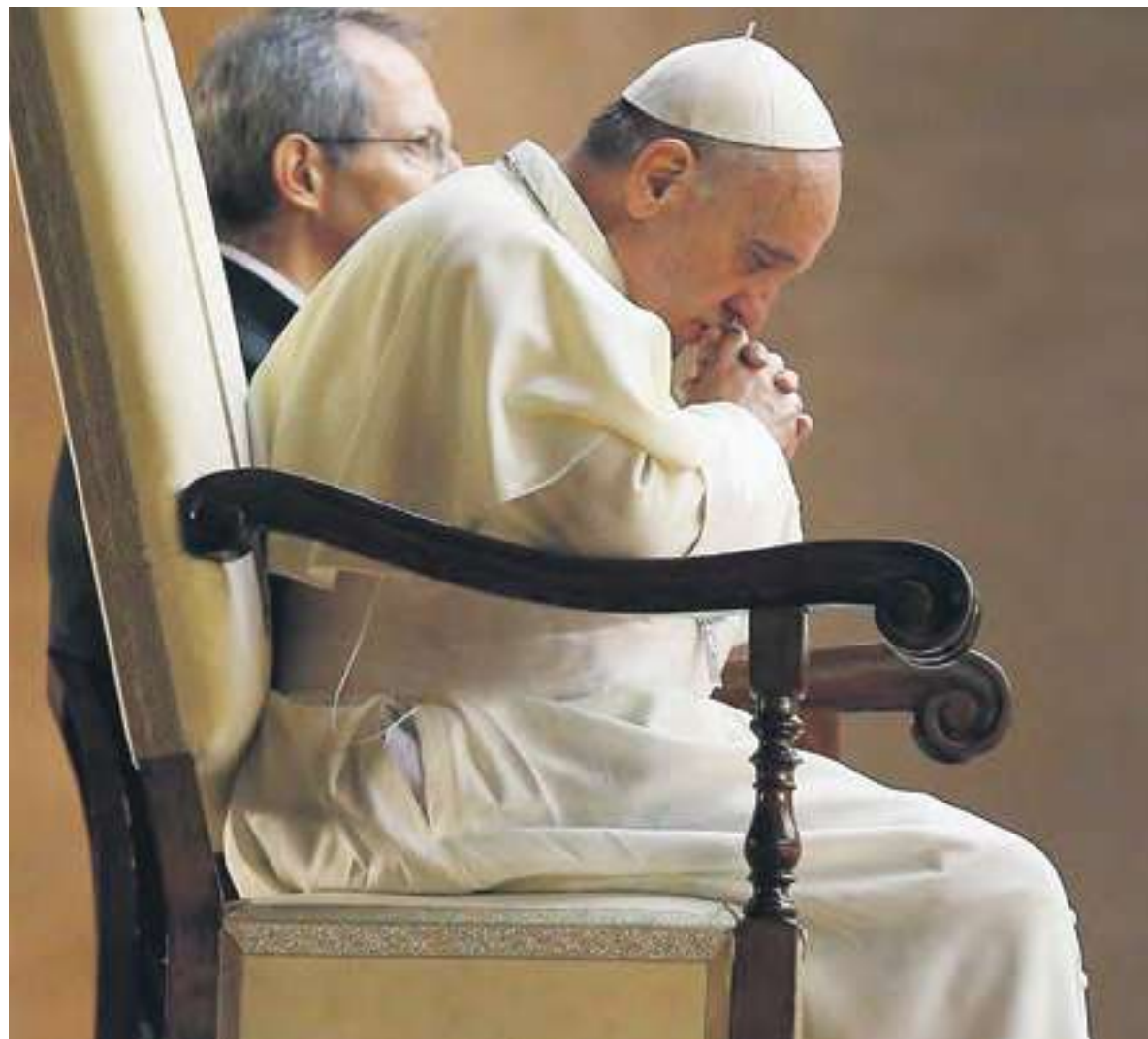
"The family is experiencing a profound cultural crisis, as are all communities and social bonds. In the case of the family, the weakening of these bonds is particularly serious because the family is the fundamental cell of society, where we learn to live with others despite our differences and to belong to one another; it is also the place where parents pass on the Faith to their children." (66)

The priesthood as service

"The ministerial priesthood is one means employed by Jesus for the service of his people, yet our great dignity derives from baptism, which is accessible to all..."

"The configuration of the priest to Christ the head – namely, as the principal source of grace – does not imply an exaltation which would set him above others..."

"The reservation of the priesthood to males, as a sign of Christ the Spouse who gives himself in the Eucharist, is not a question open to discussion, but it can prove especially divisive if sacramental power is too closely identified with power in general." (104)



The indispensable contribution of marriage

"Marriage now tends to be viewed as a form of mere emotional satisfaction that can be constructed in any way or modified at will. But the indispensable contribution of marriage to society transcends the feelings and momentary needs of the couple." (66)

Vocations

"Wherever there is life, fervour and a desire to bring Christ to others, genuine vocations will arise. Even in parishes where priests are not particularly committed or joyful, the fraternal life and fervour of

the community can awaken in the young a desire to consecrate themselves completely to God and to the preaching of the Gospel. This is particularly true if such a living communion prays insistently for vocations and courageously proposes to its young people the path of special consecration." (107)

"On the other hand, despite the scarcity of vocations, today we are increasingly aware of the need for a better process of selecting candidates to the priesthood. Seminaries cannot accept candidates on the basis of any motivation whatsoever, especially if those motivations have to do with affective insecurity or the pursuit of power, human glory

or economic well-being." (107)

Catholic education

"Catholic schools, which always strive to join their work of education with the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, are a most valuable resource for the evangelisation of culture, even in those countries and cities where hostile situations challenge us to greater creativity in our search for suitable methods." (134)

Unborn children

"Among the vulnerable for whom the Church wishes to care with particular love and concern are unborn children, the most defenceless and innocent among us. Nowadays efforts are made to deny them their human dignity and to do with them whatever one pleases, taking their lives and passing laws preventing anyone from standing in the way of this. Frequently, as a way of ridiculing the Church's effort to defend their lives, attempts are made to present her position as ideological, obscurantist and conservative. Yet this defence of unborn life is closely linked to the defence of each and every other human right. It involves the conviction that a human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development. Human beings are ends in themselves and never a means of resolving other problems..."

"Precisely because this involves the internal consistency of our message about the value of the human person, the Church cannot be expected to change her position on this question. I want to be completely honest in this regard. This is not something subject to alleged reforms or 'modernisations'. It is not 'progressive' to try to resolve prob-



lems by eliminating a human life..." (212-213)

Politics

"I ask God to give us more politicians capable of sincere and effective dialogue aimed at healing the deepest roots – and not simply the appearances – of the evils in our world! Politics, though often denigrated, remains a lofty vocation and one of the highest forms of charity, inasmuch as it seeks the common good."

"It is vital that government leaders and financial leaders take heed and broaden their horizons, working to ensure that all citizens have dignified work, education and health-care. Why not turn to God and ask him to inspire their plans? I am firmly convinced that openness to the transcendent can bring about a new political and economic mindset which would help to break down the wall of separation between the economy and the common good of society." (205)

Consumerism

"Today's economic mechanisms promote inordinate consumption, yet it is evident that unbridled consumerism combined with inequality proves doubly damaging to the social fabric." (60)

Criticising Global Indifference

"To sustain a lifestyle which excludes others, or to sustain enthusiasm for that selfish ideal, a globalisation of indifference has developed. Almost without being aware of it, we end up being incapable of feeling compassion at the outcry of the poor, weeping for other people's pain, and feeling a need to help them, as though all this were someone else's responsibility and not our own." (54)

Challenging economic injustice

"In this context, some people continue to defend trickle-down theories which assume that economic growth, encouraged by a free market, will inevitably succeed in bringing about greater justice and inclusiveness in the world..." (54)

“Nor does true peace act as a pretext for justifying a social structure which silences or appeases the poor”

"Each meaningful economic decision made in one part of the world has repercussions everywhere else; consequently, no government can act without regard for shared responsibility. Indeed, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find local solutions for enormous global problems which overwhelm local politics with difficulties to resolve. If we really want to achieve a healthy world economy, what is needed at this juncture of history is a more efficient way of interacting which, with due regard for the sovereignty of each nation, ensures the economic well-being of all countries, not just of a few." (206)



Pope Francis greets the crowd as he arrives to lead his general audience in St Peter's Square.

"Where is your brother or sister who is enslaved? Where is the brother and sister whom you are killing each day in clandestine warehouses, in rings of prostitution, in children used for begging, in exploiting undocumented labour? Let us not look the other way. There is greater complicity than we think. The issue involves everyone! This infamous network of crime is now well established in our cities, and many people have blood on their hands as a result of their comfortable and silent complicity" (211)

Against income inequality

"While the earnings of a minority are growing exponentially, so too is the gap separating the majority from the prosperity enjoyed by those happy few. This imbalance is the result of ideologies which defend the absolute autonomy of the marketplace and financial speculation..." (56)

Pope Francis washes the foot of a prison inmate during the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper at Rome's Casal del Marmo prison for minors.



Widespread corruption

"Debt and the accumulation of interest also make it difficult for countries to realise the potential of their own economies and keep citizens from enjoying their real purchasing power. To all this we can add widespread corruption and self-serving tax evasion, which have taken on worldwide dimensions." (56)

Peace

"Peace in society cannot be understood as pacification or the mere absence of violence resulting from the domination of one part of society over others. Nor does true peace act as a pretext for justifying a social structure which silences or appeases the poor, so that the more affluent can placidly support their lifestyle while others have to make do as they can..." (218)

Education

"We are living in an information-

driven society which bombards us indiscriminately with data – all treated as being of equal importance – and which leads to remarkable superficiality in the area of moral discernment. In response, we need to provide an education which teaches critical thinking and encourages the development of mature moral values." (64)

"Universities are outstanding environments for articulating and developing (an) evangelising commitment in an interdisciplinary and integrated way. Catholic schools, which always strive to join their work of education with the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, are a most valuable resource for the evangelisation of culture, even in those countries and cities where hostile situations challenge us to greater creativity in our search for suitable methods." (134)

Being prophetic

"The dignity of the human person

and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges. When these values are threatened, a prophetic voice must be raised." (218)

Prayer

"...without prayer all our activity risks being fruitless and our message empty. Jesus wants evangelisers who proclaim the good news not only with words, but above all by a life transfigured by God's presence." (259)

"Without prolonged moments of adoration, of prayerful encounter with the word, of sincere conversation with the Lord, our work easily becomes meaningless; we lose energy as a result of weariness and difficulties, and our fervour dies out. The Church urgently needs the deep breath of prayer, and to my great joy groups devoted to prayer and intercession, the prayerful reading of God's word and the perpetual adoration of the Eucharist are growing at every level of ecclesial life. Even so, 'we must reject the temptation to offer a privatised and individualistic spirituality which ill accords with the demands of charity, to say nothing of the implications of the incarnation'. There is always the risk that some moments of prayer can become an excuse for not offering one's life in mission; a privatised lifestyle can lead Christians to take refuge in some false forms of spirituality." (262)

Chapter 3 Understanding Pope Francis' Approach

First, proclaim God's saving love

Following the path set by the Second Vatican Council, *The Joy of the Gospel* confronts the contemporary realities of modern life and identi-

fies both the opportunities and the obstacles these present for Christian proclamation today.

We cannot underestimate the significance of the fact that the Church is now being led by someone from outside of Europe, the first time this has happened in almost thirteen hundred years. The majority of the world's Catholics now live in Africa and Latin America; they are poor and live in cities, often without even the basics in terms of education and health-care. Pope Francis' approach is understandably heavily influenced by his experience of being a pastor in the developing world.

Pope Francis' approach to evangelisation is pragmatic. As a son of Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, and as a faithful servant of the Church, he deeply understands and accepts what is required to live the Christian life faithfully. At the same time, as a priest and a pastor with decades of practical pastoral experience and insight into the realities and complexities of the human condition, and furthermore, as a man of deep personal prayer, he has a keen sense of what 'works', and doesn't 'work', in enabling people to encounter Christ and live their lives according to the Gospel.

“We need to be realistic and not assume that our audience understands the full background to what we are saying”

As Pope Francis sees it, God's love and mercy are not 'bargaining chips' to be used in the battle to win people's compliance with the demands of the Gospel. We have to speak of the demands of the Gospel in a context. That context is the mercy and love of God. This precedes our response to the moral demands of the Gospel and enables our fidelity, a fidelity which, even at its best, remains flawed and fragile.

Early on in *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis explains that to place the emphasis on the prior gift of God's unconditional mercy and love is exactly what he means when he asks us to transpose all our activity into 'a missionary key':

"If we attempt to put all things in a missionary key, this will also affect the way we communicate the message. In today's world of instant communication and occasionally biased media coverage, the message we preach runs a greater risk of being distorted or reduced to some of its secondary aspects. In this way certain issues which are part of the Church's moral teaching are taken out of the context which gives them their meaning. The biggest problem is when the message we preach then seems identified with those secondary aspects which, important as they are, do not in and of themselves convey the heart of Christ's message." (34)

Begin with the essentials

Essentially, Pope Francis' view seems to be that there has been poor and inadequate formation in Christian doctrine, especially for adults. More



Pope Francis embraces Vinicio Riva, 53, during his general audience in St Peter's Square. Riva, who is afflicted with neurofibromatosis, said receiving the Pope's embrace was like being in paradise.

fundamentally, there has not been sufficient initiation in to a deep and personal encounter with the living Christ, an encounter which gives the moral demands of the Gospel their legitimacy and renders them compelling.

