

The Irish Catholic

WEALTH AND A TUSSELE OF CONSCIENCE

Mary Kenny
Page 5



TAKE THE RISK FOR CHRIST

Vocations Supplement
Pages 15-25



Thursday, April 18, 2024

€3.00 (Stg £2.70)

The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

@IrishCathNews

www.irishcatholic.com

'Delight' after airport U-turn on banning plane blessings

EXCLUSIVE

Chai Brady

Dublin airport has done a one-eighty on banning the blessing of planes in news that has "delighted" the chaplain.

Last week the airport announced that due to "changes in security protocols" the tradition of blessing planes 'airside' would be stopped, causing considerable backlash.

However, Fr Des Doyle of Dublin Airport Church, Our Lady Queen of Heaven, revealed to *The Irish Catholic* that he was contacted directly by the DAA asking if he could continue with the 75-year-old tradition.

Fr Doyle said of the decision: "I'm delighted. It chimes perfectly with the supportive relationship between the DAA and the chaplaincy. That is the way it has been, so the original announcement was kind of out of keeping with that, I don't know where it came from."

For the last 16 years Fr Doyle has been going airside to bless planes at the request of airlines.

He said: "I have always

» Continued on Page 2

Gifts of the Spirit...



Students from the Presentation Sisters Primary School, Sexton St, Limerick are pictured with Bishop Brendan Leahy and Fr Leo McDonnell after their Confirmation ceremony on April 12.

Anger over RTÉ's 'new low' abortion coverage

Ruadhán Jones

An RTÉ Investigates programme on Ireland's abortion laws made a "total mockery" of public service broadcasting and has left many pro life supporters angry, says the Pro Life Campaign (PLC).

The Pro Life Campaign called for a special Oireachtas committee to examine RTÉ's editorial bias following the "highly partisan" documentary that aired on Monday night.

"The real investigation that needs to happen is into how RTÉ gets away with producing programme after programme on abortion that present a thoroughly distorted and one sided take on what's actually happening," PLC spokeswoman Eilís Mulroy said.

By focusing on the "very small number" of cases of women travelling for late-term abortions in an "inaccurate way", RTÉ exhibited "contempt for the public", Ms Mulroy added.

She questioned why RTÉ "ignored" instances of "grotesque and truly appalling" situations such as babies being born alive after botched abortions and left to die.

"The RTÉ Investigates programme on abortion that just aired made a total mockery of public service broadcasting," she said, calling it a "new low" in abortion coverage.

'FaithBlock': Social media giant restricts IC posts

Chai Brady

Social media behemoth Facebook has restricted two of *The Irish Catholic's* posts citing they are suspected of breaching 'hate speech' and 'violence and incitement' community standards respectively.

The first post linking an article

with the headline 'Priest will continue blessing planes despite airport ban', which was published on April 11, was flagged for potentially going against their standards for violence and incitement.

The second post, highlighting the Catholic Education Partnership's (CEP) stance on defending the integrity of faith-based programmes in Catholic

schools which ran under the headline 'Catholic schools staunch on religious cert requirements as INTO put on pressure' and also published in the April 11 edition of the paper, was flagged as potentially contravening their 'Hate speech' standards.

Facebook states: "We define hate speech as language that attacks people based on their: Race, ethnicity,

national origin or caste; Religious affiliation; Sexual orientation; Sex, gender or gender identity; Serious disabilities or diseases."

It is unclear what exact standards have been breached in either case.

A review has been requested on the platform but no response has yet been received. There was also no response from their press office.

MIXED FEELINGS OVER SEISMIC CHANGES OUT WEST

Ruadhán Jones

PAGE 6



STOP ENVYING THE GIFT OF PRIESTHOOD

Martina Purdy

PAGE 7



THE POPE'S DOWNSIZING IS ABOUT PRUNING TO GROW

Michael Kelly

PAGES 8-9



'Delight' after airport U-turn on banning plane blessings

» **Continued from Page 1** found the DAA very supportive, that's why I was surprised by the whole thing and nothing was said to me about it directly until I got the last communication. They said they would be delighted if I would continue it [blessing planes airside], from their point of view anyway – and they're just facilitating the airlines who want it."

Fr Doyle continued saying "in fact it's airport workers who built the church years ago and quite a number of them are still involved" and the chaplaincy continues to receive "great support"

from current airport staff.

Following a query from this paper last week about the initial decision to stop the blessing, a DAA spokesman said: "Due to recent changes to security protocols, airside access is now restricted to airport operations only. For this reason, non-operational activities can no longer be facilitated airside."

"We are currently working on a new approach to facilitating the traditional Christmas blessing of the planes at Dublin Airport."

Fr Doyle added he has enhanced security at the airport and keeps up to date with relevant training.

Western dioceses warn that a lack of resources is hindering synodal outreach

Ruadhán Jones

A lack of resources is "hindering" synodal outreach to young people, those on the margins and others, a new submission from two Western dioceses has warned.

While there is a general desire to be a more welcoming Church, in a new synodal submission, the dioceses of Clonfert and Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora have said a decline in volunteers, rushed processes and a lack of resources is hindering outreach.

"The current context is one where volunteers are few and far between and this is coupled with a history or culture of a lack of adult religious education/catechesis," the joint diocesan submission to the Synodal Pathway of the Catholic

Church in Ireland said.

"The fact that this adult catechetical formation has been noticeably absent, along with increased demands from other areas of parish and diocesan life, are all very pressing issues," the dioceses add.

The submission said there are issues with "additional demands" being placed on local communities to produce something "without giving them the necessary time and resources to grow key personnel, form them, and engage in the process in a fulsome manner".

The lack of investment and increased demands result in "ad hoc gatherings" of people, often the same as have been at previous gatherings, "rushed processes and the production of reports for imposed deadlines, rather than an engagement in a real lived process",

according to the submission.

"There can be no doubt that building an infrastructure that adequately supports synodal conversation will take time," the diocese said.

The joint diocesan submission also warned that the idea of being missionary in outlook "continues to meet with a muted response".

Equally, there is confusion around "what type of Church we are inviting people to become part of".

"The idea of welcome, of being a welcoming Church was raised many times. However, what exactly that consists of remains rather illusive," the submission said.

The comments come in response to two questions posed on introducing co-responsible leadership in the Church in Ireland.

Dublin diocese divests Catholic primary school

Staff reporter

Dublin diocese has announced the divestment of St Mary's Primary School, Dorset Street, Dublin 7, which has transferred to secular patronage.

As of April 15, St Mary's will be under the patronage of the Education Training Board (ETB).

The primary school was one of 29 schools involved in a pilot consultation process in the diocese in March 2022.

The pilot programme, a joint initiative of the

Department of Education and the Church in Ireland, was conducted with 63 schools nationally. Just three other schools have divested.

The process was facilitated by independent facilitators, who recommended that St Mary's be divested, Archbishop Dermot Farrell said in a statement.

"Ms Eadaoin Kelly, Principal, and the teachers and staff of St Mary's School are very dedicated to the education and pastoral care of the pupils," Dr Farrell said.

"I wish them blessings as they begin a new chapter in their service of the pupils, the parents and guardians of the school."

He also highlighted the service the Christian Brothers and Religious Sisters of Charity gave to the education of many generations of pupils in the original primary schools, which later amalgamated to form the new St Mary's school.

It is unclear from the statement if the school has transferred ownership to the State. This paper queried the ownership with Dublin diocese, but received no response before going to print.

Father-son camino...



Robert and Christopher Nugent are pictured before their Camino to Santiago de Compostela from Lourdes, to raise funds for faith based charity Wells for Life, which drills wells for communities in Uganda.

Deputy Editor: Chai Brady, chai@irishcatholic.ie

Multimedia Journalists: Ruadhán Jones, ruadhan@irishcatholic.ie

Brandon Scott, brandon@irishcatholic.ie

Newsroom: news@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874026

Books Editor: Peter Costello, books@irishcatholic.ie

Advertising: advertising@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874027

Accounts: accounts@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874020

Magnificat: magnificat@irishcatholic.ie

Shop: shop@irishcatholic.ie

Annual Subscription Rates: Ireland €185. Airmail €320. Six months €95.

ISSN 1393 - 6832 - Published by The Irish Catholic,

Unit 3b, Bracken Business Park, Bracken Road, Sandyford,

Dublin 18, D18 K277.

Printed by Webprint, Cork.

Place an Advert

Phone 01 687 4027 or advertising@irishcatholic.ie

Capuchin Day Centre
for the Homeless People
29 Bow Street, Dublin 7




Every day The Capuchin Day Care Centre provides
1000 hot meals for people who are homeless and each
week 1400 Food Parcels for those on the poverty threshold.

Help Fr. Kevin Kiernan to continue
providing this caring service.

Fr. Kevin or Monica 01 8720770
www.capuchindaycentre.ie

Support our Catholic Journalism and help us evangelise

For less than a cup of coffee a week, you could support our journalism and faith development campaign while strengthening one of the last independent Catholic newspapers in Ireland and the UK.

When you become a 'Friend' of *The Irish Catholic* we give you exclusive access to our premium newsletters and podcasts interviewing a wide range of interesting Catholic leaders plus discounts on books and on upcoming events.

Email garry@irishcatholic.ie to sign up today, or call 01-6874028. We greatly appreciate your support. Thank you.

Spate of church robberies continues as cathedral targeted during funeral

Brandon Scott

The latest in a series of recent church burglaries took place in Donegal on Sunday after a man broke into the sacristy of St Eunan's Cathedral in Letterkenny and is alleged to have stolen €1,754.55 and £6.13 respectively while a funeral Mass was ongoing.

The theft forms part of the recent pattern of attacks on churches across the country, which includes the move

by some churches in Cork and Kerry to tighten security measures after a number of churches were broken into in the region and an incident which resulted in two priests being threatened with an axe by raiders in Louth last month.

The accused in the burglary of St Eunan's, Ireneusz Matras (43), is a Polish native and was charged with the offence at a sitting at Letterkenny District Court on Monday.

The burglary further highlights the growing need for a conversation addressing the vulnerability of some churches, particularly in rural Ireland.

Irish Examiner journalist Anne Lucey said some of the thieves in Kerry are quite clever. "In the Killarney churches the thieves were quite clever in that they literally lifted money from the boxes using a wire clothes hanger and Blu Tack, it was quite inventive."

Last month, two priests were

attacked and sprayed with bleach during a violent burglary at their home in Louth. A gang of four men armed with axes and a sledgehammer forced their way into the rear of the property.

Fr Vinod Kurian and Fr Oliver Stansfield were deeply shocked after their ordeal. A Garda source said: "It was a full blown aggravated burglary and a shocking attack. They put the fear of God into these two priests and assaulted them badly".

Donegal priest appointed to Papal Basilica

Ruadhán Jones

Donegal priest Msgr Eamonn McLaughlin has been appointed as Canon for the Chapter of the Papal Basilica of St Mary Major by Pope Francis.

Pope Francis often visits the Basilica, coming to venerate the icon *Salus Populi Romani* before and after trips away from the Vatican.

This new announcement comes under a month since the Pope tipped Msgr McLaughlin for the position of adjunct under-secretary of the Formation Office of the Dicastery for the Clergy.

This is the third appointment for Msgr McLaughlin who was appointed a Monsignor at the end of the Summer by Pope Francis.

Msgr McLaughlin is a native of Downings in the parish of Mevagh, Co. Donegal and was ordained to the priesthood in 2002. He served in the Raphoe diocese as a Curate in Fintown, Lettermacaward and Doochary and as a Curate in St Eunan's Cathedral, Letterkenny.

The monsignor is known as a cleric with a passion for supporting people pastorally and will take possession of his new office during the celebration of Vespers on Sunday, April next 28.

Singing star Malachi Cush joins SVP as ambassador



SVP Ambassador Malachi Cush

Chai Brady

Acclaimed Co. Tyrone singer songwriter Malachi Cush has been announced Ambassador for the Northern Region of St Vincent de Paul.

Commenting on his new role, Malachi said: "I am deeply honoured to have been chosen as Ambassador for St Vincent de Paul. For so many years, this charity has had a remarkable impact on the most vulnerable members of our society, empowering them with dignity and support.

"I admire the dedication and selflessness of the volunteers and staff who tirelessly carry out the organisation's mission. I am inspired by their unwavering commitment to caring for others and hope that I can contribute to their noble cause as part of this wonderful team."

He added that he is committed to "shedding light on the vital work being done by SVP and raising awareness of the ongoing needs within our communities".

Mary Waide, SVP Regional Manager for the Northern Region said: "We are humbled to welcome Malachi Cush to be an Ambassador of St Vincent de Paul as his values are perfectly aligned with the mission of St Vincent de Paul.

"Loved across the generations, Malachi is a great role model to children and the young and old alike. The qualities he possesses are exceptional and he reaches far beyond the stages he performs on. I believe that his passion transcends boundaries, and his infectious spirit has the ability to lift even the most vulnerable amongst us," she said.



The Dominicans

Preaching Truth for the Salvation of Souls



"Truth, according to the Christian faith, is God's Love for us in Jesus Christ. Therefore, Truth is a relationship."
- Pope Francis

Contact our Vocations Director today to find out more about our upcoming vocations events:
colm.mannion@dominicans.ie

LOURDES PILGRIMAGES FROM KNOCK



18 JULY | 5 NIGHTS | CLASSIC LOURDES PILGRIMAGE

18 JULY | 5 NIGHTS | KILLALA & ACHONRY DIOCESE

18 JULY | 5 NIGHTS
CONNAUGHT ACTIVITIES PIONEER TOTAL ABSTINENCE ASSOCIATION PTAA
TO BOOK CONTACT: FR JOE ON 0876660408

30 AUGUST | 5 NIGHTS | ELPHIN DIOCESE

30 AUGUST | 6 NIGHTS | TUAM ARCHDIOCESE

TO BOOK VISIT JOEWALSHTOURS.IE

info@joewalstours.ie | 01 241 0800 | 89 Harcourt St, D02 WY88
Tours are operated by Petriva Limited t/a Joe Walsh Tours who are licensed by the Irish Aviation Authority TA 0804 TO 273.



PSNI culture criticised

Staff reporter

The Catholic Police Guild of Northern Ireland has highlighted a damning report examining the culture in the PSNI which found that many officers believe there is a two-tier disciplinary system.

The 'audit of organisational culture', also found there was a perception of "a growing environment of fear" with officers worried about serious consequences for small mistakes.

The survey of more than 4,000 officers, carried out by independent

consultancy firm Inspiring Change, found employees had concerns about "different rules around accountability for those in higher grades or ranks".

The report also warned there was a lack of understanding around the meaning of equality, diversity and inclusion. The study said: "There is an gap between the intentions voiced around [this] and meaningful change happening".

It called on the PSNI to build trust and reduce fear, invest in capability and maintaining and strengthening positives, review promotion processes and show staff they are valued.

Speaking in response to the report's publication, the Catholic Police Guild of Northern Ireland said that "the current state of affairs within the Service, the impacts on Officers & Staff, indicates that major reforms are still needed.

"Following the Patten Report of 1999 and the changes introduced by Ronnie Flanagan and Hugh Orde, we have stagnated and drifted in a sea of complacency. This is why we are calling for a full review, based on Baroness Casey's review into the MPS. Our service needs to be fit for purpose, not just now but for the foreseeable future."

Senator: Parents not banging down my doors about removal of religion from schools

Brandon Scott

On a debate discussing the removal of religion from schools on Monday's episode of Upfront with Katie Hannon, Fianna Fáil Senator Shane Cassells said that parents have never "banged down his door" voicing their concerns about religious education to him as a long-standing political representative.

Mr Cassells, who described himself as a practising "Roman Catholic", said that as a parent of three young children, he hasn't encountered other parents who feel that religious education should be solely provided in the home.

"I'm in politics a long time," he said. "I'm 25 years elected and people are not banging down my door [about this] in respect to all of the issues I deal with on a weekly and daily basis. I'm also a dad of three young kids and I'm in the school yard a few times a week speaking to mums and dads."

Mr Cassells reminded the guests that a sizeable number of parents are still opting for their children to receive the sacraments in schools and that without these available figures "you'd nearly believe that people very much didn't want reli-

NEWS IN BRIEF

Irish Chaplaincy gets new CEO

The Irish Chaplaincy in London has announced the appointment of Marie Norbury as its new Chief Executive Officer.

Ms Norbury has a "wide breadth of experience" in charity and corporate sectors, as well as 10 years in Catholic education, inspired by Catholic Social Teaching.

She joins the Irish Chaplaincy from the Prison Advice and Care Trust, where she played a "key role in raising awareness of the impact of imprisonment on faith communities", the Irish Chaplaincy said in a statement.

Speaking about her appointment, Ms Norbury said she is "delighted and filled with gratitude to be joining the Irish Chaplaincy team as CEO. I am passionate about social justice and believe strongly in serving those who are vulnerable, excluded or overlooked".

gion in schools any more".

"I'm from the town of Navan – over 400 children received their sacraments from Bishop Deenihan," he said. "There is very much an engagement. You'd nearly believe that people very much didn't want religion in schools anymore."

Smiling Sr Clare



Devotees of Sr Clare Crockett, the young Irish nun who died tragically in an earthquake, are pictured at her mural in Derry after attending Long Tower's Sr Clare novena.

The Irish Catholic

FREE HOME DELIVERY

*geographical restrictions apply

Don't miss breaking news delivered directly to your home each week



With the closure of religious shops around the country, signing up for free home delivery of *The Irish Catholic* will ensure seamless arrival of the newspaper to your doorstep every Thursday.

Stay up to date with analyses that represent your voice on the national stage.

Regular contributors provide commentary to hot button issues of the day.

Local voices highlight the ongoing work of parishes and communities throughout the country.

MAGNIFICAT

Your Daily Mass and Prayer Companion
Every Month in the Post

Veritas shops are due to close by the end of 2024

Magnificat will no longer be available in Veritas

Subscribe now to get Magnificat delivered to your door



The Irish Catholic

Block 3b, Bracken Business Park
Braken Road, Sandyford
Dublin 18, D18 K277

+353 (01) 687 4024

www.irishcatholic.com

magnificat@irishcatholic.ie

MAGNIFICAT SUBSCRIPTION

Six Months €35

One Year €62

Two Years €124

MAGNIFICAT PRODUCTS

Adoration Companion €11.99

Rosary Companion €6.50

Leather Cover €25

Plastic Cover €8.5

Semi-letter Cover €15

Postage €5

News Delivery brought to you by THE IRISH TIMES

For further details

Ph: 01 920 3901 | Email: info@newsdelivery.ie | www.newsdelivery.ie

Wealth and a tussle of conscience

It won't be a surprise to learn that Ireland is growing richer, and there are, in the words of a leading accountant, "an awful lot of people making money" in Ireland today.

The number of 'super-rich' individuals – those with over €20 million in their possession – has increased by 200 over the past two years, growing from 1,400 'high net worth' folk to 1,600 since 2022.

It's not a surprise to anyone who has observed the proliferation of gleamingly opulent motor cars on the roads, or the many beautifully appointed houses and homes that now exist – despite the housing crisis.

Dazzled

As I have mentioned, people are sometimes kind enough to invite me into their home, and I am often dazzled, even daunted, by the high standard of furnishings and general décor in so many interiors. Bathrooms are often – even usually – especially impressive.

As Ireland was historically



Mary Kenny

plagued by poverty, shouldn't we welcome this growth in wealth? Especially where it is attained by people working hard and showing enterprise in a family business.

Richard Curran's weekend RTÉ Radio 1 programme *The Business* often features admirable entrepreneurs, who, sometimes overcoming setbacks, have thrived and innovated in the business world, often supported by their families.

Indeed, Ireland has an especially high rate of business being maintained by family links over the generations.

Yet, one of the negative aspects of wealth – which I notice in myself – is that it can trigger envy and discontent. I have to struggle, sometimes, after being with richer acquaintances (not all in Ireland) who talk

airily about their property portfolios or their cosmetic dental treatments or their designer outfits.

Values

I have to tell myself that material wealth is not the most important thing in life: true values run deeper and I should count my blessings. But I notice the nagging little bat-squeak of envy popping up from time to time, and that mean little streak of resentment towards the loadsamoney classes.

I notice myself recalling Andrew Carnegie's aphorism: "Behind a great fortune is usually a great crime."

Increased wealth can be used for the good of society. But does it always have a good effect on our characters? Does it prompt envy and jealousy? That's something of a tussle of conscience for me.

I had just turned five, in April 1949, when the Irish Free State of 26 counties was declared a Republic. My 17-year-old brother brought me, on the crossbar of his bicycle, to watch fireworks over Dublin, from the position of the Dodder river at Ringsend. It was a colourful display, which I thought wonderful and remembered vividly.

The declaration, 75 years ago on April 18, was originally made in controversial circumstances, by Taoiseach John A. Costello (egged on by Séan MacBride, his External Affairs minister) at a Commonwealth conference in Canada. There were allegations that Mr Costello felt his wife had been socially snubbed by certain Unionist toffs, notably Lord Caledon of Co. Tyrone.

Many rejoiced at the move to a Republic, although De Valera, in opposition, quite presciently thought it would trench Partition further – and it did so, over the next decade or so.

Some in the Church of Ireland mourned the last link with the Crown – as Ireland now definitively quit the Commonwealth and the King (George VI) was the Governor of the Anglican church.

The C of I had traditionally offered formal prayers for him. King George himself was sad about the break, too. But 75 years on, Leo Varadkar says the Republic has been a great success story and perhaps there will be more firework displays over the Dodder to make that point.

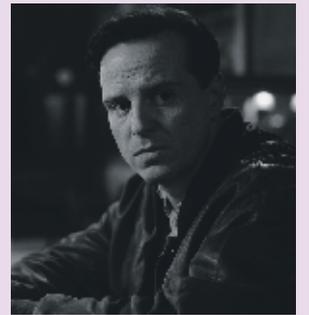
The Irish actor Andrew Scott, now 47, has had another major success in the *Netflix* psychological thriller *Ripley*. (He hit stardom as the 'hot priest' in the series *Fleabag*: a friend of mine, a lady of mature years, has been a big fan ever since seeing Andrew in his clerical collar).

'Ripley' is creepy but compelling, centred on the eponymous psychopathic killer Tom Ripley. He's the creation of the novelist Patricia Highsmith and he remained her favourite character. Highsmith, described as a violent lesbian alcoholic

by biographers identified with Ripley's cunning and guile. (Like Flaubert saying: "Madame Bovary – c'est moi.")

The story is altogether leaning to the dark side – shot in black and white – and yet I have seldom seen a movie or mini-series with so many religious images, paintings and sculptures.

