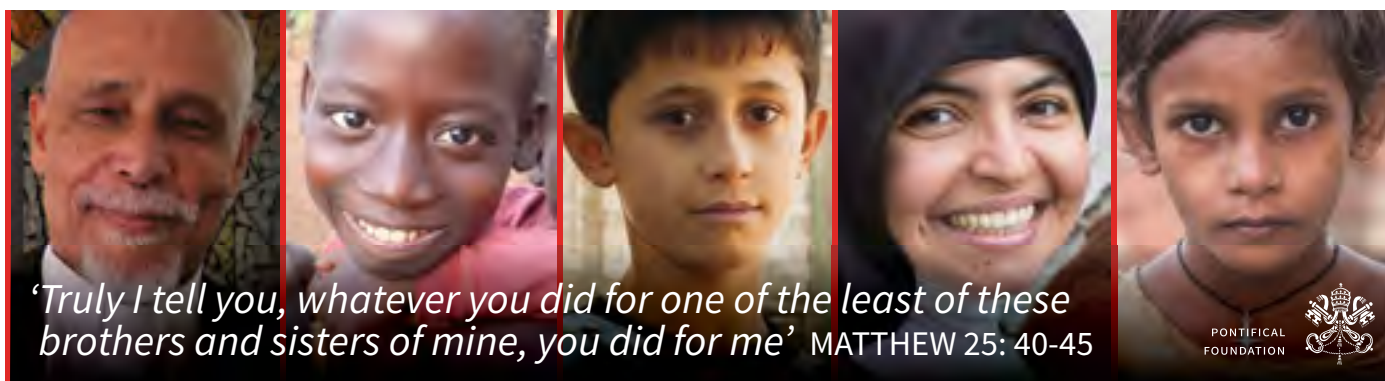




Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN IRELAND

TEL **01 837 7516**
WEB **acnireland.org**



'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me' MATTHEW 25: 40-45

PONTIFICAL
FOUNDATION

The Irish Catholic

LITTLE NELLIE

SPECIAL FEATURE

Growing devotion 100 years on

Pages 16-19



BREDA O'BRIEN

Keep the spark alive in
your marriage

Page 7



Thursday, August 8, 2019

€2.00 (Stg £1.70)

The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

@IrishCathNews

www.irishcatholic.com

Vandalism against churches set to increase warns priest

Colm Fitzpatrick

Irish Catholics should anticipate more attacks on their local churches, a Tipperary-based priest has warned after Nazi swastikas were painted on his Catholic oratory. The warning comes on foot of three attacks on churches in the midlands as well as numerous other recent attacks on religious buildings and statues.

Fr Michael Toomey told this newspaper that while the desecration of religious buildings is a much wider problem in France, Christians in Ireland are "going to be open to more and more criticism and perhaps sadly attacks" on their churches.

His comments come after vandals last week daubed a Catholic oratory and Holy Cross at Scrouthea Hill in the Comeragh mountains with Nazi swastikas.

The graffiti was discovered last Tuesday by members of

a local committee who take care of the religious site when they arrived to make preparations for the annual August Bank Holiday Mass.

The traditional service, which has been running since 1950, went ahead despite the disturbance and in his homily, Fr Toomey said that the entire community had been affected by the "childish and grotesque actions".

Attacks

His remarks follow a violent spate of attacks on religious buildings and monuments such as the decapitation of a statue outside Thurles cathedral commemorating once-archbishop Dr Patrick Leahy, as well as the defacing of St Michael's Church in Shrold last week.

Condemning the "profoundly disrespectful" incident, Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois Francis Duffy said: "I am, along with Fr

» Continued on Page 4

Move over St James, here comes St Declan...



Pilgrims make their way along one of the five stages of St Declan's Way, a 100km trek between Tipperary and Waterford which is fast becoming a rival to the well-known Camino de Santiago (St James Way) in Spain. See Pages 20 & 21 for full story.

Church-goers 'have better mental health'

Chai Brady and
Colm Fitzpatrick

Regular church attendance leads to better mental health because religion gives people "hope, meaning and perspective", according to one of the country's leading psychiatrists.

Prof. Patricia Casey was reacting to a major new Irish study which looks at people aged 50 or older and finds that those who attend church monthly or more are less likely to suffer from depression than the general population.

Commenting on this phenomenon, Prof. Casey told *The Irish Catholic*: "This is a very important study and one of the first I am aware of from Ireland. It agrees with the finding of my own study from three months ago that those who regularly attend church have fewer mental health problems. It also partly refutes the idea that this is purely down to having a bigger social network."

» See Page 9.

EXPERIENCE THE HOLY LAND

DEPARTING ON THE 23RD & 31ST OCTOBER 2019 | 8 NIGHTS

- Direct return flight from Dublin
- 4 nights Jerusalem | 4 nights Tiberias | Half Board
- Fully escorted and led by Spiritual Director

DIRECT
FLIGHT FROM
DUBLIN

from
€1,685
per person



Joe Walsh Tours
www.joewalstours.ie
info@joewalstours.ie
01 241 0800

T.O. 052 | T.A. 0689

Inside this week

Mary Kenny

TV licence is a shambles but service is worth paying for **Page 5**



Let yourself go

The excitement of a concert does you good!

Pages 31 & 33



Fr Ron Rolheiser

God doesn't expect you to think of him all the time

Page 30



Managing Editor: Michael Kelly, editor@irishcatholic.ie

Assistant Editor: Greg Daly, greg@irishcatholic.ie

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

Multimedia Journalists: Chai Brady, chai@irishcatholic.ie

Colm Fitzpatrick, colm@irishcatholic.ie

Newsroom: news@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874026

Books Editor: Peter Costello, books@irishcatholic.ie

Layout: Declan Moroney

Advertising: advertising@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874094

Accounts: accounts@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874020

Magnificat: magnificat@irishcatholic.ie

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

Shop: shop@irishcatholic.ie

Managing Director: Garry O'Sullivan

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

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR OUTSIDE IRELAND

Due to an increase in the cost of postage to €2.80 per copy, the annual subscription rate for readers residing outside Ireland must increase from €198 to €250, effective August 1, 2019. The cover price of *The Irish Catholic* remains unchanged.

Place an Advert

Phone 01 687 4094 or advertising@irishcatholic.ie

Parishes are 'life-blood' says Trócaire after bumper Christmas

Chai Brady

Trócaire has dubbed parishes the "life-blood" of the charity after their annual report shows one of the strongest Christmas campaigns in their history.

In their report for 2018/2019 the Church-charity raised €2.3 million during its Christmas appeal, a 10% increase on 2017. This was used to assist families affected by conflict in countries such as Yemen and South Sudan.

Eoghan Rice, Head of Communications in Trócaire, told *The Irish Catholic* they are "delighted" with the increased support, and that parishes are pivotal in allowing them to further their humanitarian goals.

"Parishes are the lifeblood of Trócaire, there's no doubt about it, whether it's the Christmas campaign or the

Lent campaign or just the support we get throughout the year.

"The support is holding up and increasing, I think people see the news, they see what's happening and I think they know the need."

Published over the weekend, the report states Trócaire supported 2.9 million people in 27 countries during the 2018/19 financial year.

Donations

The agency raised €69 million, including donations from the public worth €23.2 million. This is less than the €29 million they received in 2017/18, which they put down to donations sent for their East Africa Emergency Appeal during that period, which secured €5.5 million.

The Lenten campaign remains Trócaire's largest fundraiser, generating €7.6 million.

Commenting on the report, CEO Caoimhe de Barra thanked local parishes, schools and clergy for their "generosity".

She added: "Governments are increasingly restricting civil society and targeting human rights defenders.

"We continued to see a significant increase in work to defend civil and political rights across a number of countries. This is in response to the worsening human rights environment and illustrates our increased focus on this area of work.

"In 2018, 247 human rights defenders were murdered for protecting their communities' rights in the face of corporate interests. We have launched a campaign to secure a binding UN Treaty on Business and Human Rights. This protection is needed to keep communities safe from land grabs and other violations"



Bishop Denis Nulty stands with young people from Staplestown Cooleragh parish as part of the Kildare and Leighlin pilgrimage to Lourdes.

Meath monastery discovery is 'significant' find

Colm Fitzpatrick

The discovery of an ancient monastic site just outside Drogheda is "significant" as it offers an insight into how religious lived at the time.

Dom Richard Purcell, abbot of Mount Melleray Abbey, told this newspaper that the 13th-Century Cistercian settlement which is currently under excavation in Meath's Beamore "tells us more about the life of the monks back four, or five or six hundred years ago".

With the discovery of French pottery and architecture, it is understood that those who founded the monastery kept strong links with their mother house in France.

"It would appear they were sending back produce to France from Ireland, so exporting stuff that distance either through England or around the UK was a lot of work. It's interesting," Fr Purcell said, adding that historians don't know "an awful" lot about how the monks ran the monastery.

"The interesting thing about it is the connections with France, so relatively late in Ireland for the Church. The original French connections were all in the first half of the 12th Century...now you're looking at something 200 years later where monks are coming from France again to Ireland, and we don't know why."

It has been reported that archaeologists Matthew and Geraldine Stout, who are leading the excavations, said what has been discovered at the site is "quite exceptional and very possibly unique to Ireland".

Support Irish Missionaries

Reaching 19,000 Youth

Missionaries

As many fellow Irish might relate, for my whole life my faith has been there, but it was just something that I could list off rather than something I was passionate about, like I would say I was Catholic the same way I would say I have black hair. Then through a family friend I was invited to do NET. I can honestly say now after finishing my year that is was the best year of my life. NET helped me make my faith SO much stronger than it's ever been, and it's really helped me improve as a man of God.

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

Yes! I would like to donate to NET Ministries

NAME:

FULL ADDRESS:

TOWN:

POSTCODE:

How would I like to make my monthly donation to NET Ministries Ireland of: ☐ €10 ☐ €25 ☐ €50 ☐ Other:

I enclose a cheque payable to NET Ministries Ireland OR please debit my ☐ (Name card only)

Card Number: /

Expiry Date: / CCV (back of card):

Signature:

NET Ministries Ireland is a registered charity. Credit Transfers & Direct Debits. NET Ministries Ireland. IBAN: IE69 0901 0000 0000 0000 0000. BIC: NETIIE33. NET Ministries Ireland or call us 075 919 8696. College Court, Ballybofey, Co. Donegal

Church-going improves mental health says major new study

Chai Brady and
Colm Fitzpatrick

Regular church attendance leads to better mental health because religion gives people "hope, meaning and perspective", according to one of the country's leading psychiatrists.

Prof. Patricia Casey was reacting to a major new Irish study which looks at people aged 50 or older and finds that those who attend church monthly or more are less likely to suffer from depression than the general population.

The report was published last week by Trinity College Dublin and is from the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA).

It found that two-thirds of this age group still attend church on a regular basis. Almost 45% attend every week, 10% attend once or twice a month and 10% attend more than once a week.

In addition, a big majority say that religion is 'very'

or 'somewhat' important to them. Just 15% of women and 25% of men say it is not important.

Commenting on the findings, Prof. Rose Anne Kenny of TILDA, said one reason why church attendance results in better mental health is because those who do so have better social networks.

Importance

She said: "The importance of continued social engagement and social participation as we age is well established and has been associated with improved health and wellbeing and lower mortality. If religious attendance facilitates older people to maintain a larger social circle with continued social engagement, alternative ways to socialise will be necessary as we develop into a more secular society."

However, the study also found that there's an added dimension to church attendance over and above social engagement that improves

mental health.

Commenting on this phenomenon, Prof. Patricia Casey told *The Irish Catholic*: "This is a very important study and one of the first I am aware of from Ireland. It agrees with the finding of my own study from three months ago that those who regularly attend church have fewer mental health problems. It also partly refutes the idea that this is purely down to having a bigger social network."

She added: "This study and ours show that there is something about religious practice over and above social networks. I think it is that church attendance gives hope, meaning and perspective to people. Multiple international studies say the same thing."

The new study is called 'Religious Attendance, Religious Importance, and the Pathways to Depressive Symptoms in Men and Women Aged 50 and Over Living in Ireland'.

See also David Quinn, Page 9.

Katy Perry to compensate Christian rapper



Katy Perry.

Staff reporter

Famous singer Katy Perry has been ordered to pay a Christian rapper thousands after a judge ruled that she copied elements of his song. Gospel artist Flame – real name Marcus Gray – sued the 34-year-old popstar after he successfully showed the court that her 2013 hit 'Dark Horse' was based on his song 'Joyful Noise'.

The US rapper, who has a masters degree in biblical counselling, was awarded €2.7 million (€2.4m) with her record label, Capitol

Records, taking the brunt of the bill. Ms Perry has also been ordered to fork out \$550,000 (£490,000) from her own pocket.

The nine-person jury agreed that her song copied the underlying beat of the rapper's single, with the verdict bringing an end to the copyright battle that began in 2014.

The singer – renowned for songs such as 'California Gurls' and 'Roar' – described the ruling as a "travesty of justice" and it is understood that her lawyers will be lodging an appeal.

Since the start of his career in 2004, FLAME has released nine albums.



How would you like to be remembered?

Leave a lasting legacy with Sightsavers

One small action now, could change people's lives forever

www.sightsavers.ie/beremembered

Call Declan or Megan on **01 663 7666**

 **Sightsavers**

© Sightsavers/Jason J Mulikita. Registered charity number CHY 15437.

Vandalism against churches set to increase warns priest

» Continued from Page 1

James MacKiernan and our parishioners, deeply saddened at the violent attack on St Michael's Church.

The church, at which Mass is celebrated each Sunday, was broken into and windows – including a stained-glass window – were smashed.

"This is the second attack on the church; the first occurring at Easter 2017, when it was desecrated. Another church in the parish, St Anne's, Curry, was vandalised last year. Let there be no ambiguity, this is not a victimless crime.

"Vandalism of this kind is profoundly disrespectful to people of faith and to places of worship. It is threatening and distressing. In a truly pluralist society these examples of vandalism are of concern to our whole community."

Sacred quality

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* about the oratory attack, Fr Toomey said that nowadays churches are viewed as public buildings without any sacred quality to them, which leads to people chewing gum and drinking coffee at Mass.

"It is actually the House of God and it's not that people are being disrespectful deliberately, it's just the society we live in they see it as just another public building perhaps," he said, adding that "we need to bring ourselves back to the sacredness of it".

Dominican sisters Donnybrook exodus 'loss' to community

Chai Brady

With almost a dozen Dominican sisters leaving the Muckross Park convent in Dublin this week the local parish administrator has said it is a "loss to the community".

Multitudes of tributes have been paid to the sisters after the main convent building in Donnybrook closed in a decision made last year on foot of a health and safety inspection of the main building.

Sadness

The sisters established Muckross Park College 118 years ago, with local clergy, pupils

and teachers expressing sadness at their departure.

"I think when a religious community withdraws from a local community it's a loss to the community," said administrator of Donnybrook parish, Msgr Lorcan O'Brien.

The secondary girls school will not be affected, which Msgr O'Brien said is "functioning very well" under its new management, Le Chéile Schools Trust, and current principal Ann Marie Mee.

In a statement seen by *The Irish Catholic* the congregation said: "We Dominicans are also conscious of the implications of this closure

for our own sisters, many of whom have dedicated their entire lives to education and other ministry associated with Muckross Park – and also for the convent staff and many others who have a long association with the convent."

Closure

The newly refurbished wing of the convent, Veritas House, which is occupied mainly by Dominican sisters, will not be affected by the closure. The 11 sisters resident in the main convent have been moved to other Dominican convents.

The convent building will most likely be sold later this

year, they said, adding that this is linked to a fall in vocations in recent decades.

The Dominican Sisters, then based at Cabra, purchased the Muckross site in 1900, where they established both a junior and secondary school in 1901.

The original house at Muckross was built and owned by Patrick Cranny in 1865.

His daughter married George Noble who was given the title of Count Plunkett by the Pope. Joseph Mary Plunkett, who was executed after the 1916 rising, was the son of Count Plunkett.

Lay group's national congress to focus on Church's future

Staff reporter

A well-known lay organisation's national congress will focus both on the challenging times the Church currently faces, and plans for the future.

St Joseph's Young Priests Society (SJYPS) will hold their congress in Dublin City University from August 24-25.

The society decided on the theme 'Be not afraid – the Lord is my shepherd', saying they feel it reflects the current challenging times for the Church in Ireland and also for society.

Purpose

Speakers include Fr David Vard of Portlaoise parish, Ireland's youngest priest, Baroness Nuala O'Loan, member of the House of Lords and former Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, Fr Michael Mullaney, President of St Patrick's College Maynooth and David Quinn of the Iona Institute and contributor in *The Irish Catholic*.

The purpose of the SJYPS is to foster vocations to the priesthood and to financially assist in their education.

In addition, they seek to promote the vocation of the laity and foster a greater understanding and love for the Eucharist.

Anyone interested in attending on either day can contact the SJYPS at 01 676 2593 or email theoffice@sjyps.ie



Fr Michael Toomey celebrates Mass at Holy Year Cross in the Comeragh mountains, Tipperary, on the August bank holiday weekend – a tradition which began in 1950.

Cork priest hits out at funeral gifts

A Cork priest has urged parishioners to choose appropriate offertory gifts at funeral Masses, rather than cigarettes or cans of beer.

Fr Tomás Walsh of Guranabraher expressed his frustration in a weekly parish newsletter about unsuitable items being presented at funeral services.

"Bringing things such as a can of beer, a packet of cigarettes, a remote control, a mobile phone or a football jersey does not tell us anything uplifting about the person who has died. Surely items such as a flower, a family photograph, a prayer-book or Rosary reveals far more about the person who has died," he said.

Teaching kids about 'positive' porn lambasted by Iona

Staff reporter

An Irish academic's call for children to be taught the 'positive' aspects of porn has been described as "inherently exploitative".

Writing on the RTÉ.ie website, porn researcher Kate Dawson said, "there is a real need for youth to be equipped with information about pornography and be supported in developing skills necessary to critique sexual representations in media so that they can make healthy and informed decisions about their sexual lives".

One of her recommendations for porn literacy educational initiatives would be to reduce shame around porn use so as to encourage conversations about the sexual encounters portrayed in porn, particularly regarding sexual consent, body image and self-esteem.

"By reinforcing stigma and shame (saying porn is bad, don't watch it), we close off conversations," she said.

A spokesperson for the Iona Institute said: "Wanting to teach pupils about the negative aspects of porn is one thing, but pretending to them that there is a positive side to an industry that is inherently exploitative is another thing entirely.

"Parents need to know what some influential figures in the sex education debate want their children to be taught and to fight back when necessary."

The UCG PhD student caused outrage earlier this year when she appeared on ITV's *This Morning* show to advocate masturbation classes for primary school children.



Follow *The Irish Catholic* on Twitter

IrishCathNews

LET'S WORK FOR A BETTER SOCIETY FOR OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN. LEAVE A LEGACY FOR LIFE.

Support the Pro Life Campaign in your will.

The Pro Life Campaign promotes pro-life education and defends human life at all stages.

For more info visit www.prolifecampaign.ie
Contact us today to order a copy of our Wills leaflet.

prolife
campaign

LOVE
BOTH

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

❖ Capuchin Day Care Centre ❖ 29 Bow Street, Dublin 7



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

Help Bro. Kevin continue providing
this caring service.

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

The TV licence is a shambles, but it's still fair to pay for a media service

RTÉ claims it needs it to find a new way to fund broadcasting, because it seems that increasing numbers of people are dodging the licence fee. Thus their plan to incorporate the levy into utility taxation.

The present system for collection of the licence fee is not efficacious: my own impression is that it is a shambles. Here's my case.

I do not possess a television in my Dublin abode – my bedsit is too small and I don't get time to watch TV in Ireland.

“RTÉ does need to charge for its services...perhaps subscription is a possibility?”

I wrote several letters to the TV licensing authority explaining that I didn't have a TV, and therefore was not a customer of their services. I invited them to send inspectors to verify this, at any time. Eventually they accepted that I was telling the truth, and wrote to say they would despatch no more demands for payment.

Yet I am still bombarded with letters reminding me to pay a TV licence, with the usual accompanying threats of fines, penalties and even a prison sentence should I desist. I have given up responding any further.



Mary Kenny



But it's irritating to be accused of defaulting on a payment, even if it's only a computer saying it. It's a waste of resources and a sign of inefficiency. No ordinary business would continue to invoice a customer for remittances once the client had explained they didn't use said services.

Yet there are other, perhaps deeper, questions pertaining to this matter. Why are more viewers dodging the licence fee? Were they not taught that it is only fair to pay your fair dues?

Or is licence-dodging increasing because of the increasing belief that all information and much screen entertainment should be free?

“It's irritating to be accused of defaulting on a payment, even if it's only a computer saying it”

The giants of the internet – Google, Facebook and Co. – have pioneered 'free'

on-line services, which aren't really free at all, since they are using the information they gather for commercial purposes.

Those of us in the media industry certainly have a vested interest in affirming that reportage and information should be paid for. That's how journalists earn their living.

Thus, I perfectly understand that RTÉ does need to charge for its services. But it has to find a smarter way of doing so than a general, compulsory tax. Perhaps subscription is a possibility – with special waivers for those declared exempt.

Actually, I listen to RTÉ radio a lot, and find it informative and useful. I'd be willing to pay an annual subscription – say €50 – for its services. 'A fair day's work for a fair day's pay' is a Christian principle, and, similarly, so is a fair payment for a service appreciated.



Journalist
Fintan
O'Toole.

Nice (if futile) try, Fintan

● The commentator Fintan O'Toole is suggesting that Sinn Féin could 'lend' their seven Westminster seats to anti-Brexit colleagues in other Northern Ireland parties, or to Independents. These 'borrowed' seats could then bring down Boris Johnson's government.

This reminds me of a Penal Times family agreement, when land-holding Catholics 'lent' their lands to Protestant cousins, on the understanding that when the law changed, these lands would be returned to their rightful owners.

You'd need a lot of trust, even in a family connection, to participate in such a plan. Clearly Sinn Féin entertains no such trust, since they shot down Fintan's idea immediately as "mind-bogglingly ridiculous".

A voice from the past: the dulcet tones of Kathleen Dolan

Kathleen Dolan, who died in 2003 aged 82, became a Radio Éireann announcer in 1944 and was once described as "probably the best-known voice in Ireland". She had 'a beautiful speaking voice', presenting what was then the most popular radio programme, *Hospitals' Requests*.

Kathleen was born in Strabane, one of three children, and the daughter of a schoolteacher. She attended Loreto, Stephen's Green and spent time in Rouen, France, before returning to Ireland when war broke out.

She resigned from her job on her marriage in 1950 – it was rumoured

During August, a weekly focus on a personality in the most recently published volumes of the Royal Irish Academy's Dictionary of Irish Biography, being portraits of Irish lives

she was to wed Eamon Andrews, but her groom was Robin McDonnell, a widower with a teenage daughter. The McDonnells were old Catholic gentry in Co. Antrim, and Kathleen's husband was known as Count Robin McDonnell of the Glens.

She returned to radio work in 1953 to present *Between Ourselves*. When

her husband became sound director at Granada TV she moved to England. She took to writing children's stories, including 'Sean the Leprechaun', which became a successful TV cartoon.

Death

After Robin's death in 1984, Kathleen returned to Ireland for the remainder of her life. She died in Dublin and was buried in Glasnevin after a Requiem Mass at the Pro-Cathedral. Her two sons and stepdaughter survived her.

Her brother was Jim Dolan, one of the vocal group, 'The Four Ramblers'; her sister Ethna Dolan Devaney was a respected architect.

A NEW BIBLE FOR STUDY & PROCLAMATION

NOW AVAILABLE

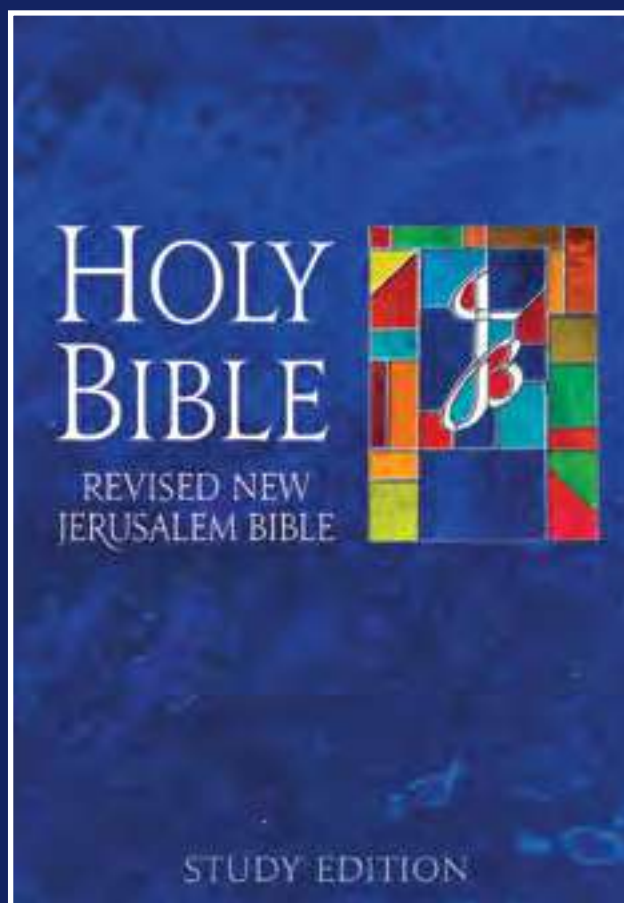
"An outstanding piece of work."
Nicholas King,
The Tablet

Translated by Revd Henry Wansbrough O.S.B

£39.99
Hardback,
printed paper case
(198x137mm).
978-0-232-53362-0.