"We need to be realistic and not assume that our audience understands the full background to what we are saying, or is capable of relating what we say to the very heart of the Gospel which gives it meaning, beauty and attractiveness." (34)

"Pastoral ministry in a missionary style is not obsessed with the disjointed transmission of a multitude of doctrines to be insistently imposed. When we adopt a pastoral goal and a missionary style which would actually reach everyone without exception or exclusion, the message has to concentrate on the essentials, on what is most beautiful, most grand, most appealing and at the same time most necessary. The message is simplified, while losing none of its depth and truth, and thus becomes all the more forceful and

convincing." (35)

Since the Council, papal teaching has stressed that evangelisation must focus on bringing about a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

Pope Francis stresses repeatedly the centrality of bringing about this personal encounter repeatedly in *The Joy of the Gospel*.

This encounter is mediated in and through the sacramental life of the faith community, but also in a particular way in the encounter with the poor and those on the peripheries (88). From the beginning of his ministry Pope Francis has spoken of the importance of Christians contributing to a 'culture of encounter' (220) in which they themselves would be confronted with the newness of God who "inspires, provokes, guides and accompanies in a thousand ways". (12)

Humility and respect for the complex situations that face people

As an experienced pastor, Pope

Francis is keenly aware of the need for the Church to acknowledge the wrong that has been done by some of its representatives in its name. This requires the Church to be humble in how it approaches the task of evangelisation.

“The Church is a community growing in faith as it journeys through time”

Speaking at the Synod on the New Evangelisation, Adolfo Nicolas SJ, Father General of the Jesuits, called for a humbler Church, pointing out that previous efforts at evangelisation had not sufficiently "found God in all things". Such efforts had not been open to the "surprise factor" of the Holy Spirit who is at work in cultures before the Gospel reaches them, "and who makes the seed grow even while the farmer is asleep or the missionary is absent". He suggested that the lack of sufficient respect for cultures that we sought

to evangelise meant that there was a failure to harvest new insights and discoveries in regard to the Good News already working in the people we encountered.

Not surprisingly, Pope Francis endorses this perspective in *The Joy of the Gospel* when he writes: "God's word is unpredictable in its power. The Gospel speaks of a seed which once sown, grows by itself, even as the farmer sleeps (Mk 4:26-29). The Church has to accept this unruly freedom of the word, which accomplishes what it wills in ways that surpass our calculations and ways of thinking." (22)

Humility is needed for a second reason. There is a need to acknowledge the complex human predicaments in which people find themselves, and which call in the first instance for acts of mercy, rather than words of judgment and condemnation. As a pastor who has always been close to people, Pope Francis knows that people grow more readily when they experience love and respect than fear and criticism. It is in this context that the much reported comment "Who am I to judge?" made by Pope Francis in an interview is to be understood.

Enabling people to grow

Related to exercising humility and showing respect, Pope Francis also speaks countless times of spiritual growth as a gradual process, one that takes patient commitment, time, and careful nurturing.

The capacity to grow is a gift of God who alone "gives the growth" (12, 1 Cor 3:7). We cannot expect to become flawless (151), yet as Christians we are expected to commit ourselves to continual personal and spiritual growth (69).

The purpose of all catechesis, and education generally, is growth (163, 166, 168, 169). The clearest sign that we have achieved growth in our spiritual lives is our willingness to go forth from ourselves in service to our brothers and sisters (179).

The Church is a community growing in faith as it journeys through time (161). It is called to continual growth in its understanding of the Gospel and in discerning the promptings of the Holy Spirit (15, 40, 45). Facilitating growth is one of the key tasks of the parish community (28).

The enemy of spiritual growth is individualism (235).

Enabling growth involves, on the one hand, recognition and acceptance of the reality of people's lives and "where they are at", while, on the other, gently confronting them with the possibilities of a much richer life based on the truth and goodness which can only be found in the Gospel (9). It also involves being always ready to leave behind securities and comfort zones and "go forth", Abraham-like, to new lands (20). The theme of leaving, departing, exiting, is a common one in *The Joy of the Gospel*.

'Tough' love for pastors and ministers

A central theme of *The Joy of the Gospel* is the reinvigoration of pas-

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Pope Francis baptises an infant in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican. The pope baptised 32 children during the celebration on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.



toral workers. Pastors and ministers have a special responsibility for the growth of others (15) and should show mercy and patience as they accompany them (164). In particular, Pope Francis warns against the confessional being experienced as a “torture chamber” (44).

Pastors must also attend to their own personal and spiritual growth. (This was a key theme at the synod as well). Their love of the Word of God must continue to mature in its intensity (149). They must never forget that they themselves are also in need of continuing evangelisation (164).

It is clear, in his view, that to those who have been given much, much more is expected. Readers will be struck by how hard Pope Francis is on priests, bishops, religious and other evangelisers. He warns about not succumbing to defeatism and becoming “querulous and pessimistic sourpusses” (85) or going about looking like they have just come from a funeral (10).

Drawing on his experience both as a member of a religious order and as a diocesan bishop, Pope Francis also warns against ministers seeking spiritual worldliness and personal or political gain (95), or “warring among ourselves”. (98)

Clearly he is keenly aware of the need to improve the quality of homilies and gives detailed instructions for preachers to follow (135-149). The richness of the homily is a key indicator of the quality of the preacher’s own prayer life and the sincerity of his pastoral commitment. His words should “set hearts on fire” (142), and always begin with the proclamation of salvation before drawing moral consequences.

He cautions pastors against using the sacraments as “instruments of power” (104). Overall, being a minister in Pope Francis’ church is meant to be demanding and challenging. Everything we do is to be in a “missionary key” (33, 34). We are to leave our comfort zone (20), be open to continual pastoral and ministerial

conversion (25), and avoid settling for mere administration (25) or for doing things the way we always did them (33). In one of several military-type allusions, he criticises those “who are content to have a modicum of power and would prefer be the general of a defeated army than a mere private in a unit which continues to fight” (96).

Those whose task it is to evangelise are to seek out and take upon themselves the “smell of the sheep” (24), a phrase Pope Francis also used in the *Civiltà Cattolica* interview. We should be very good listeners (171), and exercise a particular duty of care for society’s “discards” (195), a theme he also spoke about in his 2014 Lenten address when he focused upon the various forms of destitution in society today.

Pope Francis’ approach to change in the Church

Pope Francis speaks of the need for decentralisation (16) and for local Churches to take responsibility for realising the mission of the Church in their own particular situations and circumstances (30, 33). He calls for greater collegiality (32, 247), and he puts collegiality into practice by citing texts from several bishops’ conferences around the world, thus effectively endorsing their teaching authority, the first time ever that this has been a key feature of a papal document.

Pope Francis states clearly the kind of Church he wants to see, “a Church which is poor and for the poor” (198). A permanent state of mission, evangelisation, catechesis and service of the poor, are to be the identifying marks of a Church living out fully *The Joy of the Gospel*.

Echoing views expressed repeatedly at the Synod on the New Evangelisation, for Pope Francis the laity are to be involved in and to be enabled to participate fully in the work of evangelisation. They should be formed properly for it, and room should be made for them to speak and act (102, 169).

However, Pope Francis’ approach to change is as significant as the changes he proposes. The key concept here is, not unsurprisingly for a Jesuit, ‘discernment’, and several times in *The Joy of the Gospel* Pope Francis urges those in leadership to engage in this process (16, 30, 33, 43, 50, 64, 78, 133, 154, 166). We can therefore safely conclude that discernment is also central to the approach to change being taken by Pope Francis himself, and this can already be seen in the many advisory bodies and committees he has already established.

“It is clear, in his view, that to those who have been given much, much more is expected”

Discernment is only authentic when guided by the Holy Spirit, to whom Pope Francis refers throughout the document. The Holy Spirit is the principal agent of the missionary spirit of the people of God (122) and missionary disciples must always submit themselves to the Holy Spirit’s strength and light (50).

The managing of change needs time, patience, and prayer. Those who think Pope Francis is changing things too quickly, or too slowly, can be reassured that the Ignatian process of discernment lies at the heart of his approach and they are invited to apply that same process in their own consideration of the direction the Church should take.

Finally, it would be wrong to think that apparent indecisiveness or uncertainty on Francis’ part is a sign of weakness. Some level of uncertainty and doubt is necessary as creatures and is a sign of our humility before the mystery of God. As Francis says:

“If a person says that he met God with total certainty and is not touched by a margin of uncertainty, then this is not good. For me, this is an important key. If one has the answers to all the questions - that is

the proof that God is not with him. It means that he is a false prophet using religion for himself” (*Civiltà Cattolica* interview).

Chapter 4 Avoiding misunderstanding Pope Francis

Fair criticism?

From the very beginning of his papal ministry Pope Francis has been criticised by some faithful Catholics for not emphasising sufficiently key aspects of the Church’s moral teaching. He has been accused of relativising and even undermining the importance of the Church’s teaching on certain moral issues such as abortion, contraception, homosexuality and the indissolubility of marriage.

The concern seems to be as follows. Credible witness to the God of love involves not only preaching a Gospel of mercy but also standing up and being counted in the face of the many threats to innocent human life such as abortion and euthanasia, and to the sanctity of marriage and sexuality, especially in contemporary culture. However, Pope Francis’ approach conveys the impression that energetic promotion of the Church’s teaching in these areas is only of relative importance and can be postponed or relegated. So the criticism goes. Is this criticism fair?

In a ‘soundbyte’ communications culture it is very difficult to communicate a complex message without risking distortion. In *The Joy of the Gospel*, most of Pope Francis’ references to the media are, in fact, critical (34, 63, 70, 79, 138). As Archbishop of Buenos Aires he seldom gave interviews. Although clearly aware of the real risk of misrepresentation, as Pope, Francis seems convinced that one must make full use of various popular media to communicate the Gospel.

Protecting human life

Whatever impression has been conveyed at times in the media, and leaving aside who is to blame for this, there is no basis for saying that core moral issues are only of secondary importance to Pope Francis or that he does not see them as the logical consequence of what is revealed in Jesus Christ about the full dignity of the life to which every human being is called. In fact, he has referred to these issues explicitly on several occasions, including in *The Joy of the Gospel* (213-214).

His statements are utterly uncompromising and unambiguous, both in their language and approach.

At the same time the Pope draws our attention to the real human dilemmas in which people find themselves, and calls upon each of us to act to remove the circumstances in which some people feel compelled to take innocent human life:

“On the other hand, it is also true that we have done little to adequately accompany women in very difficult situations, where abortion appears as a quick solution to their profound anguish, especially when the life developing within them is the result of rape or a situation of extreme poverty. Who can remain unmoved before such painful situations?” (214)

Marriage and the family

Pope Francis speaks about the profound cultural crisis affecting marriage, and in particular how “the sacredness of marriage and the stability of the family” are threatened by “negative aspects of the media and entertainment industries” (62).

He points out that marriage “now tends to be viewed as a form of mere emotional satisfaction that can be constructed in any way or modified at will”. “But the indispensable contribution of marriage to society transcends the feelings and momentary needs of the couple,” (66, edited) he says.

Pope Francis’ dedication of two World Synods of Bishops (2014 and 2015) to the issue is evidence that the sanctity and stability of marriage is an immediate priority of his pontificate.

Weakened sense of sin

More generally, Pope Francis, in keeping with his predecessor, Benedict XVI, also speaks of the weakening of the sense of personal and collective sin and a steady increase in moral relativism (64). He stresses that this has led to a general sense of disorientation especially among adolescents and youths. He goes on to say, referring to the US Bishops’ *Ministry to Persons with Homosexual Inclination: Guidelines for Pastoral Care* (2006):

“... while the Church insists on the existence of objective moral norms which are valid for everyone, “there are those in our culture who portray this teaching as unjust, that is, as opposed to basic human rights. Such claims usually follow from a form of moral relativism that is joined, not without inconsistency, to a belief in the absolute rights of individuals. In this view, the Church is perceived as promoting a particu-

lar prejudice and as interfering with individual freedom" (64).

In the same place he notes how the information society can lead to a superficiality in the area of moral discernment and calls for better education in critical thinking and in the development of mature moral values.

Have mercy first

At the same time as he reiterates the objective moral norms, Pope Francis draws our attention to the Second Vatican Council's teaching on the "hierarchy of truths", arguing that there are some moral teachings that are more important than others "for giving direct expression to the heart of the Gospel". "In this basic core", he says, "what shines forth is the beauty of the saving love of God" (36). There is a "hierarchy" among the virtues and what matters most are "works of love directed to one's neighbor". These "are the most perfect external manifestation of the interior grace of the Spirit" (37). Like his predecessors, Pope Francis seeks to connect our concern about the Church's sexual moral teaching to our concern for social justice and our moral responsibility to care for creation.

It is not true that certain contentious moral teachings are unimportant to Pope Francis. It is rather that his own formation as a Jesuit, his personal spiritual journey, and his pastoral experience have convinced him that the Church's teaching on these matters cannot be 'heard' until people have first experienced the love and the mercy of Christ.

“The intention is that, knowing our wretchedness, we will recognise and appreciate, all the more, the power of God's unconditional love”

To understand Pope Francis' approach it is helpful to consider briefly the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. In the first stage of the Exercises we are invited to make a profoundly open and honest assessment of our lives. We are encouraged to be honest and self-aware about our weakness and sinfulness, and our helplessness without God's grace.