It mainly takes place in Italy, and lingers lovingly on every holy picture, statue, sculpture, exquisite church or beautiful altar it can find. The bureaux of police chiefs, post offices and hotel lobbies are adorned with prominent crucifixes, which was probably accu-



Andrew Scott stars in *Netflix's* new mini-series *Ripley*.

rate for Italy in 1960.

Ripley is morally chilling, but it's also an unrivalled tour of Italy over 60 years ago. With a special focus on Caravaggio, who is this anti-hero's anti-hero.



Family friendly event. Kidzone, face-painting, ice-cream van and more!

(Marching from Newman University Church side of St Stephen's Green to Leinster House)

For more information about March for Life 2024

CONTACT 01-662 9275 OR VISIT

WWW.MARCHFORLIFE.IE

MAKING REDUCING THE ABORTION RATE A MAJOR ELECTION ISSUE!

There is enormous potential to grow the pro-life vote at election time. If activated, it will result in increasing the number of pro-life candidates elected who'll work to reduce the abortion rate.

A staggering €46 million of taxpayers' money has been spent on abortion provision since 2019, with not a cent of it being used to promote positive alternatives. This cannot be allowed to continue.

A massive turnout at the March for Life will send a very strong message to voters about the importance of voting pro-life on Election Day.

Please make an extra special effort to attend this year's march which is timed perfectly to coincide with the upcoming elections.

**2PM
DUBLIN
BANK HOLIDAY
MONDAY 6TH MAY**

prolife
campaign

Mixed feelings after largest diocesan shake up for 900 years

Ruadhán Jones and Chai Brady

There are mixed feelings in the West after Pope Francis announced the effective merger of four dioceses in the archdiocese of Tuam, the largest diocesan shake up in Ireland since 1111AD.

The diocese of Killala and Tuam will now be headed by one bishop, Archbishop Francis Duffy, while Bishop Kevin Doran takes the reins in Achonry as apostolic administrator in addition to his role in Elphin.

The moves come as Bishop of Killala John Fleming (76) retires and Bishop of Achonry Paul Dempsey makes a shock departure to Dublin as auxiliary bishop.

The changes mean there are now just three bishops for the six Western dioceses, with Bishop Michael Duignan overseeing the dioceses of Clonfert and Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilnefora.

Changes

Announcing the news on Wednesday, April 10, the Papal Nuncio to Ireland said the seismic changes were needed to meet “new challenges” facing the Church, “pooling resources” to increase vitality.

“They say ‘in union there is strength’. Thus, with pooled resources and combined endeavours, and trusting strongly in the grace of God, we can look to the future with hope and confidence,” Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor said in a statement.

The changes have met mixed reactions on the ground in the dioceses of Killala and Achonry, which cover much of counties Mayo, Sligo and Roscommon and have a combined Catholic population of less than 100,000.

To some, the moves signify the sad decline of the West of Ireland, with resources heading east to Dublin. To others, the move is inevitable and necessary, coming at a time when the Church needs to make more effective use of its resources.

“It’s been talked about for years”, said Fr Tom Doherty CC Belmullet, Co. Mayo, so it’s “not really a surprise”.

He and the priests of Killala met with the Papal Nun-

“With pooled resources and combined endeavours, and trusting strongly in the grace of God, we can look to the future with hope and confidence”



Bishop Paul Dempsey, formerly bishop of Achonry but recently appointed auxiliary bishop of Dublin, addresses the media following the announcement of his appointment. Pictured with Archbishop Francis Duffy and Bishop Kevin Doran. Photo: John McElroy

cio to present their views on a diocesan reshuffle, and were set to meet incoming bishop Dr Francis Duffy in the wake of the news.

“The shock is we thought it would probably be later in the year, it all came very sudden on us,” Fr Doherty told *The Irish Catholic*.

“I know the population is moving toward Dublin, but we don’t want everything moving that way”

But he is confident the pooling of resources and expertise a future amalgamation will bring “can only have a positive effect”.

For Fr Michael Reilly in Ballina, Co. Mayo, Bishop Fleming will be missed, he was a “kind and very good shepherd to us all”.

A lot of people are disappointed by the news Killala will not get a new bishop, he told *The Irish Catholic*, calling it a “sad day”.

“I know the population is moving toward Dublin, but we don’t want everything moving that way,” Fr Reilly

said.

When the priests met with Archbishop Montemayor, they expressed their hope that Mayo might get an auxiliary bishop at least, with Fr Reilly lamenting the loss of the “personal contact”.

However the Ballina based cleric admitted that it was “inevitable” due to a decline in numbers of priests and lay faithful.

Decline

For Fr Desmond Kelly PP Corballa, Co. Sligo, the decision not to appoint a new bishop was “shocking”. He noted that Dublin got two new auxiliary bishops in as many months, while the West has lost two of theirs.

The changes fit into a story of neglect for the West of Ireland, Fr Kelly opines to this paper, with many parts already losing integral facilities such as banks and post offices.

“Look at the cut of Meath, Wicklow and Kildare” and the surrounds of Dublin, he said. “It’s like a mega city. With a good transport system, we could have spread the goodies.”

Fr Kelly fears the changes are “a diminishing of Ballina”, Co. Mayo’s largest town, with much of its image based around being ‘a cathedral town’.

“What’s the status of the cathedral in Ballina,” he asked, pointing out that Archbishop Duffy sits in Tuam.

He expressed frustration

at the lack of communication around the seismic changes. Fr Kelly said they received a commitment from the Papal Nuncio that he would inform them of any decision before it was announced. But the first the priest heard about it was through the media.

“The priests’ council was to give feedback but I for one didn’t get any. I didn’t know what the decisions would be because I got no word about anything”

Concerns around consultation were also expressed by members of the clergy in Achonry.

“As far as I know, the priests’ council met with the nuncio and bishop months ago,” one priest, who wished to remain nameless, told this paper. “But the people were not consulted. The priests’ council was to give feedback but I for one didn’t get any. I didn’t know what the decisions would be because I got no word about anything.”

However, a spokeswoman for the Irish bishops’ conference said “wide-spread consultation concerning the proposed reconfiguration” of dioceses in the Archdiocese of Tuam took place over many years.

“There has been discussion around this for a while. It has been talked about that dioceses would be consolidated more than just in the west, it will be a national thing in time”

Consultation

Consultations were held “with Councils of Priests, diocesan consultors, priests and religious sisters, diocesan and parish pastoral councils, as well as with lay leaders in safeguarding, the Synodal process, finance and in education”, the spokeswoman said in a statement to *The Irish Catholic*.

“More recently, the Apostolic Nuncio met with representatives of priests and lay faithful in Achonry, Tuam, Killala, and Elphin,” she said.

The move to leave Achonry without a bishop didn’t come as a surprise, according to Fr Vincent Sherlock PP Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo.

“There has been discussion around this for a while. It has been talked about that dioceses would be consolidated more than just in the west, it will be a national thing in time,” he told *The Irish Catholic*.

He expressed sadness at the loss of their bishop, though he knows most people on the ground won’t feel it.

“We’ve been very lucky to have Bishop Paul [Dempsey], he’s a very good bishop... he’ll be a blessing wherever he goes, no doubt about that,”

said Fr Sherlock.

The forthcoming changes for the diocese do raise questions around the streamlining of resources, such as the diocesan office in Ballaghaderreen, Co. Sligo.

“It’s a very big loss to us and now we just have to adjust to it now as best we can,” said Fr Sherlock.

“It may be the case that the bishop says we leave the office in Ballaghaderreen – that hasn’t been talked about – but I imagine there will be a streamlining of administration, there won’t be duplication. Ultimately there will be one priest council, most likely office staff will be centralised.”

As with Killala, the swiftness of the changes caught many people on the hop.

“We probably didn’t think it would happen so soon,” Fr Pdraig Costello PP Foxford, Co. Mayo, told this paper. “It’s a very big loss to us and now we just have to adjust to it now as best we can.”

While disappointed at the loss of Bishop Dempsey, Fr Costello believes the pooling of resources and eventual amalgamation is a plan that can lead the Church “in the right direction”.

Stop looking with envy at the gift of priesthood



Let's value the gift the Lord has given to women religious as Brides of Christ, writes **Martina Purdy**

An Anglican minister met me recently, a lovely woman who was very frank about a complaint made to her by an Anglican nun. This sister was frustrated at the lack of vocations to her convent in England. "They are ordaining the women now!" she said in exasperation. Until then it hadn't occurred to me that women's ordination would pose a problem for Anglican nuns.

After all, the Catholic Church does not ordain women – but nuns in Ireland still face extinction (my own convent in Belfast has been closed down due to falling and aging membership).

The Anglican and Catholic Church do however share a common problem: too often women religious are under-rated and undervalued.

Focus

In the Catholic Church, the focus is more and more on why women can't be priests or why they should be priests.

Although I loved being a Sister of Adoration, I remember a priest saying to my sister and I that we should be priests. Maybe he meant it kindly, believing somehow that we had to settle for a lowly consolation prize because we were in a Church that was "oppressing and excluding" women.

"Oh no," I smiled politely. "In the Kingdom of God, the lowest place is the highest!"

Many times I also heard comments, even from devout Catholics, that my sisters and I were wasted in the convent as if prayer and deep communion with Christ was second rate to an active life outside the convent.

Sr Elaine, who left life as a barrister after a profound call from God, was once quizzed by a seasoned apostolic sister (those who are active): "What's it like to do nothing all day?"

How we roared with laughter at that notion! There's never



Members of the Missionary Sisters of St Benedict mark World Day for Consecrated Life at morning Mass at the St Joseph Home for the Aged in Huntington, New York. Photo: OSV News

any shortage of work in the convent! It is an intense life, and also a joyful life when one is truly called.

I remember a young girl coming up to Sr Elaine at Knock and saying: "I want some of what you have!"

Unfortunately, nuns in habits are a rare sight these days, still rarer younger nuns.

With the closure of my convent and the loss of my habit, I now live as best I can a life of prayer and evangelisation in the heart of a parish, as a lay consecrated through my baptism, and as the poorest of brides.

I understand more than most why so many demand the right of women to be ordained priests. To modern minds, shaped by feminism, it hardly seems fair.

As a young woman, coming of age after convent school in the 1980s, I was career-driven and steeped in feminism. I used to wind up my devout parents by demanding to know why a

woman could not be a priest, or pope for that matter!

It was only later when I went deeper into my faith and my relationship with Christ that I wised up.

Sr Brieghe McKenna OSC, famous for her Eucharistic healing ministry and her work with priests, asks the question 'Should women be priests?' in her book, *Miracles Do Happen* (published in 1987).

Reasoning

Sr Brieghe had no issue with Church teaching but was often asked the question and struggled to answer the question with human reasoning. One day Sr Brieghe – who is committed to spending three hours a day in adoration – decided to pray about the issue. And she got an answer to her question.

"My eyes were opened to see for myself that nobody has a right to the priesthood," said Sr Brieghe. "It is God's gift. God chooses."

She also saw clearly how

Jesus had come in the flesh, through Mary, a woman who loved, nurtured and cared for him – God's great gift to womanhood.

Sr Brieghe has a global ministry encouraging and working with priests. "She saved my priesthood," a cleric once confided to me.

“In God's plan, spiritual fatherhood and spiritual motherhood together are fruitful”

As Good Shepherd Sunday approaches, let us reflect on the importance of consecrated religious life. Yes, priests are vital to the life of the Church but without women consecrated religious – spiritual motherhood – the Church will be sterile.

In God's plan, spiritual fatherhood and spiritual moth-

erhood together are fruitful.

In the Gospels, Jesus entrusted a woman with the message of his resurrection, encouraged Mary at Bethany to kneel at his feet and listen, allowed a woman to touch his feet with her tears and wipe them with her hair, and another to anoint him with expensive oil before he was crucified. It was the women who stood at the cross.

Vital

Women religious are not icing on the cake; they are a vital ingredient for a healthy and growing Church.

Commentators have complained that nuns, in worldly terms, do not have much status or influence in the institutional Church. But power they have through the grace of God!

We owe much to St Teresa of Avila, St Therese of Lisieux, St Margaret Mary Alacoque, St Teresa of Kolkata, St Faustina, St Brigid and St Clare of Assisi, to

name a few.

The Church has grown richer through their vocations – and has been given new insights into the heart of Jesus and his limitless love and mercy.

Women religious, both contemplative and apostolic, are a wonderful witness to God's love, a sign that Jesus is alive and active in the heart of his Church.

So let us pray for vocations to the priesthood – and to consecrated life.

Let us stop wasting our energy with distracting debates based on human thinking.

Let us stop brooding and looking with envy at the gift of priesthood, given not to every man as a right but to our chosen brothers as a gift.

And let us all consider God's creative wisdom and truly value the glorious gift the Lord has given to women religious as Brides of Christ and servants of all.



www.miseancara.ie

In 2024, Misean Cara celebrates 20 years of support to Irish missionary organisations.

Be a part of the legacy, by leaving a gift in your will to help ensure that we can support their life-transforming work overseas for years to come.

Visit us at www.miseancara.ie/Legacy to learn more.

CAMP VERITAS
Encounter Jesus. Tackle Adventure. Become a Saint.
There is a God and I'm not Him!

A week-long Catholic summer camp for youth 7th-12th grade. Join us in Ireland. Registration today!
[Scan to visit campveritas.org](http://campveritas.org)

The Pope's downsizing is about pruning to grow



Ecclesiastical structures are only useful if they allow our parishes to be vibrant places where people encounter God, writes **Michael Kelly**

While all eyes were on the cabinet reshuffle of Taoiseach Simon Harris, officials in Rome were preparing to announce details of the Pope's reshuffle of sorts of the Irish ecclesiastical landscape.

While Ireland has only had a self-governing political system for just over a century, the structures of the Church here have been largely unchanged for nearly a millennium.

The long awaited reform of the Church in Ireland's structures has begun. The effective merger of the Archdiocese of Tuam and Killala and that of Elphin and Achonry is the largest shake-up in structure in over 900 years.

And while the dioceses in the western seaboard have been notorious for their minuscule size and consequent need for reform, the rest of Ireland will not be immune from such changes. Last week's announcement from Pope Francis is only the beginning of a downsizing that Church leaders hope can be part of a wider reform and renewal.

Streamlining

"Fit for mission" is the phrase that optimists choose to use, pointing out that retaining creaking structures to merely 'keep the show on the road' will not deliver the shot in the arm that the Church badly

“Last week's announcement from Pope Francis are only the beginning of a downsizing that Church leaders hope can be part of a wider reform and renewal”



Bishop Kevin Doran, Archbishop Francis Duffy and Bishop Paul Dempsey in the Cathedral of the Assumption Tuam on Wednesday morning, April 10. Photo: John McElroy

needs.

Not that Church leaders have always been enthusiastic about these reforms. The Irish hierarchy spent years resisting Rome's pleas to embrace restructuring. Successive nuncios spoke privately of their frustration about the resistance and pushback.

“It will be slow and steady – to avoid hurts, shocks, and surprises. Everyone implicated in the matter will be involved”

Five years ago, perhaps as a way of pushing the plan forward, then Papal Nuncio Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo told this newspaper in an interview candidly that “the process of amalgamation has already started” in streamlining and merging the 26 Irish dioceses.

The straight-talking Nigerian prelate continued in the 2019 interview: “It will be slow and steady – to avoid

hurts, shocks, and surprises. Everyone implicated in the matter will be involved. The people will effect the amalgamation, work out the details of the cohesion, and inform the Holy See...The amalgamation begins from the grassroots. The communities, the meetings. In all the dioceses today, there are consultations going on.

“Some don't want to hear it,” he concluded.

No more. Recent years have seen an almost wholesale renewal of the episcopal bench as prelates appointed as far back as the 1970s reached retirement age.

Ireland

Ireland now has one of the youngest episcopates in western Europe, and powerful clerical elites in tiny dioceses that resisted change have retired and become less influential.

The Pope's current man in Dublin, fellow Argentine Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor, has been only a year in office as Papal Nuncio. While discussions have been ongoing for some time, he came to Dublin with a clear mandate to oversee the reforms.

This newspaper first reported 15 years ago on an ongoing dialogue between officials of the Holy See and representatives of the Irish hierarchy on the reform of diocesan structures.

It had been suggested for some time. In 2002, prominent theologian Fr Vincent

Twomey SVD published his landmark book *The End of Irish Catholicism?* One of the themes he took up was the need for a realignment and reduction in the number of dioceses.

The thought was dismissed by some as foolish, while some senior bishops reacted angrily to the suggestion.

Fr Twomey's idea was that fewer dioceses, particularly with falling populations in the west and fewer people going to Mass, would allow for a pooling of scarce resources and encourage people to work more closely together on pastoral renewal and faith development rather than in silos.

“While continental Europe saw diocesan structure emerge within generations of apostolic times, the powerful monasteries reigned supreme in Ireland”

The Church in Ireland has long been bedevilled by so-called ‘lone ranger’ priests and bishops – hugely charismatic men, often loved by parishioners, but virtually incapable of collaborative ministry.

Ireland was late to the whole diocesan thing. While continental Europe saw diocesan structure emerge within generations of apostolic

times, the powerful monasteries reigned supreme in Ireland.

The Synod of Rathbreasail in 1111 marked the transition of the Church in Ireland from a monastic to a diocesan and parish-based church. Today's 26 dioceses trace their geographical boundaries to that synod. There were modest reforms a few decades later at the Synod of Kells in 1152 with the number of metropolitan provinces being increased from two to four, by raising the dioceses of Dublin and Tuam to archdioceses.

There have been mergers before, of course. Waterford and Lismore were merged in 1363. The dioceses of Down and Connor were merged in 1439. In 1678, Leighlin was united under one bishop with Kildare as Kildare and Leighlin. The dioceses of Cashel and Emly had been governed by the same bishop since 1718, with the Archbishop of Cashel acting as Apostolic Administrator of Emly, until they were united in 2015 to formalise the arrangement. Lastly, the modern-day Diocese of Cork and Ross was formed by uniting the two dioceses in 1958.

Amalgamations

The absorption of Killala by Tuam was made easier by the fact that Bishop John Fleming has been due to retire for more than a year. With just over 30,000 Catholics, Killala was one of the least populous dioceses in the world. Adding it to Tuam (around

145,000 Catholics) still gives it a population much smaller than most major European dioceses, with fewer than 200,000 Catholics. Turning 66 next month, Archbishop Francis Duffy has nine years to manage the merger – more than enough time to iron out the difficulties ahead of the expected appointment of a successor in 2033.

Turning 71 this summer, Bishop Kevin Doran will take the helm of both Elphin and Achonry for an expected four years. The 36,000 Catholics of Achonry, will join with the 82,000 of Elphin to give a pastoral community of around 118,000 Catholics – still fewer than 10% of the Catholic population of Dublin.

Meanwhile, in the capital it seems like auxiliary bishops are much like buses: you wait for ages, almost give up – and then two arrive at the same time.

“Last month, the Vatican announced that 65-year-old Bishop Donal Roche would become an auxiliary bishop in Dublin”

When Cardinal Desmond Connell was archbishop, the sprawling diocese had a half dozen bishops. As retirements came, no new bishops were appointed since 1997 and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin seemed content enough with this arrangement.

In the wake of the Murphy Report on abuse, Archbishop Martin effectively forced the resignations of both Bishop Ray Field and Bishop Éamonn Walsh dramatically on Christmas Eve 2009.

However, evidently feeling the putsch was unfair Pope Benedict XVI refused to accept the resignations and both men continued as Dr Martin's somewhat uncomfortable auxiliaries up to the traditional retirement age of 75.

Last month, the Vatican announced that 65-year-old Bishop Donal Roche would become an auxiliary bishop in Dublin.

Now, the reorganisation in the west leaves Bishop Paul Dempsey of Arconry in need of a new role and he too will become an auxiliary bishop in Dublin. They will be the first new auxiliary bishops the

metropolitan see has seen elevated since 1997.

At one level, it's an odd move – diocesan bishops (known as an Ordinary in Church law) are rarely moved to become an assistant to another senior bishop. In ecclesiastical terms, it's certainly not a promotion. But it would also be unfair to see it in black and white terms like a demotion.

Bishop Dempsey, who turns 53 later this month, still has more than 20 years to serve on the episcopal bench. Since his appointment in 2020, some say he never really settled in Achonry. Coming from a large urban parish in Co. Kildare, rural Roscommon was quite the culture shock. Holidays and days off were – colleagues say – spent back in Leinster, rather than in the west.

Bishop Dempsey has boundless energy. He will be a huge asset in Dublin to Dr Farrell as the process of reorganisation within the country's largest diocese continues. Bishop-elect Roche is also admired for his pastoral approach and easy manner.

Preservation

It could also be that synodality, the Pope's global programme for reform to make the Church more collaborative, is part of the picture when it comes to the move from Ballaghaderreen to the capital. Bishop Dempsey has been an enthusiastic supporter of the reforms. Isolated in Achonry, his voice didn't carry a lot of weight. However, in Dublin, despite his duties as an auxiliary he

will have time to dedicate to promoting the synodal process.

Overall, the Vatican sees the reorganisation and restructuring of Irish dioceses to manage resources better. Rather than two poorly-resourced diocesan offices or pastoral programmes, it makes more sense to combine resources.

In a letter to priests on the changes, Archbishop of Dublin Dermot Farrell insisted that the Pope's is responding "in a way that will permit the Church to fulfil its mission in a changing Ireland".

“Like many things that are not working well in the Church in Ireland, falling numbers have only worked to concentrate minds”

Other bishops see the announcements in Tuam as part of a wider journey, rather than a destination. More change is afoot, they say – that will affect every diocese in Ireland with more mergers ahead beginning with dioceses that become vacant being put under the care of a neighbouring bishop.

Some people have emerged from the woodwork apparently annoyed that the Pope didn't take them into his confidence ahead of the announcement. After all,

fewer dioceses means fewer bishops and therefore fewer chances for promotion.

Declining Mass attendance and fewer clergy are, of course, part of the picture – but even if every one of Killala's 30,000 Catholic were attending Mass daily and its 22 parishes had half-a-dozen priests each, the case for reform of such small structures would still be overwhelming. Like many things that are not working well in the Church in Ireland, falling numbers have only worked to concentrate minds.

Loyalty

Diocesan loyalty runs deep amongst priests, particularly those of an older generation who attended the so-called junior seminaries, the diocesan colleges. Maynooth also bred a type of inter-diocesan rivalry among Irish clerics that was not a feature of other countries. These rivalries generally don't translate to laypeople, where the Church is experienced first and foremost as a parish level rather than as a concern about the number of dioceses across a relatively small country.