2416 pages, plus 8pp
of colour maps.
2 ribbon markers.

Also available:
The Revised New
Jerusalem Bible:
New Testament and
Psalms



GRANTED THE NIHIL OBSTAT AND IMPRIMATUR

www.dltbibles.com

DARTON · LONGMAN + TODD

Breda O'Brien

The View



In marriage, keep an eye out for the four horsemen of the apocalypse...

Every so often, I come across a book that I feel is worth sharing with readers, and *Eight Dates: Essential Conversations for a Lifetime of Love* by Drs John and Julie Gottman is one such. The book concerns how to deepen relationships through a series of dates planned to facilitate in-depth conversations. Each conversation focuses on one arena: commitment and trust; conflict; sex and intimacy; work and money; family; fun and adventure; growth and spirituality; and, finally, dreams.

First, some caveats. Although 95% of the

book does not conflict with Catholic teaching on marriage, there are some parts that will make a Catholic reader wince. For example, possibly the weakest chapter is the one on spirituality, even though the Gottmans cite research that shows that when couples regard their relationship as sacred, it greatly improves their chances of a successful marriage.

Spirituality is interpreted in the loosest possible sense and is far from the Catholic vision of marriage as the couple's primary vocation, open to life and helping each other to become the

people God wants them to be.

Despite these and other criticisms, it is still a valuable book. My husband and I are married for 29 short years. We have been very happy, so why were we eager to pick up, read and put into practice what the book offers? Thankfully, it was not because we felt our relationship was in trouble.

However, while the fundamentals of our marriage are strong and we feel that we are each other's best friend, both of us are busy people.

Sacrifices

While we expected the early years of marriage and small children to be busy and to demand sacrifices I think it was a surprise to us that being the parents of young adults is also very demanding.

We are also conscious that we were blessed to have had children in the first place, given that so many couples struggle with infertility, and equally blessed because our children are really good young people. So in a way, we have little to complain about.

But life always seemed to be conspiring to create circumstances where prioritising our own relationship was always being put on hold.

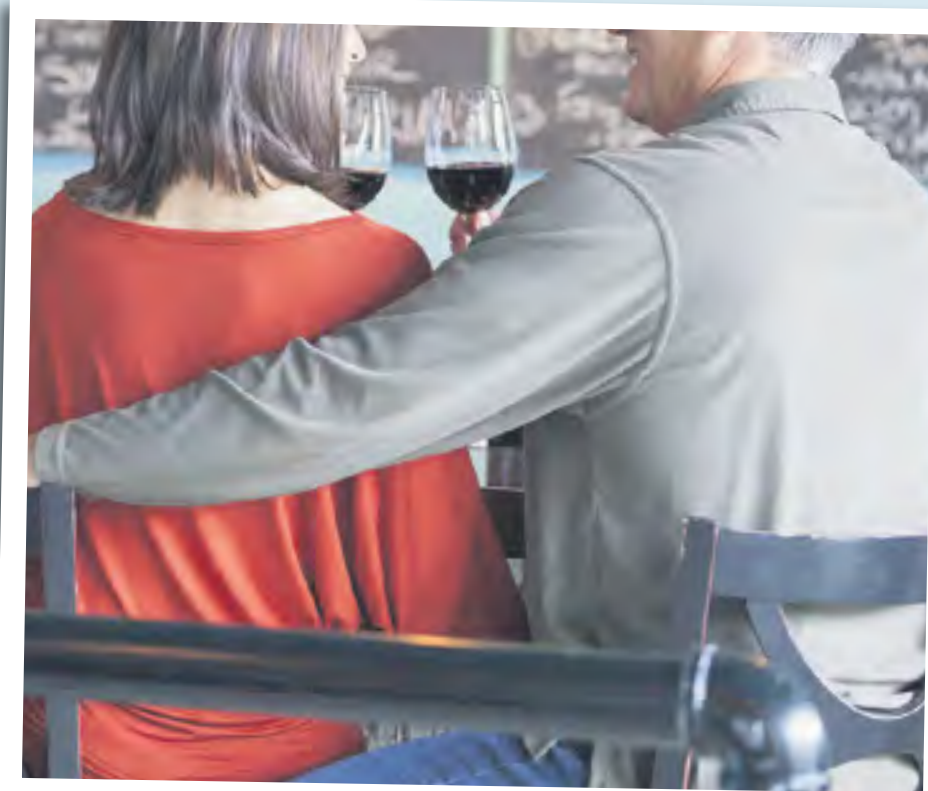
Needs

Something else always seemed to be more important. They were always worthy things, perhaps the needs of a young person going through a tough time, or trying to volunteer in the parish or a thousand other things.

No marriage should be taken for granted and every marriage can grow. When we came across the book, it seemed to be a really good way to schedule time for each other.

That may seem a bit odd. Scheduling sounds somewhat mechanical but in our case, events on the calendar happen, while those that are vague plans that might happen sometime, rarely do.

We do not need babysitters any more, so that



helped. However, I think the book would also work for couples just starting out, even though the date might have to be in the living room in the short gaps when a baby is sleeping. Younger couples might also offer to exchange babysitting services with another couple trying to do the same thing.

It does not have to cost anything. You can go for a walk in a beautiful spot and that works perfectly.

The Gottmans are probably the leading researchers in the English-speaking world on what makes relationships work and they claim that they can tell which marriages will fail and which will survive just by the way that people speak to each other. In good relationships, people affirm, support and forgive each other, with more than a

sprinkling of humour.

The Gottmans use the metaphor of the four horsemen of the apocalypse for relationships doomed to fail. These are criticism, defensiveness, contempt and stonewalling.

“Their key insight is that every relationship has areas of difference and conflict. Marriages where people never fight are relationships in trouble”

Their key insight is that every relationship has areas of difference and conflict. Marriages where people never fight are relationships

in trouble. What is important is how the differences are navigated. And where two people are willing, the four horsemen can be sent packing.

Questions

The Gottman's have a series of guiding questions on each topic. They encourage curiosity about the person whom you love. Who is this person to whom I am committed?

To answer that requires a willingness to be open with each other, to listen without interrupting, to ask supplementary questions that ensure you understood what the other person is saying, and to affirm each other.

All of these skills demand patience that is in short supply in our modern lifestyles. But really being heard is very healing.

Even though we are a long time married, we learnt things about each other we did not know. Both of us gained surprising insights not only about the other person but about ourselves. As the Gottmans say, every great love story is a never-ending conversation.

Fantastic Book Offer From Family & Life

The Last Four Things

God has not called us to His wrath, but to salvation. Only by rightly understanding the "Four Last Things" are we sure to think straight when life's difficulties threaten to overwhelm us. Fr. Wade Menezes expertly explains these realities by describing the reality of Hell, dispelling sentimental notions about Heaven, and identifying key but not so obvious - truths one must know about Death and Judgment.



Please send me the book. I enclose €16 (includes P&P)
Please print your details in BLOCK CAPITALS

Name:.....

Address:.....

Phone:.....

Mobile:.....

Email:.....

I prefer to charge my debit/credit card:

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Card Number:.....

Expiry Date:.....CVC Code:.....

Signature:.....

I hereby consent to Family & Life processing my personal data in accordance with its Privacy Policy and sending me communications by mail, e-mail, SMS, and telephone, including newsletters, updates on the organisation's projects, and requests for financial support. I understand that I am free to change my mind, and withdraw my consent, at any time. ☐

We accept Visa/Master/ Laser card orders by phone, email or through our website. Or send payment to:
Family & Life, Freepost, 26 Mountjoy Square,
Dublin 1. Tel: 01 8552790; Email: fandl@iol.ie
www.familyandlife.org

A BK TFLT 19



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN IRELAND

Doing God's Work

Support the suffering Church though the sacrifice of the Holy Mass

Mass | Triduum | Novena | Gregorian

For priests in many parts of the world,
Mass Stipends are the sole source of support.

When you submit a Mass Offering to ACN Ireland,
you are supporting a priest in the suffering and
persecuted Church who will personally celebrate
the Holy Mass for your special intentions.

100% of your Mass Stipends support Priests
who minister to and serve our suffering
and persecuted Church.

ACN also provides Mass Cards for every occasion
including Baptism, Weddings and Funerals.

Mass in a Connemara Cabin
– Aloysius O'Kelly, 1883

I would like to make a Mass Offering

Please indicate the
type and number of
Masses required.

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GENERAL | <input type="checkbox"/> TRIDUUM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NOVENA | <input type="checkbox"/> GREGORIAN |

Suggested donation per Mass are as follows:

General - €10 | Triduum - €30 | Novena - €70 | Gregorian - €270

DONATION AMOUNT € ☐ Please tick if you like an appropriate card sent out.

MASS INTENTIONS

Please complete your personal and payment details and return to the address below.

Yes, I would like to donate to Aid to the Church in Need

| | | |
|----------------------|------------|---------|
| TITLE | FIRST NAME | SURNAME |
| FULL ADDRESS | | |
| <input type="text"/> | | |
| PHONE NUMBER | EMAIL | |

☐ I would like to make a monthly donation to **Aid to the Church in Need** wherever the need is greatest.

DONATION AMOUNT

☐ €10 ☐ €25 ☐ €50

Other €

For Credit Transfers and
Direct Debits our bank details are:

IBAN IE32 BOFI 9005 7890 6993 28
BIC BOFI IE2D

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

Card Number: (Laser only)

Valid From: Maestro Issue No.

Expiry Date: Signature strip code (last 3 digits)

Signature

Please detach this form and return, with your gift, to the address below.

☐ I do not require an acknowledgment.

Registered
Charity Numbers:
(RoI) 9492
(NI) XR96620

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

Aid to the Church in Need, 151 St. Mobhi Road, Glasnevin, Dublin 9

PONTIFICAL
FOUNDATION



KEEPING FAITH IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Irish Catholic EDUCATION CONFERENCE

**THURSDAY
24TH OCTOBER, 2019**

CLAYTON HOTEL BALLSBRIDGE
REGISTRATION 9.00 AM

EARLY
BIRD PRICE

€50

UNTIL 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

**LUNCH
INCLUDED**

SPEAKERS:



BISHOP TOM DEENIHAN

Bishop of Meath

What future for Catholic schools



PROF. FRANCIS CAMPBELL

St Mary's University, London

Keeping faith in our Catholic schools



PAUL BARBER

Catholic Education Service of England and Wales

Catholic schools in a pluralist culture



BAIRBRE CAHILL

The Irish Catholic

The future of preparation
for the sacraments



NATALIE FINNIGAN

Archdiocese of Glasgow

The role of the Catholic school
in shaping society

BOOK NOW AT:

www.irishcatholic.com/shop or
call 01-6874028 or e-mail events@irishcatholic.ie

CPD Accredited



The life-giving 'secret' of the over 50s

The world might be all about social media, but a good social network is worth considering, writes **David Quinn**

Critics dismiss religion as pie in the sky at best, and an actively harmful, regressive force at worst. That is, they believe religion is a form of escapism, or else it unleashes fanaticism and violence upon the world and promotes social attitudes that repress certain groups, not least women.

Such are the charges anyway. At one and the same time they are far too simplistic and also capture a certain truth, because religion can do these things, just as virtually as ideas can. For example, socialism and nationalism have been the cause of fanaticism and violence even though they try to be unifying forces. Liberalism, for its part, makes the individual the basic unit of society and helps to dissolve the social bonds, including the family.

Liberal individualism also weakens religious commitment. Again, there will be plenty of people who think this a good thing, but when we don't feel like we belong to something bigger than ourselves, we can easily find ourselves isolated and alienated and that is never a good thing.

Study

A new Irish study has just been published which examines the lives of 6,000 people over the age of 50. It looks in particular at their levels of religious involvement and finds that those who attend church regularly have fewer mental health problems than those who do not. Are you paying attention, Simon Harris?

The study was released by the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) at Trinity College Dublin.

First of all, it looked at levels of regular religious attendance among those over 50. Given how religious



attendance in general has declined in Ireland in recent decades, the results were a bit surprising because 44% of those taking part in the study attend church every week, a further 10% attend once or twice a month and another 10% more than once a week.

“We can easily find ourselves isolated and alienated and that is never a good thing”

This adds up to almost two-thirds of the over 50s in Ireland attending church regularly, higher than expected maybe. The study then found that this group has lower levels of depression than in the general population. That's a very good thing indeed.

What's going on? Well, one explanation seems that regular church attendance is a sign of being part of a wider social network, decreasing feelings of isolation and loneliness.

As one of the researchers, Prof. Rose Anne Kenny put it: “The importance of continued social engagement and social participation as we age is well established and has been associated with improved health and wellbeing and lower mortality.”

However, the study also found that there is a link between church attendance and better mental health over and above participation in social networks. It says that increased social connectedness is only part of the explanation, and this

“indicated that there may be other mechanisms through which religiosity is related to mental health”.

Perspective

It does not know exactly what this is, but Prof. Patricia Casey provides a clue. As she tells *The Irish Catholic* this week: religious participation “gives hope, meaning and perspective” to people when life challenges them that they might otherwise not have.

In other words, they can rely on something bigger than themselves when they suffer a set-back.

The study also examines how important religion is to the over 50s. There were significant gender differences here. Just under 15% of women said it was not important versus almost 25% of men. Conversely, 56% of women said it was very important versus 42% of men. The rest said it was “somewhat important to them”.

Interestingly, the study found that people who say religion is important to them but do not attend church regularly are more likely, not less, to suffer from depressive symptoms than the general population.

This seems strange. The researchers speculate that such individuals may feel particularly isolated because they see how religion has declined in Ireland and lack the benefits of meeting fellow religious believers at church on a regular basis.

As church attendance continues to decline in Ireland, what will happen to the mental health of our growing population of older

people?

Prof. Kenny says we will have to develop “alternative ways to socialise...as we develop into a more secular society”.

But that is easier said than done and it overlooks the fact that the study itself sees a link between good mental health and regular church attendance over and above the greater social connectedness.

“We are meaning-seeking creatures. Ultimately, we are God-seeking creatures”

Perhaps that something is the fact the religious people pray more and perhaps, as Professor Casey says, religion links them to something much bigger than themselves. Religion is a primary source of meaning and purpose, which is one reason why it is so universal and so persistent over time. We are meaning-seeking

creatures. Ultimately, we are God-seeking creatures.

As St Augustine famously said: “We are made for you, O Lord, and our hearts are restless till they rest in you.”

Can any kind of secular social network really replace what religion offers? The decline of religion in Ireland is linked to wider trends in society. As mentioned earlier, various forms of social participation are in decline, not just religion. Trades unions are far smaller than they once were. So are political parties. We marry at lower rates and divorce and separate in bigger numbers.

All of this is in large part a consequence of our turn towards radical individualism. Greater church attendance among the over 50s helps to protect them against this social trend and they should be very glad of it. They know a ‘secret’ the rest of society is forgetting.

WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE HOLY FAMILY IN...

THE HOLY LAND

16 – 24
FEBRUARY 2020

PRICE:
€1540 INCLUDING
TAXES AND TIPS

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT €450



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

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

BISHOP KEVIN DORAN

Eight-night pilgrimage in four-star hotels

- Luxury air-conditioned coach throughout the itinerary
- Breakfast and evening meal served each day at hotels
- Full religious programme organised by Marian Pilgrimages
- Services of Marian Pilgrimages representative and professional English-speaking guide throughout the pilgrimage

- Full-day guided tour of Jerusalem including visits to the Western Wall, Dome of the Rock, Church of St Anne, Via Dolorosa, Holy Sepulchre and Shrine of the Book

- Complete programme of sightseeing and visits to sites of interest in the Holy Land
- Boat trip on Sea of Galilee
- Return taxi transfers to Mount Tabor

To reserve your place:

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



MARIAN PILGRIMAGES

The Irish Catholic

Marian Pilgrimages is a fully licensed and bonded tour operator T0142 - ATOL 10296

RTÉ isn't worth it...but you'll pay the fee anyway



It seems odd that we are asked to pay a fee for a service that many of us don't use, writes **John McGuirk**

I am childless, but my taxes pay for schools. I am not sick, thank God, but my taxes pay for hospitals. Ireland is not likely to be invaded any time soon, but my taxes pay for an army. We pay the government for things that we do not use ourselves, but benefit everyone, all the time, because the country is a better place for everyone if it has schools and hospitals. Also, without the state paying for them, there would be many fewer schools, and hospitals. The market will not provide.

That is not true of television. In Ireland today, you can choose from any number of packages and providers to suit your needs. Netflix, BT, Sky and Virgin all provide relatively cheap options if you want loads of original content. If you don't feel like paying, the

BBC, Channel 4, Channel 5, ITV and Virgin Media are all available, and cost you nothing. Indeed, more Irish people watch these channels, and these offerings, than watch RTÉ. The national broadcaster has the largest single share of the audience, but it is a minority share, and one that is ever shrinking.

Operations

For this reason, it is, of course, losing money. Normally when companies lose money, they cut back and trim down their operations to get themselves back on track. Think, for example, of the turnaround at Aer Lingus, which was losing money hand over fist in the late 1990's but is now a very profitable airline, having learned lessons from its competitors.

RTÉ, however, wants to go down a different road – it wants you to

pay more to support it, year after year, whether you watch it or not.

This week, the Government announced that it will impose the television licence fee on people who do not own televisions. That's right – even if you have never owned a television, you will find yourself paying the €160 (set to rise, as well) to support the national broadcaster.

It is approximately the same thing as if the Government forced people who walk on the roads to buy car insurance. Don't drive? No matter – you should pay for an insurance policy for a medium sized family car either way. It is no different in principle than asking the taxpayer to fund my subscription to Sky Sports. You would think that was very unfair, wouldn't you? Asking people who don't have Sky Sports to pay so that I can watch it? Well, it's a lot like asking people who don't have a television to pay for a TV licence.

RTÉ is in the position it is in because the public are not watching its programmes. That is not the fault of the public. You or I are not to blame because we are not captivated by *Fair City*, or because we prefer Graham Norton to Ryan Tubridy. The fault for that lies solely with RTÉ.

“Don't drive? No matter – you should pay for an insurance policy for a medium sized family car either way”

RTÉ, by the way, already receives almost all the benefit from the TV licence. It gets a huge chunk of money from the taxpayer that Virgin Media does not. On the radio front, Newstalk, Today FM, 4FM and your local radio stations have to struggle on without a penny from the license fee, while RTÉ Lyric FM, with far fewer listeners, is paid for by people listening to other stations.

RTÉ is sitting, in Donnybrook, on some of the most expensive land in Ireland, smack in the middle of Dublin 4. Its main competitors, Virgin Media and TG4, are based outside the M50, and in rural Galway, respectively. It is one way they manage to keep costs down compared to their subsidised competition. Is it really so unreasonable to ask RTÉ to sell its land at Donnybrook and move somewhere cheaper, like Athlone? The profits from such a move would be significant, and it would also move some badly needed jobs to rural Ireland.

RTÉ, despite its financial difficulties, has some of the highest paid journalists in Europe, let alone Ireland. It has the money to sponsor the Dublin Gay Pride parade, and the



money to fund a youth parliament on climate change.

In recent years, it has embraced an aggressively liberal approach to journalism,

discarding any effort to be balanced in favour of campaigning relentlessly on the liberal causes of the day. It is so

unused to providing balanced coverage that when it came to report on the Government's proposals to put a licence fee on people with no televisions, it could not even include a single voice opposed to the idea in its report.

RTÉ is not a school or a hospital. There are plenty of other channels doing the same thing, better, and for less. It has the resources and the options available to get out of its own mess.

Asking the public to pay even more, for something they don't even watch, at a time when families across the country are struggling, is deeply immoral. The Government should think again on this one, but they will not. Do you know why?

Because our politicians are more scared of RTÉ than they are of us voters. Isn't that some state of affairs?



Ryan Tubridy.

MAGNIFICAT

Your Daily Mass and Prayer Companion



SUBSCRIBE NOW FOR

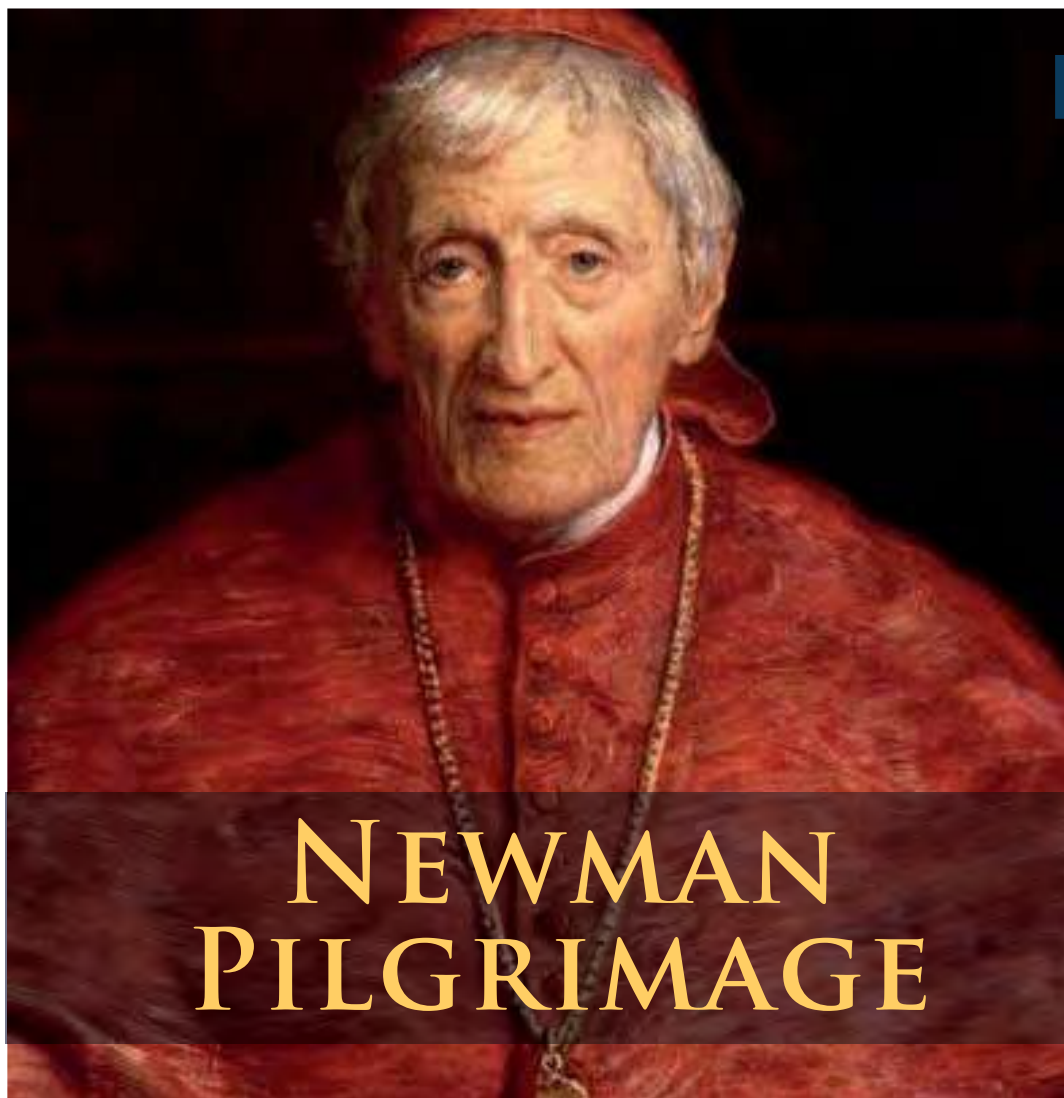
€53*

Annual subscription

☎ 01 6874024

✉ magnificat@irishcatholic.ie

🌐 www.irishcatholic.com/product/magnificat-subscription



Notre Dame Centre for Faith and Culture
in association with The Irish Catholic

Cardinal John Henry Newman Canonisation Pilgrimage to Rome

10 – 14
OCTOBER 2019

PRICE:
€725PPS

Spiritual Director: **Fr Bill Dailey CSC**

BOOK NOW

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

Schedule

Day 1 Thursday 10 October

- Our pilgrimage begins with an afternoon flight from Dublin to Rome with Aer Lingus.
- Upon arrival in Fiumicino airport we will meet our tour escort and drive to the four-star Hotel Clodio where we will stay for four nights on a bed and breakfast basis.