This is not, however, an end in itself; a futile exercise in experiencing our wretchedness. Rather, the intention is that, knowing our wretchedness, we will recognise and appreciate, all the more, the power of God's unconditional love. As our awareness of our sinfulness grows, so also does our recognition of the depth of the love of God who pursues us persistently and is not defeated by our failings. In fact, it is only the awareness of being held and sustained by God's love that makes it possible for us to be utterly self-effacing; to be truly honest with ourselves. If we think, for instance, of moments of trauma we have had in our lives: at the time, we probably have not been fully able to grasp just how awful they were, or perhaps how precarious our situation was.



Newly married couples pictured near Swiss Guards as they attend Pope Benedict XVI's general audience in St Peter's Square at the Vatican in 2012.

Only subsequently, from a state of security and safety have we been able to look back and appreciate fully the mess we were in.

Similarly, it is only from the state of knowing ourselves to be loved without limit that we can face the full reality of our lives, "warts and all". We become aware that we are helpless and lost without God, and yet are not crushed by this awareness, because at that same moment we also become aware that we are, in fact, held and embraced by God's mercy.

'Mercy-ing'

Pope Francis' episcopal motto, which he explained in the Jesuit *Civiltà Cattolica* interview, helps us to under-

stand how he has been aware of this dynamic of mercy and love at work in his own life. The motto is *Miserando atque Eligendo* (by having mercy and by choosing him). It is taken from the *Homilies of Bede the Venerable*, referring to the calling of Matthew (Matt 9: 9-13).

Pope Francis has said he likes to translate the Latin *miserando* with (in English) 'mercy-ing' as this conveys the sense of it as something really dynamic and active in one's life.

In Pope Francis' judgment, the gaze of Christ is simultaneously both an experience of love beyond any possible anticipation, and a call to renunciation and conversion. Until people have experienced this gaze, that is, God's 'regard' for them,

the various moral demands of the Gospel cannot really resonate with them. They cannot fully appreciate their own sinfulness and thus the need for repentance and conversion.

Mercy: not an 'optional extra'

The word 'mercy' occurs over thirty times in *The Joy of the Gospel*, and in various contexts. Citing St Thomas Aquinas, Pope Francis refers to it as the greatest of the virtues (37). God's mercy brings about forgiveness (3), overcomes divisions (24) and lifts burdens (43). The experience of God's mercy draws the Church and each of us as individual disciples to respond to the poor, those on the periphery, and those economically

exploited, in order to alleviate their suffering (193, 215, 252).

A sinner Pope?

On several occasions, Pope Francis has acknowledged publicly his sinfulness. In *Civiltà Cattolica*, he speaks of it in answer to the very first question about who he really is: "... I am a sinner. This is the most accurate definition. It is not a figure of speech, a literary genre. I am a sinner."

And he spoke of his reaction on being elected Pope: "And this is what I said when they asked me if I would accept my election as pontiff... I am a sinner, but I trust in the infinite mercy and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I accept in a spirit of penance" (*Civiltà Cattolica* interview).

On Good Friday 2014, Pope Francis broke with tradition by going in full view of others in St Peter's to have his confession heard by one of the ordinary priests rather than in private by his personal confessor.

It has been suggested by some commentators that Pope Francis' emphasis on his sinfulness is a sign of his profound regret for mistakes he made as a young provincial in Argentina. Pope Francis has openly admitted that in his early years in authority he mishandled difficult situations, acted insensitively at times and showed poor judgment. But his emphasis on his sinfulness has much deeper roots than this.

Acknowledging one's sinfulness and trying to learn from mistakes should be a part of every Christian's identity. We recall that St Patrick, for instance, began his Confession with "I, Patrick, a sinner."

But this attitude is central to the Ignatian way, and therefore to be expected of a Jesuit Pope.

In *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis refers to sin and sinfulness countless times, always in the context of God's greater mercy, forgiveness and healing. Acknowledging oneself as a sinner held in a loving



Pope Francis, as bishop, is seen celebrating Mass at the Villa 21-24 slum in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1998.

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Argentine Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, right, now Pope Francis, is pictured traveling by subway in Buenos Aires in 2008.

embrace by Christ who continually pours out divine mercy and love: this is the fundamental message of Ignatius, of Pope Francis, and of *The Joy of the Gospel*.

Chapter 5 Living the Joy of the Gospel

Joy: both the means of proclamation, and its fruit

The title of the Pope's first apostolic exhortation links his ministry back to that of Paul VI and the early stages of the implementation of Vatican II. In 1975, Pope Paul VI issued two exhortations: *Gaudete in Domino* ("Rejoice in the Lord"), and *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, ("Proclaiming the Gospel"). The word "joy", occurs ninety-nine times in *The Joy of the Gospel*; the same frequency with which it features in the Latin-American bishops' Aparecida text of which it is also a central theme.

For Pope Francis, joy is both the means by which we proclaim the Gospel, and that which results from our proclamation, for us and for those to whom we proclaim the Good News. The only way to proclaim faith effectively is with joy in our hearts.

Our joy comes from recognising that God is with us; that even though we are sinners, the Lord has looked upon us with mercy. Joy is the opposite of desolation (2). It is to be found in little things (4). It is a characteristic of genuine discipleship (5) and is often found among the poor (7).

The work of mission and evangelisation fills us with joy (9, 10, 83). Its absence in a Christian is a practical denial of the reality of the resurrection (3, 110, 276-277).

Lack of joy leads to narrowness and self-absorption (8). The enemies of joy are sterile pessimism (84), spiritual sloth, and selfishness (81-83, 275).

Joy is to be distinguished from

pleasure. Pope Francis quotes Pope Paul VI: our "technological society has succeeded in multiplying occasions of pleasure, yet has found it very difficult to engender joy" (7).

The more we are caught up in a calculating world, determined and shaped by the calculus of the marketplace and by consumption, the harder it is to be filled with a sense of joy and be open to being surprised by it.

The Word of God, well preached, should fill us with a sense of joy, and set our hearts burning.

How do we live *The Joy of the Gospel* when faced with contentious issues in the public square?

The Pope's most fundamental appeal in *The Joy of the Gospel* is to transform everything we do into a missionary key.

There is a battle on, and in time of battle "special measures" are necessary. At this urgent time of mission we are to concentrate on the essentials. For now, what is essential is to communicate the core of our faith, which is God's unconditional mercy and love; without an understanding and experience of this, some Church teaching can come across as cruel, or simply incomprehensible.

We convey this core message most eloquently by our compassion and mercy, and by radiating the joy that we ourselves experience from responding to the Gospel. If true joy is in our hearts, we can trust that we will be given the right words to say (Matt. 10:19). Only an experience of God's mercy and love can transform what might seem like impossible and unreasonable Gospel demands into loving responses to God's ever-greater love.

Thus, Pope Francis urges us to communicate the Church's teaching on important but divisive issues, e.g. abortion or gay marriage "in a context" (34). The context is that the Gospel in its entirety is, literally, Good News. It is meant to be Good News, life-giving and liberating news, not just for some people, but for all.

In approaching difficult topics



in the public square it follows that we should speak as positively as we can. We need to avoid getting locked into ideological battles that distract and prevent us from proclaiming the Gospel in its entirety. When Church teachings are communicated only piecemeal, their deepest truth can often be distorted or betrayed.

So, to take a current example, same-sex marriage, it is clearly the Pope's view that we should underscore firstly the goodness, beauty and preciousness of marriage between a man and a woman, and the unique role marriage plays in bringing forth and nourishing new human life. From this perspective we can try to show that it makes sense to reserve the term marriage as a special way of protecting this unique relationship in the interests of the common good.

When it comes to abortion, our pleas in the defence of defenceless human life must be matched, as Pope Francis states, by the witness of our concrete accompaniment of women who find themselves in appallingly painful situations and our efforts to address the circumstances that lead to abortion (214).

At the end of the day, Pope Francis expects individual episcopal conferences to deliberate upon what is necessary and appropriate in their particular contexts. As he says, "it is not advisable for the Pope to take the place of local Bishops in the discernment of every issue which arises in their territory" (16). Apart from wishing to put collegiality and decentralisation into practice, Pope Francis recognises that the relationship between faith and culture is multifarious and complex and requires careful and intelligent discernment at grassroots level (30, 33)

How do we personally respond to *The Joy of the Gospel*?

Pope Francis certainly intends us to take his exhortation very seriously. He sees it as a set of guidelines directing the Church into a new phase of evangelisation (17). He expressly says that his document "has a programmatic significance and important consequences" (25).

At the same time, paradoxically, a key element of his message is that we are to take responsibility ourselves, all of us, for the evangelisation of the local Church to which we belong. As he sees it, we should not be expecting the papal magisterium to offer "a definitive or complete word on every question which affects the Church and the world" (16).

Pope Francis is calling all Christians to a new level of seriousness and personal maturity in regard to our faith and our day-to-day spirituality. In a strikingly straightforward and insightful manner he knocks on the head many of the ways we can allow our faith to become merely a private and individualistic comfort blanket (262). He also clearly names and shames the ways we can seek to avoid responsibility for the renewal of the Church and engage in various kinds of blame games.

Conclusion

The Joy of the Gospel is an essential guide to becoming a missionary disciple. We hope that this introduction encourages people to read the exhortation itself and has assured them in regard to its accessibility.

No one can read *The Joy of the Gospel* carefully without coming away feeling deeply challenged

personally about the integrity and authenticity of their faith. But this challenge is presented in the context of an invitation to an ever-deeper appreciation of and trust in God's mercy, healing, compassion and love.

So we respond most fundamentally to *The Joy of the Gospel* by allowing our lives to be more fully rooted in God's mercy, healing, compassion and love. This happens in honest prayer, and in activities of service and self-giving that build up our "spiritual muscle", and that give us regular experiences of the joy that living according to the Gospel brings. In this way we play our part in the renewal of the Church and the building up of the kingdom in accordance with our gifts, and the opportunities the Holy Spirit gives us.

Acknowledgments

The following texts have been particularly helpful:

Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel) by Vatican Press, <http://www.vatican.va/evangelii-gaudium/en/>

Victor Manuel Fernández and Paolo Rodari, *La Iglesia del Papa Francisco – Los Desafíos desde Evangelii Gaudium*. (Madrid, San Pablo, 2014)

"A big heart open to God", exclusive interview by Antonio Spadaro SJ, with Pope Francis. (America, Sept 30, 2013)

Pope Francis, *In Him Alone Is Our Hope: The Church According to the Heart of Pope Francis*. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2013)

"Concluding Document", V General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean. (Aparecida, May 2007)

World Report



Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie

Religious groups praise Supreme Court ruling in same-sex cake case

Religious freedom groups cheered Monday's 7-2 Supreme Court decision that a Colorado baker had his rights violated when the state civil rights commission said he was required to bake a cake for a same-sex wedding.

The Supreme Court ruled in favour of Masterpiece Cakeshop owner Jack Phillips, saying that the Colorado Civil Rights Commission showed a constitutionally unacceptable hostility toward religion when it ruled that he had discriminated against a same-sex couple who requested a wedding cake from his bakery back in 2012.

"Today's decision confirms that people of faith should not suffer discrimination on account of their deeply held religious beliefs, but instead should be respected by government officials," said leaders of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Aspects

"This extends to creative professionals, such as Jack Phillips, who seek to serve the Lord in every aspect of their



Colorado baker Jack Phillips in his shop.

daily lives. In a pluralistic society like ours, true tolerance allows people with different viewpoints to be free to live out their beliefs, even if those beliefs are unpopular with the government," they said.

Archbishop Joseph Kurtz of Louisville, chair of the bishops' religious liberty committee, Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia, head

of the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, and Bishop James Conley of Lincoln, chair of the Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, released the joint statement on Monday.

Mr Phillips, a devout Christian, said repeatedly throughout the case that he would have no issue serving

gay customers in a context outside of a custom cake for a same-sex wedding. In adherence to his religious beliefs, he also refuses to make Halloween cakes, products with alcohol, and cakes for bachelor parties.

The Court stopped short of setting a major precedent, and instead tailored the decision to this particular case. However, supporters of Phillips said the decision still marked an important victory.

"Government hostility toward people of faith has no place in our society, yet the state of Colorado was openly antagonistic toward Jack's religious beliefs about marriage. The court was right to condemn that," said Kristen Waggoner, senior counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom, which was representing Mr Phillips.

"Tolerance and respect for good-faith differences of opinion are essential in a society like ours. This decision makes clear that the government must respect Jack's beliefs about marriage," she added.

Progress in US audit of abuse allegations despite 'worrisome signs'

The 15th annual report on the implementation of the US bishops' 'Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People' shows a decrease in allegations of clergy sex abuse from the two previous years.

It also indicates the need for continued vigilance since charges were raised by more than 650 adults and 24 minors.

The overall decrease in allegations coupled with the fact that charges of abuse are still being made is something Dr Francesco Cesareo, chairman of the National Review Board, finds troubling.

He said: "While progress continues to be made, there are worrisome signs

for the future revealed in this year's audit that cannot be ignored."

Dr Cesareo said he was most concerned by signs of general complacency, such as a shortage of resources available to fully implement programs, failure by some dioceses to complete background checks in a timely manner and poor record keeping.