Of course, the Church is not a corporation, and the Vatican doesn't view such reforms as akin to the work of an AIB area manager closing small rural branches.

The key aim is to prune to grow, to ensure that the Church is fit for mission. There are a lot more mergers due to come. Rome is banking on a leaner more stream-lined Church having more energy for evangelisation. Only time will tell.

Pope Francis appointed Bishop Paul Dempsey, up until now Bishop of Achonry, as Titular Bishop of Sita and Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin. The Pope also made Archbishop Francis Duffy, Archbishop of Tuam, as apostolic administrator of the diocese of Killala and Bishop of Elphin Kevin Doran apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Achonry. Pope Francis also accepted the resignation of Bishop John Fleming, Bishop of Killala, on grounds of age. Photo: John McElroy



“The key aim is to prune to grow, to ensure that the Church is fit for mission. There are a lot more mergers due to come. Rome is banking on a leaner more stream-lined Church having more energy for evangelisation”



Bishop Paul Dempsey, now Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin, and Archbishop of Tuam Francis Duffy look on as the Bishop of Elphin, Kevin Doran speaks to the media in the Cathedral of the Assumption Tuam, Co. Galway. Photo: John McElroy

The Irish Catholic

NOW HIRING

A FULL-TIME NEWS REPORTER

Requirement & Qualifications

- Ideally a Degree in journalism/theology/philosophy
- Proven working experience as a Journalist or Reporter will be an advantage
- Proficiency and fluency in English
- Ability to follow strict deadlines and fast-check information
- Computer proficiency (MS Office, digital editing, web search, database)
- Excellent communication and networking skills along with an aptitude in extracting information
- Capability in photography and/or video journalism an advantage
- Passionate about journalism and freedom of speech/expression rights

Please send your resume, cover letter, to editor@irishcatholic.ie

The Pope's 'seamless garment' approach to social issues



The Church must speak up for rights society is happy to ignore, writes David Quinn

The late Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, who was the archbishop of Chicago, used to advocate an approach to Catholic social justice teaching that became known as 'the seamless garment'.

The idea behind it was that all social justice teachings belonged together and could not be separated from

one another. For example, if you opposed abortion, you should also oppose the death penalty. But in addition, if you supported the right to life, you should also be concerned about poverty, or the rights of migrants.

Cardinal Bernardin became archbishop of Chicago in 1982, early in the presidency of Ronald Reagan. Pro-life, pro-Reagan Catholics were critical of his 'seamless garment' approach.

Watering down

They saw it as a way of watering down opposition to abortion. If abortion was simply reduced to one more issue that Catholics ought to oppose, among others, then less attention would be paid to it.

There was something to that argument, and I could certainly see the point of it. Back in 1982, the Roe vs Wade ruling of the US Supreme Court that imposed an extremely liberal abortion law on all 50 states regardless



Pope Francis responds to a question as he meets with about 200 children at St John Vianney parish on the far eastern edge of Rome, where he went April 11, to inaugurate his "School of Prayer" initiative in preparation for the Holy Year 2025. Photo: CNS.

of what voters wanted, was only nine years old.

The pro-life movement wanted to focus laser-like on that, and it wanted the Church in general to do so as well. Lots of American bishops agreed and they had the full support of Pope John Paul II, whose pontificate was also still in its early stages and full of energy.

This is not to say that they did not add their voices to

other issues as well, far from it, but opposition to abortion was a particularly strong theme for Pope John Paul and he coined the phrase "the culture of death". This culture has only tightened its grip over the years and in some countries now encompasses euthanasia, with moves being made to permit that in Ireland as well.

Galvanised

Meanwhile in the United States, the Roe vs Wade decision has been repealed, but this has galvanised the abortion 'rights' movement, which in many ways has become even more extreme in response, supporting the 'right' to have an abortion for what amounts to any reason, in some cases right up to birth.

Last week, the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (it used to be a Congregation), issued a document called *Dignitas Infinita*, meaning 'infinite dignity'. It is signed by Pope Francis.

It discusses the topic of human dignity. It declares: "Every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state, or situation the person may ever encounter."

It then expands on this idea and grounds it in the belief that we are all made in the image and likeness of God.

This is a much surer ground for believing in the inherent dignity of all human beings than atheism, which says we are accidental by-products of

evolution and therefore have no intrinsic significance at all.

The document then lists some of the major threats to human dignity, among them: poverty, human trafficking, unjust treatment of migrants, surrogacy, gender ideology, abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, online violence, and war.

Some of these are very old threats, but some of them are new, for example, surrogacy and gender ideology.

“The Church also takes a stand against the practice of surrogacy, through which the immensely worthy child becomes a mere object”

However, we can immediately see the similarity between this new document and the 'seamless garment' approach taken by Cardinal Bernardin. No issue is singled out. The document runs the full gamut of Catholic social justice teachings.

What is new, or fairly new, is the attention paid to surrogacy and gender ideology. The Pope has been a consistent critic of surrogacy.

Dignitas Infinita says: "The Church also takes a stand against the practice of surrogacy, through which the immensely worthy child becomes a mere object."

In other words, surrogacy, especially when it involves a fee, commodifies a child. A woman bears a child specifically to hand it over to the couple or individual who has 'ordered' that child. The woman herself, who is often poor, is exploited.

The Pope expresses his "hope for an effort by the international community to prohibit this practice universally." He seems to have commercial surrogacy particularly in mind.

Gender theory is the belief that we can choose our own 'gender' and it does not have to be the same as the sex we are born into. Thus, someone who is biologically male can identify as female or vice

versa. They can also claim to be some other gender entirely.

The document says that gender theory is "a concession to the age-old temptation to make oneself God, entering into competition with the true God of love revealed to us in the Gospel".

It adds: "All attempts to obscure reference to the ineliminable sexual difference between man and woman are to be rejected".

Common Good

In its conclusion, the document "ardently urges that respect for the dignity of the human person beyond all circumstances be placed at the centre of the commitment to the common good and at the centre of every legal system".

This is a political message. Politics is about organising society according to the precepts of justice. Christians cannot fail to have an opinion about this.

The Church as a whole, and Christians individually, ought to take a seamless garment approach to politics, but does this mean every Christian should dedicate themselves equally to every issue that comes under the heading of the Church's social teachings?

The answer is no. Obviously, one Christian can dedicate themselves mainly to fighting poverty, another to fighting human trafficking, and another to fighting for the right to life of the unborn, the old and the infirm.

Each individual priest, religious and lay-person can have their own particular interests. Therefore, one bishop might pay particular attention to the right to life, and another to the issue of human trafficking.

But I think the Church should also be aware of what issues are being neglected at a particular time. For example, if few are asserting the right to life, but many are dedicated to fighting against poverty, then at a given moment, threats to the right to life may need to receive particular attention from Catholics.

Cardinal Bernardin was right in taking a 'seamless garment' approach to the social teachings of the Church, but by the same token, this can never be used as an excuse to neglect rights that society in general is very happy to ignore, or worse, actively undermine. One of these is obviously the right to life.

“If few are asserting the right to life, but many are dedicated to fighting against poverty, then at a given moment, threats to the right to life may need to receive particular attention from Catholics”

Veritas Shops are closing...

By the end of 2024

Don't miss the latest in Catholic news from Ireland and abroad
Subscribe today and get *The Irish Catholic* delivered to your door

Featuring news and analyses that represent your voice on the national stage, regular contributors who provide commentary on hot button issues and local voices highlighting the ongoing work of parishes and communities throughout the country.

Special Offer for New Subscribers
3 MONTH SUBSCRIPTION

€55

Down from €65

Print Subscription	Digital Subscription
3 Months for €65	3 Months for €20
6 Months for €105	1 Year for €60
1 Year for €199	

For more information, please visit
www.irishcatholic.com/shop
or call on 01 687 4028

The Irish Catholic

You can also send us a cheque/postal order to:
The Irish Catholic, Unit 3b, Bracken Business Park, Bracken Road, Sandyford, Dublin 18, D18 K277

Bishop-elect's sudden death leaves Scotland grieving



The sudden death of beloved priest and bishop-elect has united Scottish Catholics in grief, writes **Ian Dunn**

I couldn't believe it. A text came through Wednesday lunchtime. Fr Martin Chambers had died in his sleep the night before.

He was just 59, fit and healthy, and was due to be installed as Scotland's newest bishop just two weeks later.

Like many others, I felt a grief with a real sharpness to it. We had lost a great priest, and a better man.

The grief rippled far beyond the parishes of his native Ayrshire where he had served for decades. Hundreds of Catholics who had travelled with him to

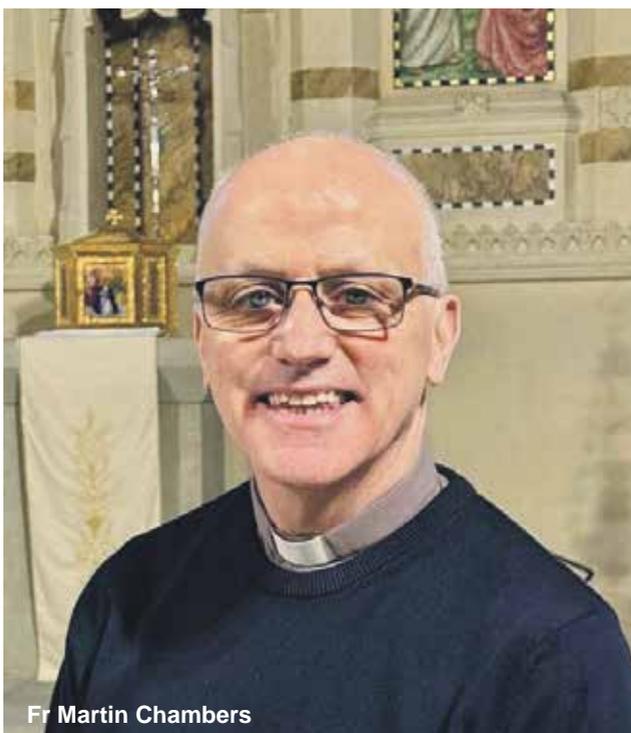
Lourdes on HCPT pilgrimages when he was a chaplain added their voices.

As did those in Ecuador where he spent five years working as a missionary and founded a parish, and a charity to support the neediest in that parish when he returned to Scotland.

The news, a few months ago, that the Pope had appointed him Bishop of Dunkeld had been a surprise. He didn't fit the traditional profile for a bishop, few of whom take a five-year sabbatical from parish life in their own diocese to work with the poorest of the poor on the other side of the world, but many of us were excited to see what he would accomplish there.

“To know Martin was to know a man of love, enthusiasm, humour, and a deep faith which enlivened all that he did”

Yet reading through the reactions on social media from Catholics of every hue, bishops, priests, and laity,



Fr Martin Chambers

mixed with the grief was a common thread of laughter.

Heart

His great friend, the recently installed Bishop Frank Dougan of Galloway, said, “It was with a heavy heart and the deepest sadness that he learned of the news. To know Martin was to know a man

of love, enthusiasm, humour, and a deep faith which enlivened all that he did”.

Erin Robertson, who went with him to Lourdes, said, “he changed my life! He taught me not to take myself seriously but my faith.”

Archbishop William Nolan of Glasgow said he was shocked and saddened at the news. He added: “Martin's death is a huge loss ... When I was Bishop of Galloway I knew him well – a great priest, always welcoming,

friendly, with a good sense of humour who worked so hard for his people.”

So many of the tributes mentioned the humour, the laughter, the songs, the dancing.

Joy

He was a man of great joy in his faith and he spread that joy freely. And he was funny.

I have met a lot of priests in my life. He's the only one who ever made me fall off a bike laughing. Years back at a charity cycle, he told me a story about a funeral, the *Fast and Furious* film franchise, and a packet of cooked meat that ended me. Shamelessly I have retold it many times since, always to howls of laughter.

That commitment to joy is something that was redoubled when he returned to Scotland after his time in Ecuador. He told me once that on his first night there he looked out and saw mile after mile of houses made of bamboo. “It was extreme poverty. I wondered what I was getting myself into.”

However, in time he came to love the ironically named shantytown of Nuevo Prospero where he was based and especially the people there.

“The greatest joy of my time as a missionary priest came in walking the dusty

streets of the shantytown, meeting the poor people, visiting their homes, and hearing their joys and sorrows,” he said.

“We have let our religion be defined by its most sober elements. That we have lost the joy of it”

“Even though they had nothing, they had such joy,” he said. “Despite all the poverty, there was a lot of happiness there. When I came back to Scotland, I was struck by how miserable a lot of people seemed. We have so much in comparison yet often it seems we don't know how to be happy.”

Fr Martin Chambers found that joy in his faith.

It seems to me that all too often we have let the greyness of reality infect the carnival of Catholicism. That we have let our religion be defined by its most sober elements. That we have lost the joy of it.

Fr Martin Chambers crusaded against that his whole life. As we mourn him, we can best honour his memory by taking joy back into our Churches and out into the world.

“The greatest joy of my time as a missionary priest came in walking the dusty streets of the shantytown, meeting the poor people, visiting their homes, and hearing their joys and sorrows”

Malaysians mourn Irish nun who pioneered girl's education

Vanitha Nadaraj

Thousands in Malaysia have paid tributes to an Irish missionary nun who pioneered girls' education in her adopted country for decades.

Sr Enda Ryan died on April 7 at the age of 96, according to her religious congregation, the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (FMM).

FMM is an international Catholic religious order founded in British India in 1877.

The nun has been widely hailed as the founder of the iconic Assunta schools and for helping to build the Ave Maria Clinic, now the Assunta Hospital, the first private hospital in Malaysia.

The schools and hospital are in Petaling Jaya, a newly developed satellite town for Kuala Lumpur.

Many have posted on social media lauding the nun's contributions.

Born Eileen Philomena Ryan on December 30, 1928, in Galbally, Ireland, she joined the FMM in 1947 and came to Malaysia in 1955 after graduating from university with a degree in education.

Education

The government requested the FMM nuns to open schools for girls whose education was disrupted by the Communist insurgency.

Malaysia was then under British rule, and it became an independent country in 1957.

In 1958, Sr Ryan became headmistress of the newly established Assunta Secondary School. The school began with three classes for girls aged 13-14, and by 1963, it had 900 students and 34 full-time teachers.

Lily Lee, one of the nun's students from Batch 1964, hailed her for her contributions to education.

“I so enjoyed the singing lessons with her because I

love to sing. She had a beautiful singing voice,” she added.

Ms Lee recalled her as stricter in many ways. “She'd shoo away the La Salle boys [from the boys' school across the road] who stood at the fence, watching us Assunta girls during games or practices,” she told *UCA News*.

Jacinta Vythilingam, a student of the 1987 batch, told *UCA News* that Sr Ryan had composed the school song.

“She was a leading figure in developing education policies and practices in Malaysia, making her an education icon”

“We still sing it proudly at every major school occasion. Her passion for music and her beautiful voice always uplifted us,” she said.

Ms Vythilingam said the nun also promoted racial and religious harmony.

“There was no race or reli-

gious [segregation] in school. There were only Assuntarians,” she said, adding that many female leaders in Malaysia today are alumni of Assunta school.

Among her famous students is Nurul Izzah Anwar, the daughter of Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim.

Lourett D'silva, a 1971 batch student, said she was initially terrified of Sr Enda.

“But when she started teaching us Catechism and Bible knowledge in the upper forms, I found her to be a very good teacher,” she recalled.

She also remembered the nun as a “very empathetic and sympathetic” person who visited her family to join the funeral of D'silva's father and asked students to pay respects to him on the way to St Francis Xavier Church.

The nun retired in 1989, but she was a leading figure in developing education policies and practices in Malaysia, making her an education icon.



Sr Enda Ryan. Photo: Lily Lee.

In 1966, the Malaysian government bestowed citizenship on the nun for her contributions to education in the country.

During her 31 years of service, she received numerous national awards and was conferred an honorary doctorate in humanities from

Taylor's University in 2022.

Sr Ryan's burial was on April 11.

i Vanitha Nadaraj, a journalist based in Kuala Lumpur, has more than 30 years of experience in journalism and public relations as both trainer and practitioner.



Out&About

Viva VIVO!



DUBLIN: On April 7, the Ukrainian Catholic chaplaincy's Divine Liturgy was accompanied by the singing the VIVO quartet from the Cathedral of the Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Family in London.



ROSCOMMON: Fr James McDonagh and Fr Vincent Sherlock show off their musical talent during a night of festivities in St Nathy's Cathedral on April 1.



KERRY: Anne Hanbidge, Tralee, and Bill Looney, Tralee, attend Divine Mercy celebrations at St John's Church, Tralee. Photo: John Cleary.

IN SHORT

Irish Churches launch anti-racist handbook

The Irish Council of Churches have launched a new handbook aimed at inspiring congregations to build inclusive and compassionate Church communities and pursue racial justice.

The Launch of From Every Nation? A Handbook for a congregation's journey from welcome to belonging took place at the 101st Annual Meeting of the Irish Council of Churches in Gracehill Moravian Church, Co. Antrim.

The annual meeting gathers senior Church leaders and lay representatives from across its 15 member Churches in Ireland, including

Bishop of Limerick Brendan Leahy, bringing together the broad spectrum of Christianity in Ireland, a spokesperson for the ICC said in a statement.

The new handbook equips "Churches with an understanding of diversity and inclusion, and to support actions at the local church level to improve inclusion and work towards racial justice through faith", the spokesperson said.

Bishop Leahy, Co-Chair of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting, said: "This handbook allows space to reaffirm our commitment to promoting justice and equality for all. We hope Church members will be equipped through using this resource to better understand diversity and work towards building a church where everyone belongs and is included."

The handbook is available to download for free at irishchurches.org/belonging

First ever pilgrimage for life takes place May 4

The first ever National Pilgrimage for Life, organised by the bishops' council for life, will be celebrated at Knock International Eucharistic and Marian Shrine in Knock, Co Mayo, on May 4.

The pilgrimage will begin in the Knock Basilica at 2.30pm with Anointing of the Sick, followed by Mass at 3pm and Rosary Procession after Mass, subject to weather conditions.

The main celebrant and homilist will be

Archbishop Francis Duffy of Tuam and everyone is invited to join this pilgrimage to celebrate the gift of life and to pray for the protection of all human life.

Speaking ahead the pilgrimage, Bishop Kevin Doran, who is chairman of the Council for Life, said: "I very much look forward to this first National Pilgrimage for Life, which gives us all the opportunity, as advocates for life, to draw strength and inspiration from Mary, who is mother of Jesus and mother of the Church.

"Central to our pilgrimage will be the Eucharist which nourishes us through life as well as being a particular source of strength to the sick and the dying."

Edited by Ruadhán Jones
Ruadhan@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



LIMERICK: Students of Doon Convent NS participate in a 'Ceremony of Light' for Confirmation candidates, hosted by Fr James Donnelly PP.



CLARE: Some of the pilgrim walkers from Nenagh Walking Club who are trekking across the diocese from Loop Head to the Slieve Blooms are pictured on day 5 at St Martin of Tours Well, Ballynacally.



CLARE: Bishop Fintan Monahan joins members of the Neocatechumenal Way for their Easter octave celebration at St Flannans College, Ennis.



MAYO: Cavan man Kevin Carolan meets Primate of All-Ireland Archbishop Eamon Martin on a trip to Knock Shrine.



DUBLIN: A new mural depicting Sr Concepta Lynch OP has been unveiled in Dún Laoghaire. It is located on Lynch Lane, which is named after the Irish nun.

ANTRIM

Antrim parish rosary and night prayer takes place on Tuesday's at 8pm in St Joseph's Church.

ARMAGH

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults takes place every Tuesday at 7.30pm in St Catherine's Irish Secondary School. For more info contact 0044 7856 172206

CARLOW

Poor Clares in Carlow invite women aged 22-40 for a cuppa and a chat to find out more about the community's life on Saturday May 4 from 2.30-4.30pm. Contact poorclaresvoc@gmail.com to RSVP.

CORK

Teen day retreat for ages 13-17 takes place Saturday, April 27, 11am-5pm, beginning with Mass at St Mary's Popes Quay. Lunch and snacks included, cost €15. RSVP to info@pureinheart.ie

DERRY

Coleraine parish picnic will take place at Chapelfield on Sunday, May 19.

DONEGAL

A guided holy hour of adoration in honour of the Holy Face of Jesus takes place on Sundays, 6-7pm in St Mary's Oratory.

A retreat for Young Adults at Lough Derg, Pettigo County Donegal takes place on Saturday, April 27, from 10am-4pm. Refreshments and lunch provided. This retreat is organised by the Knights of St Columbanus Omagh and is free of charge. To register, please visit tiny.cc/loughderg or email info@knightsofst-columbanusomagh.co.uk

DUBLIN

Capuchin youth group for ages 18-35 meets every second Saturday at 2.30pm in the Capuchin Friary, Church St. D07 HA22. For more details contact youth.capuchin@gmail.com

FERMANAGH

St Peregrine novena of healing and hope takes place Sunday April 28 to Wednesday, May 1. Mass Sunday-Wednesday at 7pm in Holy Cross Church, Lisnaskea, and 10am Monday-Wednesday, St Mary's Church, Maguiresbridge.

GALWAY

A series of talks on Dominican life in Ireland takes place in St Mary's Church, the Claddagh on Tuesday evenings at 7.30pm. Next talk 'Dominicans in Time of Persecution' by Ultan Lally, local historian.

KERRY

Youth week takes place in Kerry diocese from Saturday, April 20, to Friday, April 26, with a range of events across the dioceses. Visit dioceseofkerry.ie for more information.

KILDARE

The Youth 2000 Summer Festival to take place August 15-18 at Clongowes Wood College.

LAOIS

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place each Sunday of Lent from 5-7pm and concludes with the rosary.

LOUTH

Fr Willie Doyle SJ prayer group takes place in Holy Family Church, Drogheda every Thursday at 7pm. Includes adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and a prayer for vocations.

SLIGO

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in St Colmcille's Church takes place every Sunday from 4-5pm.

TIPPERARY

Next Cherished women's meeting for prayer and fellowship takes place Monday, May 6, beginning with rosary at 7.30pm in Glencomeragh House, Kilsheelan. For more information visit www.holyfamilymission.ie

Holy Face hour takes place Tuesdays 7-8pm in Our Lady and St Kevin's Church, Littleton, E41 HD90, including rosary, Holy Face prayers, Divine Mercy chaplet and Eucharistic Adoration.

TYRONE

YouCat study for ages 16+ years takes place on Tuesdays in the Oratory, at 7 Main Street, Newtownstewart, starting at 6.30-7.30 pm. For further information contact 028 81661445 or email ardstraweast@derrydiocese.org.