Day 2 Friday 11 October

- After morning Mass, we'll walk to Vatican City for a guided tour of St Peter's Basilica where we'll see Michelangelo's Pietà statue, the canopy altar where the Pope celebrates Mass and the crypt of the Popes.
- We'll then visit the Church of Santa Maria in Vallicella, the mother church of the Oratorians, the same order as John Henry Newman.
- After free time for lunch in nearby Piazza Navona we will visit the Pantheon and the famous Trevi Fountain.

Day 3 Saturday 12 October

- This morning we will visit the Basilica of St. John Lateran and have the opportunity to climb the Holy Stairs, the sacred staircase which Christ is said to have ascended to be sentenced to crucifixion by Pontius Pilate. We'll then walk to the Irish College where we will celebrate Mass and afterwards enjoy a tour of the college.
- After free time for lunch we will enjoy a leisurely walk, passing by the famous Colosseum and the nearby monument of Victor Emmanuel II or "The Wedding Cake" as it is commonly known.

Day 4 Sunday 13 October

- This morning in St. Peter's Square, the Holy Father will canonise Cardinal John Henry Newman, the theologian, educational reformer and founder of University College Dublin (UCD) and without doubt one of the most prominent converts to Catholicism from Anglicanism in the 19th century.
- This afternoon we will enjoy the vibrant atmosphere of Rome with a visit to the famous Spanish Steps. Here we will have time to sit, relax and enjoy the views of wonderful Piazza di Spagna.

Day 5 Monday 14 October

- After an early breakfast we will check out of our hotel and take our transfer to the airport for our return flight with Aer Lingus departing at 11:15am.



Among the pilgrims on Croagh Patrick last month was a Belgian who'd walked three months to get there, writes **Greg Daly**

Santiago de Compostela is a fashionable destination for Irish pilgrims year-in-year-out nowadays, with a record 7,548 Irish pilgrims collecting their 'Compostela' from the cathedral offices last year. In the Camino's medieval heyday, however, huge numbers of Irish pilgrims would make the arduous journey to the Spanish shrine only in Jubilee years, when the feast of St James, July 25, fell on a Sunday.

It's a curious coincidence that this would be a major pilgrimage day in Ireland itself, with the annual 'Reek Sunday' pilgrimage up Croagh Patrick taking place on the last Sunday in July.

Pilgrimages

For 66-year-old Belgian Luc Abel, who first visited Mayo when cycling in the area in mid-July 1975 and who finished an 80-day walk to Croagh Patrick last month, the overlap of the two pilgrimages could not be ignored forever.

"There is a holy year at Compostela each time July 25 falls on a Sunday, but also St Patrick's Reek Day is on the last Sunday of July, so sometimes they are together, and in 1976 that was the case," he tells *The Irish Catholic*. "I had some problems in 1976, and I was in hospital for quite a long time, starting on July 25, 1976. I didn't know about St James and Compostela at that point, but later on I found out."

From Flanders to the Reek



His first pilgrimage had been to the Eternal City, prompted by a TV programme he had seen about two Germans walking to Rome.

"I saw on TV that a German couple were walking from Germany to Rome, and I thought 'what a crazy idea in

this time, walking to Rome,'" he says, adding that a few striking coincidences subsequently caught his attention and prompted him to follow in their footsteps.

"I decided that I would go to Rome. I went to Rome without money – well, I had

money but not enough, so I slept in priests' houses and in school classrooms. It was the hardest pilgrimage, the toughest one, but the best," he says, adding that the journey took him 55 days all told.

"It was long before pilgrimages existed – they existed all

“There is a holy year at Compostela each time July 25 falls on a Sunday, but also St Patrick's Reek Day is on the last Sunday of July, so sometimes they are together, and in 1976 that was the case”



Stained glass image of St Dymphna by Harry Clarke in Carrickmacross. Left, Luc Abel outside St Peter's Church, Drogheda.

the time, of course, but in the '60s and the '70s people didn't go on walking pilgrimages, they could buy a car and go by car, so pilgrimages walked by foot didn't happen," he continues.

His next walking pilgrimage was as part of a large international group walking from Warsaw to Czestochowa over 10 days in 1981, and it was not to be until 1989 that he did his second long pilgrimage, walking alone for 80 days from Antwerp to Santiago.

"When I walked to Compostela in '89, I walked in the winter – I started on January 1, and I finished in Compostela on March 21,

just before Easter, and I saw almost nobody. In France and Belgium nobody knew about Compostela, or just a little bit, at that time," he says.

Anyone who's seen the film of *The Way* should remember the lady at the first hostel, in Roncesvalles, who tells Martin Sheen's character that she has never personally walked the Camino. "When I was young, I was too busy, and now that I am old, I am too tired," she says.

The line originally comes from Jack Hitt's 1994 Camino memoir *Off the Road*, and was spoken to him by Madame Jeanne Debril, a one-woman predecessor of the pilgrim office in the French Pyrenean town of St Jean Pied de Port.

Luc Abel says she was indeed "famously severe" and that she was shocked to see him arriving at St Jean in February: "She said 'Oh my God, a pilgrim now at this time! In a few years they will be coming all year round!'"

Back then, of course, barely a few hundred people walked the Camino to Santiago, whereas nowadays more than 300,000 do so each year, although Luc points out that about a third of those do just the last 100km of the Way.

"I think maybe the hype of Compostela is a bit over," he muses, noting that the numbers arriving before Easter this year are slightly down on last year's numbers. "It is due to its own publicity and success, because the Camino Frances is – I don't know, I wouldn't recommend people to go on the Camino Frances unless it is winter or something. In the summer it will be a carnival."

In 1990 he had attempted to follow his Camino to Santiago by walking to Jerusalem, thus managing a 'hat trick' of great medieval pilgrimages, but though over 131 days he managed to get as far as Thessaloniki in Greece he was forced to stop. "Sometimes it is like that," he says. Long afterwards, though, he heard about the convergence of Santiago Jubilee Years with Reek Sunday, which sparked an interest in him in St Patrick.

"I read about St Patrick



and I thought, when I'm on my pension one of the things I'm going to do is walk with St Patrick," he says. "That's what I'm doing now – I'm retired three years. Two years ago I walked from Gibraltar to Compostela in two months, and last year I made it from Belgium to Mont St Michel in Finisterre in two months. Now it's St Patrick, and next year something else, maybe. I don't know yet!"

* * * * *

Eighty days of walking is quite the achievement, and a look at Luc's route will bring home just how impressive it is: he set off from his home in Mechelen in Flanders, making his way across Belgium and into France from where he took ship for England and walked to London. Onward then across England into Wales, from where he took the ferry from Fishguard to Rosslare and headed north, following the Wicklow Way and carrying on to Dublin and Drogheda.

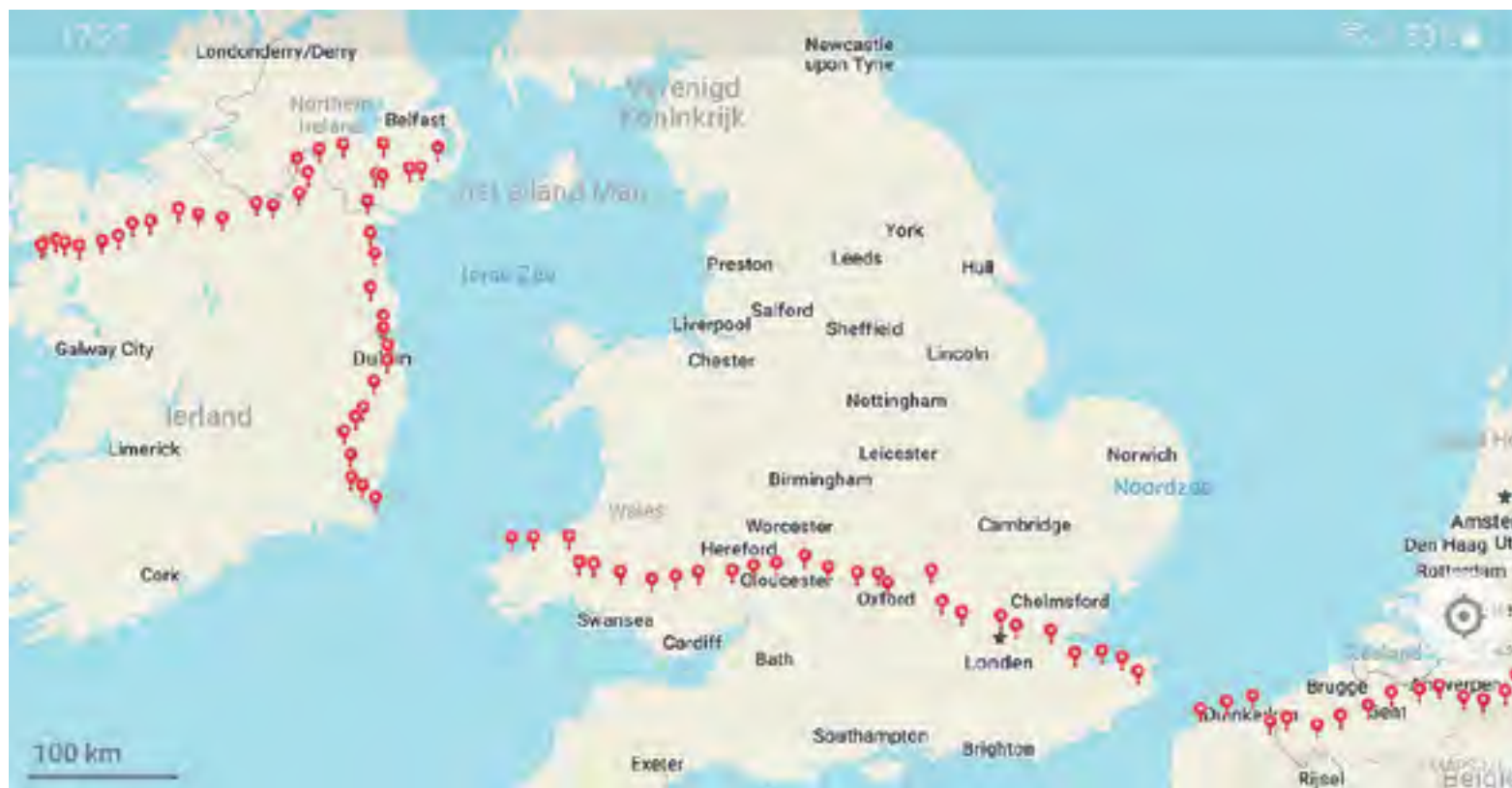
Newry then, and St Patrick's Way, before heading through Monaghan and Cavan to Carrick on Shannon, Roscommon, and across Mayo, via Knock to Croagh Patrick, which he reached a week or so ahead of Reek Sunday.

Along the way he made a point, he says, of visiting the small Monaghan village of Tydavnet, twinned with his mother's home town of Geel, and the site of a holy well linked with St Dymphna.

"My mother was born in Geel in Belgium," he explains. "Geel is known for curing the insane, for people who have mental problems, and that comes from St Dymphna, who came from Ireland."

St Dymphna's story is an extraordinary one, and one rarely told nowadays despite the Irish saint's role as a patron not merely for the mentally ill, but for victims of incest.

"Her father was a pagan king, like there were many kings in Ireland at that time, and her mother became Catholic," Luc explains. "But then the mother died, and the king was in sorrow and told he had



Map of Luc's route taken from his smartphone app.

to remarry. He said 'yes, if I find a woman as beautiful as my wife, then I'll remarry'."

His advisers and men looked everywhere for a suitable bride but to no avail, Luc continues. "And then the father saw his daughter and thought 'she is as beautiful as my wife', so he set his mind on his daughter, and that's not good."

The princess escaped with her confessor, Fr Gerebran, the two making their way to Flanders and settling in Geel, where they cared for the sick but were found by spies working for the king.

"Then the king travelled to Flanders. He found his daughter there, and asked her again would she marry him. She refused, and then he beheaded her," Luc says, adding that Gerebran was similarly slain.

“A highlight of his Irish pilgrimage, he adds, was spotting stained glass windows about St Dymphna in the cathedral in Armagh”

The victim of an insane father, St Dymphna became regarded as a saint for the mentally ill, and Geel became a shrine that attracted psychiatric patients from the Middle Ages on, with the town pioneering a method of care that still is used today, with patients boarding with families while being cared for in the local hospital.

"It's the only place in the world that psychiatric patients stay with families – even today, patients that are

not dangerous stay there," Luc says, adding that his grandfather's family had had a few 'guests' back in the day, integrated into the family while receiving professional help at the hospital.

Despite his family connections with Geel, however, Luc had never really had much to do with it until he met a man about 10 years ago who had walked from Geel to Tydavnet in connection with St Dymphna.

"I met him about 10 years ago, he had already been to Compostela and Rome and then told me he had also walked to Ireland. That's the first time I ever met anybody who had walked to Ireland," he says.

Village

While Luc had been surprised to discover just how small Tydavnet was when he got there, he says, he was grateful for the welcome he received in the village. "I was well received in Tydavnet, where in the pub a lady offered me a sandwich, when normally they don't have food, and I didn't even have to pay, so that was very nice," he says.

A highlight of his Irish pilgrimage, he adds, was spotting stained glass windows about St Dymphna in the cathedral in Armagh – with St Patrick's Way from Armagh to Downpatrick being a highlight in its own right, of course.

St Dymphna, he stresses, is not the only direct Irish link with his area. "Flanders was Christianised by Irish monks," he says, "like St Rumbold, perhaps the first archbishop in Flanders."

Whether St Rumbold was Irish or Scottish isn't quite clear, but certainly he seems to have been trained as a

priest in Ireland, as were many Scottish and Welsh-born missionaries in early medieval Flanders, Luc says, noting that Mechelen's cathedral is dedicated to Rumbold and that St Willibrord, the Northumbrian 'apostle to the Frisians', had studied in Ireland.

It seems fitting, then, that Luc has quite literally tried to walk in the footsteps of the saints who brought the Faith to his homeland, and he clearly finds it deeply enriching, even if walking pilgrimages have changed dramatically over his lifetime.

"I think walking is one of the ways that you see a lot. You're on your own, you feel your body, and things can happen. You concentrate on just walking – you don't have to do anything except walk and find a place to sleep," he says.

"Of course nowadays it's completely different from what I used to do. When I started in '76 I had a book which was all the maps of Europe, and Belgium was just two pages. Now I use my smartphone. I don't have, normally, any maps with me. I only have a smartphone and a back-up of course," he says, showing how the Maps. Me app on his phone enables him to spot the smallest of routes over fields and wherever he has stayed along the way.

* * * * *

“I think walking is one of the ways that you see a lot. You're on your own, you feel your body, and things can happen. You concentrate on just walking – you don't have to do anything except walk and find a place to sleep”

A stickler for walking every step of the way, he has no time for the notion of taking the occasional lift, regardless of how tempting that may be.

"That's not my idea. You do it all, or you give up," he says. "I've met people who have been in the rain and a car stopped and offered a lift, and said they couldn't refuse that. Of course you can refuse that – that's the hardest part – or else you say 'yes, I'll come along', but the next day you come back."

Adamant

Admitting that this is not the only way of doing such pilgrimages, he is adamant nonetheless that it is so for him. "There are no rules. Everybody does it like it fits for him, but when I say I do it walking I walk it all," he says. "You meet people on the Camino who when it is hard they take a taxi or send on their luggage or – when I do it I do it the whole way. It is the only way for me."

The modern pilgrim experience is very different to that of medieval pilgrims, and Luc thinks that trying to emulate his forerunners too closely is futile. "You cannot do it like they did in the Middle Ages. Some people say 'I want to do the original way', but there's no original way," he says.

"Of course, you make it as hard as you want. I did it in my time on the roads, because of course I had no maps. I had that book with all Europe, and sometimes I

asked people in Italy what is the best way to Rome. That way, the said: the highway. Then I took the national roads to Rome."

As a seasoned pilgrim he travels lightly, of course, carrying a sleeping bag and a small mattress but eschewing a tent in favour of staying in hostels or using AirBnB. Even then, however, he finds he has little use for either. They're there more as precautions than anything else.

July 20 was his last day of walking on this pilgrimage, with him climbing Croagh Patrick after a rest day in a very rainy Westport. He spent the next few days in Donegal and Sligo, before returning to the Reek to climb it for a second time, this time with 9,000 others. The two climbs were very different experiences, he says.

"The first time it was great and the weather was beautiful, and I thought it was almost finished – I've done it! The second time on Reek Sunday I was rather early, so at nine o'clock I was at the Mass there and it was raining. It was another Croagh Patrick I saw then," he says. "Of course, nobody knows that you have done so many months' walking to get there, so I was just an ordinary pilgrim like everybody else."

Nobody except himself and God, of course. Not, as St Thomas More says in *A Man for All Seasons*, a bad audience!

Living vocations in violent times



Irish clergy in the Philippines served God's people despite all manner of brutal threats, writes **Jean Harrington**

It was April 1973 and the island of Mindanao in the south of the Philippines was descending into a war between the Muslim population and their Christian neighbours. No one was safe, not even the priests who worked in the locality. Fr Peter O'Neill from Co. Tyrone had taken to sleeping between sandbags on the floor, as he feared an attack from the Muslim rebels who were targeting Christians in Dimataling.

One night, gunshots blazed through his bedroom window on the second floor of his two-storey residence, which was located between the church and the school. He lay there, terrified, quietly trying to still his breathing until they had gone, and thanking God for his foresight with the sandbags.

As soon as he was sure the gunmen were gone, Peter ran downstairs to check on the two schoolboys who were staying there. He found them alive, thankfully, but traumatised. Quickly, they prepared to leave, gathering water, supplies and as many of their belongings as they could carry. After all, the gunmen could come back at any moment.

Trouble

In the dead of night, they fled towards Colojo, a small village in the hills that was a trek of an hour and a half from Dimataling. Colojo felt like the safe option, as it was the boys' home and was populated only by Christians.

There were no proper cement or tarmac roads out of Dimataling, a remote town on the large island, so they trekked instead along dirt tracks and even through jungle in places, in case they came across more trouble. They travelled quickly, refusing to take a break. Still, it was



Fr Rufus Halley teaching and laughing with community leaders in Our Lady of Peace High School, Malabang, in 1996. The Waterford-born Columban was murdered by militants in 2001.

near down by the time they reached the village.

Peter spent the next few weeks there in hiding. As the violence intensified, he began to send a constant stream of refugees away from the mountains of Mindanao. And there was only one place he could think of to send them: to his friend and colleague from the Missionary Society of St Columban, Fr Des Hartford, who resided in Pagadian city, a three-hour boat trip away. Des would help them, Peter was certain.

* * * * *

Although he had not personally witnessed the terror the villagers were fleeing, Des Hartford, from the small town of Lusk in north Co. Dublin, knew what had driven the evacuees to abandon their homes in the

mountain villages and seek sanctuary. The tension in the air was palpable.

One day a young woman arrived with her three children. Distraught and overwhelmed by unimaginable grief, she broke down while trying to speak about the horrors she had witnessed. Her husband, she said, had been shot dead. Her home was burned to the ground and she'd lost everything.

Perhaps for the first time in his ministry, Des, a tall, quiet Irishman, could not think of any comforting words to say, so he just listened.

The members of the Missionary Society of St Columban were among the few to bear witness to the murderous carnage which, at times, threatened to engulf the entire island of Mindanao but remained

largely unknown to the outside world.

In the days that followed the initial attacks, Des listened to more villagers recount stories of how Muslim gunmen had murdered, tortured and maimed Christians in cold blood. To Des, the deaths represented the demise of the last vestiges of trust and charity among the island's different cultures, which had slowly eroded over the past few decades.

“ Marcos put the military in charge and gave them permission to do whatever was necessary to keep him and his cronies safe”

While the killings terrified Des, he was more frightened by the utter hatred and mistrust that such murders caused. This was best illustrated by the language each side used to describe the other. The Muslim bandits were referred to as barracuda, 'the fighting fish', by the Christians, while the Muslims called the Christians who took up arms against them the *ilaga*, a derogatory word that means 'rats'.

Des didn't believe hatred alone was the cause. He was a rational person who knew there was always an underlying motive for the violence. The killings weren't truly sectarian in nature; their cause was more complicated than that. The roots of the murderous terror that threatened to engulf the island, he felt, lay in the political corruption that infil-

trated almost every facet of society in the Philippine archipelago.

On September 21, 1972, months before this spate of killings began, President Ferdinand Marcos issued Proclamation 1081, which imposed martial law on the whole country and also closed the Philippine Congress. It had a catastrophic effect on democracy. Journalists, student leaders and trade union activists were arrested, along with those who opposed the president. A further effect of Proclamation 1081 was to shut down newspapers and bring the mass media under the control of the president.

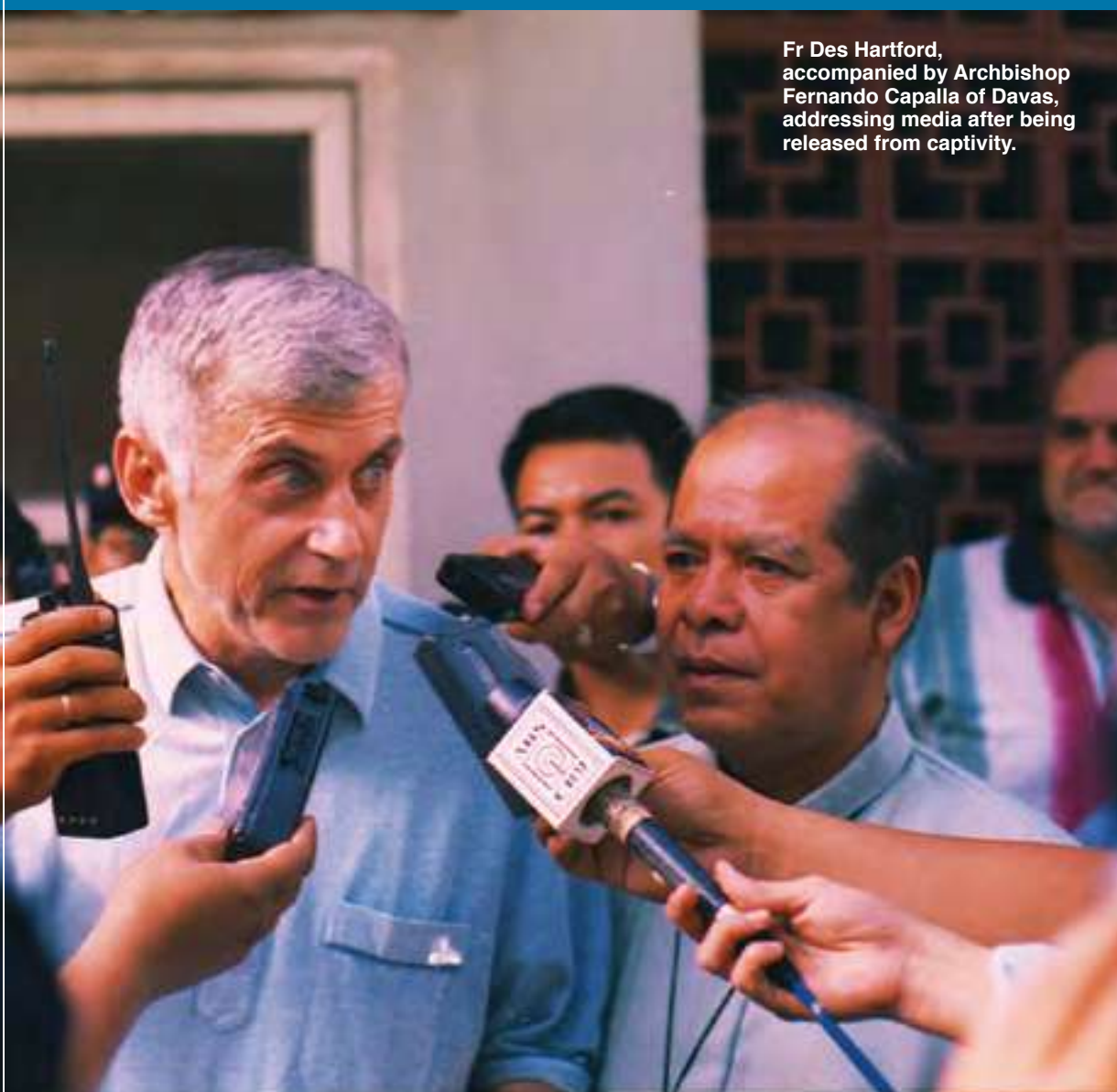
Marcos put the military in charge and gave them permission to do whatever was necessary to keep him and his cronies safe. Seventy thousand people who had connections with the workers' movement and tenants' rights were arrested and imprisoned. Marcos's circle of supporters took trading companies and government agencies for themselves. The country's wealth was going to a small selection of powerful people, who sent the money offshore to foreign banks, all the while overseen and protected by the military.