Complacency

Dr Cesareo wrote that this "apparent complacency" could indicate that some in the Church think "sexual abuse of minors by the clergy is now an historic event of the past".

The newly released report – based

on audits conducted between July 1 in 2016, and June 30, 2017 – shows that 654 adults came forward with 695 allegations.

Compared to 2015 and 2016, the number of allegations decreased significantly due to fewer bankruptcy proceedings and statute of limitations changes.

The report also notes that 1,702 victim/survivors received ongoing support and that all dioceses and eparchies that received an allegation of sexual abuse during the 2017 audit year reported them to the appropriate civil authorities.

Vatican cautions on 'winning' mentality

A new Vatican document cautions against the dangers of highly competitive children's sports, political and economic pressures on athletes to win "at all costs" and the unsportsmanlike or violent behaviour of fans.

The document on sports also calls on every group or institution sponsoring sports programmes to have expert-guided child

protection policies in place and it urged bishops, parishes and lay Catholics to be proactive in helping "humanise" sports.

The document, 'Giving the Best of Yourself', also condoned sports on Sundays as a means of bringing families and communities together in joy and celebration, but only as long as such events are not used

as an excuse to miss Mass.

The document was released June 1 by the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, and is the first Vatican document on sports, said Cardinal Kevin Farrell, the dicastery's prefect.

In a message to the cardinal, Pope Francis applauded the document and said: "Sport is a very rich

source of values and virtues that help us to become better people."

"We need to deepen the close connection that exists between sport and life, which can enlighten one another," said the Pope, who often fondly recalls how he and his family cheered on his favourite soccer team when he was a boy.

IN BRIEF

Jesuit denounces university mortar attack

● A mortar attack on a Jesuit university in Nicaragua has been condemned by the school's rector as "cowardly".

Three masked people fired a mortar at two guards standing at the main gate of the University of Central America, located in the country's capital of Managua. No one was injured.

Fr José Alberto Idiáquez denounced "cowardly attack by para-police forces" who are "protected by the impunity guaranteed by the current (government)

He said they intimidate and kill innocent citizens at night.

The attack is the latest in a spate of violence and civil unrest in the country, which began on April 18 after President Daniel Ortega announced social security and pension reforms.

Indonesia meetings oppose extremism after killings

● A Catholic church in Jakarta held a fast-breaking meal on June 1 with local Muslims in the wake of rising extremism and support for victims of church bombings in East Java in May.

About 200 Muslims from different communities, including the Gusdurian Network of activists that promotes interfaith dialogue, packed the cathedral hall at Our Lady of the Assumption Cathedral Church in the capital marking the middle of the holy month of Ramadan, when Muslims fast from dawn till dusk.

The schedule included a church tour inside led by Jesuit Fr Albertus Hani Rudi Hartoko.

WORLD MISSIONS IRELAND
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You can support the work of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith (POF) in a number of ways:

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POF is responsible for building much needed infrastructure in predominantly remote areas. Through POF, your support transforms lives and creates a hub from which the Young Church can flourish and grow, spreading the Good News of the Gospel. Priests in mission dioceses with a large number of outstations in remote rural areas cannot pay regular visits to the scattered communities of the faithful. They rely on the support of catechists and lay pastoral leaders, who travel long distances to lead prayer and minister the Sacraments. Funding received through POF enables the training of more catechists and pastoral leaders who are essential to the growth of the Church overseas.

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Letters

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

Letter of the week

We must continue to cherish life

Dear Editor, I am writing as an African woman recently settled in Ireland. I think the Irish media should have reflected a greater diversity of views on the Eighth Amendment. A priority seemed to have been given to white Irish women. There is a significant number of black, Asian and other ethnic minority communities who seemed silent. Other vulnerable people who were not fully engaged with were people with mental health issues and those with various genetic disabilities.

As the 'Yes' campaign for abortion on demand celebrated, some mentioned the words 'choice', 'victory' and 'progress'. I have been left struggling to understand what kind

of choice and justice encourages a woman to shout "victory" when given the 'right' to kill her unborn child up to 12 weeks for any reason. I use the word 'kill' because in my native language that is the word we use. We do not have words for termination or abortion.

Some 'Yes' campaigners argued about cases of rape and incest. I wonder if they could be compassionate to the unborn child, as two wrongs do not make it right.

'Yes' voters, please learn to be humble because the occasion surrounding abortion is tragic to everyone. Take time to think about your brave grandmothers, mothers,

daughters who made the decision to keep the child, and are reliving their past lives.

Most importantly to that child, let them know that they are loved by their Creator, whose only love is what matters. The 'No' vote campaigners, your work has just begun because those unborn babies need your prayers. What could be more important than to save a soul? Continue to wear your 'Love Both', 'Pro-Life' T-shirts etc. to remind not just Ireland but the world to cherish life.

Yours etc.,

Dr Margareth Rungarara-Keenan
Abbeylara, Co. Longford

Time to get real and offer realistic supports

Dear Editor, The pro-life movement now has two choices: to try and reverse a result that is in all likelihood irreversible, or it can seek to work to try and dissuade those who feel the need to procure an abortion from getting one. Arguably this is what we should have been doing in the first place. While we technically had little or no abortion in

the country until last week, 3000 abortions were performed on Irish women each year, and God knows how many more were provided via illegal abortion pills.

The Eighth Amendment did not mean there was no abortion. While that does not mean it should have been removed, it is an issue the pro-life movement failed to really grapple with.

We need to support women who get pregnant and who feel unsupported. We need to work to alleviate poverty. We need to eradicate abusive relationships. We need to make Ireland a country where no woman feels she cannot bring a child into the world.

I see this tragedy as an opportunity. Instead of pouring the funding we

spent trying to keep a law that didn't really work, we can spend it on schemes to try and drive down the desire for abortion. Abortion on demand may not have been in Ireland until recently, but 3,000 Irish babies were aborted each and every year.

Yours etc.,

Darragh McDonagh
Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo.

Let's always remember that not everyone voted 'Yes'

Dear Editor, Following the repeal of the Eighth Amendment and as the Oireachtas prepares to enact a final solution for the unwanted unborn children of Ireland, it is some consolation to know that 723,632 voters did stand up for the right to life of the most innocent and defenceless.

Yours etc.,

David Ryan, FRCSI,
Castleknock,
Dublin 15.



Abstaining was a choice to facilitate a great crime

Dear Editor, It is generally accepted that voluntarily ending a life, in any of its diverse forms, by any myriad of ways, is morally unacceptable. Equally, it is also generally accepted that members of a democracy are free to choose, consequently enjoying the numerous rewards or suffering the countless costs of our choices.

Now that we have chosen to repeal the Eighth, abortion will become a tolerable Irish norm. As a result, every Irish taxpayer will knowingly, perhaps unwillingly or unwittingly, fund, directly

or indirectly, a form of contemporary genocide hitherto unseen, thereby ultimately, and morally, incriminating ourselves in perpetuity.

Collective crime and collective guilt are not new phenomena. This dreadful malady was attributed to the German public for their backing of Hitler, and their active participation and support for World War II. The Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt, issued in 1945, is evidence of this reality.

Catholic or not, the unnecessary killing of one baby, not to mention

thousands, by the HSE, using our tax contributions as a weapon, enrols us as members of a lawless organisation, therefore confirming our guilt.

In common law states, if a person is a member of a lawless organisation, and other members of that same organisation commit an offence, each and every member of that organisation is culpable, though the offence committed was beyond the knowledge, without the consent, or active participation of each member; all members are guilty by association.

We should not have been apathetic about the recent referendum either. Abstaining was a choice to facilitate the initiation of the greatest crime of our times, a crime made possible with our money.

The real question was: are we members, who are pro-choice but anti-abortion, willing to conspire with others, who are pro-choice and pro-abortion, to complicity fund the unending killing of innocents in our name?

Yours etc.,

Richard Stanley,
Carrickmines, Dublin 18.

It's time to teach the joy of Faith all over again

Dear Editor, It hurts very much to say this, but watching the joy on the faces of the repeal campaigners on Saturday when the referendum result was announced, made me realise that Ireland is a (pagan) nation once again. Our political representatives, with a few brave exceptions, could not hide their glee with the result. The Oireachtas is no longer a parliament fit for purpose, but a pagan temple.

But we can take hope from this setback. We now have time, science and Our Lord on our side. Times are changing, and the pro-life cause is gaining strength around the world; science has progressed to the point where the horror of abortion is now visible to all; and God, in allowing this referendum to happen, has done so for his own plan, out of which only good can arise.

Do not be disheartened. We must be the new Patricks (and, in this politically correct world, Patricias) and begin to teach the joy of Faith in Our Lord to our pagan neighbours again. Through prayer and hard work, we will win this war, defeat the evil monsters now walking our land and be proud to be say Ireland is pro-life again.

Yours etc.,

John Austin
Limavady,
Co. Derry.

We don't have to sit back and let things happen

Dear Editor, My friends who voted "Yes" in the referendum, did so in response to the difficult cases which were highlighted throughout the campaign. They are opposed to liberal abortion. Indeed we were constantly reassured that the Irish abortion regime would be restrictive and would not open the "floodgates" which have been a feature of other countries.

Now that virtually unlimited power in regard to the unborn is being "conferred" on our public representatives, there are at least two things we can do:

1. We can, if we have not already done so, join the pro-life movement at local or national level. In the US and elsewhere they have won many victories against liberal abortion laws.
2. We can also make clear to our politicians that we want them to question and challenge every line of proposed abortion legislation.

In Ireland, animals are protected by law from cruelty and unnecessary suffering. Our unborn children are deserving of a least the same level of dignity and protection.

Yours etc.,

Eamon Fitzpatrick.
Sligo,
Co. Sligo.

Letters to the Editor

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

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

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

📷 Around the world



▲ **USA:** Fr Michael Thiel, associate pastor of the Quad Parishes of Green Bay, Wisconsin, leads about 100 people in a one-mile Corpus Christi procession from St. Jude Church to Annunciation Church.

◀ **BELARUS:** Young people throw flower petals during a procession marking the Feast of Corpus Christi in Minsk.

GUADALUPE: A rescue worker carries a child June 3 after the Volcan Fuego, or 'Volcano of Fire', erupted in San Juan Alotenango. The eruption on June 2 claimed the lives of at least at least 25 people and left residents covered in ash as they fled.



NICARAGUA: Women religious and relatives of Cardinal Miguel Obando Bravo attend his funeral Mass on June 3 at Catholic University in Managua. Cardinal Obando, retired archbishop of Managua, died June 3 at the age of 92. Photos: CNS



VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis meets with a delegation from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany at the Vatican June 4, urging patient progress in ecumenical dialogue. On the same day, the Vatican confirmed that the Pope has asked Germany's Catholic bishops not to publish guidelines relaxing restrictions on when Protestants married to Catholics can receive Communion.



SYRIA: People walk toward the last Syrian government checkpoint while waiting for permission to leave the besieged section of Damascus. The Jesuit Refugee Service pledged to continue supporting some of the 11 million displaced Syrians, including nine million refugees, while describing the US government's response to the world's worst humanitarian crisis since World War II as being in "retreat."

On being the beloved disciple



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

The Gospel of John presents us with a very powerful and rather earthy mystical image: as John describes the Last Supper scene he tells us that as they were at table the beloved disciple was reclining with his head against Jesus' breast.

The power of that image has, I believe, been better captured by artists than by theologians and biblical scholars. Artists and iconographers generally present the image to us in this way: the beloved disciple has his head leaning on Jesus' breast in such a way that his ear is directly above Jesus' heart but in such a way that his eyes are fixed outward looking at the world.

What a powerful image! If you put your ear at just the right place on someone's chest you can hear that person's heartbeat. The beloved disciple then is the one who is attuned to the heartbeat of God and is looking out at the world from that vantage point.

Further, John gives us a series of other images to flesh out the implications of hearing God's heartbeat.

First, the beloved disciple stands with Jesus' mother at the foot of the cross as Jesus is dying. What's encapsulated in this image? In Luke's Gospel, Jesus admits that sometimes darkness seems to overpower grace and God seems powerless: sometimes darkness just has its hour! His death was one of those hours and the beloved disciple, like Jesus'

mother, could do nothing other than stand in helplessness inside and beneath that darkness and injustice. There was nothing to be done but to stand inside the helplessness.

But, by standing there, the beloved disciple also stands in solidarity with the millions of poor and victimised all over the world who can do nothing against their plight. When one stands in helplessness when there's nothing possible to be done one gives silent voice to human finitude, the deepest prayer possible at that moment.

“The beloved disciple is any person, woman, man or child, who is intimate enough with Jesus so as to be attuned to the heartbeat of God”

Then, afterwards, the beloved disciple takes the mother of Jesus into his home, an image that doesn't need much elaboration.

However, a second image connected with the beloved disciple leaning on Jesus' breast does need some elaboration; as the beloved disciple reclines on the breast of Jesus an interesting dialogue takes

place: Jesus tells his disciples that one of them will betray him. Peter turns to the beloved disciple and says to him: “Ask him who it is?”

This begs the question: Why doesn't Peter himself ask Jesus who it is who will betray him? Peter would not have been sitting so far away from Jesus as to not be able to ask the question himself.

Moreover Peter's question takes on its real significance when seen in its historical context. Scholars estimate that the Gospel of John was written somewhere between the years 90-100 AD. By then, Peter had been Pope and had been martyred. What the Gospel is suggesting here is that intimacy with Jesus trumps everything else, including ecclesial office, including being Pope.