WATERFORD

Afternoon reflection with the Legion of Mary, rosary, adoration and talks on April 21, 2-5pm in Sacred Heart Church the Folly. Contact 086 3100 581

Down and Connor welcomes Bishop McGuckian

Ruadhán Jones

Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ was installed as the new bishop of Down and Connor diocese in St Peter's Cathedral, Belfast, on April 14.

The former bishop of Raphoe was welcomed to the North's most populous diocese by a full house at the cathedral.

Bishop McGuckian took the opportunity to call on the North's assembly to be "bold" after Stormont's restart.

"We will be channels of peace in our world," Bishop McGuckian said in his homily.

"We will reach out confidently in love, with our brothers and sisters of other Christian communions, and together we will encourage our local

politicians to be generous and bold as they seek to make our political institutions work for the good of all."

Dr McGuckian said that there are many challenges to peace, including "our own personal history, the terrible pain and misery of so many people in our world or the sad state of the Church".

On a global level, the witness of Christians who are "channels of peace" is needed today as the escalation of war is "an awful threat", he added.

Bishop McGuckian said he is excited to be part of the diocese as it charts a pathway to the future.

"I hope to spend a lot of time in the coming weeks and months praying and discerning with you, the priests and people of the diocese, how and where the Lord is leading us," he said.



Bishop Alan McGuckian is pictured outside St Peter's Cathedral, Belfast, after being installed as bishop of Down and Connor. Photos: Peter Thomas.



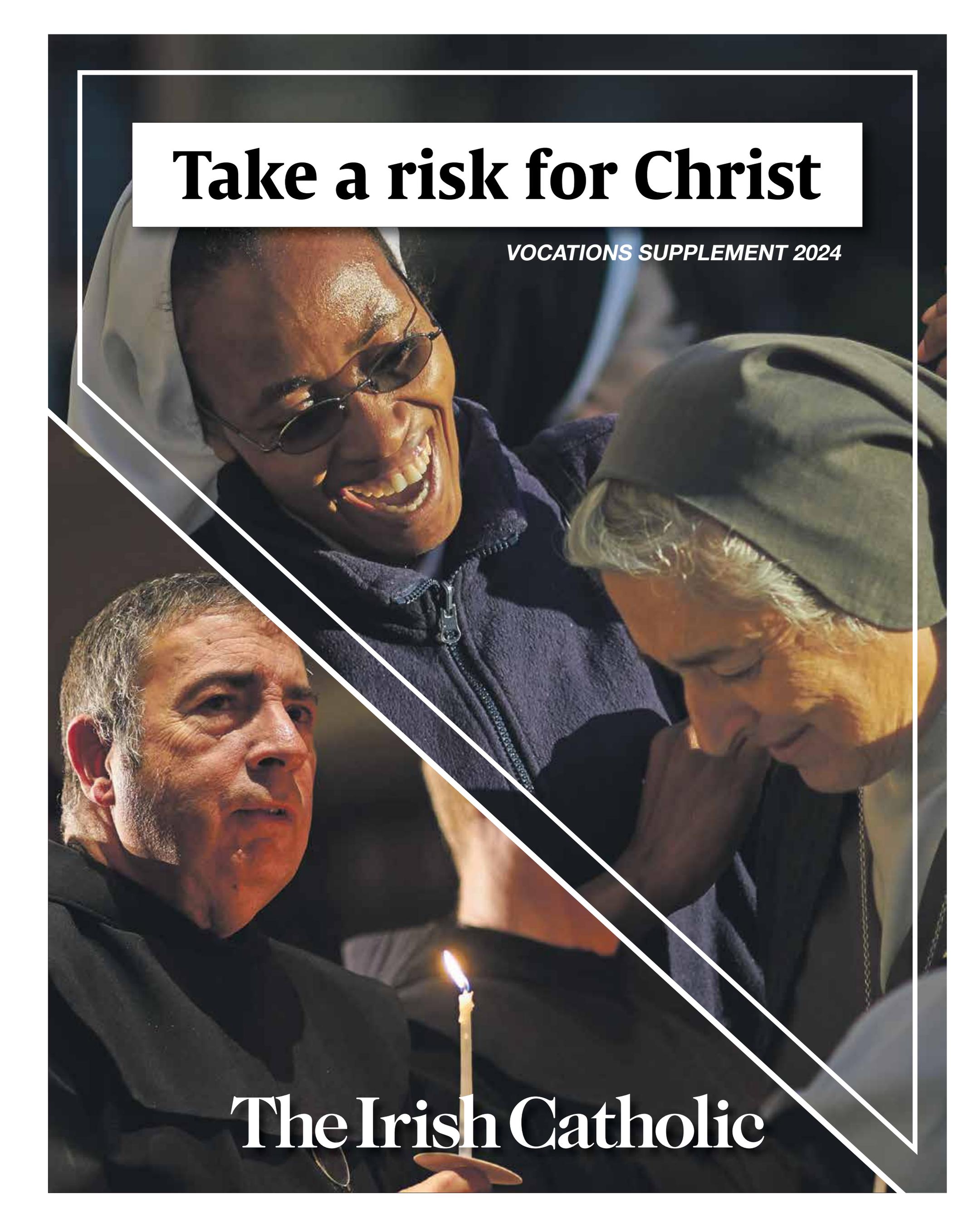
A large congregation gathered to witness the installation of Down and Connor's new bishop.



Bishop McGuckian is welcomed by young members of the congregation on April 14.

Take a risk for Christ

VOCATIONS SUPPLEMENT 2024



The Irish Catholic

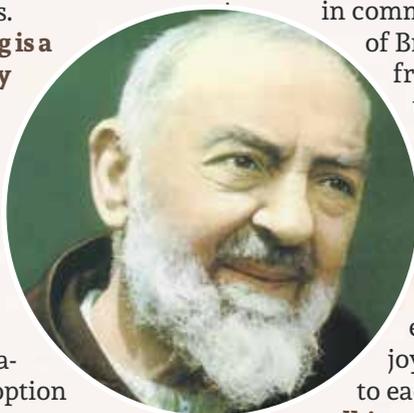
Capuchin Franciscan Vocation

We believe that everyone is called by Jesus. In many ways we could say – If I exist, then I am called! Your life is important and what you do with it is very important. Jesus Christ calls us in many ways and ultimately all of these ways lead us into deeper relationship with God, others, ourselves and the world around us.

A vocational calling is a call to live in the way that feels most authentic to us. This could be as a person who chooses to marry and start a family or a person who remains single. It can also be an invitation to explore the option of religious life.

As Capuchin Franciscan Friars we vow to live in poverty, chastity and obedience. These three vows help us connect at a deeper level with God as well as the Friars we share our life with and the people we serve through our various ministries. We follow the rule of life given to us by St Francis of Assisi over eight hundred years ago. This rule is steeped in ancient wisdom and is the means by which we aim to follow the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ in our daily lives.

The earliest name for the Capuchins was 'The Brothers of the people'. This was a name given to us by those people that the early Friars served and its testament to the love and care the Friars had for these people. When the Capuchins were founded in 1525, Europe was a place of war, famine and plague. The early Friars listened deeply to the cry of the poor and did their best to respond to it. These Friars entered into some of the most difficult and challenging situations imaginable and often put their own lives at risk.



Why? Simply, because they saw those in need as their brothers and sisters. They had to reach out and help in whatever way they could. Even though our name may have changed to 'Capuchin' (referring to the long hood we wear on our habits) at our core we are still 'Brothers of the people'.

You may well ask how we live this vocation today. Firstly, we live in community as a fraternity of Brothers. The word fraternity meant more to St Francis than simply a gathering of Friars – it was a radically new way of living. To live in fraternity means to commit our lives, energy, talents, hopes, joys, fears and sorrows to each other. **It means walking together as brothers**

towards Christ in good times and not so good times. It means living, praying, eating, laughing and sharing together all that we have. This was the dream of St Francis who believed that this model of life could be a way of peace and reconciliation in a troubled World.

As Capuchins we prefer to use the title 'Brother' – this is important for us as it links us back to St Francis' dream of fraternity and the early Capuchin Friars. Some of our Friars are ordained as priests and some are not. Either way we are first and foremost, brothers. **That's our vocational call – to pray, work and live as brothers of St Francis and brothers to each other.**

Responding to a vocational call takes courage. Pope Francis encourages us to take risks for Christ. If you feel the Lord is calling you to explore a religious vocation, allow the Holy Spirit to guide you and trust that God has a plan for you and your life. And remember - **Be brave! Take a risk for Christ!**



To find out more about consecrated life as a Capuchin Franciscan Friar email our Vocations Director, Brother Antony, at vocations@capuchins.ie



Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles

One Heart, One Mission... Witnessing to God's Love in the World



Finding Purpose Beyond Self

In a culture consumed by immediacy and self-indulgence, the concept of vocation often fades into the background. We're conditioned to believe that we control our destinies, that our desires dictate our paths. Yet, the truth is far more profound: vocation is not a self-selected journey but a divine calling.

The vocational journeys of our Sisters have been as diverse as they are profound. Each response to the call has been as unique as the individual who heard it. Some initially resisted, only to find clarity in an unexpected encounter or moment of revelation. For others, the call was so compelling, so undeniable, that it left no room for hesitation or doubt.

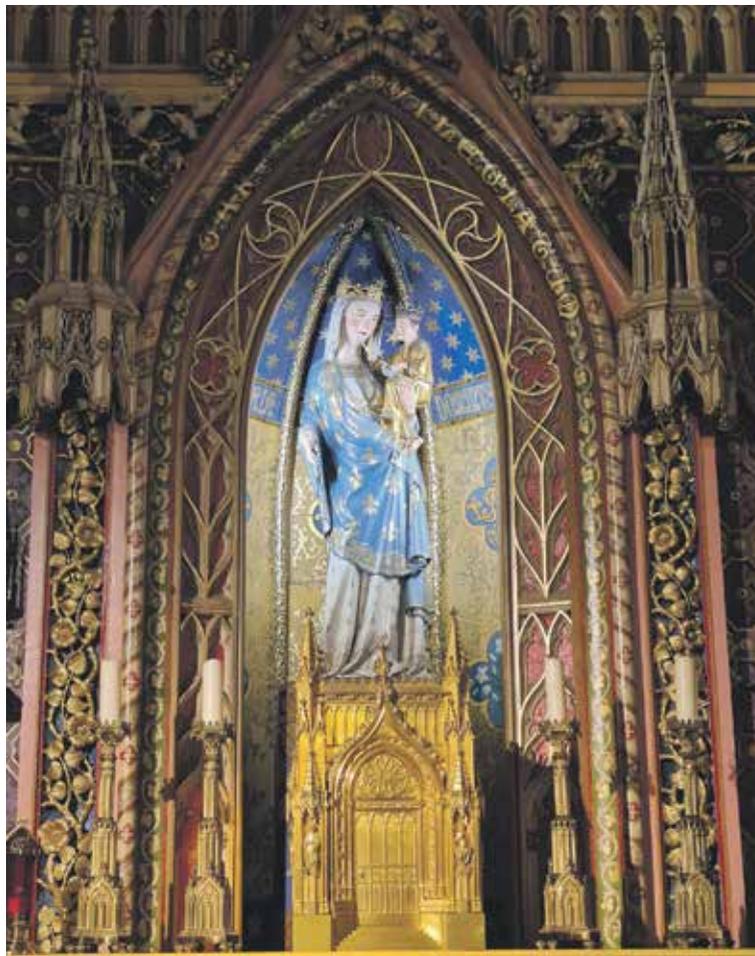
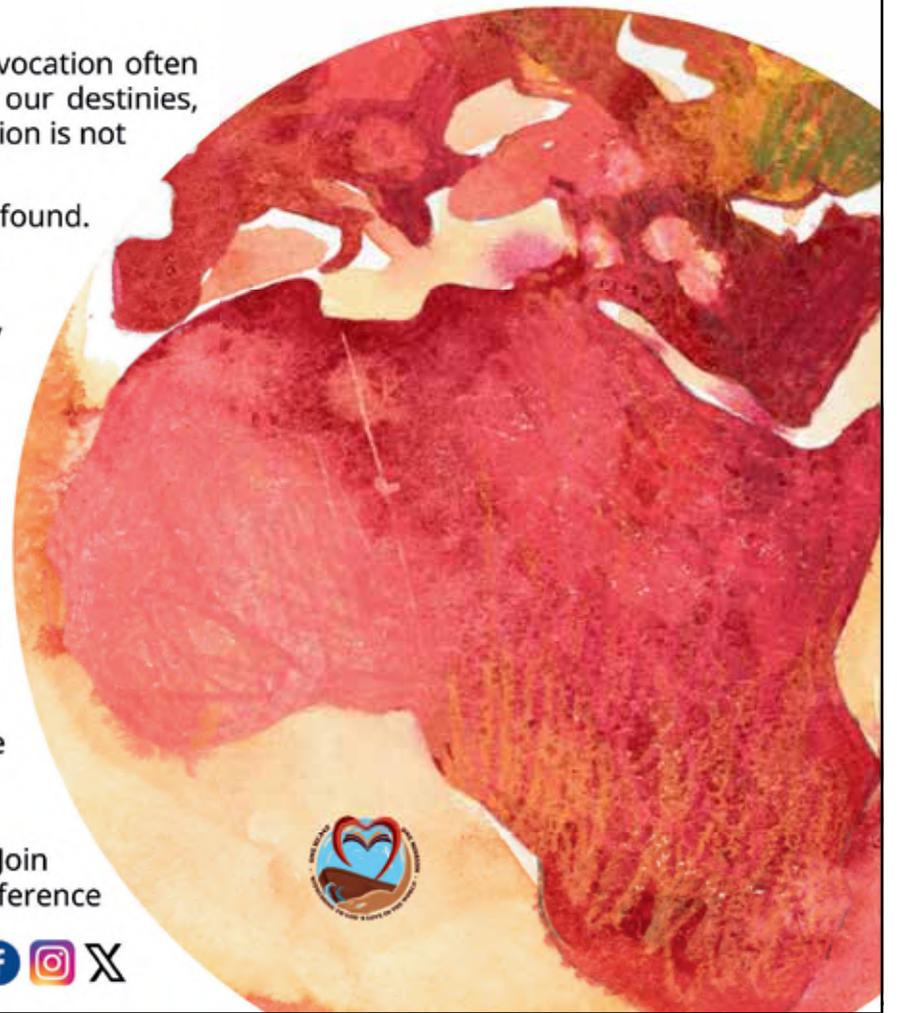
Their narratives, though distinct, share a common thread: an unwavering belief in a higher purpose guiding their lives. Whether this leads to distant lands or humble communities, the call remains steadfast, urging these remarkable women to step beyond themselves.

In a world that all too often values speed over depth, may we pause to listen to the whispers of our hearts and the guiding hand of providence. Let us listen for the quiet voice of God, so that we may discover the true richness of life and the boundless love that surrounds us.

We are an international group of Religious sisters, apostles rooted in faith and hope, ready to risk it all for the Lord. As 'Women in Communion', we live in international communities, passionately fulfilling the intense missionary dream of our founder, Father Augustine Planque.

Be part of our mission! Explore ways to get involved by visiting our website. Join us as we witness to the presence of God in our lives and strive to make a difference in the world.

www.olaireland.ie



Sisters of Bon Secours
1824 2024
200 YEARS



The Sisters of Bon Secours are an International Religious Congregation of Catholic women based in seven countries who bring to the world "Good help to those in need".

The Congregation was founded by a group of 12 women, led by Josephine Potel, who came together in Paris in 1824 to nurse the sick and the dying in their own homes, demonstrating the healing presence of Christ through their compassionate care.

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

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

Their ministry includes more than just the physical; it is a holistic approach which includes peoples' spiritual, psychological and emotional needs.

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

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

Contact us: www.bonsecours.ie [sistersofbonsecours](https://www.instagram.com/sistersofbonsecours) [Sisters of Bon Secours Ireland](https://www.facebook.com/SistersofBonSecoursIreland)

The Carthusian Nuns' Vocation

The Life

"Whilst all monastic life is always oriented towards God alone, essentially the way of the solitary life is freedom of soul. There are as many spiritual paths in the Carthusian Order as there are people, so to speak. There is no standardize inner path for each one, such a way of standardization does not correspond to the Charterhouse. The Charterhouse respects the personal path of each one and thus reflects the multifaceted beauty of our Church." – A Carthusian nun

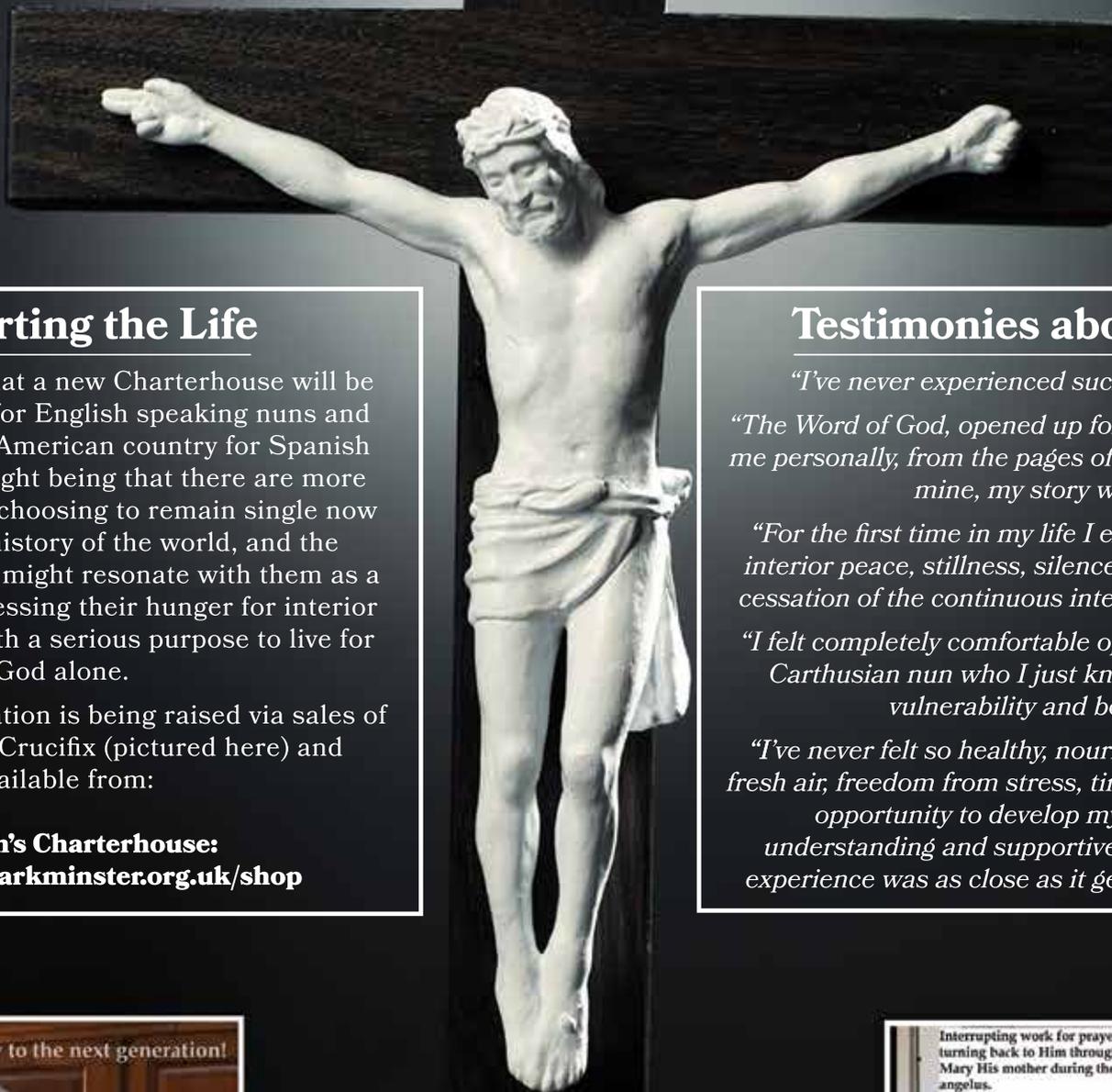
Contact Details, Information and Discussion of the Statutes

Official site: <https://chartreux.org>

Facebook page and group:
Carthusian nuns (English Speaking)
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/580166039593693>



IN
RI



Supporting the Life

There is the hope that a new Charterhouse will be founded in Ireland for English speaking nuns and another in a South American country for Spanish speaking, the foresight being that there are more women consciously choosing to remain single now than ever in the history of the world, and the Carthusian vocation might resonate with them as a positive way of expressing their hunger for interior freedom coupled with a serious purpose to live for God alone.

Money for the foundation is being raised via sales of The Bimillennial Crucifix (pictured here) and available from:

St Hugh's Charterhouse:
<https://www.parkminster.org.uk/shop>

Testimonies about the Life

"I've never experienced such joy in life before!"

"The Word of God, opened up for me, He spoke to me, to me personally, from the pages of scripture, His story was mine, my story was His."

"For the first time in my life I experienced peace, real interior peace, stillness, silence, the absence of stress, cessation of the continuous interior negative narrative."

"I felt completely comfortable opening up my heart to a Carthusian nun who I just knew would respect my vulnerability and boundaries."

"I've never felt so healthy, nourishing food no rubbish, fresh air, freedom from stress, time to think, exercise, the opportunity to develop my creative talents, understanding and supportive accompaniment; the experience was as close as it gets to heaven on earth!"



Carthusian nuns as lovers of Christ



Ruadhán Jones

If you have ever drunk the colourful French liqueur Chartreuse, you already have a connection to the life of the Carthusians.

The order's name and also the liqueur derive from the Chartreuse Mountains in France, where their first charterhouse – the technical name for a Carthusian monastery – was founded in 1084 by St Bruno of Cologne.

What was St Bruno looking for in founding the first hermitage? The Statutes of the Order – its rule – sum it up in one sentence: “To the praise of the glory of God,

“The example of the first community and their devotion to the hermitic way of life soon had a real influence and from 1115, several communities asked to join the way of life established by St Bruno”

Christ, the Father's Word, has through the Holy Spirit, from the beginning chosen certain men and women, whom he willed to lead into solitude and unite to himself in intimate love.”

The example of the first community and their devotion to the hermitic way of life soon had a real influence and from 1115, several communities asked to join the way of life established by St Bruno.

Expansion

Around 1145, the nuns of Prébayon, Provence, in the south of France, living under a local rule were attracted by this new way of life and asked for affiliation with the Carthusians.

They were welcomed into the Order by St Anthelm, the seventh prior of Chartreuse, and so gave birth to the women's branch of the Order. Since then, the nuns have formed a unique Order with the Carthusian monks,

under the direction of the same Minister General, the Prior of the Great Chartreuse.