Dictators

Like other dictators, Marcos defended his decision to effectively abolish democracy by claiming to be protecting it. He said martial law was necessary to counteract the threat posed by the New People's Army (NPA), a communist-inspired group, and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), a paramilitary organisation dedicated to the crea-



Fr Des Hartford relaxing with friends after his release.



Fr Des Hartford, accompanied by Archbishop Fernando Capalla of Davao, addressing media after being released from captivity.

tion of an independent Muslim state in Mindanao.

The MNLF was formed in 1971 by Nur Misuari, whose radical interpretation of Islam and proclamations against the Marcos regime attracted a groundswell of support among the island's Muslim population. It was a disciplined organisation that had a profound influence on other rebel groups because of the tight way it was run.

Insurgents

Misuari wanted all Muslim insurgents to unite and align under the MNLF umbrella. Many insurgent groups did join the MNLF because they were allowed to maintain their individual identity while joining with the larger, more disciplined organisation. Others remained outside the MNLF, but they too were taking up arms against the government's troops.

The number of armed insurgents in 1973 was estimated at between 15,000 and 30,000. While their fight was with the government, it was the ordinary citizens of the Philippines who suffered the most in this protracted conflict. By the end of the century, more than 100,000 had been killed by the violence.

The motivation behind Marcos's

decision to suspend democracy was not, as everyone knew, to protect the Philippines against a Muslim insurgency; the order was aimed at ensuring that Marcos could retain absolute power. The Philippine constitution limited the presidential reign to no more than eight consecutive years in office. Having held the presidency already for eight years, Marcos was out of time. Martial law allowed him to suspend the constitution and gave him the extension of power he so badly desired.

There were many societal changes under Marcos's rule. From 1975 to 1983, the country's debt increased threefold and the local currency, the peso, lost half its value. The government had borrowed money from international banks, allegedly to build dams, motorways and factories, but many of these projects never materialised. The money disappeared into the president's pockets.

The size of the military also increased hugely during this time, and high-ranking officers became rich and powerful. They attacked the Catholic Church, especially the clergy and lay people who spoke out against them. Soldiers defended land barons and logging and mining companies, and removed people

from their lands with little or no compensation.

They imprisoned people without trial. They used local people to go into the mountains to negotiate with the NPA, and if a villager refused to help, they burned down every house in the village. They covered their tracks by saying the villagers were part of the NPA.

In response to Proclamation 1081, the MNLF launched what was to become a fully fledged armed insurgency in Mindanao. They first focused on the city of Marawi, the inhabitants of which were almost all of Muslim faith and culture.

After Marawi, the fighting quickly spread, and the MNLF campaign soon descended into an overwhelming assault, particularly in rural areas. The insurgents murdered those of other faiths and cultures whom they had lived alongside in peace for generations, possibly because the military was viewed as Christian. Des, along with his fellow Columbans, watched in horror at the slaughter that ensued.

* * * * *

The Missionary Society of St Columban's relationship with the archipelago began in 1929 when, at the request of the Archbishop of Manila, it sent two priests, Patrick Kelly and



Fr Rufus' five brothers flew to Philippines for his funeral in 2001.

Michael Cuddigan, to serve in the parish of Malate, in Manila. The Philippines was not 'in the missions' as outlined by canon law, because approximately 90% of its inhabitants were recorded as being Roman Catholic.

It was seen as an unusual choice for the Columbans, who were intended to do "apostolic work among infidel peoples". So going to a country where, on paper, the vast majority of people were Catholics was not an obvious choice.

The truth was, however, that hundreds of parishes had been abandoned and some had been left vacant since the Spanish ceded the Philippines to the United States of America in 1898 as part of the Treaty of Paris. The Archbishop of Manila, Michael O'Doherty, needed priests and had pleaded with the Columban superior general, Michael O'Dwyer, to send help.

“Des came to realise, like the other priests of his generation, that attempting to strengthen the people's spiritual life alone was not sufficient”

About a quarter of Catholics in the country at this time had left the Roman Catholic Church to join the Philippine Independent Church, presided over by Gregorio Aglipay, who had led a campaign to free the Church from Spanish dominance. Many saw very little difference between the two Churches. However, the Columban priests were disheartened when they saw that former Roman Catholics were content to burn candles before statues and seemed to know nothing about the Eucharist.

The missionaries had their work cut out for them. Over the next few years, more and more Irish missionaries arrived and began to care for the spiritual needs of the Catholic inhabitants of the islands. The Columban mission, as the missionaries saw it, was to rekindle the faith of the people, rebuild churches and train catechists.

This work ground to a halt for a period during the Second World War, when the Japanese invaded the archipelago. The Columbans suffered greatly during the war and many were forced to leave the country.

For those who were able to stay, many suffered deprivation, living in the mountains where they were protected, fed and sheltered by friendly Catholics. Others were tortured and killed, however. One Columban, Francis Douglas from New Zealand, was hauled away in the middle of the night on July 27, 1943.

He was never seen again and, even today, the Columbans are still trying to learn of his fate and the details of his presumed martyrdom.

Upliftment

The missionary work of the Columbans began again once the invaders were defeated and had left the Philippines. Their mission was successful because the Columbans placed great emphasis on training lay people to work in their own local parishes.

Missionary zeal for the spiritual upliftment of the parishioners was not the only purpose of the Columban missionaries, though. The Columbans were also social advocates, whose religious beliefs were grounded in the struggle for social justice.

It was this underlying aspect of the Columbans' work that Des Hartford was passionate about. By the time he arrived in the archipelago in 1968, the Columbans had developed an advanced theological approach to their mission. They recognised that the poverty they encountered in the Philippines was structurally related to decisions and behaviour not only in the Philippines, but also in other parts of the world.

Des came to realise, like the other priests of his generation, that attempting to strengthen the people's spiritual life alone was not sufficient. The Columbans had to support their congregation in all their needs. He and his colleagues believed the injustices and poverty their parishioners were experiencing could not be ignored. They became a part of their communities and took action to help their parishioners in all areas of their lives.

When he was a young boy in Ireland dreaming of joining the missions, however, he had no idea how complex his life would become as a priest.

i The above is an edited extract from *Murder on the Missions* by Jean Harrington, published by Mercier Press.

“The number of armed insurgents in 1973 was estimated at between 15,000 and 30,000...by the end of the century, more than 100,000 had been killed by the violence”

Little Nellie... continuing to inspire devotion for more than a 100 years

Chai Brady
hears about a
community's
intense
desire
for Little
Nellie's
sainthood



Even though she died over 100 years ago Ellen Organ, best known as Little Nellie of Holy God, continues to inspire devotion among a significant number of people in both Ireland and abroad, with a growing number calling for her to be made a saint.

Much of this comes from Cork, where Little Nellie spent a lot of her short life which was marked by severe suffering. Despite having a crooked spine and several other medical conditions she later developed, she expressed a great faith and understanding of the Eucharist. Nellie is often credited with being an influential factor in Pope Pius X's decision to lower the age children could receive Communion.

Little Nellie was born on August 24, 1903 in a military barracks in Waterford. When her father, who was a soldier, was transferred to Spike Island the family moved with him in 1905. Nellie lost her mother Mary to TB in 1907, and her father put the children into care as he was unable to look after them – they



Pawel, Justyna, Antoni (4) and Hanna (2) Slodzinka, originally from Poland, pray at Little Nellie's grave. Photos: Chai Brady

were all under the age of nine at the time.

Little Nellie and her sister Mary were sent to the Good Shepherd Sisters in Sunday's Well, on the mainland, where she spent most of her time in the infirmary. Before this she was examined at the Sisters of Mercy hospital, where she was diagnosed with whooping cough. This highly contagious bacterial disease that causes large bouts of coughing and choking – making it very hard to breathe – had a much higher mortality rate in the 1900s.

A researcher and tour guide dedicated to Little Nellie's cause and the promotion of her life and holiness, John Flynn of Cobh Town Tours, told *The Irish Catholic*: "When she was suffering she always said this is nothing compared to what Jesus suffered on the cross, so she had a spiritual awareness from the moment she was born.

Holy hour

"She longed to get her Holy Communion, kept on crying, kept on saying she wanted to get it, in

one of her communications she said that Jesus had told her he was going to fly her to heaven on Holy God's day on the holy hour, and she actually did die on a Sunday at 4pm, so she predicted that."

The Good Shepherd Sisters, in light of her desire for Communion and profound knowledge of the Faith, asked that her case be investigated. Then Bishop of Cork and Ross, Alphonsus O'Callaghan, allowed this to happen after she was interviewed.

It is believed Bishop O'Callaghan visited her on several occasions,

which Bishop Emeritus John Buckley of Cork and Ross reiterated when he said to this paper: "My predecessor, Bishop O'Callaghan, he was a Dominican and he visited her shortly before she died regarding Holy Communion which she had been requesting for some time, and he asked her a specific question, he asked her who are you receiving? She said, 'I'm receiving Holy God on my tongue and he will go down into my heart and he will make me very holy.'"

Little Nellie is associated with having the miraculous ability to know when someone had received Communion. It is said that the nuns would go to Mass in the morning, out of site of Little Nellie's room, and some would receive the Eucharist and others wouldn't. Apparently, the young girl was able to tell each time who had and who hadn't – one of the supernatural signs people say is an example of

“The Good Shepherd Sisters, in light of her desire for Communion and profound knowledge of the Faith asked that her case be investigated. Then Bishop of Cork and Ross, Alphonsus O'Callaghan, allowed this to happen after she was interviewed”





jaw, which meant that it was very swollen, infected, had to be cleaned every day. Just before she died a little piece of her jaw actually fell away."

Her caries, which is the decay and crumbling of tooth or bone, emitted an intense odour and caused her difficulty eating.

According to *Princesses of the Kingdom*, Jacinta Marto & Nellie Organ, by Leo Madigan, a nurse would syringe disinfectant into the wound, which "hurt considerably".

It reads: "This, although it hurt considerably, was nevertheless not once resisted by the child after her Confirmation. When the nurse took out the syringe, Nellie took out her crucifix. Giving her intelligent consent to this pain, which clearly God had laid upon her, she thought of the Great Atonement. When the pain was greatest she used to lie motionless in bed, her arms crossed on her breast, her little fingers folded round her crucifix."

It also states that upon receiving Communion, the odour from her caries ceased.

“It is said that a priest, a nurse and two other witnesses said her corpse was intact, her hands flexible and her hair had grown a few inches”

According to her death certificate, it was 'chronic' TB that she died from in the end on February 2, 1908. She received First Communion on December 6, 1907 and continued to do so frequently by being carried down to the chapel until her death aged four years, five months and eight days old.

Little Nellie was buried in St Joseph's Cemetery in Cork. Her remains were exhumed a year later after the Good Shepherd Sisters were given permission to move her body back to the convent. It is said that a priest, a nurse and two other witnesses said her corpse was intact, her hands flexible and her hair had grown a few inches.

The dress, wreath and veil of First Holy Communion, in which she requested to be buried, were said to be intact and her silver medal of the Children of Mary bright as if it had just been polished.

After this many people began visiting her grave from Ireland and abroad, some to satisfy their devotion and others to ask for cures.

Experience

Mr Flynn said that he had a profound experience relating to Little Nellie that shaped the course of his life, and is the reason he aspires to be an "ambassador" for her and her cause for sainthood now.

"I wasn't working in history, I wasn't working in tours, I started doing Spike Island. I passed her house one day, I would have known about a little girl called Little Nellie, nobody knew about her and as I passed the corner, I felt I couldn't



John Flynn of Cobh Town Tours shows a relic of Little Nellie given to him by a nun which was part of her burial shroud.

walk anymore," he said.

"I felt I went deaf for about 10 seconds, I couldn't hear the bushes or the trees or the water and I didn't see anything but I got a very powerful peaceful feeling and the Virgin Mary flashed into my head quickly followed by a photograph image of Little Nellie and I could hear again and I got a fright and from then on I said I must do research into this little girl, and that's how it all started."

There were several occasions

when he felt like giving up, and was struggling to conduct research on Little Nellie but each time he feels something happened to put him back on track.

He said: "For example I was in Ballincollig in Cork on Christmas Eve and I just picked up a paper that's only out every year for Christmas, and I opened it on a page and there was a big write-up about Little Nellie."

Originally conducting tours on Spike Island, Mr Flynn said

he would like to bring more information about her further afield and join with others interested in pushing her cause for sainthood to be opened.

Organising tours of Little Nellie's grave every few months on request, he said interest in growing, saying last time he went 50 people attended. He adds: "With all the people I've met, they'd like for her to be acknowledged better than what it is at the moment."

» **Continued on Page 20**

her holiness.

The four-year old also called the chapel on the convent grounds 'the Holy House of God' and referred to God as 'Holy God'. When she first heard about the Passion of Christ, it said that she burst into tears. Little Nellie also claimed to have visions, one of which she saw Christ as a child and the Virgin Mary and on several occasions said she saw the Infant of Prague dancing for her.

“She said, ‘I’m receiving Holy God on my tongue and he will go down into my heart and he will make me very holy’”

Her suffering intensified as she neared the end of her life, Mr Flynn said: "She suffered from a spinal disease but her big one would have been she had caries of the



A photo left by Little Nellie's grave.

Accessing Little Nellie's grave is a 'daunting' prospect

Chai Brady

Serious questions are being asked by Little Nellie's devotees about access to her grave. The path is overgrown and difficult to reach with several obstacles in the way – making it almost impossible for an elderly or disabled person to access the cemetery.

When the site, formerly owned by the Good Shepherd Sisters, was passed into the hands of receivers there was an added complication for pilgrims visiting the grave: they were technically trespassing on private property.

Due to it being prime land in Sunday's Well in Cork City, it's been reported the 7.8-acre site has an asking price of more than €6.75m.

Conditional planning permission has been granted for 234 apartments. According to the Cork City Council website the proposed development consists of a "partial demolition, redevelopment and extension" of the Good Shepherd Convent, orphanage and Magdalene home buildings and the demolition of all ancillary sheds and structures to facilitate the new development.

There is also expected to be a crèche located in a refurbished gate lodge next to one of the entrances.

A spokesperson for one of the directors of Moneda Developments, Eamonn Laverty, who are selling the land, confirmed that the graveyard will be protected and access to it will be maintained.

However, they did not clarify what access would look like for pilgrims in the future, or if the route to the graveyard would be changed.

Enthusiast

When this journalist visited, it was only possible to find her resting place with the help of a local. Little Nellie enthusiast Lillian Keane of Blarney parish, who happened to be in the area, was happy to be of assistance. Ms Keane also offered to help a Polish family, Pawel, Justyna, Antoni (4) and Hanna (2) Slodzinka, who were also searching for her grave at the same time.

Coming across a padlocked gate, the first obstacle to her grave, Ms Keane described it as "a little daunting" as the gate hadn't been locked in March when she last visited. On a rusty fence blocking the site off, a notice highlights: "If you pass beyond this point you are on a premises" and that the 'occupiers' are excluded from a duty of care towards visitors.

Coming through an overgrown small basketball court, pilgrims must walk up a small but steep



A galvanised metal sheet with a notice warning pilgrims.

muddy slope and are then greeted by an old galvanised metal fence with a sign reading "Users of this building site do so at their own risk. The management will not accept responsibility for any damage accidents or losses."

Subsequently entering a large green area, Ms Keane described the scene saying: "We're now progressing onto the final stretch, in this field you'd want wellies in winter and strong shoes at any stage."

Passing the convent, which is a listed building, she said it was subject to two arson attacks in 2003 and 2012, which is one of the reasons for its "nasty disrepair".

Arriving at the grave, Pawel Slodzinka said: "We're very surprised it's very hard to get to this place, and that this area isn't open to everyone. This is very sad because this place is very important for us."

"We came here because my wife found a short clip on YouTube about Little Nellie so we decided to come here and see her."

“We're very surprised it's very hard to get to this place, and that this area isn't open to everyone”

His wife Justyna said that it was "very important" for the family to visit Little Nellie's grave as "she might help us".

"When we tried to find this place, it was very difficult because we didn't know where it was, we tried asking people and they didn't know. In the beginning we didn't know it was the correct way...but it is very difficult and dangerous for kids."

There has been calls among some of Little Nellie's devotees to have her exhumed a second time

and buried in a location they feel is better suited.

Descendent of Little Nellie, Sue Organ Jackson from Cork, said she should be exhumed and buried with her mother in Cobh. Mrs Jackson says she hit a dead end trying to speak to her local TD and the council regarding moving the grave.

"Her mother died while holding her daughter. The children, they didn't ask to be put into the Good Shepherd orphanage, they were innocent little children. I believe that they should be back with their mother, plus it's accessible to everybody," she said.

Mrs Jackson is a fourth generation descendent of William Organ, Little Nellie's father and the family still have a very close connection and devotion to the young girl who has inspired so many. Mrs Jackson said: "If her name is to be put out there, and with the help of God if she is canonised, how are people supposed to visit the saint's grave?"

Bishop-Emeritus John Buckley, speaking to *The Irish Catholic* a week before Bishop Fintan Gavin took the reins of the Diocese of Cork and Ross at the end of June, acknowledged the difficulty in accessing the grave. He said improving this "would be nice and people would like it, especially people in the neighbourhood, they would certainly like to visit the grave".

"It's difficult when you're dealing with people, new ownership and so on. Now people have suggested that her remains be brought to a more prominent and public place, for example the cathedral grounds. But the difficulty is there are other children buried there also, and some Good Shepherd Sisters, and it might create a bit of difficulty, it's a very sensitive thing," he said.

"It's not an ideal location,



The Good Shepherd convent in Sunday's Well in Cork.



A padlocked gate is the first obstacle on the path to Little Nellie's grave.

there'll have to be consultation with relatives of the others who are buried there. There would have to be consultation with the order, it wouldn't be my decision to decide on that, I would recommend they should look at it."

Efforts to contact a spokesperson for the Good Shepherd sisters regarding the future of the graveyard proved unsuccessful despite several weeks of queries.

Despite a huge amount of anxiety and speculation about the future and accessibility of Little Nellie's grave – with the current sellers ensuring it will be "protected" along with the whole graveyard – there is still many questions to be answered for pilgrims devoted to Little Nellie who want to worship and pray where she lies.



Will Little Nellie of Holy God be made a saint?

Chai Brady

Despite an extensive investigation carried out by canon lawyers, clergy and lay people, Bishop-Emeritus of Cork and Ross John Buckley was not convinced that the evidence collated on Little Nellie warranted sending to Rome.

He acknowledged that there was a huge interest in Little Nellie among the faithful in his diocese, saying: "There is great devotion for her in Cork, teachers in school often mention her name.

"We did establish a committee to look into the whole situation, canon lawyers and some lay people and so on, and their recommendation is that there had been reports of miracles – but nothing that you could send to Rome. I suppose the thing is to promote devotion to her, there are some prayer cards and they're being distributed."

Sources who were involved in the report have said there could be no other conclusion than it stating categorically Little Nellie must be a candidate for sainthood, suggesting that her cause should be sent and opened by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in the Vatican.

Miracles

The Irish Catholic understands several people have claimed they had experienced miracles due to devotion and prayer to Little Nellie, and were mentioned in the report.

However, Bishop Buckley said it "didn't quite go as far as" suggesting her cause be opened, but that it certainly recommended that people promote devotion to Little Nellie.

Speaking to the *Irish Independent* in 2017, Fr Patrick McCarthy, parish priest of the Church of Ss Peter & Paul in Cork said: "A few years back, lots of people were ringing into the Bishop's office about Little Nellie, so the bishop asked me to set up a study group."

He added: "Our mandate was not promotion, but to gauge levels of devotion. And there is growing devotion to Little Nellie, from Cork to Canada. What's remarkable is that the child died aged just four-and-a-half in obscurity, but 109 years later she is widely venerated."

Pope Pius X, whose devotion to the Eucharist earned him the title of 'Pope of the Blessed Sacrament' (Pope Pius XII referred to him 'Pope of the Eucharist'), lowered the age of Communion to seven.

Many people devoted to Little Nellie, who received Communion when she was only four, cite her as playing a pivotal role in the then Pope's decision.

Pope Pius X took a personal interest in Little Nellie, so much so that he requested one of her relics which the bishop of Cork at the time, Alphonsus O'Callaghan, provided.



Plaque on Little Nellie's grave.



Little Nellie of Holy God.

In the momentous encyclical, *Quam Singulari* released in 1910 Pope Pius X stated: "The age of discretion, both for Confession and for Holy Communion, is the time when a child begins to reason, that is about the seventh year, more or less. From that time on begins the obligation of fulfilling the precept of both Confession and

Communion."

At the time the idea of a child aged four becoming a saint was seen as improbable, if not impossible, as only children who died as martyrs had become saints at that stage.

However, this changed when Francisco and Jacinta Marto – who died aged nine and 10 – were made

saints in May 2017 by Pope Francis. They witnessed an apparition of the Virgin Mary at Cova da Iria in Fatima, 1917.

Looking to the future, and the possibility of Little Nellie being made a saint, Dr Buckley said: "Maybe in the years ahead when devotion increases...the bottom line of course is before you can approach Rome there must be some semblance of a miracle you can prove, and that's the difficulty."

“Many people devoted to Little Nellie, who received Communion when she was only four, cite her as playing a pivotal role in the then Pope's decision”

"That's the danger, I know there has been reports. I'd say they'd certainly find it difficult in Rome to accept it. I would be quite happy [if there was a substantial miracle], I think Cork people would be quite happy too. There's a hope that maybe as a result of this prayer movement and so on, this devotion to her, that this may be the result."

The report is in the bishop's office. It's now up to Fintan Gavin the new bishop of the Diocese of Cork and Ross, whose episcopal ordination took place on June 30, to decide whether the report should be sent to Rome.

A spokesperson for the bishop told this paper that he will be looking at the report in the coming months, and wasn't yet in a position to comment.

Trekking across counties, pilg



At stage four, the crowd receives pre-event instructions in Lismore.

St Declan's Way 2019

First stage: April 27 – Cashel to Cahir

Second stage: May 25 – Cahir to Goatenbridge

Third stage: June 29 – Goatenbridge to Lismore

Fourth stage: July 27 – Lismore to Aglish

Fifth stage: August 31 – Aglish to Ardmore



Paul Dwyer descends from Liam Lynch Monument to Melleray Road at stage three.



Pilgrims gather outside Cahir House at stage two.



Weary pilgrims enjoy refreshments at Cahir House Hotel after stage one.

Chai Brady

Starting in Tipperary and ending in Waterford, hundreds of pilgrims have been enjoying the 100km-long St Declan's Way over the summer.

Broken-up into five stages and starting in Cashel, 300 people have taken on the challenge each month since April. At the end of this month, pilgrims will tackle the final leg of the trek on August 31.

Mark Rylands from Knockmealdown Active, organisers of the pilgrimage, says 'stage five' between Aglish and Ardmore is "absolutely amazing for so many reasons".

"It's one of the parts that people, in living memory, would remember walking," he said. "There's a great buy-in from the community. Last year when we did it the weather was incredible. Local people left out tables of items, water, sweets and orange juice and things like that. There was a real sense of community and people really thought there was something special happening."

People go on the pilgrimage for many reasons, Mr Rylands says, "at the end people come up to you and tell you: 'I did this for my mother, or I did this for my brother who is sick', or 'I'm practicing for the Camino in Spain', which is something we're trying to promote."

"If you're thinking of going to Spain and doing a long-distance walk, the stages will be simpler, about 20-25km, so come and do it with us before you head off to Spain and get your blisters over there."

Blessings

During the third stage pilgrims stopped-off in Mount Melleray Abbey in Lismore where some received blessings from Abbot Dom Richard Purcell. Mr Rylands described it as a "nice little touch" which added more of a "religious element" to the pilgrimage.

St Declan's Way is fully waymarked, with 2018 being the official re-opening of the route. Those interested can learn more at a site dedicated to the pilgrim path at <http://www.stdeclansway.ie/>

Before this paper went to print there was less than a dozen places left. According to Mr Rylands, each stage has been fully booked.

i Bookings can be made for the final stage of the walk at <https://www.kmdact.com/walking-events/>

rims tackle St Declan's Way



Gathering above Goatenbridge at stage three.



The Abbot of Mount Melleray addresses pilgrims during stage three.



Ready for sign in at Lismore Primary School before stage three.



Pilgrims rest in Cappoquin Square during stage four.

Out&About

Mass on the mountain

TIPPERARY: Some of the faithful gather for the annual 'Devil's Bit Mass' on Devil's Bit Mountain, Templemore. It usually takes place on the closest Sunday to the feast of St James and records show the Mass has been a feature since the 1850s when crowds of 50,000 attended. The Mass is organised each year by the local Legion of Mary group.