Everyone's prayer has to go through the beloved disciple. The Pope cannot pray as Pope but only pray as the beloved disciple (which, like any other Christian, he can be). He can offer prayers for the world and for the Church as Pope, but he can pray personally only as beloved disciple.

Finally, the notion in the Gospel of John that intimacy with Jesus is more important than the ecclesial office is further illustrated on the morning of the Resurrection.

Mary Magdala comes running



from the tomb and tells the disciples that the tomb is empty. Peter and the beloved disciple set off at once, running towards the tomb. We can easily guess who will arrive there first. The beloved disciple easily outruns Peter, not because he's perhaps a younger man but because love outruns authority. The Pope can also get there first, if he runs as the beloved disciple rather than as a Pope.

It is commonly assumed that the beloved disciple was the Evangelist himself, John. That may in fact be correct, but that is not what the Gospel text wants you to conclude.

The historical identity of the beloved disciple is deliberately left an open question because the Gospel wants that concept, to be the beloved disciple of Jesus, to be a designation that beckons and fits you – and beckons and fits every Christian in the world, including, hopefully too, the Pope himself.

“The Pope cannot pray as Pope but only pray as the beloved disciple”

Who is the beloved disciple? The beloved disciple is any person, woman, man or child, who is intimate enough with Jesus so as to be attuned to the heartbeat of God and who then sees the world from that place of intimacy, prays from that place of intimacy, and sets off in love to seek the Risen Lord and grasp the meaning of his empty tomb.

Mystical images are best illuminated by other mystical images. With this in mind, I leave you with an image from the 4th Century Desert Father, Evagrius of Pontus:

Breast of the Lord
Kingdom of God
Who rests against it
A theologian shall be.

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, June 7, 2018

Personal Profile

Reading
God in
the notes

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Participants at Youth 2000.

Bringing fun to the Faith

With the summer holidays now here, it can be stressful for parents to try and keep their children occupied and entertained in lieu of the normal daily school routine. This can be even harder to combat with young teenagers who aren't old enough to be left alone in the house without supervision.

Among the many activities that your kids can get involved in which will stave off boredom and be personally enriching at the same time are summer youth camps. Most camps offer kids the chance to learn new skills and develop talents, but there are also many that combine an element of Faith into them. For those parents who want their children



Colm Fitzpatrick explores Faith camps being offered this summer

to have a fun-filled summer with other young people passionately celebrating their Faith this year, check out the list below.

Music Ministry Together

The summer school 'Music Ministry Together' is a wonderful place for your child to strengthen their Faith as well as develop their playing and singing skills. The five-day summer course

will be taking place from July 3-8 in Roscrea, and has a focus on musical, liturgical, spiritual and prayer formation. According to Ian Callanan, director of the initiative and this week's 'Personal Profile', the camp has morning prayers, music teaching sessions, and break-out workshops where instrumentalists can attend masterclasses. Even if you're not proficient with the guitar, the

camp will facilitate those who want to learn. Ian also stresses that there are a team of leaders who are there to help and guide attendees.

The course was established in 2015 and is experiential – the participants not only learn new music but are also introduced to various styles of liturgy, celebrating the Eucharist and other sacraments. Nightly entertainment is also provided while afternoon activities ensure that everyone has an enjoyable few nights. This camp is the perfect opportunity for any budding musician who wants to learn about God through the power of community and melody.

For more information, see: <http://musicministry.ie/>

Youth 2000 Summer Festival

Another well-known Faith-formative camp for young adults aged 16-35 is the Youth 2000 Summer Festival which will be happening from August 16-19 in the Cistercian college, Roscrea. Youth 2000 is a Catholic organisation and runs lively festivals, retreats and prayer groups across all of Ireland.

The main speaker of this year's festival is Fr Joe Freedy from the Diocese of Pittsburgh, and during the retreat you will learn the basics of your Faith and discover the great love of God. It is run by young people for young people meaning that there are plenty of

» Continued on Page 29

Family News

AND EVENTS

Sea it to believe it!

Ireland's national maritime festival, SeaFest, will be returning to Galway Harbour from June 29 to July 1, and will be covering everything sea-related and will also have something for all ages.

The programme of events includes a seafood fair, seafood cookery demonstrations with celebrity chefs and seafaring family fun. There will be tours of ocean going vessels, leisure craft and boats, exhibits on marine life and lots more fun and educational activities. One of the highlights is the Our Ocean Wealth Summit, which is a feature of each edition of the festival and examines our commercial relationship with our maritime resources.

Also on offer are historical and cultural explorations of Ireland's seafaring history, as well as dedicated kids' zones. Most events taking place across the weekend are free, with some requiring tickets. So jump on the deck, skipper!

SOMETHING TO CHEW ON: We've all heard some amusing tales about chewing gum, be it the myth that it takes seven years to digest or that its magical benefits can help improve concentration. Adding to this list, a new study has revealed that chewing gum while walking can increase the walking distance and energy expenditure of men in particular.

The research carried out by Yuka Hamada and colleagues from Waseda University in Japan showed both men and women had a higher mean heart rate while walking, and a higher change in heart rate from resting to moving state, if they chewed gum at the same time. In the case of male participants however, their distance and mean walking speed increased more significantly in the gum-chewing trial than their female counterparts.

The researchers concluded that "chewing gum while walking affects a number of physical and physiological functions in men and women of all ages".

Small solution to a big problem

How does a waterproof bag that can protect all your precious belongings and still be small enough to fit onto your key-chain sound? Impossible, right? Well, the Matador Droplet Wet Bag does just that – it's a seamed polyester bag tightly compacted into a silicon droplet shell keychain. The Droplet is reusable and can keep the wet in, or out, depending on your needs, and even has a nifty drawstring to keep everything contained. This is the perfect gadget for gym goers and travellers who want to keep sweaty clothes or precious objects safe.



During this time of year, the Droplet is ideal for families heading to the beach who want to make sure important accessories don't get wet or become damaged by the sand. They say good things come in small packages and at around €13 to buy, this is something not worth missing.



Pastoral Congress: the family experience

The Amoris Parish Programme has concluded, plans are advanced and dates have been selected for the last few diocesan and parish family gatherings and, with the exception of the local opening for WMOF2018 in each diocese on August 21, all eyes are now on Dublin for the five days on the family at the World Meeting of Families 2018 in August.

It has been just under three years since we heard the news that the Pope himself had chosen Dublin as the host for the ninth World Meeting of Families. Now with less than three months to go, the plans have been progressed and families from across Ireland and across the world will gather in Dublin to celebrate the Gospel of the Family as Joy for the World.

“We will have 5,000 young people under the age of 18 at the Pastoral Congress and we are about to reach a registration milestone of 30,000 attendees at the Congress”

But what can families expect from the events that are shaping up? The WMOF2018 comprises a Pastoral Congress in the RDS from August 22-24, a Festival of Families in Croke Park on August 25 and a Closing Mass in the Phoenix Park on August 26. Pope Francis will arrive in Ireland on Saturday and depart again on Sunday. We know that he will be part of the Festival of Families and the Closing Mass but he will not be part of the

World Meeting of Families 2018



RDS Pastoral Congress.

When you are preparing a global event of this scale there is always the concern that the non-papal events will be less interesting to people. I am delighted to say that is definitely not the case with the WMOF2018. We can see that people are coming from more than 102 countries to the Congress and that grandparents, parents and children are coming in large numbers.

We will have 5,000 young people under the age of 18 at the Pastoral Congress and we are about to reach a registration



milestone of 30,000 attendees at the Congress.

So what can people expect at the Congress and how will families be catered for so as they can experience the programme as a family unit?

Sometimes those tasked with organising events for families

can place the focus on offering programming for the different ages with the result that parents are offered a different programme that is separate to the one that is offered to children.

In preparing our WMOF2018 Pastoral Congress, I hope we have thought of everything!

We have arranged the RDS Pastoral Congress programme to allow adults to attend workshops having dropped their children off to the parallel teenager and children programme. But, we have also allowed for several spaces where parents can stay with their teens and younger children to be part of their day(s) in the RDS.

Options

In addition to both of these options, there is also a very informal programme that will run in the main arena of the RDS each morning which will allow parents to have a relaxed space for their children where they can run around and meet other

children. There will be some gentle programming taking place in the background.

All formal programming will begin in the morning and will stop so as families can reconnect with each other and

with families from around the world for lunch. Once lunchtime is over everyone will be invited into the main arena where there will be a keynote address, inspiring testimony and then the celebration of the Eucharist.

For those families who cannot make it to the RDS during the day, there will be

some evening programming on the Wednesday and Thursday evening. The themes we will be reflecting on at the Pastoral Congress are taken from *Amoris Laetitia* and they are everyday ones that impact on some or all families.

We will be looking at the impact of technology; the prayer life of families; the vocation and challenge of being a parent; and the role of grandparents. The tone will be down-to-earth and practical and there will be something for everyone interested in family.

“There is also a very informal programme that will run in the main arena of the RDS each morning which will allow parents to have a relaxed space for their children”

The Festival of Families event in Croke Park is being billed as a celebration of families. There will be music and culture on display but the atmosphere will be one of Faith and togetherness, with inspiring testimonies from families in the presence of Pope Francis. This event will see the Gospel of the Family shine through.

On Sunday, August 26, we will come together in Phoenix Park as an international family of families for Mass with Pope Francis. He is sure to have words of hope and encouragement for families. I have no doubt that he will also have words that will positively challenge us too – and that's to be welcomed.

» Continued from Page 27



opportunities to make friends who are your own age. There is no official cost for the retreat as it operates on a donation-only basis, so you give what you can afford.

Attendees sleep in a warm room, either in a proper bed in a dormitory or an airbed in a room. Many parents can be hesitant to send their children off to summer camps because of travelling complications but Youth 2000 offers buses up and down the country which go straight to the festival, so there should be one close to your location.

The Youth 2000 festival is a perfect fit for those who want explore their Faith in a deeper way, and also those who need guidance and support on their personal Faith journey.

For more information, see: <http://youth2000.ie/>

Scripture Union Family Week

For those parents who want to be a part of their child's Faith formation, the Scripture Union's 'Family Week' provides a prime opportunity for the whole family to have a week together having fun, praising God, meeting new people and living in community.

Running from July 29-August 4 and also August 5-11, the camps are brimming with energy and passion. Each morning and evening, there are age specific groups for adults, teenagers, children and if needed, a morning crèche facility. Afternoons are full of activities for the whole family to enjoy or you can take some time to yourself to reflect and pray.

According to Ministry Leader Emma Fawcett: "Family Week is an excellent way to spend quality time with your family in a fun, exciting and God-filled way...while the children are busy having fun, learning about God and making new friends, the adults have daily teaching, seminars and a chance to delve deeper into God's word."

Price varies depending on accommodation and catering choice. Families can stay in the stunning Avoca Manor in Co. Wicklow but also offered is camping with catering and caravanning with catering or self-

catering options.

For more information, see: <http://scriptureunion.ie/>

The Michaela Foundation's Girls' Summer Camp

This camp is like no other as it gives girls aged 11-13 a week of unforgettable fun filled activities which includes games, crafts, and talks, all of which have Faith development at their centre.

Originally founded in Co. Tyrone, the camp is one of many inspiring programmes to blossom from the Michaela Foundation, which was established in honour of the life of Michaela McAreavey (the daughter of Tyrone football manager, Mickey Harte) by her husband John McAreavey, after her tragic murder during their honeymoon in 2011 on the island of Mauritius.

The camp offers young women throughout Ireland different programmes tailored to establish a happy, confident and faith-filled life. Since the establishment of the first camp in 2012, more than 70 camps have been run, giving more than 6,000 Campettes the life without limits experience.

The camps run across most locations in the North of Ireland ranging from Derry to Monaghan, meaning that they're probably a



stone's throw away from your house. They take place from Monday to Friday, the date of which varies depending on what location you decide to pick. One of the unique aspects of these camps is that they are run by young voluntary female leaders who act as inspiring role models for the girls attending. If you'd like your daughter to make friends with those her own age in a Faith-inspired environment, this is an opportunity not worth missing out on!

For more information, see: <https://michaelafoundation.com/>

St Aloysius Faith Camp

For boys and girls aged 5-14, this camp run by the Mallow Parish Youth Ministry is an opportunity for young people to develop confidence and character, and to know and experience the love of God through sports, arts and crafts, music, dance, drama, prayer and catechesis. The ministry project is funded by the parish of Mallow in Co. Cork, with a particular emphasis on the development of young people's Faith and how young people exercise their spirituality.

According to Mallow youth worker Sharon Doody, alongside these various activities, there will be guitar playing where children can learn religious songs, and at the end of everyday a different priest celebrates Mass. Kids are broken up into different age categories so that can befriend those of the same age and learn a bit about their Faith together. She adds that from previous camps, the kids "love" it so it is certainly worth checking out.

The camp will be taking place in the Mallow Community Youth Centre from July 3-6 and application forms will also be available there.

So now that you have a litany of summer camps to choose from you can be confident that this year your child will create great friendships, learn new skills and develop their Faith in a much deeper and rewarding way.

Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



This is the face of 21st-Century nesting: a steady stream of Amazon boxes full of baby bottles, nappies and sundry accoutrements has been arriving at the door for days. My wife was distracted, studying for a high-pressure medical exam she had to do. Now that it's done, her mind has turned more fully to the increasingly imminent arrival of our fourth child.