For several centuries, the Carthusian nuns had a greater share of community life than the monks, but successive constitutions gradually reinforced the same principles of solitude and poverty.

“This way of life has been hard won, with the Carthusians suffering vicious persecution during the Reformation in Britain and the French Revolution”

In the renewal sparked by the Second Vatican Council and following urgent requests from the nuns to be able to lead the Carthusian life in its fullness, there was an evolution towards a more solitary life, so that today the life of the nuns is identical to that of the monks.

Since 1973 they also have their own General Chapter, celebrated at the Great Chartreuse every two years, as well as their own complete Statutes, they remain

in organic and spiritual union with the monks.

Today, 21 charterhouses continue the tradition begun almost 1,000 years ago, 16 for monks and five for nuns.

The continuation of this way of life has been hard won, with the Carthusians suffering vicious persecution during the Reformation in Britain and the French Revolution. Today there are six charterhouses in France and one in Britain.

Separation

Their way of life appears very alien to our modern, interconnected age, in which we are hardly ever disconnected from our social networks and our minds are never at rest.

By contrast, the Carthusians spend most of their lives as hermits living in a cell with a garden, where they spend time in contemplation and eat their meals.

The cells are organised around a cloister and there is an element of community life. For instance, the nuns come together for community prayer and Mass, while once a week they enjoy a Sunday meal together.

But this austere life is not a hide away from the world.

“At present there is no charterhouse in Ireland, the order hopes to found one for English speaking nuns and are raising funds for that purpose”

As the Carthusian nuns' website says, “Choosing a solitary life does not make us desert the human family”.

“Union with God, if true, does not close us in on ourselves, but instead opens our minds and expands our hearts, to the point of embracing the whole world and the mystery of Christ's Redemption.

“Solitary prayer is the gift that God and the Church has entrusted to the monks and nuns”

“Separated from all, we are united with all: and so it is in the name of all that we stand in the presence of the living God.”

Solitary prayer is the gift that God and the Church

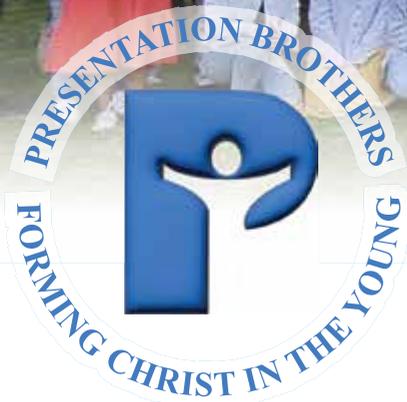
has entrusted to the monks and nuns, and through which they cooperate in the unceasing work of Christ: “My Father works and I too work” (Jn 5,17).

Sisters

The Carthusian nun, while being faithful to the call received from God, “also gives her life for her brothers and sisters in the world, because the prayer of each is for all, and the prayer of all is for each, on earth and in heaven”.

“The Holy Spirit awakens Christ's prayer in us through faith and love. Because we are members of his body, our prayer is his, our silence announces his good news and our vigil his coming.”

Although at present there is no charterhouse in Ireland, the order hopes to found one for English speaking nuns and are raising funds for that purpose.



PRESENTATION BROTHERS

*'Here I am Lord,
I come to do your will.'*

Psalm 40

Today the Lord is calling men and women to follow Him in a radical way. People are opening their hearts and responding with generosity, joy and enthusiasm.



PRESENTATION BROTHERS

Presentation Brothers follow Christ as religious brothers. Our mission is evangelisation – bringing the message of Christ to young people today. If you think the Lord is calling you to this exciting mission, then we'd love to hear from you!

Forming Christ in the Young

Pope St. John Paul II said, "Every generation is like a new continent to be won for Christ!" Youth ministry is at the heart of our vocation as Presentation Brothers. We work as youth leaders, teachers, chaplains and many diverse roles to help young people form a personal relationship with Christ.

Evangelisation and Faith Development

Our Brothers at the Mardyke House Community at the heart of Cork City run the L.E.A.F. PROJECT. The Leadership Education and Formation Project is a new ministry focussed on helping young adults increase their knowledge of the Catholic faith and developing young faith leaders for the faith.

The Mardyke House Community in collaboration with the Diocese of Cork & Ross, the UCC Chaplaincy Team and other faith groups has become a hub for youth ministry and evangelisation.

We run the Sycamore and 'Called to More' programmes, along with many workshops, retreats and gatherings related to the faith search of young adults. The Presentation Brothers are part of the very successful 'CONNECT' young adult movement within the Diocese of Cork & Ross.

Serving Those in Need

Love of neighbour is perhaps the most effective witness we give to our faith. Presentation Brothers, in the spirit of our founder, Blessed Edmund Rice, are involved in working with and empowering people at the margins, including refugees and asylum seekers.

So, if you have a passion for evangelisation and service, get in touch!

DISCERNMENT – Becoming a Brother

The process of becoming a Presentation Brother is an exciting spiritual adventure, taken over several years. The first step is usually an informal chat with the Vocations Director. This is a good opportunity to ask questions and to learn more about our life, community, and mission. After that, the process begins:

Accompaniment

This is a series of regular meetings with the Vocation Director over several months. You will be guided through a process of discernment. This will enable you to reach a prayerful decision about your next step.

Community Experience (9 months)

We invite men who wish to take the next step to spend around 9 months (September to May), in our Mardyke House Formation Community in Cork. This time is an opportunity to experience and deepen your understanding of our prayer life, community, and mission.

Novitiate (2 years)

Novitiate is the first formal step into the Religious Life. It is a period of spiritual preparation. It involves prayer, reflection, and study – a decisive turning point towards the Lord in a person's life.

Profession of Temporary Vows

At the end of novitiate, the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience are taken, initially for a period of one year at a time. This period of temporary vows can last for up to six years depending on the individual candidate. During this time, the young Brother gains further experience of Presentation life and mission. Further studies in theology, education and other aspects of ministry are undertaken, along with practical placements in community and mission.

Profession of Final Vows

After prayer and careful discernment, on the part of the

individual and the community, the young Presentation Brother now makes profession of final vows for life. He becomes a full member of the Congregation sharing in the charism of Brotherhood and the mission of 'forming Christ in the Young'.

The Vocation of the Presentation Brothers

We are a Catholic congregation of religious brothers working in several countries around the world. Our vows remind us of the priority of God and free us to serve other people. We live in groups called communities and this helps us support one another in our mission. Our vocation is a challenging one, but it is deeply rewarding.

We believe the Lord is calling men to answer this call today. Pope Francis says:

*"How wonderful it is to be surprised
by God's call, to embrace his word,
and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus."*

If you are drawn to this way of life, our message is "Do not be afraid!"

The Next Step

Contact our Vocations Director by phone, text or email. He can help answer any questions you might have. He is also available to meet you for an informal conversation.

We also organise vocation discernment groups and live-in weekends. These are relaxed and informal opportunities to help understand our religious life better. If you are interested in any of these options, our Vocations Director would be delighted to speak with you and give you more details!

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
ON THE VOCATION AND MISSION
OF THE PRESENTATION BROTHERS,
OR FOR A CHAT ABOUT VOCATION
DISCERNMENT, PLEASE CONTACT:**

VOCATIONS OFFICE

**Presentation Brothers
Mardyke House
Mardyke Walk
Cork T12W8RP**

**Mobile 087 2260531
Email leafprojectpb@gmail.com**

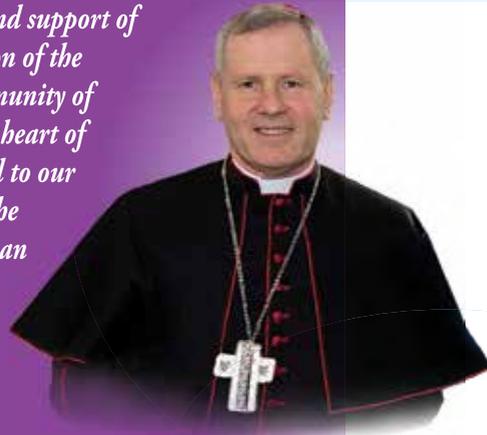
■ *“A 2015 Vatican document, along with the more recent words of Pope Francis in Fratelli Tutti (2020) point to the need to take a fresh look at brotherhood and sisterhood for humanity. Against this backdrop, it is perhaps timely to look afresh at the vocation of the Religious Brother in the world today”.*

■ *“The vocation of the Brother is part of the answer that God gives to the absence of brotherhood which is wounding the world today”.*

Identity & Mission of the Religious Brother in the Church, Vatican document 2015.

■ *“Since coming to Cork & Ross as bishop, I have been hugely grateful for the collaboration and support of the Presentation Brothers in the mission of the Diocese. The Mardyke House is a community of prayer, welcome and hospitality at the heart of Cork. The L.E.A.F. PROJECT is central to our mission with young adults. I welcome the opportunity to encourage any young man attracted to the charisma of forming Christ in the young to consider the Presentation Brothers way of life”.*

✠ Fintan Gavin,
Bishop of Cork & Ross



■ *“Since coming into contact with the Presentation Brothers Mardyke Community, we have found great support for our work as a university chaplaincy team. The central importance the Brothers attach to accompanying young people on their faith journeys, along with their openness and hospitality are truly inspirational. We pray that young men will join them in this mission”.*

Miriam Goulding,
UCC Chaplain



■ *“We are a Congregation in renewal, facing a great mission, here in Ireland. Through the Leadership Education and Formation Project, (L.E.A.F.), and our collaboration with other faith groups we are responding to new needs in the area of evangelisation, justice and peace. We welcome new people. We are multi-cultural and international. As a West Indian, who is now an Irish citizen, I am very aware that vocations are now coming from all sectors of Irish society, including the new Irish communities. We invite young men to join us, in following Jesus, as missionary disciples, facing the new challenges of today”.*

Br. Barry Noel,
Congregation Leader,
Presentation Brothers



■ *“The Presentation Brothers are amazing!!! They have been such a gift to our whole team since we moved to Cork. I am confident that we are part of the same mission as I see their love for evangelisation, forming Christian leaders, and hospitality. They are sincerely listening to the Lord and following His will in their lives. I’m excited to see what young men the Lord will call to join them!”*

Áine Lee,
FOCUS Missionary Team

■ Simon’s Story

Simon Fernandes made first profession of vows as a Presentation Brother in 2019. He completed a degree in theology and sociology at St. Patrick’s College, Maynooth. He is now a chaplain at Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh, Bishopstown, Cork, as well as completing the P.M.E. course in UCC. Simon was born and grew up in Pakistan, a country where Christians are a small minority. Here Simon shares his vocation story.



Simon’s Story: A Journey in Faith, an Adventure in Hope

The Faith of My Grandmother

I feel like I have always had a desire to be of service to my fellow human beings and to God. Therefore, I believe that my vocation story began since I was a young boy at the age of 5. I have memories of my grandmother taking me for evening Mass. She would go to Church hours before Mass began. She wanted to pray the Rosary with the other women, while I played with the children. I would come into the Church and sit down on the kneelers during the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, before the Mass. I recall being reverent, even as a young child. At home, we said the Rosary almost daily and some night prayers. To this day, I still remember those prayers by heart.

Inspiring Lives

As I grew older and started hanging out with my friends and extended family I always clung to the Rosary as my basic prayer and said it almost daily. As I grew into my teens, I was part of the Altar Servers and Lectors. I always wanted to help and serve, in any way I could. I was much influenced by the lives of the Brothers and Sisters that I daily met at Mass but never understood this as a calling to join the Religious Life. It was their kindness and the generosity of their lives, along with their good works which inspired me.

Pre-Medical Studies

As I still was unsure what direction to take in life, I pursued my education in the field of pre-medical studies. Then I began to think about Religious Life. However, it took me two years to discern if that was really what I wanted to do with my life. So, during that time I worked as a trainee Dialysis Technician and lived a typical young adult life. Even though I saw the medical profession as a great way of service, I felt a strong urge to commit myself to something deeper and more spiritual. Then I was introduced to the Presentation Brothers. I sensed, almost from the beginning, that this is the missionary discipleship kind of journey I would like to travel.

God at work in my Life

During my initial formation I have really experienced and understood God’s love for me in a unique way. This has helped me to respond to God’s call and to give my life in the service of my sisters and brothers. I feel that God, has always been at work in my life leading me from one experience to another. I have a special devotion to Mary, and this is a strong feature of the spirituality of the Presentation Brothers. My journey in the Presentation Way of Life has truly been a journey in faith and an adventure in hope. I still have a long way to go in my formation and much to learn. However, I believe God is with me every step of the way.

Consider the Challenge of Religious Life

The happiness of the Brothers I have met has impressed me, their prayer and community life, along with the Presentation charism for forming Christ in the young. I would encourage any young man or woman, who is searching for a deeper meaning and challenge to consider Religious Life! Our suffering world needs the witness of true brothers and sisters.



FOCUS Missionary Team (LtoR): Eva Conroy; Brendan Keenan; Ireland Johnson; Áine Lee.

“There are very few people who realise what God would make of them if they abandoned themselves entirely into His hands and let themselves be formed by His grace.”

(St. Ignatius of Loyola).



■ Our Newest Brother:

Br. Antony Sahayampillai (28), originally from Sri Lanka, is now studying in Cork. He will make first profession of vows on Saturday, 1 June, anniversary of the birth of Blessed Edmund Rice.



■ VOCATION DISCERNMENT – PRAYER, COMMUNITY, FORMATION

If you a young man considering vocation, especially to Religious Life, spending 9 months (September – May) as part of an intentional community of discernment may be exactly what you need to help you make a decision. Prayer, formation and living Presentation community and mission are part of this experience. If you are interested in exploring this possibility, then we would love to hear from you!



"How wonderful it is to be surprised by God's call, to embrace his word, and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus."

Pope Francis



PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

LORD of the Harvest,

BLESS young people with the gift of courage to respond to your call. Open their hearts to great ideals, to great things.

INSPIRE all of your disciples to mutual love and giving - for vocations blossom in the good soil of faithful people.

INSTILL those in religious life, parish ministries, and families with the confidence and grace to invite others to embrace the bold and noble path of a life consecrated to you.

UNITE us to Jesus through prayer and sacrament, so that we may cooperate with you in building your reign of mercy and truth, of justice and peace.

We pray for all the vocations of the Christian life – which are like so many rays of the one light of Christ whose radiance brightens the face of the Church.

We pray especially for vocations to the Presentation Brothers, so that their witness to you and the mission of forming Christ in young people may flourish anew in our time.

Amen

"Do not be afraid, for I am your God: I will strengthen you, I will help you"
(Is. 41:10)

Give
Us a
Call,
Text or
Email.

Mobile 087 2260531

Email leafprojectpb@gmail.com

The Passionists

Remembering the Love of God that flows from the Cross

for information about becoming
a Passionist priest or brother, contact

Fr Paul Francis Spencer CP
Passionist Vocations Office
St Paul's Retreat
Mount Argus
Dublin 6W

passionistvocations@gmail.com

passionists.ie



WARMING HEARTS WITH THE LOVE OF GOD

May the LORD Give You Peace!

Who will heal wounds and warm hearts today?

In our time, Pope Francis has said, "The thing the Church needs most is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity. I see the Church as a field hospital after battle".

Franciscan friars (OFM) are present in eight locations around Ireland, living a life based on the Gospel, observing the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and seeking to heal wounds and warm hearts with the love of God.

Eight centuries ago, our founder, St. Francis of Assisi gave the friars a similar task: "We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way".

St. Francis wrote a rule of life for the brothers, a rule we still base our lives on today. He called it "the marrow of the Gospel" because our call is to follow Jesus Christ and to make Him known and loved.

Friars in Ireland are working today as chaplains and in third level, in education, in pastoral ministry, as counselors, as retreat directors, spiritual directors, advocates for the poor and supporters of the overseas missions. In everyday encounters, both within our communities and outside, the healing of wounds and the warming of hearts is continuing.



Friars Aidan, Liam and Damian at the celebration of the Eight Centenary of the Franciscan Rule last November.



The novices in Killarney friary celebrate Br Vianney's birthday

This is a mission we feel called to. Perhaps you feel drawn to this Gospel way of life? If you would like to find out more visit www.franciscans.ie and learn more about our way of life.

"Come and See" Franciscans



If you are interested in the Franciscan way of life, please contact:

Friar Liam Kelly OFM
Phone 087 396 0262
Email irishfranciscansofm@gmail.com
Postal address Franciscan Friary, Ennis, Co Clare.

Poor Clare Sisters, Cork

Sr Colette Marie and Sr Anthony Mary



The Poor Clare Sisters are an enclosed Order of nuns, belonging to the Franciscan family.

We were founded in Assisi by St. Francis and St. Clare. Here in Cork we are privileged to have daily Eucharistic Adoration. St. Clare had immense love for Jesus in the Blessed Eucharist and we continue this tradition of prayer before Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. We intercede before Jesus for the needs of the entire world, particularly for those who are suffering in any way.

Young women, who are considering a religious vocation, are most welcome to contact us and we will be happy to be of assistance in discerning what is God's will for each one.



Sr Faustina

God's will is always for your good! He loves you and He knows where you will find happiness in serving Him and helping people.

The Poor Clare Sister follows the Lord in a hidden way that is rooted in faith, faith in a loving God, Who asks us to work with Him for the good of the whole world!

Vocations Afternoon for young women: Saturday May 25th, 2 - 4 pm, at the Poor Clare Monastery, College Road, Cork

For more information see our website poorclarescork.ie or email us vocationspoorclarescork@gmail.com

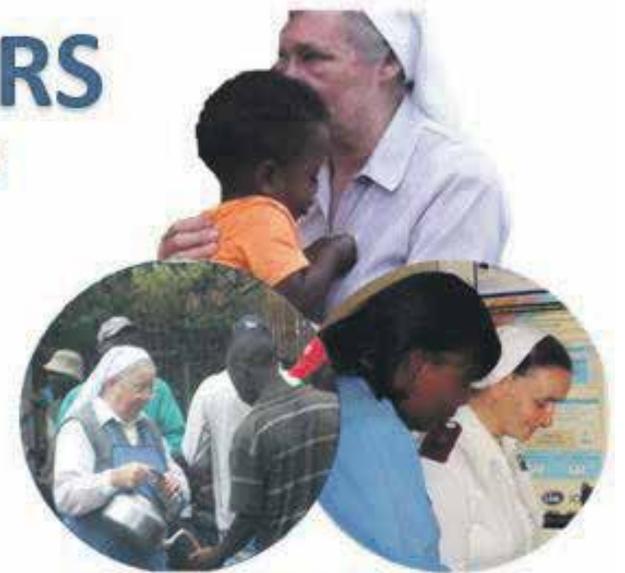
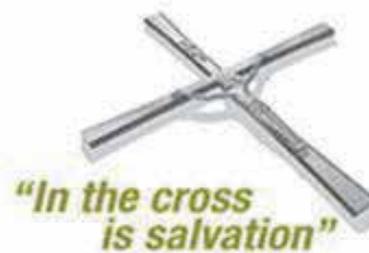


HOLY CROSS SISTERS Southern African Province

THIS IS MY CALL...
THIS IS OUR CALL...
COULD IT BE YOUR CALL?

to be immersed in human reality and to be a

TRANSFORMING PRESENCE in our context today...



'May Jesus live in our hearts.'

Mother Bernarda



For more information contact:

Holy Cross Sisters

86 Glen Road

BELFAST BT11 8BH

Telephone: 0044 28 9061 4631

E-mail: holycrossbelfast@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.holycross-menzingen.org>



THE SYNODAL TIMES

“Synodality is what the Lord expects from the Church of the third millennium” – Pope Francis

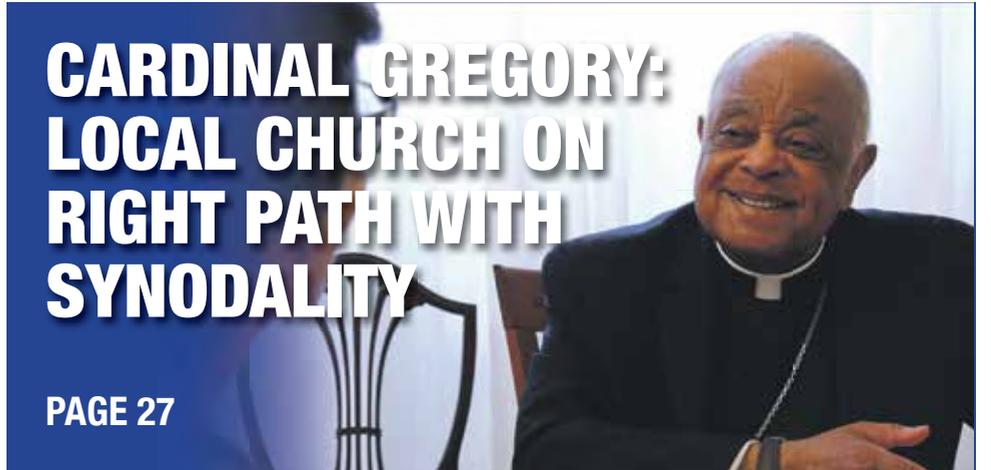
THE KENYAN STYLE OF SYNODALITY

PAGE 29



CARDINAL GREGORY: LOCAL CHURCH ON RIGHT PATH WITH SYNODALITY

PAGE 27



Synodality comes to Knock

On Friday, April 19 and Saturday, April 20 an international conference on Synodality takes place in conjunction with Notre Dame University, Perth, Australia. The theme of the two-day conference is ‘Synodality explored – Facing the Future’ and it will be facilitated by Prof. Eamonn Conway, who is now based at Notre Dame University, Australia.

Keynote speaker on both days will be **Cardinal Mario Grech**. Cardinal Grech has been Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops since September 2020. Formerly Bishop of Gozo, Malta and President of the Maltese Bishops’ Conference.

The conference will be facilitated by **Prof. Eamonn Conway**. Fr Eamonn Conway is a priest of the archdiocese of Tuam. Having served as Head of Theology & Religious Studies at Mary Immaculate College from 1999-2023, he now holds the Inaugural Chair of Integral Human Development at the University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA).

His early research interests included the works of Karl Rahner and Hans Urs Von Balthasar and in recent years he has been at the forefront of researching and advocating for the distinctiveness of Catholic Education.

He is currently working on a book on the interface between Catholic Education and Integral Human Development for CUA Press (Washington DC). A past president of the European Society for Catholic Theol-

ogy and the Peter Hünermann Foundation, he has researched and published widely on synodality.