MAYO: Mary Anne Booth, Teresa Phelan and June Maher, from Kilkenny, take part in the 2019 Carmelites pilgrimage to Knock on July 28.



MAYO: Bishop Silvio José Báez OCD blesses those present at the Apparition Chapel at the end of the 2019 Carmelites pilgrimage to Knock at the end of July, watched by PP of Knock Fr Richard Gibbons (left), and Fr Paul Bennett CC of Knock, who was the Master of Ceremonies.



LAOIS: Bishop Denis Nulty presents Isobel Brooker with a Benemerenti medal for her contribution to the Parish of Graiguecullen and Killeslin. Also pictured are Fr Liam Lawton and Fr John Dunphy. Photo: John Bradley



DUBLIN: Sr Geraldine Henry of the Daughters of Charity watches as a container is filled with equipment on the Navan Road, it will be sent to help disabled children and adults in Kenya. The sisters collected wheelchairs, crutches and more from around Ireland, it is expected to arrive in September.

Edited by Colm Fitzpatrick
colm@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



KILDARE: Joyful Accord students are pictured in Maynooth after they completed their three-year Higher Diploma in Counselling (Marriage and Relationshipship).

KILDARE: Attendees enjoy the opening of the Sensory Garden in Maynooth behind the pastoral centre and parochial house, blessed and opened by Fr Frank McEvoy, who thanked Tidy Towns for their "hard work" and the Credit Union for their sponsorship.



LAOIS: Margo Byrne is presented with a Benemerenti medal for her contribution to the Parish of Graiguecullen and Killeshin by Bishop Denis Nulty. Also pictured are Fr Liam Lawton and Fr John Dunphy. Photo: John Bradley



LAOIS: A youth group from the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin receive a special blessing at Mass before travelling to Lourdes on pilgrimage on August 1.

ARMAGH

A Centre Prayer Meeting is held at Mount Oliver (near Ballymascanlon Dundalk) every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm.

Special Mass of Thanksgiving in St Patrick's Cathedral on Saturday, October 1, at 1pm to celebrate the 80th year of Apostolic Workers in the archdiocese.

CLARE

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

Cloughleigh Oratory will continue to pray the Novena Prayer to St Anthony every Tuesday morning at the 9.30am Mass.

Outdoor Novena of Prayer at Drumellihi Shrine, Cooraclare Parish on August 15 from 6-7am.

CORK

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

Rosary conscious group prayer meeting on Fridays from 7.30-8.30pm in the Portiuncula Chapel, St Francis Church, Liberty Street. Entrance to the rosary through the Mass office door.

DERRY

Dungiven Parish: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Monday to Friday, 8-12pm and 3-9pm.

St Maria Goretti Prayer Movement: Prayer for healing for victims of abuse and reparation for the Church. First Holy Hour of prayer in the Immaculate Conception Church, Trench Road Derry at 8.15pm led by Fr Sean O'Donnell, on the third Tuesday of every month.

DUBLIN

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

A three-day Tridium in honour of St Maximilian Kolbe will take place in Our Lady of the Visitation Church, Fairview, from August 12-19. The solemn act of consecration to Mary Immaculate and the Blessings of the Relic of St Maximilian will take place each day at the end of the 10am Mass.

Novena to St John Vianney in the parish church of St John Vianney, Ardlea Road, Artane. It runs from August 3-12 and services will be led by the resident Sacred Heart Fathers.

Ewe Thina: We Walk God's Way. Want to get fit? Embrace God in nature and build true friendships? Join other young adults for reflective hikes around Dublin area. Monthly event. Contact: siobhan.tighe@dublindiocese.ie

FERMANAGH

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

nights at 7pm. www.churchservices.tv/linaskea

GALWAY

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

One day retreat in Lough Derg on Saturday August 31. Bus departing from the Abbey, at 6am (sharp). Tickets available from the Abbey Mass Office, Francis Street. See website: ofsgalway.com

Emmanuel House Clonfert: Monthly first Saturday of prayer and reflection on August 3 at 10.30am. Guest speaker Fr Pat Collins. Please bring a packed lunch.

KERRY

Weekly Monday prayer meetings led by Ben Perkins, from 8-9.30pm in the Ardferret Retreat Centre.

KILDARE

Praying, reading and sharing the following Sunday's Gospel in Resurrexit, Kilmeague, every Wednesday from 8-9.30pm. See www.resurrexit.ie for details, or ring 087-6825407.

KILKENNY

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

LIMERICK

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

LOUTH

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

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

MEATH

Adoration in St Patrick's Church, Stamullen, after 10am Mass every Thursday until 5pm in St Mary's Church, and in St Mary's Church, Julianstown, on Wednesdays from 9am and after 10am Mass.

ROSCOMMON

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at St Bride's Church, Ballintubber, every Wednesday, 7.30-8.30pm.

WICKLOW

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

St Patrick's Prayer Group, Wicklow town, meet on Thursdays at 7.30pm in the De La Salle Pastoral Care Centre.



World Report

IN BRIEF

Fire destroys 'treasured' historic church in Texas

● The Church of the Visitation in Westphalia, a nearly 125-year-old wooden church with bell towers on each side, burned to the ground last week. The fire, which began in the morning, is still under investigation. Parishioners ran into the burning church to save what they could, including its tabernacle.

"We got some stuff out, but it wasn't near enough," parishioner Marvin Meyer said. "We just saw the smoke, and everyone came. Everyone just tried to do what you could to save what you could, but it went so fast. In like 15 minutes, it was over."

The church, which is in the Austin Diocese, serves 244 families.

Denounce plague of human trafficking – Mexico bishops

● The Catholic bishops of Mexico encouraged the faithful in the country not to become indifferent to the suffering of human trafficking victims, but to take action to fight corruption and exploitation.

"We cannot accept exploitation, we cannot grow accustomed to the suffering. Let us denounce exploitation! Because as long as human trafficking remains hidden, the traffickers will continue to act with impunity," the Mexican Bishops' Conference said in a statement.

The statement, released for World Day Against Human Trafficking last week, asked Catholics to pray for those who are suffering exploitation and to boldly "denounce corruption and complicity".

Nun alleges tampering in Indian bishop rape case

● A nun representing a reported rape victim of Bishop Franco Mulakkal has accused the defence of evidence tampering in the case and is demanding that the real evidence be presented.

Sr Anupama of the Missionaries of Jesus said the tampering was part of a campaign to "sabotage" the case and protect Mulakkal.

She made the accusation after a court in Pala, Kerala found "discrepancies" between copies of cyber forensic evidence submitted by a forensic laboratory and those submitted by police.

"If real evidence is not handed over to the police, I will file a complaint against the lab. This is a bid to prolong the trial," Sr Anupama said.

Glasgow archbishop appeals for asylum seekers being evicted

● The Archbishop of Glasgow has written a letter to the UK Home Secretary calling the forced evictions of refugees and asylum seekers in his city "regrettable and harsh". Those being evicted have failed in their asylum claims.

Serco, a provider of public services, began changing locks last week on housing it provides free of charge to asylum seekers in the city. The residents had been given eviction notices a year ago.

Archbishop Philip Tartaglia of Glasgow wrote to Priti Patel, the UK's Home Secretary, saying that "this measure is regrettable and harsh, bringing indignity and suffering on the refugees and asylum seekers, and dismay to the citizens of Glasgow".

Cardinals visit Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh

● Two cardinals from the Philippines and Burma visited a Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh this week, meeting with refugee families as well as relief agency personnel and government officials.

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila and Cardinal Charles Maung Bo of Yangon travelled to refugee camps in south-eastern Bangladesh last week, according to ucanews.com.

The cardinals talked to refugee families in the camps and met with Caritas volunteers and staff, who are helping provide necessities to the refugees. In 2017 the Rohingya, a Muslim minority group, faced a sharp increase in state-sponsored violence in Burma, also known as Myanmar.

Pope prays for victims of US mass shootings

Pope Francis joined Catholic Church leaders expressing sorrow after back-to-back mass shootings in the US left at least 31 dead and dozens injured in Texas and Ohio last weekend.

After the Angelus in St Peter's Square on August 4, the Pope said he wanted to convey his spiritual closeness to the victims, the wounded and the families affected by the attacks. He also included those who died a weekend earlier during a shooting at a festival in Gilroy, California.

"I am spiritually close to the victims of the episodes of violence that these days have bloodied Texas, California and Ohio, in the United States, affecting defenceless people," he said.

Violence

He joined bishops in Texas as well as national Catholic organisations and leaders reacting to a bloody first weekend of August, which produced the eighth deadliest gun violence attack in the country after a gunman opened fire in the morning of



Serenity Lara cries during an August 4 vigil, a day after a mass shooting at a Walmart store in El Paso, Texas.

August 3 at a mall in El Paso, Texas, killing at least 22 and injuring more than a dozen people.

Less than 24 hours after the El Paso shooting, authorities in Dayton, Ohio, reported at least nine dead and more than a dozen injured after a gunman opened fire on a crowd at or near a bar in the

early hours of August 4. The suspected gunman was fatally wounded and police later identified him as 24-year-old Connor Betts, of Bellbrook, Ohio.

On August 4, after the second shooting became public, the president of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and the chairman of

the bishops' domestic policy committee offered prayers, condolences and urged action.

Lives lost

"The lives lost this weekend confront us with a terrible truth. We can never again believe that mass shootings are an isolated exception. They are an epidemic against life that we must, in justice, face," said Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, USCCB president, in a statement issued jointly with Bishop Frank Dewane of Venice, Florida, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

"God's mercy and wisdom compel us to move toward preventative action. We encourage all Catholics to increased prayer and sacrifice for healing and the end of these shootings. We encourage Catholics to pray and raise their voices for needed changes to our national policy and national culture as well," she said.

Polish Church leader condemns 'worsening attacks' on clergy and churches

The president of the Polish bishops' conference condemned attacks on clergy and places of worship in the traditionally Catholic country as the Church countered media accusations of inciting violence against LGBTQ groups.

Archbishop Stanislaw Gadecki of Poznan said that "ever more frequent attacks of hatred against believing people and priests" were a growing concern for Church officials.

"So does the profanation of sacral buildings, places and objects of faith so important to Catholics," the archbishop said. "Although differences of worldview are evident in any pluralist society, they cannot justify such inhuman conduct."

His comments followed an assault on July 28 on Fr Aleksander Ziejewski in the sacristy of the Basilica of St John the Baptist in the northern city of Szczecin during an attempted robbery.

Three men have been arrested in connection with the incident. Authorities said the attack occurred after the men broke into the basilica before evening Mass and demanded vestments to hold a same-sex wedding.

Incident

The incident was the latest in a wave of events that included the stabbing of priest at a church in Wroclaw and the parodying of Catholic rites and images of

Mary by LGBTQ campaigners in Czeszow, Gdansk, Krakow and other cities.

In a July 30 letter to Fr Ziejewski, Archbishop Gadecki said "symbolic and physical violence" was escalating against Polish Catholics and called on "perpetrators to show restraint".

A dozen Catholic churches have been desecrated in the last two months across the country, according to the Krakow-based Polonia Christiana association.

In a July 29 statement the bishops' conference spokesman said the upsurge of attacks on Catholic sites was becoming "intolerable."

Thousands march to defend Philippines clergy

Catholics in a northern Philippines archdiocese marched in support of Church leaders accused of conspiring to overthrow President Rodrigo Duterte.

About 3,000 Church workers, students and parishioners from the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan carried placards last week with messages expressing support for Archbishop Socrates Villegas and

other accused Church leaders during a July 31 prayerful demonstration, ucanews.com reported.

The country's Justice Department is set to open a preliminary investigation this week into sedition and cyber libel charges against the leaders, which other than Archbishop Villegas include Bishop Honesto Ongtioco of Cubao, Bishop Pablo Vir-

gilio David of Kalookan, and retired Bishop Teodoro Bacani Jr of Novaliches.

Others facing the same charges are Divine Word Fr Flaviano Villanueva, Jesuit Fr Albert Alejo, Fr Robert Reyes, and Lasallian Bro. Armin Luistro.

At least 36 other people were also charged for allegedly orchestrating a series of online videos purporting that

Duterte and his family members were involved in the illegal drug trade.

The bishops' conference has called the allegations "beyond belief".

Speaking during a Mass before the march, Auxiliary Bishop Fidelis Layog of Lingayen-Dagupan called on Catholics to stand up for truth, justice and human rights.



Edited by Colm Fitzpatrick
colm@irishcatholic.ie

Cruelly taken, never forgotten



A mourner leaves a candle at the scene of a shooting in Dayton, Ohio. Back-to-back mass shootings in the US left at least 31 dead and dozens injured in Ohio and Texas last weekend. Photo: CNS

US suicide law dubbed 'utter failure' of government and society

New Jersey's new law allowing assisted suicide, effective at the beginning of this month, "points to an 'utter failure' on the part of government and indeed all society," said Bishop James Checchio of Metuchen.

It is the failure "to care truly, authentically and humanely for the suffering and vulnerable in our midst especially those living with an incurable disease as well as the frail elderly, the infirm and those living with disabilities," he wrote to the 650,000 Catholics in his four-county diocese.

"Assisted suicide is a grievous affront to the dignity of human life and can never be

morally justified," he said. The legal permission now granted to this practice does not change the moral law."

Bishop Checchio said that under the new law – called the Medical Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill Act – the elderly "could feel undue pressure to view this as an option to prevent being a burden to others and young people will begin to think that people can and should be disposable."

"Indeed," he added, "with this law there will be a further desensitisation of the value of human life."

Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy, a Catholic, signed the assisted suicide bill into law

on April 12.

It passed the Assembly 41-33 and the Senate 21-16 on March 25. As the measure awaited Murphy's signature, pro-life groups and other opponents urged state residents to contact the governor and ask him not to sign the bill into law.

In his statement the day of the signing, Murphy said that "allowing residents with terminal illnesses to make end-of-life choices for themselves is the right thing to do".

"By signing this bill today, we are providing terminally ill patients and their families with the humanity, dignity and respect that they so richly deserve at the most difficult

times any of us will face," he said, and thanked the legislature "for its courage in tackling this challenging issue".

In his letter, Bishop Checchio said he and the other New Jersey bishops as well as the Catholic faithful and others from across the state "fought for over seven years to oppose this law".

At the time Murphy signed the measure, all the Catholic bishops of the state, the New Jersey Catholic Conference and pro-life groups decried his action. Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark called the new law regrettable, saying "whatever its motives and means," it is "morally unacceptable".

Another Congo diocese intensifies fight against Ebola

A Catholic diocese in Congo has boosted measures to protect its congregations against Ebola, after the latest outbreak was declared an international emergency by the World Health Organisation.

"The Goma Diocese is joining the general preoccupation with preventive precautions," said a statement issued by Msgr Jacques Letakamba, diocesan chancellor.

"Washing will now be obligatory for all faithful before Mass, and basins must be prepared for this purpose with chlorinated water. The call to Christ's peace by the priest during Mass will not be accompanied by the extending of hands,"

the statement said.

The measures were implemented as Rwanda closed its border with Congo on August 1 following confirmation of a second Ebola death in Goma, a city of two million people.

More than 1,800 people have died of Ebola in the latest outbreak, Congo's 10th since 1976, with a dozen new cases reported daily, mostly in North Kivu province, according to WHO.

The *Associated Press* reported that one of the latest victims, a miner in his 40s, had shown symptoms of the disease after returning to Goma and died on July 31 at an Ebola treatment centre.

Church officials in the heavily Catholic country have called for an international strategy to contain Ebola as the nation faces political instability and multiple armed conflicts.

Fr Pierre Cibambo Ntakobajira, Africa liaison officer for Caritas Internationalis, said in mid-July that the Catholic Church had been asked by United Nations officials to raise awareness among parishioners to avoid spreading the disease.

"The Church has a special responsibility and opportunity to help communicate the dangers, given the trust and confidence placed in it by local communities," he said.

Vatican roundup

Abuse reports confirmed about famed Jesuit in Chile

● While deceased Jesuit Fr Renato Poblete Barth was known publicly as a champion of the poor in Chile, an internal investigation funded by the Jesuits revealed that the famed clergyman abused more than a dozen women over a span of nearly 50 years.

The results of the six-month independent investigation, which were announced by Jesuit Fr Cristian del Campo, provincial superior of Chile, concluded that "the abuses of power, of conscience, sexual and other crimes committed by Renato Poblete Barth were sustained by a sort of double life, protected by his public image of a good person."

"The abuse, transversely, was carried out from a position of power that gave him that image, his enormous network of contacts, and the economic power that he had by autonomously handling important sums of money during many years," the report said.

Accusations against the famed Jesuit first came to light in January after Marcela Aranda Escobar, professor of theology at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, said she was abused physically and sexually by Fr Poblete for eight years.

Cuban youth encouraged to become missionary disciples by Pontiff

● Pope Francis asked participants of Cuba's Second National Youth Day to "uphold the example of Mary" in a message sent ahead of celebrations.

In a letter sent last week, signed on his behalf by the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Pope referred to the theme of the event urging young people to go forward following the example of Our Lady.

The theme, he noted, which is 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord, may it be done to me according to your word', from the Gospel according to Luke, invites all "to continue to

firmly uphold the example of Mary, the faithful handmaid of the Lord, and to experience the joy that is born of having met Jesus Christ".

Thus, the Pope encouraged Youth Day participants to be, like Mary, "witnesses of his resurrection" and willing to let themselves be transformed into missionary disciples, "so that many other young people may discover the presence of the Lord Jesus, listen to His call, grow in his friendship, and, in this way, live an existence founded on Faith and mercy".

Pope pays surprise visit to nun recovering from surgery

● An elderly religious sister who worked for many years at the Domus Sanctae Marthae, the papal residence, was at her congregation's house recovering from surgery when she received an unexpected visit from Pope Francis.

The Pope arrived at Rome's Regina Mundi House and greeted Sr Maria Mucci, a member of the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, as well as members of her congregation.

Since October, Sr Mucci has been recovering from a delicate surgical procedure.

Nevertheless, the elderly nun was in good spirits, especially after Francis' visit.

"Just look! My illness has made all the sisters of the Regina Mundi House who met the Pope happy," she told *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper.

In an interview with the newspaper, Sr Stefania, a fellow Daughter of Charity, said that Sr Mucci took great pride in her work attending to the needs of the Pope at the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

Before her surgery, Sr Mucci "took care of the kitchen and was proud of personally preparing vegetables for the Holy Father", Sr Stefania said.

Letter from Mexico

Rural Mexico a gut check for Church on religious freedom

Recently – and, many observers would say, belatedly – the Church has awoken to the reality of anti-Christian persecution around the world. The emblematic case is the Nineveh Plains in northern Iraq, where Catholic organisations such as the Knights of Columbus and Aid to the Church in Need have meant the difference between life and death for a resilient Christian minority struggling to rebuild post-ISIS.

Pope Francis routinely talks about anti-Christian persecution as a fact of life in the early 21st Century, invoking an “ecumenism of blood” to express the reality that oppressors don’t generally make distinctions among the types of Christianity practiced by their victims.

This activism is warranted by the threats faced by tens of millions of Christians around the world – to invoke the language of the Catholic Mass, it is “right and just”. For a Catholic witness to be effective, however, it must be consistent and apply across the board, lest it seem mere confessional self-interest.

And that, by a short route, brings us to the small town of Cuamontax Huazalingo, Mexico, population around 700 souls, located in Hidalgo State in the central part of the country just north of Mexico City.

Retaliation

Last month, four Protestants were kicked out of town by village leaders in Cuamontax Huazalingo, apparently in retaliation for their refusal to sign an agreement



John L. Allen Jr

barring Protestants from entering the community and also for a press conference held by their lawyer accusing the Mexican government of failing to defend religious freedom.

A home belonging to Gilberto Badillo, his adult son Uriel Badillo and their wives, all Missionary Baptists, was attacked on the Sunday while they were away, with all their belongings carted off and the windows smashed in order to make the home uninhabitable. In consequence, the Badillos left town and sought refuge in a nearby city.

According to religious freedom watchdog groups, there was ample warning the family was in danger but local and regional government officials refused to intervene, instead giving interviews to media blaming the family for their refusal to participate in, and give financial support to, Catholic activities.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide reports that beginning in 2018, community leaders cut the electricity, running water and sewage services to the handful of Protestant inhabitants, demanding that they sign an agreement to financially support all village activities, including Catholic

festivals, and also pledging that no Protestant missionaries would enter.

“CSW is deeply troubled by yet another forced displacement in Hidalgo after the government has failed to take action to uphold freedom of religion or belief,” said the group’s Head of Advocacy, Anna-Lee Stangl.

“Mexico is 81% Catholic, the highest percentage in Latin America, and has largely resisted the inroads made by Evangelical Christians”

“Once again, state officials neglected to take advantage of an abundance of opportunities over the past eight months to intervene and resolve the conflict in accordance with human rights protections under Mexican law,” she said. “We call on Hidalgo State Governor Omar Fayad Meneses to take immediate action to ensure that members of his administration are upholding the law, and that those who commit criminal acts associated with religious intolerance are held to account.”

It’s not, by the way, as if the situation in Cuamontax Huazalingo is anomalous.

Mexico is 81% Catholic, the highest percentage in Latin America, and has largely resisted the inroads made by Evangelical Christians in the rest of the region. However, 90% of Mexicans say

they were born Catholic, and the country’s bishops have often expressed concerns about the proselytising activities of non-Catholic denominations.

In September 2011, a group of about 70 Protestants in the village of San Rafael Tlanalpan in Puebla state were issued a terrifying ultimatum: leave immediately or be “crucified” or “lynched”. Traditionalist Catholics in the village, located about 60 miles from Mexico City, threatened to burn down their homes and kill any Protestants who remained, styling them as a threat to the Catholic identity of the area. It was the culmination of a long-running effort to get rid of the Protestants, as their water supply had been cut off for the first time five years earlier.

In 2013, one Evangelical organisation claimed that 50,000 Protestants had been displaced from their homes in Mexico over the previous 30 years, with hundreds injured in violent altercations and a handful of Protestants killed.

One such victim was Lorenzo López, a 20-year-old evangelical in the state of Chiapas, who was killed in 2007 when he entered the village of Jomalhó in order to repay relatives money he had borrowed for his wedding. Witnesses reported that roughly 30 traditionalist Catholics assaulted López, shouted Catholic slogans at him, dragged him into a hall for a “trial”, sentenced him to death and forced him to dig his own grave, then smashed his head with rocks.

Granted, such incidents are

largely confined to rural Mexico and often tied up with issues of land use, indigenous rights, and a basic fear of outsiders, none of which are specifically “religious” factors. Nevertheless, this is a case in which Christians – generally evangelical and Pentecostal Protestants – are being persecuted, and not by a hostile regime or Muslim extremists but by oppressors acting in the name of the Church.

“In September 2011, 70 Protestants were told to leave immediately”

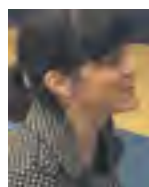
It’s understandable that religious freedom advocates appear to be focused mostly on cajoling the government to act, since police intervention in these cases is obviously required. Equally, however, it would seem reasonable to demand that the Catholic bishops of Mexico step in, beginning with publicly disowning these perpetrators, and from there perhaps devising a campaign to educate Mexico’s rural communities in the actual teaching of the Catholic Church on religious freedom.

Mexico is the second-largest Catholic country in the world after Brazil, and if the Church can’t insist on respect for religious freedom from its own members there, it’s hard to imagine what success it’ll have anywhere else.

John L. Allen Jr is Editor of *Cruznnow.com*



Worshippers pray during Palm Sunday Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Mission, Texas. Photo: CNS



Katie Scott

Arrests of immigrants in the US illegally are increasing nationwide, and the result is more children are losing – or fearing they will lose – a parent through detention or deportation.

On July 22, the Trump administration released a new policy allowing immigration officials to quickly arrest and deport undocumented immigrants without going before a judge. More than 20,000 people could immediately be subject to the expanded fast-track removal process.

The expansion is the latest in ongoing efforts by the administration to keep migrants from entering the country illegally or remove them after they enter. Last year, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement deported more than 256,000 immigrants, an increase of 13% on the previous year.

Some years of the Obama administration, the numbers were even higher, though convicted criminals and those who'd entered the country multiple times were targeted. Under the current administration, agents are instructed to detain and remove anyone living in the country illegally, including individuals without criminal histories. Many of these individuals are parents and caretakers.

Trauma

When it's a parent who's deported, the impact on children is traumatic and has emotional, developmental and physical repercussions, said Lucrecia Suarez, manager of the Intercultural Counselling Centre at Catholic Charities. Even a baby's development "can be altered by the toxic and chronic stress the remaining parent, and the entire family, has to overcome with such a loss," she said.

Catholic Charities is attempting to help support these children through a range of services. "We don't know what the outcome will always be for the families," said John Herrera, director of the agency's Immigration Legal Services. "But we can do our best to provide support and use existing laws to keep parents with their children. Through it all, we are working to fulfill the Gospel."