Her blossoming bump is a lovely reminder of the transformation our lives are about to undergo. Some women feel embarrassed by their large third trimester tummies, but I've always thought that there is a heart-lifting beauty about a woman, swollen with new life. At once, she is vulnerable and yet powerfully dignified, engaged in the most profound task: bringing a new human being into the world.

Andrea has reached 34 weeks now, well into the third trimester. She herself was born at 35 weeks, so it could be any day now. I'm hoping the baby will wait until she is good and ready, though. I touch wood nervously when I speak about the baby's arrival, for I assume nothing. It is a nerve-wrecking time. Even though the baby could do fine if born now, there is so much that can go wrong in the perilous journey from the womb to the outside world.

Arrangements

Preparations are afoot in our household: the cot has been set up and the baby bag is being packed. Arrangements have been made for friends to look after the kids in case of a sudden midnight dash to the maternity ward.

The couple of glasses of wine I enjoy at weekends will be forgone until after the baby arrives. I would feel like a duff husband if I couldn't drive my wife to hospital at 1am on a Saturday morning, because I was over the limit.

This is not mere paranoia, we have a track record of precipitous labours, and the last baby was born in the emergency room of the Rotunda, about three minutes after arrival.

The children remain curiously excited about the baby's arrival. Each week we sit down and learn more about the baby's development. This week, we learned that the baby may be dreaming. She can hear our voices, and might be soothed by a lullaby.

The kids have already been singing to the baby and kissing the bump goodnight for months now, but the burgeoning bump has become far more responsive. They can now feel their little sister's increasingly powerful kicks from outside the tummy. The bump has already become a member of the family.

“The kids have already been singing to the baby and kissing the bump goodnight”

Much of my preparation has involved nervously googling things like: "What is it like to have four kids?" One article that pops up is encouragingly entitled: "Why having four kids is not as terrible as you think". All speak of chaos. Most say it's worth all the hard work.

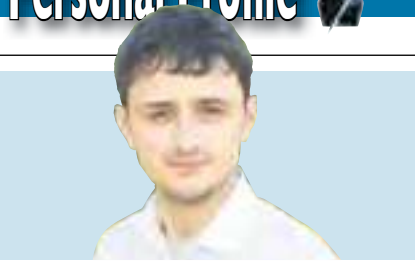
I guess having four kids amounts to a big family these days. When I was a child, three or four kids was standard issue. A generation further back, four kids

would have been a smaller family. Nowadays, when booking things, a family ticket includes two adults and two kids, that's it. In the past, you could pile a load of kids into the back of a car. Rules around car seats now mean you need a very big car to seat six, and you're moving into minibus territory if you also want to transport friends or visiting relatives.

Such practicalities will sort themselves out, I believe. We haven't had a full night's sleep in years anyhow, and our lives are already a constant whirl of school drop-offs, pick-ups, scraped knees, dispute resolution, meal preparation, washing up, tidying up, entertaining and so on. Perhaps we'll hardly notice the difference.



Personal Profile



Colm Fitzpatrick speaks with liturgist Ian Callanan

With a vast array of musical skills and talent, an Irish composer is spreading the message of the Gospel through the melody of instruments.

Born in Cork but now living in Tipperary, Ian Callanan is a contemporary Christian song writer best known for composing the hymns 'Comfort My People' and 'Take and Eat, This is My Body'. His involvement with liturgical music actually began when he was 13, when he joined a local folk group playing guitar. He soon became the lead musician.

"I started getting curious about what a lot of these songs were based on...was it based on a Psalm or a piece of Scripture," he says, adding that this curiosity compelled him to search for the original sources of the songs he was playing. Ian explains that during Mass he often wondered about the relationship between music and the structure of the service which also led him to ask more questions about liturgy.

Interests

Combined with his liturgical and biblical interests, he started composing songs using passages of scripture as the lyrics, which was a huge help given his "struggle" as a lyricist. He says that after 30 years he is still doing it, and although it wasn't a conscious chosen career path, it something that he "grew"

Reading God in the notes



Singer/songwriter Ian Callanan.

into.

"I always say to people that I've been gifted with this, for me it's about sharing that gift", he says.

Ian's initial zeal for his strong Faith is rooted in his early family life as both his parents were quite religious and would have attended Mass weekly. He notes that he was exposed to a lot of what was happening in parish life, and that he never found going to services "boring", but usually interesting given his creative nature.

His Faith continued to develop during his late teens and from the ages of 20-26, he was a Dominican student and was completely enveloped in their spirituality and way of life.

"I went to study with the Dominicans - I had a wonderful experience there. It certainly formed a huge part of me...it's very much part of who I am even

though in the end I decided it wasn't where my calling was," he explains, adding that it wasn't an "easy" decision to leave but that he has continued to write and preach about the Faith.

“When we go into the Church of Ireland they're all singing, and when you go into a Catholic church nobody is singing”

For Ian, playing music is a "natural" outlet to share the message of the Gospel, and given his proficient skill in piano and guitar, as well as his honours degree in music for Maynooth, he is certainly equipped for the job.

He runs various musical workshops which explain the liturgy and formulaic of the Mass,

and so teaches attendees the meaning behind rituals, bringing it "to another level for them".

"If you understand the context, then you can understand why we do it. Unfortunately, we do an awful lot of ritual for the sake of doing it, as opposed to it actually making sense..."

"What's the point in all of us doing these meaningless gestures - they're not meaningless - they have meaning it's just that no one knows what the meaning is," Ian says.

Related to this role, Ian also oversees workshops for choirs, teaching them about liturgy and new music. His job, he says, is to overcome the politics happening in individual choirs and to teach choir members and leaders how to become better music ministers.

When it comes to singing at services, one of Ian's pet peeves is

the distinct lack of congregational singing. He explains that at two recent events, he spent five minutes teaching everybody the main choruses of the songs, meaning that the whole congregation were singing on both occasions.

"It is possible if we go about it the right way. I'm very strong on that. When we go into the Church of Ireland they're all singing, and when you go into a Catholic church nobody is singing.

"A lot of the times it's because we're not encouraging them in the right way, we're not inviting them in the right way...it's about changing that mindset," Ian says.

Passion

Alongside the many events Ian is playing at, he is now prepping for the 'Music Ministry Together' course, which is a five-day summer school held at Cistercian College, Roscrea, for youth and adult leaders who have a passion for liturgical music. Made possible by the support and funding of religious orders, the course will be taking place from July 3-8, and will have various sessions about teaching and learning church music, preparing and participating in various styles of liturgy, as well as fun and entertainment throughout the week. This the perfect place to practice singing and playing skills in a group of passionate and like-minded people.

For Ian, who is the director of the summer school, these types of opportunities are not only a way join together in music, but also a time to develop and deepen one's Faith and love for God.

"I think if I didn't have the music I probably wouldn't have a Faith at this stage. My music keeps my Faith going - it keeps it strong."

i For more information about 'Music Ministry Together', see: <http://musicministry.ie/>

Draw up a list and avoid unpleasant chore wars

Q. In my marriage I feel like I take on the majority of the housework even though myself and my husband are both working. He does do some jobs around the house but the lion's share is on me. I am starting to resent him for this, but I have let it become our routine now that I am not sure how to start again.

Recent research from the Office of National Statistics in the UK shows that women on average do 40% more housework than men. A new research poll in the US showed shared housework was one of the top ranking reasons for a successful marriage. So it turns out putting out the bins is important to your marriage. Of course it goes much further than the apparent triviality of putting the toilet seat down, ultimately at the heart of this issue is love, communication, selflessness, respect and working together as a team.

The first thing you need to do is sit down and write out all the housework that needs to be done. Nobody likes housework but there are some things

you might prefer; there is no point in asking your husband to do something he doesn't like if it is something you don't mind doing.

If there is a chore you both really dislike then take it in turns or maybe you can tackle it together. Then you have to work out a strategy, your lives are busy and the housework can easily get on top of you.

What about breaking it down into manageable elements? Myself and my husband each evening would do a 15-minute clean as a team and it was amazing what we could get done in such a short time. Cooking takes a lot of time; do you plan your meals and batch cook so you can freeze? Try doing a 'chopathon' together chopping all your vegetables for the meals that week in one go, it will save you lots of time.

Stressful

You need to communicate and it's good to start off recognising how stressful it is, so share your feelings. Do not go on the attack here, this is about working out a strategy to manage things together. There might be things that really bother you that

your husband might not even notice and if he knew he would make more of an effort. Prioritising is key, what is actually important - does the house need to be hoovered three times a week? What are the things that matter to you most that are non-negotiable? Then see what is realistic and come to an agreement.

Once you have done your list for the week of all the errands and chores, put it somewhere visible, don't nag each other about it, let it go and at the end of the week discuss it and start again for the next week. Perhaps it was unrealistic, you have to be flexible, if you like towels folded in a particular way then maybe you should do it yourself.

The other thing to consider is, if it is causing you stress, consider hiring a cleaner. Maybe you don't want to spend the money - but it's about what you want to prioritise: would getting a cleaner two hours a week give you more time to spend together and less stress making that money better spent than on say, a takeaway? So make a plan, keep talking about, be flexible and realistic and appreciate one another and hopefully that way you can avoid the chore wars.



Love Notes

Wendy Grace

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



'Peacemakers' top billing in Nationwide

I was in the need of some good news stories last week, something to lift the spirits and restore some pride in the country.

Nationwide (RTÉ1) provided the goods as it often does, in its own low key way, and with unfailing respect for its subjects. On Monday night they had a special show on the Irish troops in south Lebanon, working with the UN interim force keeping the peace between Israel and Hezbollah. "Blessed are the peacemakers" said the plaque on a war memorial, as those who died in the service of peace were commemorated.

This marked the 40th year of Irish UN deployment in Lebanon, and so far 47 have died in this service of peace. Apart from the peacekeeping it was also great to see the Irish soldiers so involved in enhancing the lives of the local population – e.g. playing a supportive role in a local orphanage.

The report ended with a shot of a striking but simple mural – a little girl giving a flower to a UN soldier.

On Wednesday night's edition, the *Nationwide* crew focused on the stories of those buried in historic Glasnevin cemetery.

The report was greatly enhanced by aerial photography of the area (the ubiquitous drone, no doubt!), showing what a beautiful layout it has – we were told this



Some of the cast of Channel 4's *Friday Night Dinner*.

was by design in the style of a Victorian garden cemetery, not just a functional burial ground.

It was founded by Daniel O'Connell in 1832 and his own majestic tomb is most prominent. Other famous residents include Michael Collins (the most visited grave) and O'Donovan Rossa, the Fenian, at whose graveside Patrick Pearse gave his famous oration.

Pearse's father contributed to the sculptures in the cemetery, and a current stonemason showed us the intricacies of one of the elder Pearse's tomb carvings, and told us the place featured the best

gallery of Celtic crosses in the country.

The cemetery's meticulous record keeping helped Fred Heatly to find the grave of his grandmother who died during the flu epidemic of 1918, which was the subject of the second half of that show. 20,000 died of this flu, and we also learned that Limerick was particularly badly hit, with five or six funerals a day at its peak – so many that individual Masses for each deceased were not possible.

This was tragedy upon tragedy as the flu followed on from the great destruction of human life in the First World War. Families were decimated

by one or the other or both. Contributor Dr Ida Milne, author of *Stacking the Coffins* has done much to keep the memory of this time alive.

One of my favourite discussion programmes, because of the wide variety of topics and the diversity of views, is **The Big Questions** (BBC1), presented by Nicky Campbell. Last Sunday morning the show started with an exploration of ethics in sport, especially in relation to suggestions that England should boycott the World Cup in Russia because of the activities of that country – matters like Ukraine, doping in sport and the recent nerve agent attack.

Contributors

Some contributors referenced, approvingly, the historical sports boycott of apartheid South Africa, but there wasn't consensus on the World Cup. Some saw the competition as opening bridges between people; others couldn't stomach the prospect of Putin presenting the trophy, though no-one,



Nicky Campbell.

PICK OF THE WEEK

CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN

EWTN, Monday, June 11, 8am and Wednesday, June 13, 10.30pm

Looking at the rippling impact every abortion has, not only on its unborn victim, but on their mother, father and others,

CITY OF GHOSTS – STORYVILLE

BBC4, Monday, June 11, 10.30pm

The story of website Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS), where young men risk their lives to document Islamic State atrocities.

SAINTS AND SINNERS: BRITAIN'S MILLENNIUM OF MONASTERIES

BBC4, Tuesday (night), June 12, 3am

How monasteries shaped medieval Britain and created dazzling art, architecture and literature.

surprisingly, suggested keeping politicians out of the ceremonies altogether.

This was followed by a discussion on proposed new transgender legislation – conflicting views were expressed with only a slight tetchiness and a welcome lack of faux outrage.

The show ended rather limply with a discussion on saving the 'high street' in the face of online shopping and out-of-town centres. Maintaining a sense of community was the key value that featured.

Families, warts and all, are essential communities in society, and the Goodman family in **Friday Night Dinner** has more warts than most. This Channel 4 sitcom is mildly crude, unfortu-

nately peppered with gratuitous profanities, but is really funny and has a warm sense of family.

The Goodmans are Jewish but relatively little is made of this, a lost opportunity I think. Last Friday's episode The Violin, was the second last in the current (fifth) series, and featured that most embarrassing of family moments – offspring being made to perform for relations and friends of parents.