In July 2023 Pope Francis appointed him to serve as an expert advisor to the 16th General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

Day One:

Fr Declan Hurley served as Co-Chair of the National Steering Committee for the Synodal Pathway in Ireland. He defended his doctoral thesis on the Book of Job at the Institut Catholique, Paris, in 2008. He currently serves as Administrator of Navan Parish (Diocese of Meath) and Vicar General.

Prof. Renee Kohler-Ryan is Deputy Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, Philosophy & Theology at the University of Notre Dame Australia. She holds a PhD in Philosophy from Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

She served as a delegate to the Plenary Council of the Catholic Church in Australia 2021-2022 and was appointed by Pope Francis as a voting Member of the 16th General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops representing Oceania. Professor Kohler-Ryan teaches Aesthetics, Philosophy of the Human Person, and Political Philosophy, as well as courses that emphasise the importance of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition.

She has published *Companions in the Between: Augustine, Desmond, and their Communities of Love*, and has a forthcoming book on Stein’s *Essays on Woman*.



Pope Francis is pictured in an August 26, 2018, photo praying as he visits the Chapel of the Apparitions at Ireland’s Knock Shrine. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

She serves on the Reference Group for Studies in Catholic Thought, which reports to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

Day Two:

Julieann Moran is the General Secretary of the Synodal Pathway of the Catholic Church in Ireland. She was formerly the National Secretary for the Society of Missionary Children at Missio Ireland, where she spent her time raising mission awareness and developing evangelisation resources for dioceses, parishes, and schools across the island of Ireland.

From 2010 to 2016 Ms Moran was the Project Officer for the Council for Pastoral Renewal and Adult Faith Development with the Irish Catholic Bishops’ Conference and has much expertise in delivering workshops, training, and other programmes that focus on enabling people to discover and develop their faith.

Rev. Dr Dermot Ryan is a priest of the Diocese of Ossory. Having served as a Curate in Ferrybank (2001-2004) he undertook post-graduate studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, completing a thesis on the Ecclesial Voca-

tion of a Theologian.

On return to his native Diocese he served in various appointments: Curate of Mooncoin; Chaplain of St Kieran’s College; Curate of Thomastown; and he is currently President of St Kieran’s College, and Administrator of St Mary’s Cathedral Parish. He also serves as the Director of Adult Faith Development for the Diocese of Ossory.

In addition to his other diocesan responsibilities, he lectures in Systematic Theology at Carlow College and has developed the MyFaith Sacramental Preparation Programme and the Aspal Digital Faith Platform.

Austin Burke is 23 years old and from Ballina Co. Mayo and is pursuing a Degree in Business at TUS in Limerick. Austin is an organist in St Muredach’s Cathedral and St Patrick’s Church in Ballina and on the Pilgrimage Island of Lough Derg in Co. Donegal each summer. He also plays music in Lourdes for The Irish Pilgrimage Trust on their Easter Pilgrimage Week.

Josephine Enenmo is a Nigerian and a religious sister of the Congregation of Our Lady of Apostles (OLA). She is currently the director of Religious Formation Ministry Programme, Dublin.

NEXT WEEK: FULL ANALYSIS OF THE KNOCK CONFERENCE

Cardinal Gregory sees ‘Dignitas infinita’ as balanced, challenging document

US Cardinal Wilton Gregory, the Archbishop of Washington, DC, spoke with *Vatican News* about human dignity, the National Eucharistic Revival, and the Synod on Synodality.

Christopher Wells

D*ignitas infinita* (DI), the Vatican’s new Declaration on human dignity, is “probably the most comprehensive summary” of Church teaching on the topic “that could be issued at this time”, says Cardinal Wilton Gregory.

The Archbishop of Washington, DC, spoke with *Vatican News* during a visit to Rome for The Papal Foundation Board Meeting and the Rector’s Dinner at the Pontifical North American College, where he will receive the “Rector’s Award”.

Asked about the issues raised by DI, Cardinal Gregory acknowledged that the document touched on a number of “hot-button” issues and has sparked controversy on various sides. “But if you take the document as a whole,” he says, “it’s not a document about one specific issue beyond the fact that it treats human individuals, human people, as dignified in a way that is irreplaceable, that we never lose the dignity that God entrusts to us as he creates us”.

He notes that the Declaration is “humble in its context, but also very, very deeply rooted in Catholic moral and anthropological teachings”.

A challenging document

At the same time, Cardinal Gregory says he thinks DI will be a “challenge” for people. “Everyone – maybe that’s an overstatement – people will probably find something that they agree wholeheartedly with, and something that they will have to think about.”

“And to be perfectly honest,” he adds, “I think that’s the sign of a successful document. It affirms that which you understand, accept, hold and cling to, but it also stretches you to consider other dimensions of our ecclesial life, of our social life, that may pose a challenge”.

Using the example of the death penalty, Cardinal Greg-



Cardinal Wilton D Gregory of Washington speaks with Catholic News Service Senior Correspondent Carol Glatz during an interview at the Pontifical North American College in Rome April 10, 2024. Photo: CNS/Justin McLellan

ory notes that the Church as “continually strengthened its opposition to capital punishment”, moving towards the position that it is never really justified. “And for a number of people, that’s going to be an issue,” the Cardinal says, while emphasising that DI insists that even people who have committed heinous crimes “have not lost the dignity that they had from the day of their conception”.

Issues of critical importance

Cardinal Gregory went on to highlight a number of issues of critical importance to his own Archdiocese of Washington, notably the treatment of LGBTQ+ people and individuals concerned about their

gender identity.

“The document has to both recognise their human dignity, but also call them to accept and realise the fact that God has given them the dignity of an identity in their creation,” he says.

“We also have to look at the simple fact... that there are consequences to being a Eucharistic people”

The Cardinal also calls attention to the “dignity of our migrant commu-

nity”. Sometimes, he says, migrants “are being denigrated” by those who have “very strong feelings” about immigration, while at the same time, questions are raised about how to “admit and respect people who come to our borders looking for the same life advantages” that the ancestors of current residents sought when they came to America in the past. “So those issues are going to be of critical importance,” Cardinal Gregory says.

Dignitas infinita, he concludes, is “a very balanced document, and a very balanced way to look at the whole range of issues that call to mind [the question], ‘How can we better respect human dignity at every moment of its existence?’”

Who we are as a Eucharistic people

Asked about the ongoing National Eucharistic Revival in the United States, Cardinal Gregory says the US Bishops were motivated in part by an understanding that some of the Church’s teachings about

the Eucharist “have not been passed on effectively to a new generation”.

At the same time, he insists, “we also have to look at the simple fact... that there are consequences to being a Eucharistic people. The consequences are, you become that which you receive. You act in the name of the Christ whose meal you have shared”.

Cardinal Gregory goes on to explain that “the Eucharistic Revival is certainly intended to bring a deeper awareness and an acceptance of the Church’s teaching, but it also has to focus on who we are as a Eucharistic people. How are we to behave? When I dine with the Lord of life, what obligations flow from that encounter?”

Archdiocese blessed with honest dialogue

The US cardinal also spoke about the synodal process, begun three years ago and continuing this fall with the second session of the General Assembly of the Synod

on Synodality. “I’m very fortunate to be the pastor of I think a well-organised synodal community,” says Cardinal Gregory, highlighting the faithful of the Archdiocese of Washington who have taken leadership in the local Church.

“I feel blessed that we’re on the right path as a local Church,” the Archbishop says, adding that synodality “has gotten a lot of attention and generated a lot of interest. Cardinal Gregory says his Archdiocese has been “blessed... with honest dialogue”.

Acknowledging that the synodality is not going to immediately solve every issue, the Cardinal explains that “listening and speaking in charity means that you can raise issues that are still unresolved, still controversial, but at the heart of it, you do it in a reverential way for the person who’s speaking”, adding that that was his experience in the first session of the Synod’s General Assembly.

i Originally reported by *Vatican News*.

“Listening and speaking in charity means that you can raise issues that are still unresolved, still controversial, but at the heart of it, you do it in a reverential way for the person who’s speaking”

Inside the Pope's last resting place



Luca Attanasio visits St Mary Major in Rome and speaks to the staff about where the Pope has said will be his burial site

In an interview by Valentina Alazraki the Mexican correspondent in the Vatican for the Mexican television channel N+, last mid December, Pope Francis announced that he is preparing his tomb in the Basilica of Saint Mary Major. "The place is ready. I want to be buried at Saint Mary Major – said Francis – "it is my great devotion". The announcement was surprising not because Francis would be among the Popes buried outside St Peter's – there are actually many popes who lie far from the basilica that is the centre of Christianity – but because he would be the first since 1914 not to be buried in the Vatican grottoes (although some of them – after their canonisation – were later

moved inside the Vatican Basilica. The last in order of time: St John XXIII and St John Paul II, (who are buried in the right aisle of the Upper Basilica, ed.).

“He always came here even when he was not Pope and passed through Rome from Argentina”

The devotion Pope Francis speaks of is to the icon of the Salus Populi Romani (salvation of the Roman people), which tradition attributes directly to the work of the Evangelist Luke and is undoubtedly one of the most important Marian images in the Italian capital and the world. The magnificent icon is located in the Pauline Chapel, also known as the Borghese Chapel, the largest chapel in the left aisle of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major in Rome. If the Pope's intention is granted, therefore, Francis will most likely be buried in this chapel, likely under the same icon of the Virgin Mary. "But nothing is certain yet," explained a member of

“If the pope were buried here, he would be in very good company. The basilica of Saint Mary Major, in fact, houses the tombs of various pontiffs”

the reception staff I met in the basilica, "actually for the moment it is only rumours linked to a wish expressed by Pope Francis, but nothing is certain. If it is the case, he would be buried in the Chapel of the icon of Maria Salus Populi Romani that the Pope venerates". "He was always devoted to the icon of Our Lady 'Salus Populi Romani'," another staff member interjects. "He always came here even when he was not Pope and passed through Rome from Argentina". "He also once confessed to us – a third staff member urged him – this detail: 'You will never have noticed it,' he told us, 'because at the time my person was mostly unknown outside Argentina, but as a cardinal I used to come here very often to pray under that magnificent icon'".

Tradition

If the Pope were buried here, he would be in very good company. The basilica of Saint Mary Major, in fact, houses the tombs of various pontiffs, Pope Honorius III (pontificate: 1216-1227), Pope Nicholas IV (pontificate: 1288-1292), Pope Pius V (pontificate: 1566-1572), Pope Sixtus V

(pontificate: 1585-1590), Pope Clement VIII (pontificate: 1592-1605), Pope Paul V (pontificate: 1605-1621), Pope Clement IX (pontificate: 1667-1669). And, as said above, he would be the first pontiff in more than 120 years to choose to be buried outside St Peter's. The last was Leo XIII, buried in St John Lateran, the cathedral of the Bishop of Rome, in 1903.

“By contrast, there are very few cases of popes being buried outside Italian borders”

The tradition of burying popes in St Peter's Basilica dates back to the 4th century. However, over the centuries, some pontiffs have chosen to be buried elsewhere for various reasons: personal choices or for religious, sentimental or political reasons. "There are several popes who have requested to be buried in their homeland," one of the Basilica's assistants goes on to explain, "one of them was John Paul II, who had expressed the wish, once he had died, to be buried in Poland. In fact, even before his death, Pope *Wojtyła* was already in the odor of sanctity and it was deemed appropriate to bury him together with the other popes at St Peter's". In some circumstances, however, burial outside the Vatican

“With the gift of the Rose to the Salus, Pope Francis underlines the spiritual importance and profound significance of this icon in the life of the Catholic Church”

– as the Omnes website explains – was imposed for historical or political reasons. For example, Pope Gregory XII, who died in 1415, was buried in the cathedral of San Flaviano in Recanati, his hometown. St Peter's Basilica (including the Vatican Grottoes) houses the tombs of about ninety popes, while in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls (where portraits representing all the popes who succeeded St Peter can be admired in the main aisle), only two popes are buried: St. Felix III (483-492), who had a family tomb there, and John XIII (965-972), who expressly requested it in his will.

By contrast, there are very few cases of popes being buried outside Italian borders. These include some from the period around the transfer of Pope Clement V in 1309 from Rome to Avignon. The French town remained the seat of the papacy for about 70 years and John XXII, Benedict XII, Clement VI, Innocent VI and Urban V were buried in French towns.

Homage

Francis went to Saint Mary

Major the morning after the night of the Conclave, 14 March 2013, to dedicate his pontificate to Mary, and has turned to her several times, for example during the pandemic. On Friday December 8 2023, on the occasion of the traditional visit to the Papal Basilica of Saint Mary Major for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Pope Francis has paid homage to the venerated icon of the Salus Populi Romani with the Golden Rose. With the gift of the Rose to the Salus, Pope Francis underlines the spiritual importance and profound significance of this icon in the life of the Catholic Church, as it is also the oldest Marian shrine in the West dedicated to the Mother of God. "Pope Francis," one of the attendants concludes, "is very attached to this church. Every time he leaves on a trip and returns, for example, he passes by here to say his prayers and thanks and always kneels in prayer under that icon." "We," jokes the first staff member, "see him more often here than our colleagues in Santa Marta....".



We're called to live synodality in 'international, intercultural communities': Rome-based priest to Spiritans in Kenya

Fr don Bosco Onyalla

The Church is inviting her members to promote, through practice, the spirit of Synodality, journeying and carrying out the mission of Jesus Christ through a collaborative approach, a Rome-based member of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Spiritans/Holy Ghost Fathers) has said.

Addressing his confreres ministering in Kenya on Tuesday, April 9 at St Austin's Msongari Catholic Parish of the Catholic Archdiocese of Nairobi, Fr Jeff Duaine emphasized the need for Spiritans to embrace and support the reality of "international and intercultural communities".

The Congregation has made a deliberate shift from "the national model" that saw Spiritans from particular countries taking up missions in specific countries, Fr Jeff said, referring to the old practice when Irish Spiritans were assigned to Nigeria and Kenya, and native of the US and Netherlands to Tanzania.

Shift

The US-born Spiritan Priest said that the shift has been realised in the reality of "international, intercultural Spiritan communities", which he said are "offering witness to the local church".

"That's the reality of the Church, the internationality, the diversity, the mosaic," he said, adding that Spiritans in Kenya are witnesses to this diversity of the Church, and that they are facilitating the "discovering of God present in a mosaic".

While "no one doubts that the Spiritan mission in Kenya is alive and thriving", Fr Jeff said, what is needed "is to respond to the call to finding a way of working together to support each other and the Spiritan mission".

The First Assistant of Fr Alain Mayama, the first African Superior General of the 321-year-old Missionary Congregation thanked his multi-national confreres ministering in Kenya "for all

“Fr Jeff Duaine emphasized the need for Spiritans to embrace and support the reality of ‘international and intercultural communities’”

that you have done to give witness to who we are as Spiritans".

He recognised the reality of challenges in their mission in the East African nation, saying, "As a Congregation, we are very much a human institution".

“It's a new beginning; an opportunity to start afresh, to do things in a different way... a new way of coming together”

"But, we believe and we know that the Holy Spirit is working. So, despite our humanity, despite misunderstandings, mistakes, and failures as we come together, right now, with the grace of God, great things are happening," the Spiritan Priest, who had his first missionary apostolate in Haiti said.

He urged Spiritans in Kenya to go beyond their respective challenges, emphasising the need to "go beyond nationality, to go beyond where we come from, to go beyond the languages we speak and the ideologies we may have, (and instead) to participate in the call that God has given to us as Spiritans".

"That's the challenge," he went on to say, and explained, "It's a new beginning; an opportunity to start afresh, to do things in a different way... a new way of coming together, a new way of living together, a new way of supporting one another".

"What is that call about?" he posed, and responded with the illustration of Jesus Christ, to put new wines in new wineskins, where both the wine and the skin are preserved. "That means, create different ways of doing things," Fr Jeff emphasised in his April 9 address to over 40 Spiritans ministering in Kenya.

He also underscored the need for trust, support, and solidarity, "trusting each other, trusting the leadership ... that they are doing their best, making decisions for the best interest of the mission".



Kenyan Catholic devotees attend the re-enactment of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, during Good Friday procession in the Kibera settlement of Nairobi, Kenya March 29, 2024. (OSV News photo/Thomas Mukoya, Reuters)

Responding to the challenge of doing things in a "different way", he further said, involves "being attentive to what the (Holy) Spirit is calling us to; to leave behind the old ways ... to create and find new ways of doing things".

The response involves "walking together and working together, sharing your concerns, your burdens, and allowing the encounter with Jesus ... the spirit of synodality", the Spiritan Priest further said, adding, "That's what the Church is calling us to today, the spirit of synodality, listening to each other very carefully, supporting one another".

Contribution

He cautioned against competition that sees one type of Spiritan mission "greater than another". In his considered view, each and particular ministry, including Parishes in the peripheries, urban and slum, education, "all go to create this wonderful mosaic of Spiritan mission".

Fr Jeff urged Spiritans ministering in Kenya to take up the challenge of the first Catholic US President John F Kennedy in his historical statement, "Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country".

"That's the challenge the Spiritans need to take ... engage the leadership with ways of supporting the Province ... each of us has something to contribute to the mission," the US-born Spiritan Priest said.

He also underlined the need to harness the efforts being put in the mission of the Church, and the need "to live our Spiritan life authentically". "Support one another," Fr Jeff emphasised during his April 9 address.

“He had embraced the call by the Congregation during the 2021 Chapter in Bagamoyo, Tanzania, to do ‘something new’”

On his part, the Provincial Superior of Spiritans in Kenya and South Sudan, Fr Frederick Elima Wafula, highlighted the objectives of the occasional meeting.

The gathering provided the opportunity for Spiritan confreres to share experiences of their respective apostolates, the Provincial Leadership

“If you are doing it alone, if I'm doing it alone, it ends nowhere. Create a space where without you, your initiatives can always continue”

Team (PLT) to continue "planning, evaluation and reporting on the implementation of chapter decisions", and to "carry out the animation program as laid out by the General Council", Fr Wafula said.

The Kenyan-born Spiritan Priest, who has been Provincial Superior in Kenya and South Sudan since March 1 following his appointment on February 9 said he had embraced the call by the Congregation during the 2021 Chapter in Bagamoyo, Tanzania, to do "something new".

"On my part doing something new means doing it right, correct, following procedures and guidelines, creating synergy, and accepting to be corrected in order to have peace, harmony and unity," said, adding that "the end purpose is to remain faithful to our Mission (evangelisation of the poor) as a Congregation and to our charism".

Mandate

Fr Wafula emphasised the need to foster collaborative

ministry, saying, "As Spiritans, we have a mandate; as PLT, we have a mandate; as a confrere, you have a mandate ... This mandate is possible to accomplish only when we are working and walking together, holding each other's arms, as part and parcel of our missionary journey".

"If you are doing it alone, if I'm doing it alone, it ends nowhere. Create a space where without you, your initiatives can always continue," he emphasised.

The Provincial Superior in Kenya and South Sudan welcomed new Spiritans commissioned to the Province, who hail from Ghana, Nigeria, Brazil, and Angola.

Other Spiritans ministering in the Province of Kenya and South Sudan are natives of Uganda, Tanzania, Madagascar, Gabon, Sierra Leone, Vietnam, and Ireland.

ACI Africa's Editor-in-Chief, Fr Don Bosco Onyalla, is a member of the Spiritans.



World Report

IN BRIEF

Pope Francis to travel to Indonesia, Singapore, East Timor, and Papua New Guinea

● Pope Francis will travel to the Southeast Asian countries of Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, East Timor, and Singapore later this year, the Vatican announced last week.

The 11-day multi-country voyage from September 2–13 will be the longest international trip of Francis' papacy.

The trip announcement comes after the 87-year-old Pope has slowed down his travel schedule in recent months as health issues have forced him to cancel some public appearances. Francis, who often uses a wheelchair, has not travelled internationally since September 2023.

13-year-old Filipina who loved the Eucharist is officially on path to sainthood

● On April 7, the cause for canonisation of 13-year-old Filipina Niña Ruiz-Abad was officially opened at the Cathedral of St William the Hermit in Laoag City, Philippines, coinciding with Divine Mercy Sunday.

The event marked the first step of a lengthy process of making Ms Ruiz-Abad one of

the youngest saints in history. Bishop Renato Mayugba of Laoag City headed the tribunal to hear witnesses testify to the life and holiness of the Servant of God, who has been described as "an inspiration of piety, mercy, evangelisation, and fortitude to others".

Portuguese bishops announce financial compensation fund for Church abuse victims

● The Portuguese Episcopal Conference announced last week the creation of a "financial compensation" fund for victims of Church abuse in that country.

The Conferência Episcopal Portuguesa (CEP) said on its website that the bishops at their plenary assembly "unanimously approved the allocation of financial compensation, on a supplementary basis, to victims of sexual abuse against vulnerable children and adults in the context of the Catholic Church in Portugal".

The assembly had convened in Fátima on Monday of this week. The fund "will count on the solidarity contribution of all dioceses" in the country, the announcement said.

An independent commission authorised by the Portuguese bishops found last year that thousands of children had been sexually abused by priests and others within the Church in that country since the 1950s.

Pope decries how 'the unborn with disabilities are aborted'

● Pope Francis decried how "the unborn with disabilities are aborted" in a speech last week to a Vatican conference on disability inclusion.

The Pope warned that "the throwaway culture" turns into "a culture of death" when people "presume to be able to establish, on the basis of utilitarian and functional criteria, when a life has value and is worth being lived".

He pointed out that we see this today especially on the two extremes of the spectrum of life - "the unborn with disabilities are aborted and the elderly close to the end are administered an 'easy death' by euthanasia".

According to the University of Notre Dame's McGrath Institute for Church Life, it's estimated that there are as many as 27,000 abortions annually due to a poor prenatal diagnosis in the United States.