Current policies have created "a blanket of fear over the entire immigrant community," perhaps most significantly over children, said Michael Bennett, a lifelong Catholic and a Portland immigration judge for nearly three decades.

In Oregon, an estimated 62,000 young people, many US citizens, have at least one immigrant parent who is without documents, based on US Census Bureau data from 2013. Nationally, nearly 6 million US citizen children live with a family member who does not have



A Honduran migrant mother recently released from federal detention with fellow asylum seekers holds her sleeping three-year-old son at a new humanitarian respite centre run by Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley in McAllen, Texas. Photo: CNS

Charities help immigrant children with increased levels of fear and stress

legal status, according to 2010-14 census figures. Children in these families are living with relentless stress, Vanessa Briseno, director of Oregon Catholic Charities' Pope Francis Centre, told the *Catholic Sentinel*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Portland.

Although the well-publicised, large-scale raids of immigrant families haven't materialised in the state, there has been "a steady increase in ICE (US Immigration and Customs Enforcement) pickups," said Kat Kelley of Catholic Charities. When a raid does occur, "it's almost as bad as it can get for children," according to Bennett, now retired and a member of Our Lady of Victory Parish in Seaside. "It's not quite like a death in the family but almost."

"The psychological effect of all this on children, on families, is huge," added Kelley. "We are going to see a public health fallout over this for decades."

Suarez, who with Catholic Charities colleagues is attempting to mitigate that fallout, said fear and stress associated with family separation manifests itself in different ways physically and mentally for children depending on their ages.

At the counselling centre, support for children focuses on the entire family. Counsellors and case managers begin by helping

parents in practical ways, such as with children who don't want to attend school or are unable to sleep. "Then, during the grieving process of loss," she said, "we offer sustained ways to stay connected to a deported family member and to preserve hope."

Some argue that the children of these immigrants suffer because of their parents' actions.

"One of the questions we most often hear is: 'Why don't these people follow the legal channels to get here?'" said Briseno, of the Pope Francis Centre, which provides information about social justice initiatives. "Once undocumented people are here, the next response usually is, 'They should just go home and get in line.'"

But "there is no line," Briseno said. This is especially true for those who have left their countries overnight due to severe threats. "What we are seeing today are mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, grandparents who are fleeing their home countries with children at

their side because the threat of violence, death, starvation is all too real for them."

Holy Cross Father Daniel Groody, an associate professor of theology and global affairs at the University of Notre Dame, who has written extensively on migration, argued that borders are not absolute.

Many involved in this US immigration debate have legitimate concerns about an influx of immigrants, he said, and the Church accepts the necessity of national borders. But "there is also a way of seeing deeper questions about law and our relationship with others," the priest said.

Matt Cato, director of the Portland Archdiocese's Office of Life, Justice and Peace, said that if society were to truly "appreciate the significance of children's emotional ties throughout the first years of life, it would no longer tolerate children growing up fearful of losing a parent."

Catholic Charities is using legal expertise to try to preserve these ties, protect the vulnerable and keep families intact.

“The psychological effect of all this on children, on families, is huge...we are going to see a public health fallout over this for decades”

Nationwide and in Oregon, legal services for families facing separation are extremely limited. That's partially because retaining a private immigration attorney can cost thousands of dollars and is too expensive for the average immigrant family in the state, according to Herrera, head of Immigration Legal Services.

The Centre for Removal Defence was established by Portland's Catholic Charities in 2017 to provide "equal access to justice and representation for undocumented migrants in our community," Herrera said. He added that a number of centre clients are from mixed-status families – those composed of at least one US citizen.

According to data analysed by the American Immigration Council, immigrants with access to legal counsel while in custody are four times more likely to be released from detention than their unrepresented counterparts.

The centre's full-time lawyer and legal assistant have argued more than 220 asylum cases. Currently they are tackling about 40.

Over the past two years, "we've seen a significant uptick in the number of individuals and families who seek our services," said Briseno. They've had to turn away almost 200 cases because they lacked sufficient resources to help.

* * * * *

Along with the centre's legal aid, Catholic Charities offers parents guardianship workshops, where attorneys go through paperwork ensuring that if one or both parents are detained or deported, their children will not enter the foster care system. A child's older siblings or a neighbour, for example, is given authority to make decisions on behalf of the parent.

"It's heart-wrenching to think about what parents are needing to do," said Briseno, adding that Catholic Charities also belongs to a partnership that aims to keep kids out of foster care by providing trained host families.

And the agency helps immigrant families come up with a plan for children if their parents "don't come home one day," said Kelley. It includes a list of what numbers to call, where important papers are kept and where children should go. "We encourage families to have the plan taped to the door or bathroom so it's visible in a crisis," Kelley said.

One of the tragedies of separation for families is that even if reunited, "damage has been done," said Bennett. "You don't get that time back with your kids."

Still, Suarez believes there's hope for children to heal from the trauma. "Every child is different, but you can see a resilience in each of them that they learned from their parents," she said.

"That these families have survived up to this point shows how resilient they are."

① Katie Scott is special projects reporter at the *Catholic Sentinel*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Portland

Letters

Letter of the week

Highlighting Church failure isn't a great start, bishop

Dear Editor, How unfortunate that the newly appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Armagh should start his new ministry by highlighting the Church's failure with regard to the status of women in its ministry. When he said that the Church "has to follow the lead of its founder Jesus Christ" regarding women's place in the hierarchy (IC 25/7/2019), he obviously had not researched the social history of the time.

When Jesus commissioned his disciples

before his Ascension, his instructions were very clear. "You are witnesses to this", he told them (Lk.24: 44-48). However, the prevailing customs and indeed the legislation of the time did not allow women to be witnesses. In fact, it was only 68 years ago that the State of Israel allowed female witnesses in civil court, when it passed the Equality of Women's Rights Act of 1951. In the list of invalid witnesses, up to then were, in the first place, women, followed by slaves,

minors, the blind, the deaf, etc.

So, Jesus – a man of his time – could not appoint women as his witnesses. And if he had, these female witnesses would, no doubt, have got the same treatment as Mary of Magdala, Joanna and Mary, the mother of James when they brought the news of the Resurrection to the eleven and to all the others: "But this story of theirs seemed pure nonsense, and they did not believe them."

Pope Francis is keen that

the Church would "emerge from the shoals which for years had kept her self-enclosed, and would set out again on her missionary journey".

I think that if the Holy Spirit is telling us anything with regard to the status of women in the Church, it is to "read the signs of the times".

*Yours etc.,
Pat Seaver,
Farranshane,
Co. Limerick.*

Wise words at the Castle

Dear Editor, A year ago I remember hearing a great deal about what Government officials had to say to Pope Francis during his visit to Ireland. Coming up to the anniversary of that visit, it may be worth recalling a significant statement (less publicised) that Pope Francis made during his meeting with the Government at Dublin Castle on August 25.

"Could it be that the growth of a materialistic 'throwaway culture' has, in fact, made us increasingly indifferent to the poor and to the most defenceless members of our human family, including the unborn, deprived of the very right to life?"

"Each child is, in fact, a precious gift of God, to be cherished, encouraged to develop his or her gifts, and guided to spiritual maturity and human flourishing."

*Yours etc.,
Judith Leonard,
Raheny, Dublin 5.*

I remember their selflessness

Dear Editor, In your issue (IC 01/08/19) John McGuirk states "that in the days when the Church was the pre-eminent cultural power in the land, it attracted to the priesthood and to the religious life many of those who sought power and influence for themselves".

As one who was around at that time, I never witnessed such an attitude in those pursuing vocations to the priesthood or the religious life.

Then as now they were remarkably idealistic, generous and selfless men and women, especially those who volunteered for the foreign missions.

*Yours etc.,
Fr Anthony Gaughan,
Blackrock,
Dublin.*

Fear not, the Lord will provide

Dear Editor, The Church is ailing now with the scarcity of priests. This is nothing new – even in the time of Christ, Jesus said the harvest (of souls) is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the Harvest to send labourers to his harvest (Luke 10; 1-12).

God is dependent on our prayers for vocations. In the Gospel of St Matthew (28; 18-20) we see Christ before he ascended into Heaven commissioning his apostles to preach the Gospel to all people and promising he will be with them until the end of the world. We can be confident that Jesus will provide priests at all ages of the Church.

*Yours etc.,
Fr Con McGillicuddy,
Raheny, Dublin 5.*



More converts and vocations, less unreal aspiration

Dear Editor, Fintan Butler is stretching a point too far when he suggests that the Ordinariate provides a model for married clergy as "a regular feature of the church in the West" (Letters, IC 18/7/2019).

First, the Ordinariate is confined geographically to those areas where there is a large Anglican presence; in practice this means parts of the United Kingdom (excluding Northern Ireland), Australia and North America. In most of Latin Christendom Ordinariate clergy are not to be found. (Mr Butler goes on to contradict himself by calling the Ordinariate in Great Britain an "abject failure" – a somewhat unfair remark when it is remembered that several

hundred priests now belong to it.)

Second, the presence of married clergy within the Ordinariate is a temporary expedient, one which was designed to help those priests who wished to convert. The initial flow of married clerical converts has since slowed down; without a steady flow of converts the Ordinariate will, probably, wither away. I am not aware of any basis for Mr Butler's speculation that Benedict XVI hoped that the Ordinariate would prepare the way for the ordination of married men as a general rule.

As a convert from Anglicanism I am always amazed that so many cradle Catholics want to dispense with clerical celibacy – something which, so it seems

to me, should be regarded as a source of strength and a blessing to the Church.

It might be better if members of the Church thought and prayed harder about how to increase the number of genuine vocations to the priesthood rather than wondering about how married men might be ordained to the priesthood.

And the Ordinariate ought to prompt us to hope for more converts from Anglicanism instead of expecting an end to clerical celibacy.

*Yours etc.,
C.D.C. Armstrong,
Belfast, Co. Antrim.*

facebook community

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

Parishes taking the lead on becoming more green

Whilst I agree the planet should not be used as a petrochemical plant for our ease of life, there are surely more pressing matters in what is left of the Church in Ireland. Worship of God perhaps? – **Ken Purdie**

Save energy? Save souls. The Church on its knees before the altar of God not before a liberal government that has nothing but contempt for the [Church]. – **Nor Fitz**

Josepha Madigan prayed at local parish when she took over FG abortion campaign

Is she trying to tell us that God answered her prayers and told her she was doing the right thing introducing abortion into Ireland? Narcissism out of control. – **Kay Judge**

Sounds like she is trying or wants to start up her own church...plenty of places to go out there and do that, let us know how you get on. – **David O'Connor**

Even a child in a First Holy Communion class has a better formed sense of the difference between right and wrong than most of these supposedly Catholic government ministers. – **Darren Fitzpatrick**

FF would support assisted suicide debate

Imagine the effect on vulnerable old or disabled people if this comes to pass? Once suicide becomes "acceptable" and "normal", it will not take much to pressurise a person to choose death rather than be a "burden". – **Geraldine Comiskey**

Call for Catholics to keep Croagh Patrick spirit alive

The beginning of eliminating pilgrimage places, grottos, statues or anything pertaining to the Catholic Church is the same as taking all religious pictures, crosses, etc. out of public places, hospitals, schools. This is another attack on our heritage and beliefs. We live in times of much challenge to hold on to the sacred and we should stand up and be counted.

We are leaving the next generations devoid of Faith, which leads to hopelessness and depression in the broader sense. We all need Faith and the leaders of our country are doing their best to rid it from our country. We were never in more need of a belief in a higher power with all the evil that surrounds us. – **Peg Hanifan**

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

Letters to the Editor

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

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

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

Around the world



USA: Migrant families seeking asylum walk from a bus depot to a Catholic Charities humanitarian respite centre just after being released from federal detention in McAllen, Texas, last week. Photos: CNS



CONGO: A Congolese health worker administers Ebola vaccine to a child at the Himbi Health Centre in Goma.



▲ **USA:** A statue of Mary is seen amid flames through a window in the Church of the Visitation in Westphalia, Texas.
 ▼ **POLAND:** Fritzie Fritzshall, president of the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Centre in Skokie and survivor of the Auschwitz Nazi concentration camp, and Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich talk underneath the entrance gate at the camp in Oswiecim.



USA: A woman raises her arm in prayer during a Mass for Catholics of Nigerian descent at St Thomas the Apostle Chapel in West Hempstead, New York.



AFGHANISTAN: A young Afghan man receives treatment at a hospital last week after a bus was hit by a roadside bomb in Herat. The bomb tore through the bus killing at least 32 people, including children.



Divine understanding

A number of years ago at a symposium on Faith and evangelisation, one of the speakers made a rather startling statement. She, a Christian activist, ended her presentation with words to this effect: "I work for the poor and I do it out of my Christian Faith. I'm committed to this because of Jesus, but I can go for three years on the streets without ever mentioning his name because I believe that God is mature enough that he doesn't demand to be the centre of our conscious attention all the time."

Like many others in the audience, I'd never heard a spiritual writer or preacher ever say this so bluntly. I'd heard biblical scholars speak of God's self-emptying in the incarnation, of Christ's burying himself into anonymity and of God's patience in being ignored, but I'd never heard anyone say so plainly that God doesn't mind that we don't give him explicit attention for long periods of time.

But is this true? Is God okay with this kind of neglect?

“God understands that we're human, spiritually frail, busy and instinctually geared towards the things of this world”

There's an important truth here, though only if it's sufficiently qualified. Taken as it stands this can be used to justify too many things (spiritual laziness, selfishness, excessive self-preoccupation, culpable



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

resistance to deeper thought, excessive procrastination with what's important, and countless other things) that are not good. But here's its truth: God understands! God is a loving parent who understands the inattentiveness and self-preoccupation of his children.

God has not put us into this life primarily to see if we can keep our attention focused on him all the time. God intended for us to immerse ourselves in the things of this world without, of course, forgetting that these things are, at the end of the day, passing and that we're destined for a life beyond this world. We're not on this earth to be always thinking of the eternal, though we're not on earth either to forget about the eternal.

However, because the unexamined life is less than human, we also need to have moments where we try to make God the centre of our conscious awareness. We need regular moments of explicit prayer, of meditation, of contemplation, of Sabbath, of explicit acknowledgement of God and of explicit gratitude to God. We do need moments when we make ourselves consciously aware that there is a next life, an eternal one, beyond this present one.

Families

But, in the end, that's not in competition with or in contradiction to our

natural focus on the things of this life, namely, our day-to-day relationships, our families, our work, our concerns for health, and our natural focus on news, sports, entertainment, and enjoyment.

These are what naturally draw our attention and, done in good will and honesty, will in the end help push our attention towards the deeper things and eventually towards God. The great mystic, John of the Cross, tells us that, if we're sincere and honest as we focus on the mundane things in our lives, deeper things will happen, unconsciously, under the surface and we will grow closer to God.

“The magic fades and reveals the church for what it is: a plain people in a boring building who meet until kickoff”

For example, the famed monk Carlo Carretto shares this story: after living many years alone as a hermit in the Sahara desert and spending countless hours in prayer and meditation, he went back to Italy to visit his mother. She was a woman who had raised a large family and who had gone through years of her life when she was too burdened with responsibility and duty to spend much time in explicit prayer.

What Carretto discovered

to his surprise was that she was more contemplative than he was, not because all those hours of explicit prayer as a monk weren't good, but because all those selfless tasks his mother did in raising her family and caring for others were very good.

And God understands this. God understands that we're human, spiritually frail, busy and instinctually geared towards the things of this world so that we don't naturally move towards prayer and church, and that even when we are at prayer or in church, we're generally still distracted, tired, bored, impatient, thinking of other things and longing for prayer and church to be over with.

Attention

It's not easy to keep God as the centre of our conscious attention; but God both knows this and is not unsympathetic.

Kate Bowler, coming at this from the Mennonite tradition, comments on what the Church calls 'ordinary time', that is, those times during the year when, unlike the Advent, Lenten, Christmas or Easter seasons, there is nothing special to celebrate. What happens then? Well, what happens then is that things get 'ordinary': "There is no birth at the manger or death on the cross, just the ponderous pace of people singing, praying, and keeping their kids quiet during the sermon. The magic fades and reveals the church for what it is: a plain people in a boring building who meet until kickoff."

Yes, most of the time that's us – plain people in boring buildings waiting for the kickoff. And God understands perfectly.

QUESTIONS of faith

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



Was the world created in six days?

Many Christians today – usually fundamentalists or those of the evangelical tradition – believe that God created the world in six days, in accordance with the Genesis account described in the Bible. This well-known passage outlines a six-day schema of creation, concluding on the seventh day that God rested.

"By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work." (Gen 2:2)

Throughout history there has been rigorous debate about whether this creation account records day-by-day events, or is instead a piece of writing aimed at conveying some deeper theological message.

In response to this problem, some critics of the literal interpretation viewpoint have pointed out inconsistencies in the story which would render a day-by-day creation impossible. For example, how could light exist before the creation of the sun and moon? There are plenty of discrepancies like this which attempt to show that a literal understanding of this passage is untenable.

Merits

Rather than focus on the merits of each of these criticisms, it's much better to accept the overall point that the Bible is not a scientific treatise conveying empirical truths about our origins. It is a work of theology, inspired by God, aimed at teaching us who we are, where we come from, and what we are made for.

Other pagan cultures also had creation stories like the Babylonians or the Egyptian cult of the Sun. Using figurative language, the Bible distinguishes itself from these other creation myths. Well-known theologian Bishop Robert Barron has suggested, for example, that while other pagan cosmological

accounts describe creation through violent imagery, the God of the Bible peacefully creates. Likewise, the Bible makes clear that material things like the sun and the sea are not objects of worship.

On this view, the Bible opens itself up as source of deep theological richness. The Church recognises this perspective when it writes: "God himself created the visible world in all its richness, diversity and order. Scripture presents the work of the Creator symbolically as a succession of six days of divine 'work', concluded by the 'rest' of the seventh day."

"On the subject of creation, the sacred text teaches the truths revealed by God for our salvation, permitting us to 'recognise the inner nature, the value and the ordering of the whole of creation to the praise of God.'" (CCC 337)

Interpretation

The position that the Creation account should be understood in metaphorical terms isn't a modern-day, watered-down interpretation but dates back to the early Church.

There was little unanimity among the Church fathers on this topic, but many held that the days represented thousands of years, or some alternative time-frame to the 24-hour period. The influential theologian St Augustine of Hippo (354-430AD) believed that the Biblical text should not be interpreted literally if it contradicts overwhelming scientific knowledge. His view best sums up how Christians should approach all matters of faith.

"[A]t least we know that it [the Genesis creation day] is different from the ordinary day with which we are familiar." (*The Literal Interpretation of Genesis*)

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

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, August 8, 2019

Personal Profile

A Search for solitude: The woman behind Grásta Dé

Page 34



A concert today keeps the doctor away

For many, music is a significant part of their life. The second people start their morning commute, the headphones go in or the car radio is switched on, bringing some fun to an otherwise ordinary morning. One does not have to be a singer, dancer or musician to consider music a valuable part of their life. It can affect people's emotions, making them happy, sad or excited, while taking them back to a memory when they heard a song for the first time. Music is the sound track to life, changing the way people feel inside and out.

Music is good for more than entertaining someone on their morning commute. It affects people's overall well-being,



Madison Duddy explores how concert going can improve health

especially when performed in a concert setting. A 2018 study by O2, a popular music and entertainment venue, found that through psychometric and heart rate tests during concerts, frequent gig-going can extend one's life expectancy by nine years. From the physical benefits of pain relief and exercise from dancing during a

concert to the mental benefits like stress reduction, reflection, growth in self-worth and a sense of belonging, going to concerts increases well-being by 21% after only 20 minutes at a gig. Another study found from a random sample of 1,000 people that those who immerse themselves in music through dance or concert-going are

more satisfied with life than those who do not.

Specifically, studies have shown that listening to music increases one's pain threshold. Because of this, hospital patients often listen to music before, during and after surgery to help manage pain. The same applies to concert going. When listening to music at a concert, a person's brain releases endorphins that act as a pain killer.

Attending concerts is also a great source of exercise. If a person includes walking to and from the venue and dancing for a few hours straight, they could get as much exercise as someone who works out on a treadmill for 30 minutes. Also, all the screaming and singing gives the diaphragm a

good workout. This is for only one concert too. Imagine the exercise a music festival goer gets after dancing, cheering, singing and walking around extensive festival grounds for a few days straight.

In addition to the physical benefits from concert going, the mental are incomparable. In a world full of constant stressors, a concert can be just what the doctor ordered. A 2016 study by academics at Imperial College London found that going to a concert decreased the release of stress hormones like cortisol in 117 participants. At a concert, surrounded by loud music that shakes the floor, few people stand around thinking about all their overhanging

» Continued on Page 33

Family News

AND EVENTS

HAVE YOU HEARD THE STORY ABOUT JOHNNY MAGORY?

The Johnny Magory Annual Adventure Day in Aid of CMRF Crumlin will take place for the third time during National Heritage Week. The event is based around a children's book series.

This free family focused event is building on events held over the last 2 years and will include a nature hunt around Ballynafagh Lake, looking for all Johnny Magory's animal friends, a fishing demonstration, some healthy snacks and of course readings from *The Adventures of Johnny Magory* children's book series by the author. They will be hosting a raffle with prizes from local businesses and are hoping attendees will donate "what you can for CMRF Crumlin Children's Hospital". The event takes place on August 24 from 2-5pm at Ballynafagh Lake, Ballynafagh, Prosperous in Naas, Co. Kildare.

Max: 250 children. Must be accompanied by parent/guardian. Tickets need only be ordered for children and can be found on www.eventbrite.com

Not suitable for buggies or wheelchairs and the walk is approximately 3km. Wellies or old runners are essential.

DON'T BYPASS SOME WORLD-CLASS BLUEGRASS

Enjoy three days and nights of exceptional bluegrass and old-time music at the Ulster American Folk Park in Tyrone, featuring direct from the USA, the multi award winning band Joe Mullins & The Radio Ramblers.

Other acts from the US include Front Country, Chris Jones & The Night Drivers, Bill & The Belles and Hoot & Holler.

The event takes place on Mellon Road, Castletown in Omagh. Other international acts include the Paris Texas Band from Belgium as well as The Buffalo Gals and Dr Bluegrass from England. Events organisers say there will also be the best of home grown talent from across the north and south of Ireland, which "will make for a toe-tappin', knee-clappin', finger-pickin' bluegrass weekend!"

Opening times are from 12.30 – 11.30pm Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Price list: Weekend Pass: £48. Friday/Sunday: £15 adult, £6 child. Saturday (day): £20 adult, £6 child. Saturday (evening): £15 adult, £6 child.

ALZHEIMER'S TEST COULD PREDICT DISEASE 20 YEARS BEFORE ONSET

Detecting Alzheimer's disease through a blood test has moved a step closer to clinical use.

A new blood test is 94% accurate at identifying Alzheimer's before symptoms arise when age and genetic risk factors are taken into account, experts have said according to the Press Association.

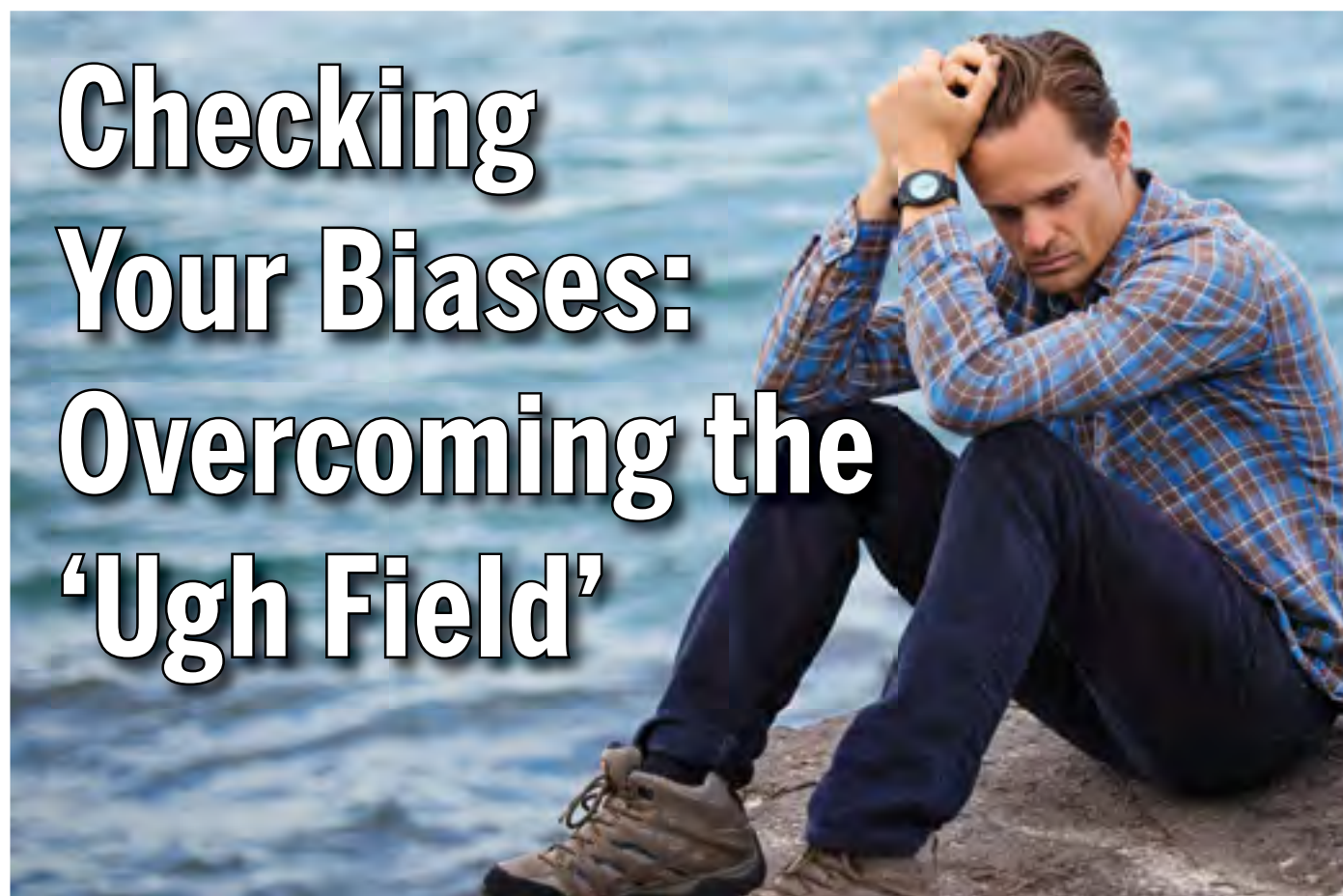
Researchers from Washington University in St Louis report they can measure levels of the Alzheimer's protein amyloid beta in blood and use these levels to predict whether it has accumulated in the brain.