It also saw a hilarious guest appearance from upcoming Irish actor Jonny Holden as Spencer, a failed medical student with doctor delusions. Nice one!

boregan@hotmail.com



Pat O'Kelly

Music

No shortage of imagination but top prize goes east

Brainchild of the ubiquitous John O'Connor, the Dublin International Piano Competition celebrated its 30th birthday last month with the 11th of its triennial events held at both the RDS and National Concert Hall.

The 2018 competition, with its €15,000 first prize, together with a series of recitals in Ireland and overseas including such prestigious venues as London's Wigmore Hall, Leipzig's Gewandhaus and New York's Carnegie Hall, drew 55 entrants from 22 countries.

Of these I was surprised to find so many coming from the Far East. There were nine from South Korea, six from China, five from Japan, two



John O'Connor.

from Hong Kong and one each from Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam.

Ireland had six entrants; the US also had six with Russia sending five. The remainder of the disparate group came from Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Georgia, Germany, Israel, Kazakhstan, Poland,

Portugal, UK and Ukraine.

The jury, under John O'Connor's direction, were equally international with members from China, Finland, Germany, Japan, UK and USA. Besides O'Connor, Ireland was represented by Finghin Collins and DIT's Mary Lennon.

Leaving the choice of programme to individual competitors means an extraordinary variety of music on offer to the general punter. It was interesting to find the baroque, classical, romantic and contemporary weaving in and out of the various rounds.

DIPC does have one stipulation – the semi-finalists must include one of the commissioned Irish works in their 50-minute recital and

this time the chosen composers were Ann Cleare, Deirdre Gribben, Brian Irving and Conor Linehan.

Imaginative

Just managing to hear six of the dozen semi-finalists I was again impressed by the extraordinary talent and musicianship of the young people involved whose ages ranged from 18 to 29. Listening to their imaginative interpretations proved a fascinating experience.

For instance Russian Alexey Sychev's vividly sparkling account of Debussy's *Feux D'artifice* and his dynamic drive in Liszt's *B minor Sonata* were particularly satisfying. I also found another Russian –

Anna Geniushene – impressive in keeping Schumann's meandering Humoresque under control without losing any of its brilliant pianistic colours.

If I felt Ireland's Eoin Fleming did not do himself full justice in either Beethoven's *Op 111* or Liszt's *Dante Sonata*, the jury awarded him a number of prizes, not least the best performance of Deirdre Gribben's shimmering Debussy-esque *Unseen*.

The move to the concerto finals also brought some stunning playing from the four soloists who were accompanied with aplomb by the RTÉ NSO under conductor Andrew Mogrelia.

In the event, the €15,000

first prize went to South Korea's Saeyoon Chon (22) heard to spectacular effect and with bravura panache in Prokofiev's *2nd Concerto*.

With elegant poise in Chopin's *1st Concerto*, the US's Evren Ozel (18) took second prize of €10,000 as well as being chosen as the best Mozart and Chopin player in earlier rounds.

Hong Kong's Aristo Sham (22) contrasted virtuosity with lyricism in Prokofiev's *3rd Concerto* and took the €7,000 third prize while Alexey Sychev (29) was rewarded with €5,000 for his richly romantic and resolute reading of Tchaikovsky's ever-popular *1st Concerto*. Overall this was a gala occasion.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



Where the heart is truly at home

Beyond the Breakwater: Memories of Home by Catherine Foley (Mercier Press, €14.99)

J. Anthony Gaughan

In these essays and short stories Catherine Foley reveals a great deal about herself and her social environment. This collection is a delightful gathering, and its content is every bit as authentic as Alice Taylor's *To School Through the Fields*.

Catherine spent her early years in Waterford City. Later she resided in the Waterford Gaeltacht, An Rinn, to which she later returned. In Waterford she attended the St John of God Convent National School. Subsequently she was a boarder in Ardfoyle in Cork and ended her secondary school education in Dungarvan.

After graduating from UCC she worked as a teacher, but after four years she retrained as a journalist and did stints at *Anois*, RTÉ, the *Irish Times* and TG4.

Catherine describes in an appreciative way her time at the various schools. In so doing she provides an insightful account of the sights, sounds and even the smells of the nuns! While studying at Dungarvan she was a member of the school's debating team. In the All-Ireland competition to determine the best secondary-school debating team they out-matched their neighbours from the Ursuline College in Waterford to become the Munster champions!

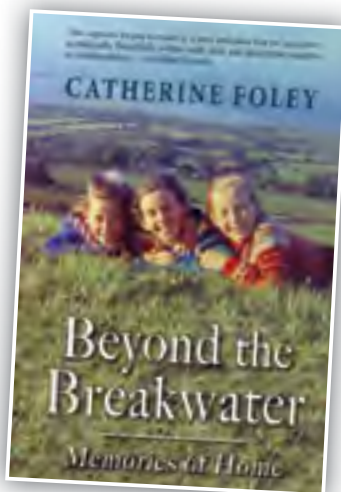
In the semi-final they met 'the boys from Bagenalstown'. Catherine's wonderfully perceptive description of that debate, which she and her team lost, relived for me an occasion when I participated in such an event. Mary Harney, Dick Spring and I were the adjudicating panel in the year when the final was held at UCD. On that occasion also the immaculately-turned-out convent school girls were also second best.

Events

Catherine records her life as a journalist in the capital. At the *Irish Times* she wrote the social column. It involved attending events across Dublin from 5pm onwards every evening. Her copy appeared on the back page of the newspaper's weekend supplement. During her nine-year stint as

a social columnist she met many famous and colourful people. Among those she liked most were Angelina Jolie, John McGahern, John B. Keane, Yoko Ono, Jonathan Miller and Edna O'Brien.

In Catherine's essays, her attachment to her extended



family and her local community is unmistakable. There are numerous affectionate references to her parents and her sisters. Her Catholic faith emerges in a number of the essays.

Teenagers

She recalls going with the other teenagers in the parish and under the care of the local curate to John Paul II's Mass for the youth of Ireland at Galway.

She retained a vivid memory of the 'warm-up', conducted by Bishop Eamon Casey and Fr Michael Cleary. While on a visit to Prague she prayerfully remembered relatives, who had a lifelong devotion to the 'Infant Jesus of Prague'. Then there is Christmas. She joyfully takes her place in the choir for the Midnight Mass and is with the rest of the family as they visit their parents grave on Christmas Day.

Catherine remains very much a girl from the Waterford Gaeltacht. She intersperses her writing with phrases in Irish. With the rest of the parish she is an avid follower of the Waterford senior hurling team. Dan Shanahan and other members of the team have no more enthusiastic fans than Catherine and her sisters. Catherine recalls how she revived in An Rinn the tradition of 'Following the Wren' on St Stephens Day. Her book reveals a writer in touch with smallest pleasures of Irish life.



Rose Barton (1856-1929), *Going to the Levée at Dublin Castle, 1897*, from the exhibition 'Drawing Dublin'. Photo © National Gallery of Ireland

National Gallery of Ireland Print Gallery Drawing Dublin exhibition curated by Anne Hodge (Curator of Prints and Drawings) and Niamh MacNally (Assistant Curator of Prints and Drawings)

Peter Costello

The three rooms of the Print Gallery in the NGI are currently devoted to a most interesting exhibition, one filled with unusual and little seen images of the capital city over a run of some three centuries from the early 18th to the mid 20th Century.

The first room interestingly is devoted to images of the surrounding countryside, largely seeing the city, so much smaller then, from the hills and mountain around.

“The drawings by Harry Kernoff which I was not familiar with are wonderful, and come from his most creative period”

George Petrie has a drawing of a wind mill used to raise limestone from the quarry in Rathgar. This was a new notion for me: I now find it stood where Herzog Park tennis courts and playground are today, just off Orwell Road. Other images are of Donnybrook fields in

A wise man of our times

Wisdom at the Crossroads: The Life and Thought of Michael Paul Gallagher SJ by Thomas G. Casey SJ (Messenger Publications, €12.95)

Anthony Redmond

The well-known writer, educator and theologian, Fr Michael Paul Gallagher SJ died from cancer on November 6, 2015. He was a brilliant, kind gentleman in the true sense of the word.

I had the good fortune to meet Michael Paul on a number of occasions, and I found him such a good listener and one who offered sound advice.

Some years later, when I visited Rome where he was then living, he invited me to the famous Gesù and having him as a guide there was an educational experience. He was so kind and such an interesting man. There was a delightful sensitivity and

serenity about him. I have the fondest memories of him.

Thomas G. Casey is an Irish Jesuit priest. As a student, he lived in community for four years with Michael Paul Gallagher and later they were colleagues for 10 years on the teaching staff of the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He is currently Dean of Philosophy at St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

Introduction

Wisdom at the Crossroads is an introduction to the life and thought of Michael Paul Gallagher and it is clear that Fr Casey has great admiration and respect for him. "He was an orthodox thinker, but in a compassionate manner," he writes.

"He didn't threaten those

who were confused or lost, but reached out to them with kindness and understanding. He had a deep respect for them, wherever they were on the journey of life. He managed to hold together a deep fidelity to the longstanding wisdom of the Church with a true respect for all that was best in the history of thought, whether ancient, medieval or contemporary."

Michael Paul was always deeply interested in what atheists had to say. He respected their sincerity and conviction. He enjoyed dialogue and he was a great listener. In his wonderful book, *Clashing Symbols*, he analyses the many cultural influences of modernity and post-modernity on belief in God. He draws our attention to the words of a Spanish theologian who said that the

very question of God remains something irrelevant, or even non-existent, for the vast majority of people. God is missing, but is not missed.

“What we are witnessing is...an undramatic limbo of non-being”

Fr Gallagher tells us that what we are witnessing is no longer what de Lubac, over a generation ago, called the drama of atheistic humanism, but rather an undramatic limbo of non-being.

In a world devoid of God, morality ceases to have any intrinsic meaning. It becomes merely a matter of personal taste and has no absolute value.

Michael Paul says: "We will never get anywhere with religious questions until we realise that they belong to a personal region of truth, and



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Drawing Dublin's secret places and private people

the days of the infamous Fair.

The third room displays a pristine set of Malton prints, calm and civilised Georgian view of some of the grand places and building of the city. These are lovely but the heart of the exhibition is to be found in the middle room. This is filled with little known, even previously unseen items, and is a delight, even for those whose grasp of the changes in the city may be a little uncertain.

Here are 10 drawing from Flora Mitchell's famous series (published in 1966 as *Vanishing Dublin*). She recorded many of the out-of-the-way and now vanished courts and streets that lay behind the civic buildings in Malton's views. Alas she was wonderful on buildings, but her people are weak.

But other artists here capture all the various shades of Dubliners there were. Pride of place has to go to the calm, resigned face drawn by Sarah Purser of Mrs Moore of 24 Powers Court, c. 1910, decked out in her best hat and coat; she looks like the weight and worries of the world rest on her shoulders. She reminds one of one of the stalwart women in O'Casey's plays.

Literary echoes can be detected in the watercolours, quickly created in a note book during his lunch break by Michael Healy a stained glass worker. They reminded one of those brief snatches of Dublin life which Joyce recorded in his epiphanies, those snapshots of street life and talk about 1898. There are other things, cartoons of Dublin celebrities by a well-known cartoonist, but the seven pencil drawings by Harry Kernoff which I was not familiar with are wonderful, and come from his most creative period in the late 1930s.

This is definitely a show to see if only because it records a world long gone, or in danger of vanishing before our eyes along with its wonderful people, under the burden of internationalised glass and concrete.

i The exhibition runs until August 26, 2018.

Right: Sarah Henrietta Purser (1848-1943), *Mrs Moore, 24 Powers Court*. Charcoal, bodycolour (white highlights) on buff laid coloured paper, from the exhibition 'Drawing Dublin'. Photo © National Gallery of Ireland



that to face the question of God will involve the whole self.

"With this kind of search one cannot stand outside in a neutral fashion. Just as stained-glass windows cannot be viewed from outside the building, truth about God can never be grasped from an external perspective. It needs a logic of its own."

Positive

There was always something bright and positive about Michael Paul, and he went out of his way to help and encourage others and give them hope.

Fr Casey writes about him: "He had a disarming gift for helping people to reach the threshold of wonder in their lives.

He invited them to open new doors into the mystery of themselves, so that they could discover a God who was beyond anything they had dared to imagine. Michael

Paul was convinced that some experience of wonder must accompany the beginning of the religious journey. If this doesn't happen, we fail to connect with the deepest longings within us and we also fail to see that the core of God's revelation is an encounter of love."

Thomas G. Casey's book is excellent. It ends with a quotation from Michael Paul's last book, *Into Extra Time*, written when he was dying. "I am struck by something so obvious. The world goes on without me and will go on without me. So who knows me except God?"

There is an unreachable aloneness, a core of each person where only God enters to love and create. It is a space of secret, often invisible, belonging or intimacy, where nothing is without meaning, where eternity begins now, where all is being embraced in love."



Fr Michael Paul Gallagher SJ.

The World of Books

By Felix M. Larkin

Newspapers in and out of history

Even work on the scale of the new four-volume *Cambridge History of Ireland* (£350.00) cannot hope to be fully comprehensive. Nevertheless, the absence of a chapter on Irish newspapers in the *History* is quite remarkable. There is a chapter in volume four on broadcasting, but nothing specifically on print media.

This omission is despite what James Curran, the foremost media historian in Britain today, has referred to as the "sustained and focused historical investigation into the Irish press" in recent years facilitated, at least in part, by the establishment of the Newspaper and Periodical History Forum of Ireland in 2008.