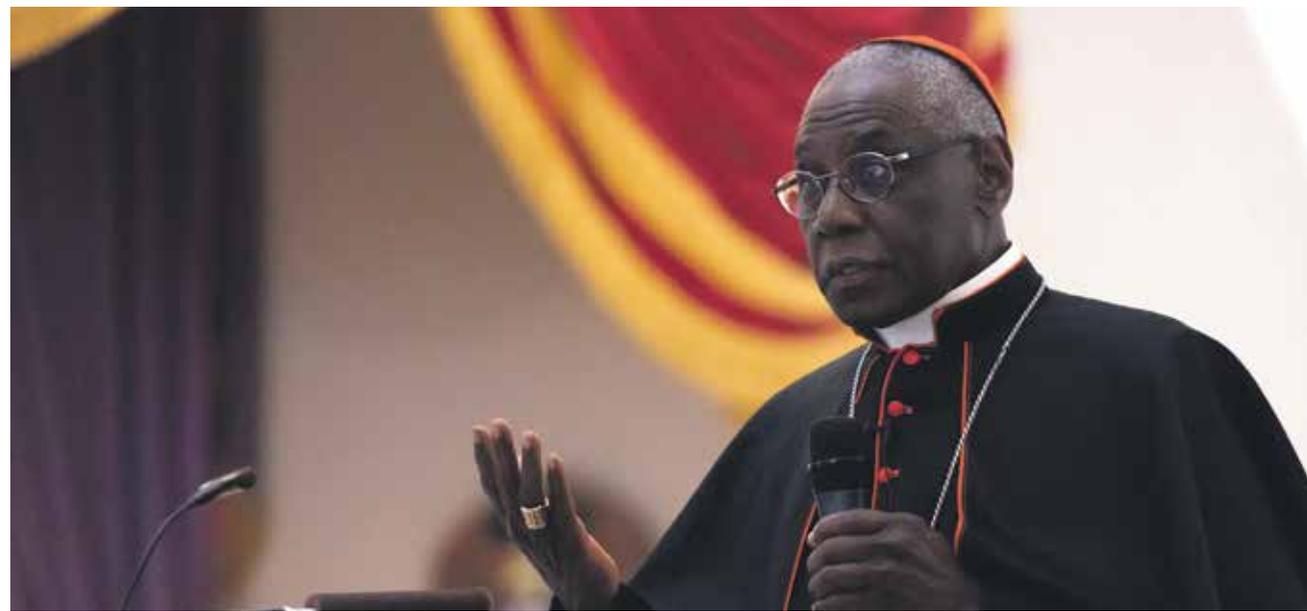
After protest from Catholics, blasphemous crisp ad pulled in Italy

● An Italian Catholic watchdog group says a blasphemous ad featuring a priest consecrating crisps in place of Eucharistic hosts has been ordered pulled from the airwaves.

The Italian Association of Radio and Television Listeners (Associazione Italiana Ascoltatori Radio e Televisione, AIART) last week had called for the immediate suspension of an advertisement by the Italian company Amica Chips, one that the group said "offends the religious sensitivity of millions of practicing Catholics."

In the advertisement, an abbess fills a ciborium with crisps instead of Eucharistic hosts prior to Mass, after which a priest distributes one of the crisps to a nun during holy Communion. As the communicants are visibly surprised to discover the crisps in place of hosts, the abbess looks on unconcernedly as she eats from the bag of crisps.

African cardinal says Western prelates have lost their nerve



Guinean Cardinal Robert Sarah answers questions in the US. (CNS photo/Kevin J. Parks, Catholic Review)

An African cardinal widely seen as a conservative critic of Pope Francis, and styled by some as possible candidate for the papacy himself, has warned of what he described as a "practical atheism" taking hold within the Catholic Church.

Cardinal Robert Sarah of Guinea also repeated his criticism of *Fiducia Supplicans*, the recent Vatican document authorising blessings of couples involved in same-sex unions, insisting that it's not just traditional African culture but Catholic teaching itself which makes the document unacceptable.

Speaking to the episcopal conference of Cameroon, Cardinal Robert Sarah of Guinea, the Vatican's former top official for liturgy, criticised Western bishops for their reluctance to oppose secular worldly values, accusing them of a failure of nerve.

"Many Western prelates are tetanised

by the idea of opposing the world. They dream of being loved by the world; they've lost the desire to be a sign of contradiction," said the 78-year-old Sarah.

Sarah told the Cameroonian bishops he believes "the Church of our time is experiencing the temptation of atheism. Not intellectual atheism, but that subtle and dangerous state of mind [of] fluid and practical atheism".

"The latter is a dangerous disease, even if its initial symptoms seem benign," he said. According to Sarah, practical atheism is more insidious than its intellectual counterpart, as it does not declare itself openly but seeps into every aspect of contemporary culture, including ecclesiastical discourse.

He asserted that the Church and its leadership has been guilty of "accommodating, of complicity with this major lie that is fluid and practical atheism".

"We pretend to be Christian believers and men of faith.

We celebrate religious rites, but in fact we live as pagans and unbelievers," Sarah said. Sarah described "fluid and practical atheism" as a treacherous and elusive force. He compared it to being caught in a spider's web, where efforts to escape only tighten its grip. This brand of atheism, he argues, is a masterful trap set by Satan himself.

Referring to the October 2024 session of the ongoing Synod of Bishops on Synodality, Sarah praised the spirited defence African Church leaders have mounted of traditional doctrine and values. "At the last Synod, the Church in Africa forcefully defended the dignity of the man and woman created by God. Her voice was ignored and scorned by those whose sole obsession is to please Western lobbies," Sarah said.

Australian archbishop condemns attack on Orthodox Assyrian clergy

Catholic Archbishop Anthony Fisher called the stabbing of Orthodox Assyrian Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel and Fr Isaac Royel "shocking and has caused distress to many in the community". A 16-year-old boy stabbed and injured the two men at Christ the Good Shepherd Church in Syd-

ney on Monday night. The attacker was arrested on Tuesday, and his victims are expected to survive. Bishop Emmanuel was born in Iraq, and is known to preach Christianity to both Muslims and Jewish people. "It does appear to be religiously motivated, but we continue our lines of inves-

tigation," said Mike Burgess, the director general of the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO), the nation's main domestic spy agency.

In a statement, Archbishop Fisher said houses of prayer have traditionally been places of refuge and sanctuary, "and so the video

footage of the attack upon a religious leader during a religious service inside a church has been especially confronting". "The images of the violence that subsequently occurred outside the church are also confronting," the archbishop said.

Brazilian bishops celebrate medical council banning method of abortion

Brazil's bishops celebrated a new resolution of the Federal Medical Council (CFM) determining that doctors cannot induce cardiac arrest on an unborn child with more than 22 weeks of pregnancy. The

norm, however, is being challenged by prosecutors and legislators and may not last too long.

On March 21, CFM published the resolution 2378/2024, which states that

physicians are not allowed to perform a procedure known as foetal asystole after 22 weeks of pregnancy, a moment in which the viability of the baby's life out of the mother's womb is considered

to be significant.

Foetal asystole is usually produced with an injection of potassium chloride inside the unborn child's heart. Dead, the foetus is then taken out from the mother's uterus.

Letter from Rome

Pope Francis reinstates papal title 'Patriarch of the West' in Pontifical yearbook



Matthew Santucci

In the 2024 edition of the *"Annuario Pontificio"*, or Pontifical Yearbook, released last week, Pope Francis reinstated the ancient, honorary pontifical title of "Patriarch of the West", reversing Pope Benedict XVI's 2006 decision to suspend the title.

This honorific designation has reappeared among the list of "historical titles" used to designate the theological and temporal reality of the pontifical office. Those include Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, and Metropolitan Archbishop of the Province of Rome, among others.

Following Pope Benedict XVI's decision to drop the title in 2006, the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity (then the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity) issued a statement noting that it had become "obsolete" and "no longer usable".

The dicastery argued that the cultural and geographic understanding of the West had expanded from Western Europe to also cover North America, Australia, and New Zealand.

"The renunciation of this title is intended to express historical and theological realism and, at the same time, to be the renunciation of a claim, a renunciation that could be of benefit to ecumenical dialogue," the dicastery said at the time.

"The decision would run the risk of being 'mainly speculative' and 'not grounded in a serious understanding of ecclesial administration'"

The title "Patriarch of the West" was adopted in the year 642 by Pope Theodore and was used for centuries, though it was not until 1863, during the pontificate of Pope Pius IX, that the title first appeared in the *Annuario Pontificio*.

Aristomenis 'Menios' Papadimitriou, a historian of religion at Fordham University specialising in modern Christianity, told CNA via email that any attempt to read into the decision would run the risk of being "mainly speculative"



Pope Francis waves as he rides in the popemobile around St Peter's Square at the Vatican before his weekly general audience April 10, 2024. Photo: CNS/Pablo Esparza

and "not grounded in a serious understanding of ecclesial administration".

Patriarch

But Papadimitriou noted that "at the heart of it lies the question of the historic and contemporary meaning of the episcopal honorific of 'patriarch' and [the life] of that term through the vicissitudes of history".

Neither the dicastery nor the Holy See Press Office has released a statement explaining Pope Francis' decision to reinstate the title.

This is not the first time Pope Francis has made changes to the papal titles in the *Annuario Pontificio*, the more-than-2,400-page long official directory of the Catholic Church's global leadership and structure.

The honorifics were previously published

above the volume's short papal biography, but as of 2020 they are listed below that biography in smaller font and identified as 'Historical Titles'. According to Matteo Bruni, the director of the Holy See Press Office, the 2020 decision was "intended to indicate the link with the history of the Pope" rather than "historicising" the titles themselves.

"The pope's decision to reintroduce the honorific of Patriarch of the West 'is part of the rediscovery of confraternity'"

That same year, Cardinal Gerhard Mueller, the Vatican's former doctrinal

chief, rebuffed the move, calling it an act of "theological barbarism".

He argued that the revised yearbook mixed the term "Vicar of Christ" with designations that "have nothing to do with primacy and have only grown historically but [have] no dogmatic meaning, such as 'Sovereign of Vatican City State'".

Nikos Tzoitis, an analyst in the press office of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and former spokesperson for Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, argued in an April 6 article that the pope's decision to reintroduce the honorific of Patriarch of the West "is part of the rediscovery of confraternity".

Importance

"In this way, he wants to emphasise the importance of

the lost synodality in the Lord's Church, which expresses his Body and has synodality as a tool," Mr Tzoitis wrote.

Pope Francis has cemented ecumenical dialogue as one of the main priorities of his pontificate.

In 2014 Francis, during an apostolic visit to the Holy Land, met with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the historic meeting between Pope Paul VI and Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I of Constantinople on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem in 1964.

That was the first formal meeting of a pope and ecumenical patriarch since 1438, marking a paradigm shift in the ecumenical relations between the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches.

"We need to believe that, just as the stone before the tomb was cast aside, so too every obstacle to our full communion will also be removed," Pope Francis said during his 2014 address with the Ecumenical Patriarch.

"We need to believe that, just as the stone before the tomb was cast aside, so too every obstacle to our full communion will also be removed"

Matthew Santucci is a CNA Rome correspondent based in EWTN's Vatican bureau.

Letters

Letter of the week

Preserve the sanctity of the Mass

Dear Editor, I fully agree with the sentiments expressed by Fr Barry Matthews, Fr Joe Deegan, and Fr Tom Ryan regarding online Mass [*The Irish Catholic* – April 11, 2024].

While livestreamed Mass has undoubtedly been a lifeline for many during times of restricted physical gath-

ering, it is essential to recognise its limitations. The Mass is not merely a spectacle to be observed but a sacred ritual to be actively participated in, where one can truly experience the presence of God and the communion of believers.

Fr Deegan's emphasis on the importance of physical

presence and community interaction is essential. The richness of the Mass encompasses the shared prayers, the communal worship, and the fellowship of believers.

As we navigate the post-pandemic landscape, it is crucial to encourage a return to physical attendance at Mass while contin-

uing to offer support and accommodation for those unable to attend in person. Let us strive to preserve the sanctity of the Mass and uphold its significance as the central act of worship in our faith.

Yours etc.,
Geraldine O'Reilly
Harold's Cross, Dublin 6W

Pray for Gaza suffering to end

Dear Editor, I ask everyone who believes in prayer to pray for the suffering people of Gaza. In all my 70 years I have never heard of such horrific and heartbreaking pain and suffering as that seen in Gaza among the unfortunate Palestinian people. Over 33,000 Palestinians, almost half of them children, have been killed by the Israeli forces, the IDF. There are so many orphans and parents who have lost their beautiful children. There are innumerable terrible injuries. The infrastructure and homes in Gaza are destroyed. People are homeless there.

We must also pray for the Israeli hostages taken by Hamas. May God grant that they will be released to their families.

What's happening in Gaza, Rafah and the West Bank is utterly horrendous and heartbreaking and anyone who believes in God must pray that this terrible suffering will end.

Yours etc.
Anthony Redmond
Drimnagh, Dublin 12



Don't create confusion and disharmony

Dear Editor, The letters on this page often reflect the disunity within our Church. Unfortunately decades have passed where laity were not catechised and this sows a faith that questions, criticises and at times borders on heresy.

Our Catholic faith comes from sacred scripture, sacred tradition and the teaching of the magisterium. It is not à

la carte menu you can pick and choose from. If you go to Mass but you don't believe the teachings of the Catholic Church on priesthood, LGBT issues, abortion, euthanasia, that is not faith. You are not in full communion with the Catholic Church.

Bring your questions to a catechism class, an orthodox priest or an orthodox nun. By orthodox I mean a priest or

religious who believes and follows Catholic teaching, not one who creates disharmony and disunity by constantly questioning Church teaching.

Be proactive in deepening your faith. We are created to know and love God. The more you know him, the more you will trust him and trust his teachings.

Don't listen to second-hand information on social

media about what Pope Francis is trying to teach us. Look up his documents and statements and read them for yourself.

Please don't create confusion and disharmony with others who may have a weak faith. It is not fair on Jesus and it is not fair on our Church.

Yours etc.,
Fiona Kiely
Bartlemy, Co. Cork

Putting manners on the media and Govt

Dear Editor, The prominent role of Senator McDowell in the defeat of the two recent referendums merely underlines the failure of the pro-life leadership in the previous referendum, about the 8th Amendment, to detach a significant support from within the so-called liberal heartland.

The pro-life leadership continues unelected and when it appeared before the cameras for the campaign to retain the 8th, what we saw were people with

no record of winning anything.

For years that leadership has failed adequately to document the bias of the liberal media, or to coordinate those of us who tilted against it and were fobbed off with its high-bar and forensic complaints procedures.

As a result, it is quite normal now to meet people who think there was no bias at all. Senator McDowell, on the other hand, made it central to his effort to put manners on the media and on the

Government spin doctors.

Nor did the pro-life leadership try, with any real conviction, to create a grass-root movement. Living in Limerick City at the time of the campaign to remove the 8th, I counted about 40 of us present on the first night of the pro-life canvas. It grew to over 100: all too little and too late.

Yours etc.,
Gerald O'Carroll
Ballylongford, Co. Kerry

Irish Church's restructuring lacks any semblance of synodality

April 10, 2024 will be noted in the annals as a significant day for the Church in the west of Ireland, because after almost 900 years the number of dioceses in the province was reduced from six to three. Two years ago, a new bishop was appointed to Galway with responsibility for the diocese of Clonfert. Now the Archbishop of Tuam has been given responsibility for the diocese of Killala and the Bishop of Elphin for Achonry.

History sometimes invites comparisons. The initial establishment of diocesan boundaries in Ireland took place at the Synod of Rathbreasail, in Tipperary, in the year 1111. According to the Annals, there were more than 50 bishops present, "together with 300 priests, and 3,000 ecclesiastics" along with other nobles of the province. The final configuration of the dioceses was made at the Synod of Kells in 1152, with the boundaries almost entirely unchanged since then.

During the 12th Century there were at least 12 national synods in Ireland. Today synodality is on the top of the Church's agenda, with the plan for some form of national synodal assemblies in Ireland in 2026. Yet a major restructuring of dioceses, or rather mergers, is taking place entirely apart from any synodal process.

When the dioceses were first established in Ireland, it was part of a more general 12th Century Church reform going on across Europe, driven by a series of reforming popes. However, the drawing up of the actual boundaries was left to those actually attending the various synods. They were not imposed by Rome. Rather, Rome accepted the outcome of these local synods.

Now that Pope Francis speaks of a synodal Church, one might expect that the restructuring of dioceses today would be an agenda item for a national synod as it was in the great reforming 12th Century synods. The fact that the restructuring of dioceses is not being addressed in a synodal fashion invites a question about the seriousness of the bishops' own commitment to synodality.

Although the Archbishop of Tuam mentioned 'consultations' having preceded the decision, these were in fact minimal – a brief visit by the Nuncio to the four dioceses concerned – with a small number of selected people and some written submissions. These could hardly be construed as particularly synodal or genuinely discerning processes. The Bishop of Achonry in a letter read at Masses said that the nuncio met with priests representatives and "several" members of the lay faithful in leadership positions – in other words middle-management.

Pope Francis spoke early in his pontificate of a need for decentralisation. Yet, in light of the way the announcement of the mergers was made, it had all the appearances of a decision made at the centre and not at the 'peripheries'. However, there is no indication that the Irish episcopal conference showed any enthusiasm or took any initiative to deal with the rationalisation of dioceses that was so obviously needed and had been recommended by the Holy See following its Visitations in 2012. Perhaps had they taken the initiative a more imaginative approach to the restructuring might have occurred, engaging the entire country.

The Pope also regularly condemns clericalism. He might add hierarchicalism – of which clericalism is the child. Hierarchicalism – the process or policy of organising as a hierarchy – is characterised by a lack of accountability, the ability to act with impunity and prioritising its own self-preservation. The way in which the announcement of the mergers was made was an icon of hierarchicalism. It appeared rather odd that when the Nuncio chose to make his announcement about the new mergers, he did so outside the two dioceses that were to be most affected, those about to be merged. Adding to the strangeness of the event, only the bishops of the province were present, in full regalia, with no representation, either priests or laity, from the dioceses being merged.

A huge opportunity to show busy, sceptical clergy that the hierarchy means to operate differently, in a synodal fashion, different than before was lost. And so, some clergy and laity will quite rightly discern that the rhetoric of synodality, of consultation and travelling together as Church in Ireland remains largely just rhetoric.

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.

God's exuberant energy

All things considered; I believe that I grew up with a relatively healthy concept of God. The God of my youth, the God that I was catechised into, was not unduly punishing, arbitrary, or judgmental. Granted, he was omnipresent so that all of our sins were noticed and noted; but, at the end of the day, he was fair, loving, personally concerned for each of us, and wonderfully protective to the point of providing each of us with a personal guardian angel. That God gave me permission to live without too much fear and without any particularly crippling religious neuroses.

Notions

But that only gets you so far in life. Not having an unhealthy notion of God doesn't necessarily mean you have a particularly healthy one. The God who I was raised on was not overly stern and judgmental, but neither was he very joyous, playful, witty, or humorous. Especially, he wasn't sexual, and had a particularly vigilant and uncompromising eye in that area. Essentially he was sombre, heavy, and not very joyous to be around. Around him, you had to be solemn and reverent. I remember the assistant director at our Oblate novitiate telling us that there is no recorded incident, ever, of Jesus having laughed.

Under such a God you had permission to be essentially healthy. However, to the extent



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

that you took him seriously, you still walked through life less than fully robust and your relationship with him could only be solemn and reverent.

“We see energy as the primal force that lies at the heart of everything that exists, animate and inanimate”

Then, beginning more than a generation ago, there was a strong reaction in many churches and in the culture to this concept of God. Popular theology and spirituality set out to correct this, sometimes with an undue vigour. What they presented instead was a laughing Jesus and a dancing God, and while this was not without its value, it still left us begging for a deeper literature about the nature of God and what that might mean for us in terms of a health and relationships.

That literature won't be easy to write, not just because God is ineffable, but because God's energy is also ineffable. What, indeed, is energy? We rarely ask this question because we take energy as something so primal

that it cannot be defined but only taken as a given, as self-evident. We see energy as the primal force that lies at the heart of everything that exists, animate and inanimate. Moreover, we feel energy, powerfully, within ourselves. We know energy, we feel energy, but we rarely recognise its origins, its prodigiousness, its joy, its goodness, its effervescence, and its exuberance. Moreover, we rarely recognise what it tells us about God. What does it tell us?

Prodigy

The first quality of energy is its prodigiousness. It is prodigal beyond our imagination and this speaks something about God. What kind of creator makes billions of throwaway universes? What kind of creator makes trillions upon trillions of species of life, millions of them never to be seen by the human eye? What kind of father or mother has billions of children?

And what does the exuberance in the energy of young children say about our creator? What does their playfulness suggest about what must also lie inside of sacred energy? What does the energy of a young puppy tell us

about what's sacred? What do laughter, wit, and irony tell us about God?

No doubt the energy we see around us and feel irrepressibly within us tells us that, underneath, before and below everything else, there flows a sacred force, both physical and spiritual, which is at its root, joyous, happy, playful, exuberant, effervescent, and deeply personal and loving. God is the ground of that energy. That energy speaks of God and that energy tells us why God made us and what kind of permissions God is giving us for living out our lives.

“At the very centre of everything there lies an unimaginable energy that is not an impersonal force, but a person, a loving self-conscious mind and heart”

God is ineffable, that is the first truth that we hold about God. That means that God cannot

be imagined or ever circumscribed in a concept. All images of God are inadequate; but, that being admitted, we might try to imagine things this way. At the very centre of everything there lies an unimaginable energy that is not an impersonal force, but a person, a loving self-conscious mind and heart. From this ground, this person, issues forth all energy, all creativity, all power, all love, all nourishment, and all beauty. Moreover, that energy, at its sacred root, is not just creative, intelligent, personal, and loving, it's also joyous, colourful, witty, playful, humorous, erotic, and exuberant at its very core. To live in it is to feel a constant invitation to gratitude.

The challenge of our lives is to live inside that energy in a way that honours both it and its origins. That means keeping our shoes off before the burning bush as we respect its sacredness, even as we constantly receive permission from it to be robust, free, joyous, humorous, and playful – without feeling we are stealing fire from the gods.

“What they presented instead was a laughing Jesus and a dancing God, and while this was not without its value, it still left us begging for a deeper literature about the nature of God and what that might mean for us in terms of a health and relationships”

‘I know my sheep and they know me’



Bassem, a Palestinian shepherd, herds sheep and goats on the hillsides of Zanuta, West Bank, April 2, 2022. Photo: CNS

Acts 4:8-12
Ps 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26,
28, 29
1 Jn 3:1-2
Jn 10:11-18

Good Shepherd Sunday

Jem Sullivan



Throughout 2,000 years of Christian history, artistic expressions of faith can always be found.

From the rustic art of the early Roman catacombs to the monumental Byzantine Romanesque basilicas to the soaring Gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages, to the artistic torrent of the Renaissance and Baroque, the truths of Christian faith through the ages have taken the form of the beautiful in countless masterpieces of sacred art, sacred architecture and sacred music.

Image

For the first Christians, the cross of Jesus was a stark reminder of a cruel, inhuman form of torture and death reserved for crimi-

nals and enemies of the Roman empire.

So how did the early church begin to visualise the meaning of Jesus' life, death and resurrection?

“He is shown as a simple, yet robust shepherd who carries one lost sheep on his shoulders, while other sheep stand close”

The Gospel image of Jesus the Good Shepherd, described by Jesus himself in the Gospel reading on this Fourth Sunday of Easter, attracted the first Christians.