The report said that up to 20 years before people develop the memory loss and confusion of Alzheimer's disease, damaging clumps of protein start to build up in their brains.

The findings, published in the medical journal *Neurology*, are a major step towards a blood test to diagnose people on track to develop the disease, before symptoms arise.

"Right now we screen people for clinical trials with brain scans, which is time-consuming and expensive, and enrolling participants takes years," said senior author Randall J Bateman, professor of neurology in Washington University's medical school.

Checking Your Biases: Overcoming the 'Ugh Field'



What's the opposite of good, clear thinking? An obvious answer is 'biased thinking'. The truth is that we're all biased. None of us are gods or angels, and the brains with which we do our thinking often go wrong, the whirls and eddies of our thoughts pushing us away from the truth instead of towards it. The best we can do is be aware of these biases and do our best to correct for them, redirecting our minds towards pursuing the truth.

One very common sort of bias is the 'Ugh Field' (the term comes from the website *Less Wrong*). If you have an Ugh Field about some belief, it means that you find yourself flinching away from thinking about it (with, presumably, a mental 'Ugh').

“The best we can do is be aware of these biases and do our best to correct for them, redirecting our minds towards pursuing the truth.”

Take an example, a believer in God named Tim who has an Ugh Field about the prospect of God not existing. Every time Tim even thinks about a world without God, his stomach drops, he starts sweating, and he panics as he stares into the void of a world that cannot hold.

It's not that Tim has thought it all out, considered all the implications, and then decided that a world without God would be horrifying. Rather, he's so terrified about what a world without God might be like that he refuses to actually think about it at all.

A second example: Charlotte, who supports same-sex



Everyday philosophy Ben Conroy

marriage, has an Ugh Field about the idea of herself changing her mind. Coming to believe that gay marriage really was morally wrong might be a terrible prospect for her: she might think things like, "how could I face my gay friends?" or "that would be so horribly unfair", and flinch away from considering the arguments about same-sex marriage on the merits.

“If you have an Ugh Field about some belief, it means that you find yourself flinching away from thinking about it

Usually, people with Ugh Fields have a sneaking suspicion that the belief they're afraid of might be correct. If Tim were completely and utterly confident in his belief in God (because of rock-solid arguments, personal experiences or any reason really), he wouldn't flinch from considering the possibility that God did not exist. Even if he thought the prospect were truly awful, he wouldn't think it at all likely and so (barring phobias) wouldn't be afraid of it. But the Ugh Field itself might prevent Tim ever getting to that position - he gives the belief force over him by refusing to calmly consider its truth or falsity. Similarly, Charlotte wouldn't have an Ugh Field about same-sex marriage if she

calmly, the arguments for your Ugh field belief aren't as strong as you were afraid of.

As a result, you become more confident in your own position because you understand the other side of the argument rather than just being afraid of it. Sometimes you'll realise that the arguments for the belief you fear are very strong, but the belief still seems really unpleasant or objectionable for whatever reasons. But at least you'll know where you stand, and you'll be able to face the real problem rather than its menacing shadow.

“Sometimes pushing through an Ugh Field will make you realise that the belief you feared wasn't so scary after all

Overcoming Ugh fields can make it easier to change your mind or it can make you more confident in your existing beliefs. People in the grip of an Ugh Field tend to be bad arguers: desperately flinging arguments at the position they fear in order to make it go away rather than engaging in a good-faith search for truth. They're likely to impute dodgy motivations to their opponents - anything rather than consider whether they might have to actually believe whatever it is they have an Ugh Field about. They often don't even know the best arguments for their own position, because they've been too afraid to consider the best arguments against it.

Overcoming Ugh Fields can be tricky, but facing them head-on will make us better truth-seekers.



» Continued from Page 31



responsibilities. Instead, people get lost in the music and the crowd, singing and dancing along to their favourite songs in sync with hundreds or thousands of people.

“In addition to the physical benefits from concert going, the mental are incomparable. In a world full of constant stressors, a concert can be just what the doctor ordered.

However, the sense of community is probably the most powerful natural high at a concert. The awareness of being surrounded by thousands of other people singing the same lyrics from memory along with the artist connects people, reminding them they are not alone but in a world full of others just like them. This collective effervescence has brought people together for centuries, forging strong bonds of brotherhood and community that continue to keep societies together in strength. It's the same feeling one might experience at a religious ritual or on a nationwide holiday. The sense of connection to people provides one with a positive outlook and longevity.

While at a concert, people have a moment to reflect on their life. Music can be like a time machine, transporting one back to memories associated with the song they are listening to. Thinking about the past allows people to relive moments in their past, remembering times of innocence, happiness, love, sadness, regret and heartbreak. Reconnecting with the past reminds one to take a step back from all the distractions in life and live in the present with joy

and gratitude. It can help people to remember that there have been good times in their life and that there are more good times to come. A study on the effects of nostalgia in a 2013 issue of the *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* found that nostalgia not only creates happiness in the present but creates optimism for the future. The researchers had participants listen to specific songs or read lyrics to induce nostalgia. Participants who became nostalgic then conveyed more optimism for the future which leads to feeling more socially connected to others. The increase in social connection then boosts self-esteem which again creates a more optimistic person.

“Music can be like a time machine, transporting one back to memories associated with the song they are listening to. Thinking about the past allows people to relive moments in their past

Last but not least, attending concerts gives people a stronger sense of well-being, according to the O2 study. The scope of well-being extends to self-worth, closeness to others, and mental stimulation. Self-worth and closeness to others increased by 25% and mental stimulation by 75%. The O2 study also concluded that those who go to concerts every few weeks are more likely to have a high level of happiness, productivity, self-esteem and contentment.

Self-worth and closeness to others increased by 25% and mental stimulation by 75%.



Well-being ties into someone's life span, which confirms that people who frequently go to concerts could live longer. Health Affairs published a 2016 study by Yale that measured collective well-being of individuals from different counties, including their physical health, emotional health, healthy behaviours, life evaluation, basic access and work environment. The result was that counties with higher scores of well-being had a higher life expectancy, specifically 1.9 years higher for females and 2.6 higher for males.

“Those who go to concerts every few weeks are more likely to have a high level of happiness

If the connection between music, human emotions and well-being can teach people anything, it is that attending concerts is never a waste of time or money. Sometimes, a concert is a perfect, natural cure for one's physical and emotional pain.

Faith — IN THE — family



Bairbre Cahill

Is it bizarre to find a connection between the Harry Potter books and the Eucharist? It is something that has been going around in my head for a while. In the books it gradually becomes clear that the evil character Voldemort cannot easily be killed. He has placed a horcrux – a piece of his own soul – in various objects and even in people and until all of these are destroyed Voldemort cannot be destroyed.

I don't want to get too deep into exploring what a horcrux is here. Safe to say that Voldemort is not a nice individual and anything he is involved in is equally negative. But the thing that sparked my imagination was the idea that Jesus too, in the Eucharist, gives himself away. For Jesus, it is an act of absolute love and generosity.

At the Last Supper, knowing what was about to happen to him, Jesus gathers his friends and taking bread in his hands says, “This is my body” and with the cup of wine, “This is my blood”. He wasn't just saying this is like my body and my blood. He was much more definite and direct than that. What he gave them to eat and drink was, he was telling them, his very own self.

To my mind, he seems to be taking the initiative before the powers that be can kill him. He puts himself utterly into the hands of those who have loved and followed him. He entrusts himself entirely to them and in doing so, even death on a cross cannot destroy him. So, it seems to me that what happens in that first Eucharist and what happens in the Resurrection are intimately and powerfully connected. The friends of Jesus, even the ones who run away from the cross, have become tabernacles of his presence.

But it goes further than that. Every time we gather to receive the Eucharist, we are being entrusted with the very being of Jesus in just the same way. We are living tabernacles.

I've been reading Richard Rohr's book *The Universal Christ* and there was something there that really struck me and got me thinking about all of this again. Rohr speaks of noticing that sometimes when people receive Holy Communion they bow towards the

tabernacle as if they have not understood that the real presence is now carried within their own bodies.

The readings these past few days have been about Moses going up the mountain to speak



with God. When he comes down his face is radiant. I have sometimes found myself sitting after Holy Communion wondering what it would be like if we could see the wonder of that real presence of Christ radiant in each person.

What impact would it have on our appreciation of the Eucharist, on the reverence with which we receive the Eucharist? The really challenging question is how differently would we live if we took seriously the responsibility to carry that real presence out with us into our daily lives?

If I am right and there is that vital connection between Eucharist and Resurrection then that should give us confidence. If Jesus could not be destroyed even by death because he had placed himself in the hands of his friends so too the Church which is Christ's body cannot be destroyed if we continue to be bearers of Christ's presence. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, Christ continues to be present through the lives of you and me.

Have you ever walked into a room full of people and met someone who shares your name? It can give us a sense of connection, a feeling of having something in common – a place to begin a relationship from. Well when we come together as people of faith, we all share the same name. We are all Christopher – the Christ bearer. How's that for a reason to feel connected and to build a relationship!

A Search for solitude: The woman behind Grásta Dé

Personal Profile



Madison Duddy

“Such spiritual places of retreat will be needed to recover ground lost to the materialism of modern Ireland,” says Gráinne McGroarty, a Co. Donegal native who founded Grásta Dé, a group of hermitage sites within the Inishowen peninsula.

Gráinne believes this hectic world wears people out physically and spiritually, and a hermitage site is the perfect place to rejuvenate and connect with God.

“Such spiritual places of retreat will be needed to recover ground lost to the materialism of modern Ireland,” says Gráinne McGroarty.”

Growing up in a religious family, Gráinne can remember praying the rosary every evening. After attending Catholic primary school with the Sisters of Mercy and in 1996, joined the order of consecrated virgins in Derry. Gráinne's inspiration for hermitage sites came from her experiences with Críost Linn in college, a lay Christian Eucharist centred community. While with Críost Linn, Gráinne helped look after hermitage sites in Ferns. “Such spiritual places of retreat will be needed to recover ground lost to the materialism of modern Ireland



“It just felt something like that, offering silence and peace and solitude, would be beneficial for people everywhere. I felt that the place where I live would be a good place to offer that kind of facility and that's where I got the idea originally,” says Gráinne. “The land where the hermitages are now built was actually donated, so I took that as a sign of God's province since the land was given to me.”

In 2004, Gráinne approached Bishop Seamus Hegarty, the then Bishop of the Diocese of Derry, with her idea to build the hermitages. After prayer and discussion, Grásta Dé was born.

“We prayed, and the name just came, Grásta Dé. It means the Grace of God,” says Gráinne. “Grásta Dé is a place where people can come apart to pray, a place where the life of God can revive in their hearts and souls. If the light of faith dims in Ireland, our concern for the poor, the sick, the old - and for the sacredness of life itself - will

vanish too. The mission of Grásta Dé is to offer a space where people can listen for the voice of the God who loves them. Inspired and empowered by that love, they can go forth to serve those to whom God's grace will send them.”

“In 2004, Gráinne approached Bishop Seamus Hegarty, the then Bishop of the Diocese of Derry, with her idea to build the hermitages. After prayer and discussion, Grásta Dé was born.”

At the moment, only one of the five hermitages is finished, but is already impacting many peoples' lives.

“It is used very regularly by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal,” says Gráinne. “They work in a very busy parish and they come

regularly to spend time there. I see in them, when they arrive, they are tired and worn out. They are very different when they are leaving because they spend their time in silence and in prayer. They go back rejuvenated, able then to continue on the work they are called to do.”

In addition to the friars, the hermitage is also utilised by laypeople who wish to escape from the world and connect with God.

“I have seen laypeople who come here as well and I'm always impressed by the fact that people are changed whenever they leave,” says Gráinne. “They come, I suppose, burdened, and the time in silence and the time just waiting on God brings them to a deeper awareness of the love and healing of God that awaits all of us.” Gráinne herself has been to hermitage sites and sees them as a great place for healing.

“I have spent time in Ferns and I always feel that any time I spend away like that from the business of life, it just changes me in some way. I come back feeling refreshed and

just to be able to take time to let God speak within. I can also think through things that have been on my mind and set those things in the presence of God, and the awareness of the presence of God brings a healing,” says Gráinne. “I always find that any time I spend in prayer, whether it is at home or at a retreat centre or a hermitage, I always feel changed at the end of those days apart and the changes, I believe, come about from the touch of God and the awareness of his presence in my life.”

“In addition to the Friars, the hermitage is also utilised by laypeople who wish to escape from the world and connect with God.”

Grásta Dé still has a ways to go in finishing their five hermitage sites. Relying solely on donation, the project has come far but still needs €200,000 to reach completion. Gráinne is determined to finish Grásta Dé because she believes in the power of hermitage sites from seeing their impact first hand.

“I think that today we live in a busy world and a hermitage is a place of peace and a place that provides solace and silence in a world of hurried and worried people.

I think it's really an antidote to the noise and frenzy, and a place where we can be still in silence and wait for God. All of us rush around searching for that which we can only find within when we remain still. It's not easy to find a place that offers this kind of silence and solitude, and yet, for anybody who is searching for true meaning in life, I think a place of silence is vital. I believe God waits for us to be silent so that we can become aware of him and his love in our life.”

Sweet Treats

Laura Anderson



Lemon and Blueberry Cake - A fresh, sweet summer treat

This fruity layered cake is a definite crowd-pleaser with the tanginess of the lemon, bursts of blueberry and indulgent cream cheese icing to top it all off. It would make a beautiful cake for a friend or family member's birthday. Don't be put off by the number of ingredients - you will find most of them in your kitchen already just pick up some fresh lemons and blueberries and you'll be good to go!

Ingredients

For the cake:

- 220g butter
- 280g granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp lemon zest (about 1 medium lemon)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 360g plain flour + 1tbsp
- □ tsp salt
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 4 medium eggs
- 170ml milk

- 60ml lemon juice
- 200g blueberries

For the cream cheese icing:

- 500g icing sugar, sifted
- 230g cream cheese
- 110g unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp lemon zest
- 1 tbsp lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°F/Fan/Gas mark 4. Grease and line three 8 inch circular tins. Start by mixing the milk with the lemon juice and set it aside. Prepare the blueberries by tossing them in 1 tbsp of flour, this will prevent them from sinking during baking. Then assemble the dry ingredients by sieving the flour into a bowl along with the baking powder and salt. Stir gently to combine. In a separate bowl using an electric whisk, beat the butter and sugar together on high for about two minutes until pale and creamy. Reduce speed to medium



and beat in the eggs one at a time. Then add the vanilla and lemon zest.

Now working in three batches, fold in the dry ingredients from earlier alternating with the milk. Start and end with the flour, so flour-milk-flour-milk-flour. Finally, fold the blueberries gently into the mixture, try to keep them intact. Distribute this mixture evenly between the prepared tins. The tins may not be as full as you are used to but you want three relatively thin layers. Bake in the oven for about 25 minutes until a skewer inserted into the middle of the cake comes out clean.

Leave to cool in the tins for about 15 minutes before transferring onto a wire rack to cool fully. It is important that the cakes are completely cool before icing!

Prepare the icing by beating the butter until it's pale and fluffy. Then add the cream cheese, lemon juice and rind and vanilla extract. Beat until combined, this shouldn't take long. Finally, slowly add the icing sugar and beat until you have a spreadable, smooth frosting. Use about half the icing to sandwich the layers together and the rest on the outside. Add a lemon twist and some blueberries on top to finish and chill for half an hour before serving.

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Not so private discussion on *Liveline*

There are some programmes I like and some I dislike, and then there are programmes I find inspiring at times, and irritating at others.

Liveline (RTÉ Radio 1) fits into the latter category, and last week I was definitely irritated. It all started on the Tuesday when 'Diane' (not her real name) expressed how upset she was by reaction towards her at a recent silent retreat in Donegal. Strangely she was on this retreat despite being Protestant and an active lesbian.

She seemed taken aback to have Catholic teaching outlined to her (by her own admission in a gentle manner) by Bro. Basil, a Benedictine monk from France. Allegedly her friend was called an adulteress by another monk, and subject to intrusive questioning.

Bro. Basil came on the line on Thursday's show, which may not have been the wisest move. So, what followed was an uneasy discussion of what had been a private pastoral conversation – better if they had stuck to general principles.

Presenter Joe Duffy gave Bro. Basil what I thought was an overly intense grilling. Joe seemed particularly hung up on a prayer that was given to 'Diane' – a prayer for purity and chastity. Yes, the language sounded old fashioned and maybe the Church needs



Some of the cast of *The Kids are Alright* (RTÉ1).

to find a better language to gain more traction for its teachings on sexuality, but Bro. Basil stayed calm, doing a reasonable job explaining this teaching ("eloquently and fluently", said Joe). It didn't help, however, that he was being prompted in the background by another monk.

Third party

Joe didn't help by bringing in another third party, a woman who knew the two who were on the retreat. It all became rather anecdotal and third hand and there were some discrepancies as to the length of the retreat and the numbers attending.

At one stage Bro. Basil

declared himself unhappy with the direction of the interview, which Joe, I thought unfairly, interpreted as him threatening to hang up.

When another woman came on the line defending Church teaching Joe asked her: "You're saying Diane should seek forgiveness for being gay?" She wasn't, and even after she made the distinction between act and orientation he repeated that question to her. She suggested he might need to seek forgiveness himself for being rude and said that the Catholic Church isn't anti-women or anti-gay. Great.

I needed some light relief after that and got some laugh-

ter therapy from US sitcom **The Kids Are Alright** (RTÉ1, Friday). The show features a US Catholic family in the 1970's – eight boys (we get it – large Catholic family) with no-nonsense parents. It's fast paced, witty and avoids sentimentality.

So far the Catholic element is background. The eldest has left the seminary, there are references to the mother going to church, the boys cover the eyes on a picture of Our Lady so she won't see their mischief – and there's a lot of it!

Despite bringing the boys up strictly the mother has a certain moral flexibility – in one episode she gets a fancy hairdo and leaves what she thinks ought to be the price rather than the actual charge, which is greater. The local priest, Fr Dunne, doesn't get



Joe Duffy.

PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM: STATIONS OF THE CROSS
BBC2, Saturday, August 10, 1.55am

Challenging film about a young girl undergoing instruction within a strict fundamentalist Catholic order to prepare for her Confirmation.

LIFE AND SOUL

RTÉ1 and RTÉ Radio 1 Extra Sunday, August 11, 11am

To mark the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Northern Irish 'Troubles', we meet people whose lives have been impacted. With music and reflection.

MAXIMILIAN: SAINT OF AUSCHWITZ

EWTN, Monday, August 12, 10am, also Tuesday, August 13, 9.30pm

Actor Leonardo DiCaprio as St Maximilian Kolbe, the Polish Franciscan priest who withstood the horror of Auschwitz until his death.

much of a look in – given that he's played by Paul Dooley I hope he features more prominently in future.

Sermons

References are made to his sermons and in last Friday's episode the father insists on bringing one of the boys, 18-year-old Eddie, to Confession after he comes home at 3am having visited his girlfriend. These are suspicious parents and usually their suspicions are well grounded – I'd say most parents can relate to staying awake restless until all the family members are in bed.

Creator Tim Doyle has created a show that's entirely credible. He does the role of narrator himself and it has to be said this show reminds me particularly of *The Won-*

der Years and, to an extent, *Malcolm in the Middle* and *Young Sheldon*. And that just means the show is in pretty good company.

Finally there was a very positive item about Catholic education when **Songs of Praise** (BBC1, Sunday) visited St Mary's University in Twickenham. Vice-Chancellor Francis Campbell spoke enthusiastically about the legacy of the visit of Pope Benedict in 2010 and it was uplifting to see a group of articulate and faith-filled young adult students living in a religious community in a house named after the Pope.

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



Aubrey Malone

Film

Feel-good films enjoying a field day on our screens

International films are having a field day on our screens at the minute. *Blinded by the Light* takes up where *Yesterday* left off, giving us the story of a disaffected young Asian man becoming liberated by music. Bob Dylan once said that hearing Elvis Presley for the first time was like "busting out of jail". Something like this happens here too if we replace Elvis with Bruce Springsteen.

Gurinder Chadra's film is set in Luton in 1987. Margaret Thatcher is in power. Everything seems bleak for Pakistani teenager Javed (Viveik Kalra). He can't seem to settle at anything, but when a Sikh friend of his (Aaron Phagura) introduces him to Springsteen's music his life goes into

a new groove.

He becomes his inspiration, his escape from Thatcher's tunnel vision of what constitutes true worth. He's suddenly 'Born to Run' as The Boss himself might say. The genie is out of the bottle.

This adrenalinised rite-of-passage film is based on Sarfaraz Manzoor's semi-autobiographical book *Greetings from Bury Park*. Manzoor was only two when his family moved from Pakistan to Britain in 1974. As he grew up he found it difficult being a Muslim in an alien environment.

But then he heard Springsteen singing 'The River' and a light bulb went off in his head. Everything suddenly began to gell. Springsteen became the glue that bound

all religions, all lives together.

If music is the cathartic influence behind *Blinded by the Light*, love performs that function in Ritesh Bate's *Photograph*. It deals with a struggling street photographer from Mumbai (Nawazuddin Siddiqui) who's being pressurised to marry by his grandmother (Farrukh Jaffar). One day he asks a shy young woman (Sanya Malhotra) to pose for a photograph with him.

He pretends it's a photo of his fiancée to try and get his grandmother to cease her matrimonial tirades but then she meets her. Now Malhotra has to play the role for real.

Deanna Durbin made a film called *It Started with Eve* with a similar theme

in 1941. In that instance it was a grandfather (Charles Laughton) doing the pressurising. Laughton was seriously ill. His grandson gave him a tonic by presenting him with a fake fiancée in Durbin.

It was obvious from early on in that film that the two leads were going to fall in love. So it is here too. *Photograph* is slow-moving and gentle like an old-fashioned rom-com. Bate photographs Mumbai like an extra character in the film, charming us with his light touch.

Novel

Also on release at the moment is *Transit* from German director Christian Petzold. It's based on a novel by Anne Seghers about a man trying



Viveik Kalra (left) stars in Gurinder Chadra's *Blinded by the Light*.

to flee Nazi-occupied France during World War II. He falls in love with the widow of an author whose identity he assumes after the author commits suicide.

Petzold has preserved the essence of the plot but transposed it to modern times, replacing the Nazi threat with one focussed on terrorism and the refugee crisis.



BookReviews

Peter Costello



Down to earth in rural Ireland

Lay of the Land: Reflections on life in rural Ireland

by Fiona O'Connell
(Red Stag, €12.99)

Christopher Moriarty

This collection of chatty articles is attractively illustrated by Caroline Barry with a pen-and-ink sketch at the head of every one of the one hundred plus short chapters. They are a selection from the author's weekly articles which have been appearing in the *Sunday Independent* since 2012. They cover a wide range, but are centred on incidents of rural life, some fanciful, some true and original.

Fiona O'Connell clearly loves the country and makes a plea for its preservation, drawing attention to many of the threats, real or perceived, to the land and to the people and creatures that inhabit it.