Most historians regard newspapers as of interest essentially because of the light they throw on politics, society and public opinion at a particular time and because they offer the proverbial "first rough draft of history" – a phrase usually attributed to Philip Graham, the legendary publisher of the *Washington Post*. John Horgan, the former Press Ombudsman, has thus written that "newspapers are generally understood to be secondary sources for historians...sometimes they are the only record of things that actually happened. Sometimes they provide brief items of information, unavailable elsewhere, that can contribute important missing parts of a much larger historical jigsaw puzzle. And sometimes, precisely because they do not know what happened next, they are important witnesses to, and evidence of, the general mindset of populations and elites."

All this is true, but it is dangerous for the historian to rely on any newspaper as a source without some background knowledge of the publication in question, especially its political agenda. That is the primary reason why historians should study the history of newspapers in general and also the history of individual newspapers. They must understand the press and its history in order to critically assess its value as a source and to come to a proper appreciation of its limitations as a source.

“Newspapers have been a vital element in political, social and cultural life for more than two centuries”

James Joyce inserted a wonderful aphorism into the 'Aeolus' episode of *Ulysses*: "Sufficient for the day is the newspaper thereof." It echoes the Sermon on the Mount from St Matthew's gospel – "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" – and its significance is that it reminds us that newspapers are ephemeral. They have a shelf-life of one day, hardly ever longer than that. They lack the long-term perspective that is the hallmark of the work of the historian. Historians using newspapers as source material must add that perspective, and knowledge of the history of the newspapers in question is an important factor in that process.

Moreover, the history of newspapers is an inherently interesting topic for study – of value in its own right and for its own sake. It is not merely a side show, not just an effort to enhance our ability to use newspapers as sources – important though that is. Newspapers have been a vital element in political, social and cultural life for more than two centuries. Both individually and collectively, they have always been regarded by politicians and others as of great importance in creating and moulding public opinion and/or as an expression of it.

The nature and extent of the influence of the press is difficult territory for the historian, public opinion being an even more nebulous concept in the past than it is today. In his book *Public Opinion*, published in 1922 and described by Robert Schmuhl as "one of the first intellectually rigorous inquiries of journalism", Walter Lippmann argued that the importance of newspapers derives from the fact that they "signalize" an event or issue. They do not, and cannot, determine what people think – but they tell their readers what to think about and help shape the discourse that ensues.

Such considerations should inform the work of historians and others concerned with the past. Their work needs to take account of the history of the press and its influence on politics and society over time, and it is regrettable that the new *Cambridge History of Ireland* – in other respects, a very admirable project – fails to do that.

i Felix M. Larkin is a co-founder and former chairman of the Newspaper and Periodical History Forum of Ireland.

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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— Henry, MQI aftercare client

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EVENT

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PILGRIMAGE

ST OLIVER PLUNKETT three day pilgrimage from Dublin 2018 dates are 29 June - 01 July and 10 August - 12 August. The total cost is €115 and €105 for pensioners and students. For more information please phone 086 3853027 or if after 6pm 01 4941171. All are welcome.

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— Pope St Pius X, June 4, 1912

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The Irish Catholic

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If you would like further information please contact Trocaire, Maynooth, Co. Kildare



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info@trocaire.ie
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Crossword Junior Gordius 235



- ACROSS**
- 1 There is a colour in the name of this woodland wildflower (8)
 - 6 China and Iraq are in this continent (4)
 - 7 Helping (6)
 - 8 "I like a story with a happy _____" (6)
 - 9 Shout loudly, yell (4)
 - 11 It's shot from a bow (5)
 - 14 Ship that is famous because it hit an iceberg (7)
 - 15 Human-like machine (5)
 - 16 Cash (5)
 - 17 Backbone (5)
 - 18 Puts numbers together to get a total (3)
- DOWN**
- 1 Most heroic and courageous (7)
 - 2 Get the meaning (10)
 - 3 Keen (5)
 - 4 You can climb on its rungs (6)
 - 5 The King of the Beasts (4)
 - 10 Angered, cross (7)
 - 11 Crossword clues are set out as _____ and Down (6)
 - 12 Bunny (6)
 - 13 Damp (3)
 - 16 Crazy (3)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

GORDIUS No.353

Across – 1 Game warden 6 Berg 10 Truro 11 Conger eel 12 Attempt 15 Thyme 17 Rafa Nadal 18 Each 19 Punic Wars 21 Shackle 23 Sweat 24 ACOL 25 Info 28 Respray 33 Land of Nod 34 Prima Donna 35 Yuan 36 Cider press

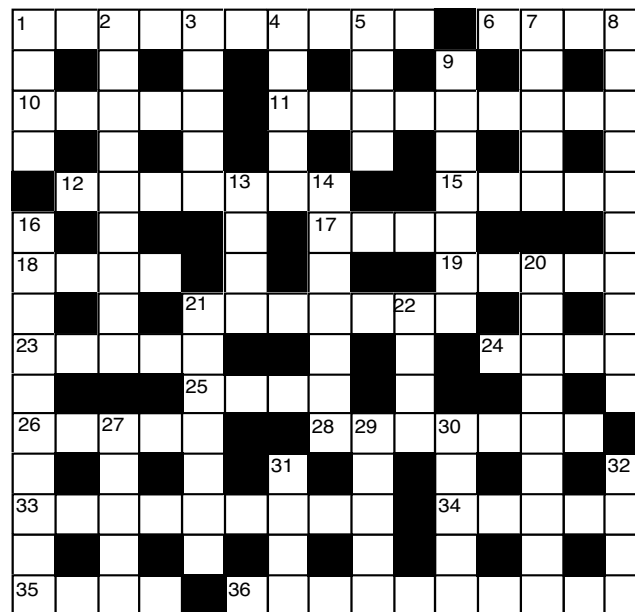
Down – 1 Gate 2 Moustache 3 Whole 4 Recap 5 Eons 7 Enemy 8 Golden calf 9 Red tape 13 Moth 14 Tractor 16 Personally 20 Nectarine 21 Stilton 22 Loss 29 Eddie 30 Pop-up 31 Anti

CHILDREN'S No.234

Across – 1 Juliet 6 Rung 7 Magpie 8 Avenue 9 Sharks 10 United 12 Over 14 Elevator 16 Dove 18 Leash 19 Skis 20 Why

Down – 1 James Bond 2 Luggage 3 Treasure 4 Angelina 5 Thread 11 Enough 13 Reels 15 Vase 17 Oak

Crossword Gordius 354



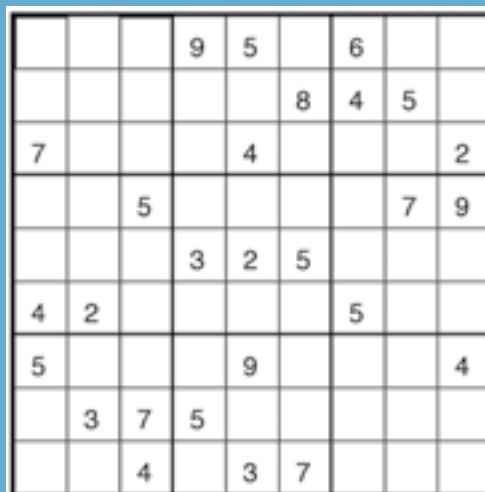
- ACROSS**
- 1 Is this a sport or a dance for creels? (10)
 - 6 Sprint (4)
 - 10 & 35a Such emissions might mar my saga (5,4)
 - 11 Whip a disturbed herald into a place of worship (9)
 - 12 See the clan die awfully in a European country (7)
 - 15 Magicians' props (5)
 - 17 Doing nothing (4)
 - 18 Troubles caused by Clinton's decapitation (4)
 - 19 Eagle's nest (5)
 - 21 They have been responsible for people coming to ropy ends (7)
 - 23 Game to make the trashcan leave (5)
 - 24 Tumble (4)
 - 25 Some holy Islamic ascetics initially formed this sect (4)
 - 26 Bird one might greet strangely (5)
 - 28 With rodents around, purloin something of little substance (7)
 - 33 Such amounts of weight might send girls amok (8)
 - 34 Changes focus quickly to see the Menagerie Manuscript (5)
 - 35 See 10 across
 - 36 The moneylender makes the chessman more destitute
- DOWN**
- 1 Sacks (4)
 - 2 Lions come around for a punctuation mark (9)
 - 3 Communication via the internet (1-4)
 - 4 Salted meat (5)
 - 5 Behind schedule (4)
 - 7 In the Bible, Moses' brother (5)
 - 8 My goodness - are these what await unrepentant sinner Quasimodo? (5,5)
 - 9 I'll wager it's just a small point that separates us (7)
 - 13 Glow, emanation (4)
 - 14 Schematic drawing (7)
 - 16 What finally decides the contest is harmful to neckwear (10)
 - 20 Do the police set it up to confuse a bald crook? (4,5)
 - 21 Kidnap victim (7)
 - 22 Heroic tale, saga (4)
 - 27 Political meeting during a game of tennis? (5)
 - 29 Norwegian playwright (5)
 - 30 Which which you shave (7)
 - 31 Ditch this for a comical reaction (2-2)
 - 32 One with a drug habit is sure to be upset (4)

Sudoku Corner 235

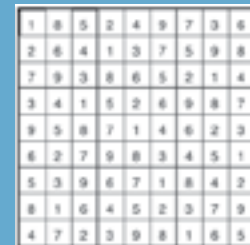
Easy



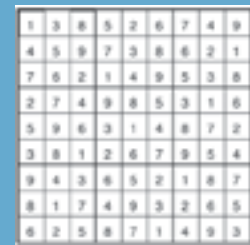
Hard



Last week's Easy 234



Last week's Hard 234





Fr Vincent Sherlock

Notebook

I am a Catholic...



fine men and women, who gave freely of their time and who spoke out in defence of life and against abortion in the hope their words would be heard and accepted as a message rooted in compassion.

Compassion

That notion of compassion was often spoken of during the debate and the Church's crucial link with compassion, which literally means "to suffer together" or "to feel pity" was denied, downplayed and sometimes ridiculed. I truly believe our Church is compassionate, despite its failings, and that parishioners encounter compassion at local level. We mind one another in times of crisis, from people preparing food and directing traffic at funerals, to sitting with loved ones during serious illness.

promote that message of life in a way that upheld the teachings of our Faith. This same sadness has been the experience of the many

GRAMMAR TIPS! As thousands of students sit their Junior and Leaving Cert exams these days, we hold them in our prayers and wish them well. I am reminded of a story once told by a teacher who corrected the Leaving Cert English paper.

One student's work was totally devoid of punctuation. Every answer began with a capital letter and ended with a full stop but nothing, by way of punctuation, in between. On the last page, he had lines of full stops, commas, hyphens, question and quotation marks, colons, semi-colons, etc. and a message: "Dear Examiner, please stick these in where needed".

There is kindness at work in our Church that calls all to do their best.

The little wallet I carried acknowledged me to be a "Catholic" in the event of an accident. If recent weeks have a message for us, it's that we must be "Catholic" at all times of our lives. To me this means having an eye and ear for the vulnerable. It's about being a voice seeking to be heard over a roaring crowd – not a voice to control or dominate but one to be heard because it has a message of truth, speaks of peace and of another way – the Christian way.

To be Catholic now is the same as it was to be a Catholic ever. It's about reflection on our call to live in accordance with God's plan.

It is about being willing to be a counter-voice when needed and a supportive voice always. It is about sharing sacred space and being open to hear a-fresh, God's word. It is about only going with the flow if the waters are flowing in a direction that gives glory to God, enhances and enriches all human life.

I am a Catholic. I am willing to come to your side when and if needed. That's our way!

They came because of a song

On Palm Sunday, almost 80 people joined us for Mass. They were visiting from Michigan, US. Their visit to our parish was, like all the places they visited, in response to a song. In our case the song was 'Kilkelly Ireland', a wonderful song about a father's desire to keep in touch with his emigrant son in the mid to late 1800s.

Something seemed so right about this – that the love of a song would bring people to travel and share a tune. We need to sing more often!



SISTERS IN TANZANIA URGENTLY NEED HELP TO SINK A BOREHOLE



Please can you help the Misericordia Sisters turn three and a half acres of arid land into a fruit and vegetable farm? Sister Fabiola, working with very deprived children in Dodoma, Tanzania, urgently needs funds to sink a borehole. The children desperately need fresh fruit and vegetables but the Sisters cannot afford the high prices charged in the city. If they had an adequate water supply she and her Sisters can do the rest. They could grow what they need to feed the children, and the surplus fruit and vegetables would feed the poor and needy in the surrounding villages.

Can you spare a donation for the Sisters?

The Sisters are pleading for the sum of €8,290. If you can spare a donation, please send it to The Little Way Association and we will transfer it to the Sisters without deduction. A borehole is crucial to ensure clean safe water for the school children, Sisters and the villagers.

If we receive more than the Sisters need on this occasion, we will use it to help other similar water projects.

EVERY EURO YOU SEND WILL BE VERY GRATEFULLY RECEIVED AND FORWARDED WITHOUT DEDUCTION.



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Email:

littlewaycentreknock@gmail.com

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

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€..... **NEEDS OF MISSIONARIES**

€..... **MASS OFFERINGS**
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Please tick if you would like an acknowledgement

Name (Rev. Mr. Mrs. Miss)

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Address

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