Amongst the people are the owners of small, traditional village shops and, amongst the creatures, special place is given to the hedgehog which



appears in the very first chapter and again later on in the book.

Some readers will find her complaints entertaining and, without doubt, they are intended to bring problems to the attention of the authorities and to her fellow country-dwellers. But this approach has a down side in giving an overall impression that the entire country is in a state of malaise. Perhaps it is but, in the experience of this reviewer, the good immeasur-

ably outweighs the problems.

Not only that, but the supposedly ignorant people in authority whom she is attempting to educate are for the most part knowledgeable, dedicated and as deeply concerned as the author.

Generation

In an 'author's note' which appears even before the contents list, she explains that one reason for her leaving her native Dublin was because "my generation was

perhaps the last to live in a city that still had green space with hedgehogs and badgers roaming around our new estate that was steadily swallowing up the countryside".

Yes Dublin is spreading. But it spreads around carefully maintained green spaces, wonderful new parks and even new lakes, all of which teem with wildlife and in which wild flowers are deliberately given space.

Meanwhile the suburbs have come to be inhabited

by birds, such as buzzard and little egret. And the beautiful goldfinch, which was strictly a country species in my childhood, is now a devoted user of peanut feeders in nearly every garden – while still as plentiful as ever in its former haunts.

The hedgehogs that appear in the first chapter are dead – killed by traffic. For some reason she gives this hedgehog mortality a date of commencement as the '70s, probably 70 and certainly 20

Author Fiona O'Connell, with Green Party leader Eamon Ryan, at her book launch.

years after it began.

On the positive side is her mention that hedgehogs visited her back garden. This is an interesting observation and could be expanded by a little something about the fact that suburban back gardens are amongst the richest bird habitats in the world.

Distressing

But to return to the hedgehog, of course the sight of any dead animal is distressing to most of us. Remarkably what the sad hedgehog corpses, plentiful for more than half a century, tell us is that the hedgehog population of Ireland is thriving.

The fact is that biodiversity in Ireland is alive and well and nowadays enjoys the added advantage of being taken seriously by all sorts and conditions of public officials together with a host of the plain people.

Elsewhere: One Woman, One Rucksack, One Lifetime of Travel

by Rosita Boland
(Doubleday, €16.99)

Barbara Pierce

Elsewhere is a fascinating series of essays written about extraordinary journeys travelled by Rosita Boland over a period of about thirty years. She set off alone with only a 10kg bag, a passport and a black note book, no camera! These notes and her memories were her source for these nine thought provoking essays.

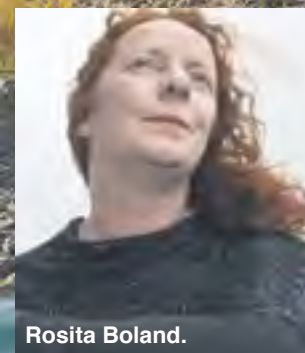
In a forward, the author tells of her love of words and how she learned new words taken from *Chamber's Dictionary* to enrich her poetry. This now enriches her prose.

The title of each chapter is a country name and an unfamiliar word which hints at a deeper theme to the traveller's tale and of the authors personal journey. From a friend, she hears a new word, "Fernweh" an ache for distant places, and responds, "So that's the word for it, all these years, for this yearning for elsewhere."

Freedom

In 1988, newly graduated, the author went to Australia on a one year visa, working briefly in a holiday resort deep in the rainforest and, as her departure date neared, she realised that she had acquired "an

Making the most of a wide, wide world



Rosita Boland.



The Hunza river in full flow.

intense desire for freedom" which would not allow her to settle in back Ireland.

Over the years, Rosita Boland worked in England for three periods, usually in publishing, earning enough money to go 'elsewhere', always planning her next escape, not wanting a career, but always restless, always collecting dreams of elsewhere.

In 1995, during such a period in England, Rosita Boland fell in love. It was mutual, but complicated by

the fact that he was in a relationship. So she decided to stick with her planned journey to Asia.

There follows a riveting account of how the author made her way back from Nepal to Europe through Pakistan, where she walked alone on the Karakoram Highway close the Chinese border in awe of the range of 6,000m mountains of which K2 is one.

It was there that she had her formidable courage tested by a terrifying bus journey along a ledge between a

mountain cliff and the Hunza river hundreds of feet below. All during this time she was sending and receiving poetic love letters from each post restante. *Brame*, which means 'fierce longing, passion', is the apt word for this.

There are many more adventures to be recalled, remembering Thailand, where she spent Christmas exactly two years before the devastating tsunami, author reflects on how Fortuna, the goddess of luck, chance and fate has protected her always.

She was never assaulted or ill, while 'elsewhere', although there were unpleasant and potentially serious incidents.

In absorbing stories of experiences in Japan, Peru and Antarctica, each with a defining word or phrase, we learn a more about the author, her own story, her values, her joys and her sorrows and friendships formed, some long-lasting, others brief.

In 2015, after all her independent journeys, Ms Boland returned to Ireland and became a journalist for the

Irish Times. She found that she did have a career after all, and in this role she visited Iceland, 'the land of the Snow Queen'.

Accounts

Reading these exciting accounts, I envied her fierce determination to follow her dream and her ability to overcome obstacles and dangers, but was only envious of her time in Bali. Although for her it was a time of suffering and healing.

Rosita's other great desire was to someday be a parent. She had suffered two miscarriages and sought to adopt, only to hear that she had 'aged out' of the process and would never be a parent.

Devastated by this, she took leave of absence and went to Bali, where she lived and reflected, surrounded by beauty, releasing her pain by immersing herself in a magical infinity pool and swimming and swimming.

Just before she left this paradise, a final agonising and deeply experienced 'arcane' massage freed her spirit enough to bear her pain and allowed her to feel again delight in an 'image of a red haired woman on horse, flying with silver edged wings, through a starry night'. Her life has been mended with gold!

Readers should note that *The Irish Catholic* circulates throughout the island of Ireland and the book prices listed are the retail price recommended by the Irish or British publishers, in either euros or sterling, as a general indication of what purchasers may expect to pay.



Colour lithograph by Paul Klee from the first Bauhaus portfolio © Staatsgalerie Stuttgart.

'Rethinking the World' – Bauhaus artists on display at the National Gallery

Bauhaus 100 – The Print Portfolios
Continues to December 1, 2019 – NLI Print Gallery, admission free

Peter Costello

This year marks the centenary of the founding in Weimar Germany of *Das Staatliche Bauhaus*, better known as the Bauhaus, an institution which served to promote modernist architecture, making Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe international figures of influence – the recently revamped Bank of Ireland buildings in Dublin's Baginbun Street are now renamed The Miesian Plaza, a nod to the inspiration architect Ronni Tallon took from Mies's NYC Seagram Building.

But there were other aspects of the Bauhaus project – craft art, typography, even industrial design – where the group's influence persists. For nearly 30 years after WWII modern German typography, thanks to a refugee designer,

imposed its elegant purity and rigid simplicity on the design of Penguin books.

However, the new small show at the NGL, intelligently curated by Niamh MacNally, presents a lesser known aspect of Bauhaus, a display of selected images from the famous, but little seen, portfolios of New European Graphics the group issued between 1922 and 1924. The idea behind these, according to Gropius, was to show how "the artistic generation of our time shares the ideas of the Bauhaus". Some 45 artists' work is to be seen in this show.

Aspect

The images come from the Stuttgart Staatsgalerie, and are being uniquely exhibited aboard here in Dublin for the anniversary. Some of the artists displayed are known to all, Klee, Mücke, Schwitters, Kandinsky and Kokoschka; but in contrast lesser, yet still vital, figures provide a con-

text. This is reason enough for seeing the show.

Their work presents a little known aspect of the Bauhaus, through sets of images. There were to be five of these, but the one of French artists never appeared. However images by both the Bauhaus masters and German, Italian, and Russian artists did, distributed in large and expensive portfolios.

These all reflect the grim and yet exciting post-war years, also in their glimpses of violence and neglect prophesy the later years of oppression under National Socialism.

Bauhaus made little impact on Irish architecture except for a few select buildings, such as early work by Michael Scott. In Harry Kernoff alone we can see in a 1930s Irish artist some echoes of this creative outburst. But the whole range contrasts with what Irish artists were largely producing in the 1920s and 30s.

WebWatch

Greg Daly



Throwing light on internet shadows

A lie can be halfway around the world, as the adage so often incorrectly attributed to Mark Twain has it, before the truth has got its boots on. The internet has managed to make this depressing reality all the worse, and just as paper doesn't refuse ink, so one thing screens cannot do is screen out falsehoods. We need our eyes and our wits more than ever nowadays.

Take, for example, an article published on the egregious lifesitenews.com just last week under the rather alarmist title, "British coup": Author claims UK gov't may have helped in Pope Francis' 2013 election.

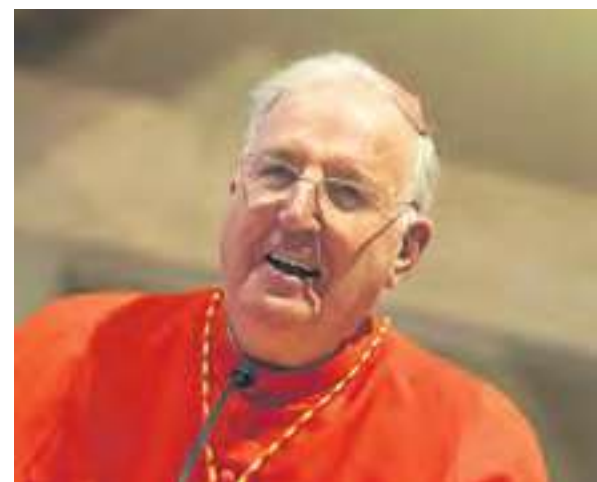
Now, the article has been tweaked in a number of ways since publication, not least in correcting its original descriptions of Ireland's Cardinal Seán Brady as English, but its fundamentally misleading nature, feeding into an ongoing anti-Francis pattern, is still the same.

Commenting on Catherine Pepinster's 2017 book *The Keys and the Kingdom: The British and the Papacy from John Paul II to Francis*, the article reports the book as claiming that the UK government played a key role "in setting up a meeting where key cardinals networked with lesser-known cardinals to promote Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio for Pope".

"Calling Bergoglio's election a 'British coup', Pepinster's work suggests that a secular power was involved in the election of a Pope," the article proclaims, adding that "this should justly cause concern" and that "this report certainly should lead to further inquiries also as to the involvement of British foreign intelligence assets".

Key source

Now, a bit of cop-on is needed with stories like this. Success tends to have a lot of fathers, after all, and a key source for this story was the late Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor, an affable man who wasn't backward about putting himself forward. It's worth remembering too the adage that all news is local,



Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor.

such that Ms Pepinster's emphasis on a behind-the-scenes British role in a conclave devoid of British prelates really looks like little more than an attempt to titillate a British audience.

Stripped of hyperbole, so, Ms Pepinster really just reported that cardinals from poorer countries in the global south hadn't had much scope to talk among themselves about what sort of Pope they'd like before the 2005 conclave, and that senior figures in the English Church had realised that they – or at least the UK – could facilitate that.

So cardinals from the poorer parts of the Commonwealth were invited to a reception in the British ambassador's apartment, with Cardinal Cormac basically being a kind of co-host. There were just a few minutes, it seems, he could speak privately with the cardinals from the south, and nobody has revealed what was said.

It should be obvious that there's nothing here to suggest the UK government was involved "in setting up a meeting where key cardinals networked with lesser-known cardinals to promote Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio for Pope". Rather,



Cardinal Peter Turkson.

Ms Pepinster says the reception involved Cardinal Cormac and cardinals from poorer countries, with the UK government simply seeing it as a chance for Catholic leaders from poorer commonwealth countries to network.

Crucially, among those Commonwealth cardinals lifesitenews.com says were Cardinals Turkson and Gracías. Turkson, readers may recall, was a name heavily touted for the papacy back in 2013.

“The whole thesis smacks of racism, to be honest”

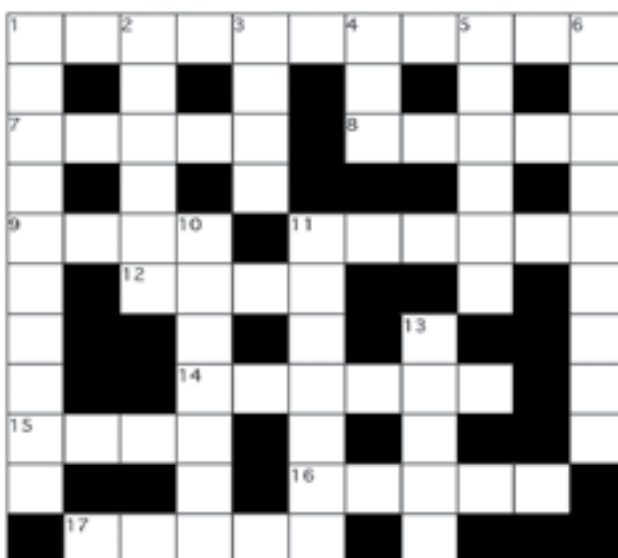
Admittedly, his candidacy came to nothing – according to Gerry O'Connell's america.org 'Exclusive: inside the election of Pope Francis', Cardinal Turkson got just two votes in the first conclave ballot – but it is really plausible that one of the more publicly papabile cardinals was invited to a shindig at the UK ambassador's apartment so a retired cardinal could tell him to vote for somebody who wasn't even being whispered about as a possible Pope?

The whole thesis smacks of racism, to be honest. It's one thing to say cardinals from poorer southern hemisphere countries were given a chance to network and discuss the kind of Pope they'd like. It's another to suggest that white Europeans told them to jump, and they happily said: "How far?"

Leisure time

Crossword Junior

Gordius 294



ACROSS

- 1 People sometimes use these two words when they are speaking to a king or queen (4,7)
- 7 Large areas of still, fresh water (5)
- 8 Take-away sign (5)
- 9 The sound a pig makes (4)
- 11 It may be cheddar or gorgonzola, perhaps (6)
- 12 Costing a lot of money (4)
- 14 Plant that looks a bit like a shamrock (6)
- 15 Having a lot of money (4)
- 16 Spooky (5)
- 17 Cleaned with a cloth (5)

this to a player (6,4)

- 2 Not nice to someone (6)
- 3 You might put it on your face a Hallowe'en (4)
- 4 You might spread it on your bread (3)
- 5 Performer of a song (6)
- 6 24 hours ago (9)
- 10 Tomato sauce (7)
- 11 Not straight (7)
- 13 Animal that looks like a

DOWN

- 1 You might see a referee show

sriped horse (5)

SOLUTIONS, AUGUST 1

GORDIUS No.414

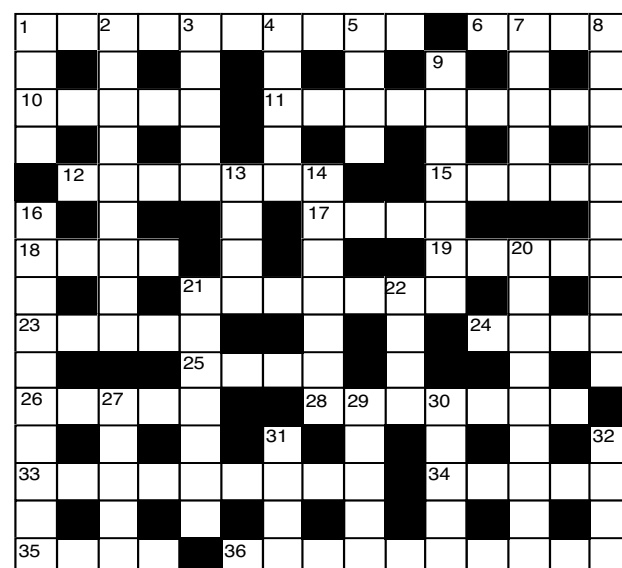
Across – 1 Cog 3 Pole-vaulter 8 Igloos 9 Tricycle 10 Icing
11 Event 13 Clamp 15 Lorelei 16 Taffeta 20 Deuce 21 Waned
23 Spies 24 Snake pit 25 Compel 26 Tape measure 27 Abs
Down – 1 Criminal law 2 Gulliver 3 Prong 4 Enthral 5 Uncle
6 Ticket 7 Rue 12 The Apostles' Creed 14 Plane 17 Ethiopia
18 Curates 19 Encamp 22 Dream 23 Scone 24 Sit

CHILDREN'S No.293

Across – 1 Apple tart 7 Owl 8 Close 9 Stable 12 London
13 Obeyed 15 Rex 17 Bricks 18 Lava 19 League 20 Reveal
Down – 1 Accelerator 2 Phoenix 3 Eve 4 Aunt 5 Tomb 6 Clue
9 Snowball 10 American 11 Lie 14 Dashed 16 Bake

Crossword

Gordius 415



ACROSS

- 1 'Eraser' - the group - is elastic in form (6,4)
- 6 Bovine part of the leg (4)
- 10 Word for fate of Asian origin (5)
- 11 Desert tempest (9)
- 12 May one take roe from this growth? (3,4)
- 15 Faithful, steadfast (5)
- 17 Additional, extra (4)
- 18 The Biblical prophet has avocado mash on sourdough starters (4)
- 19 Being nosy, discover some cardinals unconscious (5)
- 21 She is due to inherit (7)
- 23 She has fared badly (5)
- 24 Where peas might be spilled in a church (4)
- 25 Stylish, fashionable (4)
- 26 Ponder how to get spare potassium (5)
- 28 A Himalayan summit should let the First Lady take it easy (7)
- 33 Prickly-backed insectivores (9)
- 34 Many go crazy with desire (5)
- 35 Give out cards (4)
- 36 The chimney maintainer, having bathed, takes all the trophies (5,5)

DOWN

- 1 Decapitate a mallard to make a gathering implement (4)

- 2 Behind the pub, Ms Vorderman and the cardinal write a boat song (10)
- 3 Bring in a piece of legislation (5)
- 4 Drip butter on the prepared beast (5)
- 5 Ship which accompanied the Pinta and the Santa Maria on Columbus' great voyage (4)
- 7 Extreme pain (5)
- 8 Might one twig one's place in this depiction of genealogy? (6,4)
- 9 Completely ineffective (7)
- 13 & 20d Is it a ceremony belonging to the corridor one experiences at significant times in one's life? (4,2,7)
- 14 Hug (7)
- 16 It's not very realistic to deter chaff like this (3-7)
- 20 See 13 down
- 21 Cut ahead of a French general to find a taxi (7)
- 22 Is it the only seafish? (4)
- 27 Asian subcontinent (5)
- 29 Roman goddess of the hearth (5)
- 30 Instruments of torture (5)
- 31 With a pigeon sound, the novice is not so hot! (4)
- 32 Look up to see a fortification (4)

Sudoku Corner

294

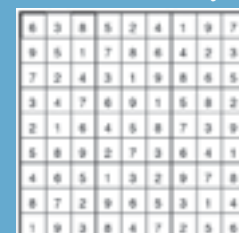
Easy



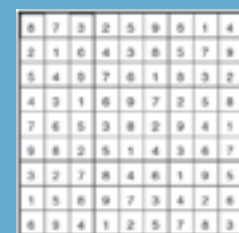
Hard



Last week's Easy 293



Last week's Hard 293



Please make a little room
in your will for people
who are homeless

Contact our Fundraising
Department in strictest
confidence
Tel: 01 8815 900
Email: info@focusireland.ie
www.focusireland.ie

FOCUS
Ireland



Everything Family & Life does to save babies and strengthen the family relies on you and our other generous friends. This work has never been more needed.

A gift in your Will ensures that the most effective pro-life / pro-family organisations will continue working for the kind of society we all desire, and will leave a loving mark on countless lives for years to come.

For further advice or to avail
of our Solicitor's free Wills
service, please contact us
today on

01-8552790

FamilyLife

26 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1
Ph: 01 8552790 | email: fandi@iol.ie
www.familyandlife.org
www.prolife.ie

Will the MSC Missions

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

Please help us with a gift in your Will

Contact:

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

www.mscmissions.ie

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

Trócaire

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

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

Notebook

Fr Martin Delaney



Reflection for Jim and Leonie's wedding

JIM AND LEONIE, thank you for asking me to be the priest who witnesses your marriage vows today in this little corner of Co. Monaghan which holds so many wonderful memories for all of us.

By way of a reflection I want to share with you a story which was first given to me some weeks after my ordination 33 years ago. I offer it today as you speak to each other the most important words you will ever speak to another person and in the presence of the most important people in your lives.

The story is of a shopkeeper who was a little eccentric and one of the ways this showed was his fascination with pencils. In his shop he stocked all kinds of pencils and he even talked to them!

Advice

When he sold the shop the last thing to go were the pencils and he had a few words of advice for them before they left him.

Firstly, he said to them that wherever they ended up each of them would be asked to make their mark on the world. Jim and Leonie, individually and as a couple you have both made a significant mark and contribution in the world, in the lives of your



families, your friends, your work places and your community. You will leave this church today as a married couple and the greatest mark you can make is the witness of your love for each other.

Secondly, the man said to the pencils: "The mark that you make must come from the heart, the

centre because of course it is the lead and not the wood that does the writing." Jim and Leonie, it could only be in your two hearts that you first realised that you loved this person and that you wanted to spend the rest of your life with them. We have a saying that when our hearts are in

something then it will succeed. I pray that your two hearts will always be in this amazing commitment which you make to each other today.

Thirdly, the man reminded the pencils that there may be times when they will grow blunt and will need to be paired back and sharpened so that they can make their mark better.

“You are both instruments in the hands of someone much greater than yourselves: God”

In all of our commitments and relationships there may be times when we wander off course or take the other for granted. Someone might tell us to cop ourselves on and get back on track. It could be painful to hear but we know it is the right thing to do.

Fourthly, the little eraser on the end of the pencil is essential because mistakes are made which need to be rubbed out so we can begin again. Unless you are going to be the most perfect couple ever to walk out that church door there will be times in the years ahead when you will need to forgive and

be forgiven by the other. I pray that that the sun will never go down on your anger.

Finally, the man said to the pencils: "The most important piece of advice; remember that you are but an instrument in the hands of someone much greater than yourselves."

The pencil remains useless until it is picked up and guided by another. Jim and Leonie, as you begin your married life together please remember that you are both instruments in the hands of someone much greater than yourselves: God.

Somehow, he has had a part in bringing you together. You have chosen to begin your marriage in God's house in the context of Mass. I pray that he will always have a place in your lives and your home.



PLEASE HELP BUILD AND MAINTAIN HEALTH CENTRES FOR NEEDY PEOPLE IN MISSION LANDS

The Consolata Missionaries in Raposa Serra do Sol, Brazil, wrote to The Little Way Association: "The lack of a medical centre [here] has led to the high death rate of pregnant women. The only existing medical centre is 60km away. Many people are dying of snake bites because they cannot access assistance. The region is suffering from epidemic diseases, diarrhoea etc." Local leaders offered to provide builders and stonemasons, as well as food for the workers. Thanks to Little Way funding, a new health centre is now open.

Pregnant women must walk many kilometres in scorching heat for medical help

Fr Mugerwa Joseph imc wrote to us: "Your act of charity has changed ordinary opportunities into God's blessings to the indigenous communities here. We continue praying for all friends of Little Way Association."

Your contribution to our Hungry, Sick and Deprived fund will help construct and equip more places where the needy can receive basic health care. Donations go direct to the missions without deduction.



Many health centres in mission lands are humble buildings like this one in the indigenous territory of Raposa Serra do Sol, Brazil.



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

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

www.littlewayassociation.com

I enclose €..... to be allocated to:

€..... **HUNGRY, SICK AND DEPRIVED**

€..... **NEEDS OF MISSIONARIES**

€..... **HOLY MASS OFFERINGS**
(Please state number _____)

€..... **LITTLE WAY ADMIN EXPENSES**

☐ Please tick if you would like an acknowledgement

Name (Rev. Mr. Mrs. Miss)

(Block letters please)

Address

To donate online go to
tinyurl.com/lwadonations

**DONATIONS FOR THE
MISSIONS ARE SENT WITHOUT
DEDUCTION FOR ANY
EXPENSES.**

IC/08/08



LITTLE WAY THERESIAN CENTRES

Promoting the message of St Thérèse, praying for the missions and offering accommodation to pilgrims wishing to spend a few days in private prayer at a Marian shrine.

For reservations please contact:

KNOCK:

Tel. 094 9388406

Mobile: 08525 47285

Email:

littlewaycentreknock@gmail.com

WALSINGHAM:

Tel: (0044) 1328 820 222

Email:

thelittleway.org@btconnect.com

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER AT ONE OF OUR HOUSES?

The work involves general house-keeping duties, providing guests with a light breakfast, prayer and welcoming pilgrims.

If this work appeals to you, and you could offer one month of your time, please write to us giving details, experience and a contact number.

Email:

thelittleway.org@btconnect.com