In fact, one of the earliest artistic depictions of Jesus is a 3rd Century fresco

discovered in the Roman Catacomb of Priscilla that portrays Jesus as the Good Shepherd.

He is shown as a simple, yet robust shepherd who carries one lost sheep on his shoulders, while other sheep stand close to their master.

For the first Christians, the Gospel image of Jesus the Good Shepherd summed up faith in Jesus as the Son of God who rescues from the power of sin and restores humanity to friendship with God.

Inspiration

This Sunday's Gospel most likely inspired the early Christians who painted Jesus the Good Shepherd on the walls of the ancient catacombs.

“For the first Christians, the Gospel image of Jesus the Good Shepherd summed up faith in Jesus as the Son of God who rescues from the power of sin and restores humanity to friendship with God”

In the 10th chapter of the Gospel of St John, Jesus invites his disciples – and us – to experience his loving mercy as the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep.

“Jesus desires to stay close to his flock, whom he longs to rescue from the grip of self-love, alienation and even despair”

As a shepherd, Jesus remains close to his sheep, sharing in their daily life with love and tenderness.

Jesus also warns his disciples against shepherds

“As the Easter season unfolds, may we encounter Jesus the Good Shepherd as the one sent by God to lead us to the loving mercy of God within the community of his body, the Church”

who are not to be trusted.

Those who are hired hands, working for pay, and whose only interest is their own well-being and self-preservation are to be avoided.

At the first signs of danger, such false shepherds abandon the flock to wolves, who eventually scatter or kill the helpless sheep.

Jesus desires to stay close to his flock, whom he longs to rescue from the grip of self-love, alienation and even despair.

He was willing to carry out God's saving plan with his very life. So Jesus says, “I will lay down my life for my sheep ... they will hear my voice and there will be one flock, one shepherd.”

As the Easter season unfolds, may we encounter

Jesus the Good Shepherd as the one sent by God to lead us to the loving mercy of God within the community of his body, the Church.

In these Easter days, may we encounter in Jesus the Good Shepherd the divine care, providential protection and daily guidance we seek, as we pray in faith, “Speak to me, Lord.”

Question: How do you encounter Jesus as the Good Shepherd?

i Jem Sullivan holds a doctorate in religious education and is an associate professor of Catechetics in the School of Theology and Religious Studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



RTÉ bias on abortion on full show

So many important matters were teased out in the media last week – it's challenging to have a life and keep on top of it all!

There was a telling interview on **Drivetime** (RTÉ Radio 1, Friday). Cormac Ó hEadhra interviewed the Iranian Ambassador and pressed him hard on Iranian support for Hamas.

The surprising thing was that the ambassador said he had attended the recent Fine Gael Ard Fheis and was due to attend the Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis of last weekend. The Israeli Ambassador had not been invited to either gathering.

The presenter asked him if Iranian human rights abuses had been raised with him at the FG Ard-Fheis – he said they hadn't. It seemed like a bizarre case of double standards.

Of course, this was before the dramatic events of last Saturday night when Iran launched a few hundred missiles and drones directly at Israel – I was glued to the news channels in trepidation, but fortunately defences worked well and no one was killed.

Last week the Cass Report into the treatment of children with gender dysphoria was published. It got exten-

sive coverage in the UK, but not so much here, even though it is particularly relevant as Irish children have been sent to the controversial Tavistock gender clinic in the UK, and because the report will influence future directions in Ireland.

The quiet reaction here might have something to do with how critical report was of how children were not well served by the approach of gender services. That approach seems to have been guided by ideology rather than science, with activists getting a disproportionate role in setting the direction of strategy.

It did get an airing on **Drivetime** (RTÉ Radio 1, Wednesday). There was an interview with Prof. Donal O'Shea who treats transgender people at St Columcille's Hospital in Loughlinstown. For him the report was "welcome" and "comprehensive" and he seemed a moderate voice working in this area of medicine.

Dr Chris Noone lecturer in psychology in University of Galway and also on the board of the National LGBT Federation was critical of some of the report's methods for collating. There was no voice even daring to suggest that ideology, delusion or hysteria might be playing



RTÉ bias on abortion was on full show in a programme on Monday, not heeding at all the voices of pro lifers. Photo: John McElroy.

a role in this modern phenomenon.

Another story that got some small amount of coverage was the re-organisation of Catholic dioceses in the West of Ireland. **Newstalk Breakfast** (Thursday) discussed the issue with Fr David Vard, at age 32 one of the youngest priests in Ireland. He agreed it was a significant change, the first of its kind in 900 years, but he thought it was good news, a chance for small diocese to join forces and resources.

While declining numbers of church goers and vocations was part of the reason, he thought in general Irish dioceses were too small – in fact some parishes in the

East were bigger than some dioceses in the West (population-wise I presume).

The same issue was explored on **This Week** (RTÉ Radio 1, Sunday) when reporter Gavin O'Callaghan travelled in the West of Ireland with Fr John Kenny. There was quite a geographical spread and where there were once five priests now there was just himself, with help from an Indian priest in the neighbourhood and a local priest retiring. "You can't cover the ground," he said. While living alone, he said he had a good support network among his colleagues, always "someone at the end of the phone for me".

PICK OF THE WEEK

SONGS OF PRAISE

BBC One Sunday, April 21, 1.25pm

Rev. Kate Bottley is in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, meeting Christians who are contributing to their communities through their acts of service and selflessness.

HOPE - OUR LADY OF KNOCK

EWTN Sunday, April 21, 9pm

A historical docudrama that covers the events leading up to and following the apparition of the Blessed Mother, St Joseph, St John, and the Eucharistic miracle that occurred in Knock, Ireland in 1897.

FILM: A HIDDEN LIFE

Channel 4 Sunday (night) April 21, 12.50am

(2019) Epic, critically acclaimed World War II drama, written and directed by Terrence Malick, set in rural Austria and following the life story of Franz Jägerstätter (August Diehl), a conscientious objector. Recommended.

RTÉ's bias on the abortion issue, in News and Current Affairs, is sometimes subtle, sometimes blatant – last Monday's **Morning Ireland** (RTÉ Radio 1) was an egregious example of the latter. It was a promo for last Monday night's **RTÉ Investigates** programme on abortion services in Ireland, and wouldn't you know, amounted to a big push for liberalisation of the law – an attempt to undermine the three-day waiting period, the 12-week limit and the measures to on foetal abnormality.

The strategy is always the

same – point out the alleged deficiencies of the law, have personal stories from one side only, and have experts presented as if they were neutral.

When will there be an 'RTÉ Investigates' report on the more than doubling of abortion figures since repeal, or the suffering of these living babies, or the inherent discrimination against the disabled, or the millions spent on this destruction, or the pressures on doctors to get involved if they want to be employed?

Film

Aubrey Malone



Blistering biopic of jazz world's self-destructive demise

Few people have names more applicable to the way they lived than Amy Winehouse. How many hours did she spend in such establishments?

She died at 27, thereby becoming a member of the '27 Club', an ill-fated gathering of rock legends that also included people like Kurt Cobain, Brian Jones, Jim Morrison, Robert Johnson, Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix.

They all died at that ridiculously young age, thereby issuing a stark warning to anyone else with a similar hard-living lifestyle.

Marisa Abela is a brilliant lookalike – and soundalike – for Winehouse in *Back to Black* (15), a captivating

reconstruction of her 'Chanel Number Pub' life. It gets its title from her album of the same name. It became the best-selling one of the century after she died.

Sam Taylor-Johnson chronicles her meteoric rise from rudimentary guitar-strumming in Camden to megastardom before drink and drugs wrest it away from her. "Music is my rehab," she crows. But then "real" rehab looms.

Beginning with scenes featuring her touching relationship with her beloved gran (Lesley Manville) and concerned, bewildered, father (Eddie Marsan) it segues into a clunky marriage to 'bad boy' Blake (Jack O'Connell) before love proves to be a 'losing



Marisa Abela as Amy Winehouse in *Back to Black* (2024).

game'. His raffishness precipitates her nadir as the klieg lights of foraging paparazzi vultures tip her over the edge.

Abela radiates an electric charge as the jazz aficionado who refuses to bend the knee to the 'suits' who want to

manufacture her US career robotically. Her gran warns her not to turn into another Charlie Parker. He died at 35, she says... looking 60.

But already, we feel, it's too late.

Singers who die young are

frozen in time. They're like the elfin Winehouse or the Adonis-like Morrison. In cinema we think of James Dean in his leather jacket astride his motorcar rather than crushed like a cigarette packet inside it on a Cholame highway. Or the impossibly beautiful Marilyn Monroe flashing that 1000-watt smile at us instead of clutching a telephone cable in a run-down house in Brentwood after taking an overdose of Nembutal.

In the past year we've seen the premature deaths of three of our own musical icons – Christy Dignam, Shane MacGowan and Sinead O'Connor. All three clung to life despite their problems or excesses.

Winehouse didn't. In this she resembled Billie Holiday,

another victim of addiction. Winehouse sounds very much like her here. Holiday lived until she was 44. That's practically geriatric for substance abusers in the music cosmos.

Winehouse is iconic today. We may not remember where we were when she died like we do for Elvis or JFK but she was the present generation's especial prodigy, wailing her way to nirvana.

In the early years of this century as I read almost daily reports of her indulgences I thought of how tiny she looked, how waifish, how fragile.

People like Amy shuffle off the mortal coil almost nonchalantly. We can only console ourselves with the wonderful musical legacies they've bequeathed us.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



A century of 'The Hidden Ireland'

The Hidden Ireland,
by Daniel Corkery
(Wipf and Stock, Eugene,
Oregon, \$35.00 / €33.50 /
£26.00; other editions widely
available on line)

Peter Costello

This is a reissue of a book by an established writer and patriot which was written a century ago, back in 1924, and issued in Dublin by an Irish publisher. It is a cultural landmark from what was the first year of real peace that Ireland had known had since 1912.

On its appearance the *Irish News* noted presciently that "the brilliant Munsterman has written a book which will probably be regarded as one of the half dozen Irish books published in 1924 which will be remembered in 1939".

By 1954, it was in its fourth impression, a distinct achievement then for an Irish book. By the time he died in 1964 it was a widely available paperback.

The Hidden Ireland, however, while something of a genuine Irish classic, is still a disputed one. Its aim was to provide a broad overview of the state of poetry in 18th Century Munster and important poets such as Aoghán Ó Rathaille and Brian Merriman, which he believed was unknown to the Anglo-Ireland of the day.

Troubled

It was by a man who was having at the time a troubled passage in his career as a teacher. However, in 1925, perhaps on the basis of this book, he was made an inspector of Irish, a government post.

He had left his position at St Patrick's College in Cork after a row over promotion. There he had taught a boy who later became the writer Frank O'Connor. At this time he also knew Seán O'Faolain.

In 1930 he was made Professor of English at University College, Cork, where he had the warm support of Alfred O'Rahilly, the president of the college, who assisted him with the publication of *Synge and Anglo-Irish Literature* (Cork University Press, 1931).

However as O'Faolain later pointed out, though he would have been a bright addition to a department in a modern university otherwise fully equipped with teaching staff, but as far as English literature at UCC was concerned, he was all there was. The department hardly flourished under him.

Yet in thinking about Cork-

The Lonely Tree, a watercolour by Daniel Corkery of the Munster landscape.



ery we must recall that at the start of his career he was a literary rather than critical writer. It was as the author of *A Munster Twilight* and other works published after 1917 that he influenced those young men around him in a Cork moving towards the revolutionary years. This period is vividly described in the revealing memoirs of Frank O'Connor (*An Only Child*) and Sean O'Faolain (*Vive Moi!*).

“In his last years down to 1954 he devoted himself to the promotion of the Irish language with the all embracing ambition of creating a truly Irish Ireland”

Both Frank O'Connor and Sean O'Faolain have provided living but critical views of a man who so greatly influenced them in their lives and careers; but from whom they had to part if they were to survive as literary artists themselves.

Corkery published more books, but by the 1940s his

literary vocation failed, and in his last years down to 1954 he devoted himself to the promotion of the Irish language with the all embracing ambition of creating a truly Irish Ireland.

Synge

The book on Synge is a volume which nowadays will only be of interest to a Synge specialist. It has little to communicate to the ordinary reader about Anglo-Irish literature, and on Synge is too partial to help in an understanding of the playwright.

In the 1960s, however, the book at hand received the critical attention of one of the new school of Irish historians, Louis M. Cullen of TCD, in his critique *The Hidden Ireland: A Reassessment of a Concept* (new edition, Lilliput 1988).

But readers should not neglect Declan Kiberd's alternate view in *Synge and the Irish Language* (1979, new edition 1993), which showed Synge to be more a master of Irish than his critics had allowed.

Another view with a more Catholic perspective can be found in the monograph by Patrick Maume, *'Life that is Exile': Daniel Corkery and the Search for Irish Ireland* (Insti-

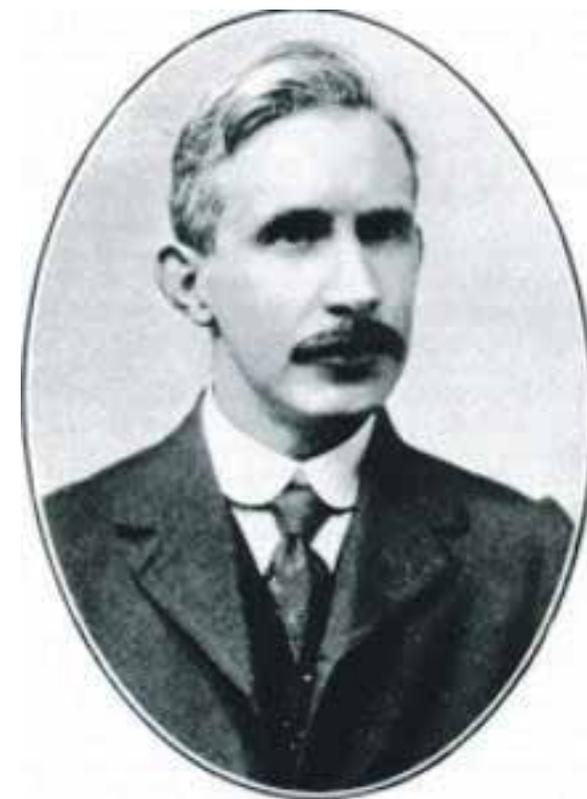
tute of Irish Studies, 1993).

The Hidden Ireland is a book which every student of Irish culture should have read at least once. Though now seen as less revealing of the 18th Century than it was when it was published, its influence on the thinking of the generation that created the first values of an independent Ireland was immense.

“It is less a work of history about a past society, than an outline of a society that might be created given the national will”

Today a more nuanced view of it can be taken, a more distanced view might be taken. Our view, too, of Catholic Gaelic speaking Ireland has evolved.

However, Corkery is still in print, and one imagines that in another century, young Irish citizens of Nigerian or Polish descent will be reading it to try and understand the complicated and contradictory culture of the country of which they will then be a



Daniel Corkery in his younger years.

rising part.

It is not a work of genius, but of passionate appeal. It is less a work of history about a past society, than an outline of a society that might be created given the national will.

It was what the Irish poets

he attempts to reanimate would have recognised as an *aisling*, a poet's visionary experience, but one recounted in prose. And it looks likely that such books, in Irish literary history, often have long lives.

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.

Ireland's 18th Century: A Thousand Piece Jigsaw



The smiling face of Irish innovation in the 18th Century: Dr Henry Quin of Dublin. Photo: Four Courts Press.

Speculative Minds in Georgian Ireland: Novelty, Experiment and Widening Horizons, ed. Toby Barnard and Alison FitzGerald (Four Courts Press, €50.00 / £45.95)

Peter Costello

Looking back on the Ireland of the 18th Century it appears at first glance to be settled picture, but on closer examination it turns out to be something of a jigsaw puzzle, with a multitude of separate and separable pieces each telling one a small part of a large complicated composition, far more complicated than Daniel Corkery in his day or some of the enthusiasts for Georgiana can quite comprehend in their different ways.

The cover of this book shows a portrait of Henry Quin, a leading Dublin doctor in Dublin painted, in 1770s. His will be an unfa-

“Through Quin it is possible to recover something of a world of enquiry, curiosity, experiment and speculation, influenced certainly by developments elsewhere, but not simply imitative”

miliar name, but his career is opened out by one of the editors, Tony Barnard, in his contribution.

Dismissive

He says that the common dismissive attitude of that day that Ireland contributed little to science was simply wrong, as the inventiveness of Quin shows. His achievement was to develop a method of making replicas of ancient carved cameos, known as ‘pastes’, which came to international fame.

“Quin’s achievements may well serve to switch attention away from tiny, landed and often titled elites to the principal innovators in later 18th Century Ireland. These professional people of industry and commerce are often hidden away through lack of documentation.

“Through Quin it is possible to recover something of a world of enquiry, curiosity, experiment and speculation,

influenced certainly by developments elsewhere, but not simply imitative.”

This, in brief, is the theme worked out in the other contributions, dealing with sugar making in Dublin, the trade in exotic plants, fashionable pottery, satirical prints, experiments in poor relief, developments in Jamaica, and glass making in Dublin – a rival to that of the Penroses in Waterford.

“The future of the country in reality lay not in rural Ireland but with these innovators”

This present book had its origin in a symposium held virtually in 2021. The contributors present a very complex picture, as one might expect, in which the simplified view of Daniel Corkery, if we can use his work as a certain view of the century, appears hardly to be history at all.

The future of the country in reality lay not in rural Ireland but with these innovators, as indeed the Church with its urban emphasis recognised.

Explaining the Modern World

The Crisis of Culture: Identity Politics and the Empire of Norms; Translated by Cynthia Schoch and Trista Selous (Hurst, £20.00)

Frank Litton

I have promised myself that should I win the lottery, I would employ an ‘explainer’. There is so much about the modern world that I do not ‘get’.

And it is not only TV advertisements and the films that they punctuate. Consider two recent puzzles. Constitutions are intricate.

Their composition demands the combined skills of a Machiavellian Prince and the wisdom of Plato’s philosopher kings to bring social conventions, legal theory, political and moral philosophy into harmony.

They are creatures of their time and as times move on they are amended. To justify an amendment, basic questions must be answered.

What are constitutions for? What belongs to a constitution and what to the legislature? What precisely does the constitution say and what are the implications of the new wording?

None of the professional politicians that populate our main political parties gave any thought to these questions as they proceeded to spend €20 million on the recent referendum.

They collapsed into incoherence when the questions were raised. What planet, I ask myself, do they inhabit? One where constitutions are no more than collections of slogans?

I cannot get my head around today’s preoccupation with ‘identity’. So it is no surprise that I was thrown into confusion by the invitation to celebrate ‘Transgender visibility day’.

I had thought that ‘transgender’ was not an identity, that invisibility was its object. So the ‘trans’ aspect of a male identifying as a woman should go unremarked as she raced to the finishing line well ahead of her [biological] female competitors.

You may be pleased to learn that while I have not won the lottery, I have found an ‘explainer’ who does address my confusions in a most helpful manner.

Olivier Roy is professor at the European University Institute in Florence. He has published six esteemed books on religion and politics. Now we have this general study of the condition of our western culture.

He distinguishes ‘anthropological culture’ from ‘high culture’. The former are the notions of what is and what should be that shapes our lives in common.

It is the shared ‘picture’ of the world that underpins cooperation and contains conflicts. High culture emerges from anthropological culture as we reflect on our condition, seeking to understand ourselves with the resources of art, literature, philosophy, history.

Anthropological

We should not overestimate the unifying power of anthropological culture. Diversity, difference, conflict are the order of the day. Sub-cultures are important.

For example, Irish emigrants brought their culture with them to the USA. It provided an ethnic identity that supported them in their struggles as they climbed the social ladder.

It now gives a distinctive flavour to their participation in the general culture. The dynamic between the general and subcultures, played out through history has formed our world.

Roy points out that the general culture is weakening. The dynamic is undone. We no longer have a map with its mountains and

“We have here an impoverished view of history joined with an indifference to the contribution of philosophy resulting in a politics that gives up on the future as it turns to enjoy righteous anger at the wrongs of the past”

plains with which to orientate ourselves.

We are lost and resort to ‘subcultures’ to find our identities, competing for recognition on the basis of the oppressions we have endured.

His explanation of why this is happening is necessarily complicated. He outlines the factors at play in lucid prose. Economics, of course, plays a major role.

Its lens which dominates how we see the world, presents us as individual consumers while putting out of view the fact that we are also producers, enmeshed in relationships beyond the ken of economics.

Love and commitment have been sidelined as contract and consent control engagements among the sexes.

Globalisation weakens the nation-state. Territory, a foundation of the nation-state loses its significance. The internet contributes to this ‘deterritorialisation’ as we roam the virtual world, face-to-screen encounters supplement, if not displace, face-to-face meetings.

The sense of commonality engendered by the nation-state finds no equivalent in this new world. Roy notes, with asperity, the feebleness of the European Union’s efforts to concoct a common European identity.

The impact on high culture is considerable. The humanities that once enabled us to see the past as tragedy, threaded with the hope of salvation, opening on to a better future, no longer supports such grand narratives.

History, now a melodrama, is flattened to a collection of unsavoury incidents whose relevance is disconnected from their distance in time.

The literary canon is dismissed as the work of privileged white patriarchs and imperialists, philosophy is ‘deconstructed’ to reveal the face of power it contrived to conceal.

The decision of Trinity College to remove the name Berkley, one of Trinity College’s most noted graduates and illustrious lecturer, illustrates the trend.

George Berkley (1685-1753) was a man of many parts, an Anglican minister, a bishop of Cloyne, an educationalist (with an interest in the education of women), an outstanding philosopher whose work continues to command attention and for a period, the owner of a plantation in Rhode Island, USA and of several slaves who worked there. It is this last that enraged students who mobilised to push for the ‘denaming’.

We have here an impoverished view of history joined with an indifference to the contribution of philosophy resulting in a politics that gives up on the future as it turns to enjoy righteous anger at the wrongs of the past.

Excusable in the uneducated young, unpardonable in those entrusted, by the taxpayer, to educate them and who colluded in their campaign.

Roy concludes “what we are living through now is a true crisis of humanism”. This is the modern world our elites would have us welcome.

i Olivier Roy is Professor at the European University Institute in Florence. Six of his highly acclaimed books on religion and politics are published by Hurst, including *Globalised Islam; Jihad and Death; Holy Ignorance; and Is Europe Christian?*

Classifieds

The deadline for advertising in the classifieds is 10.30am, the Friday before publication. Contact the Classified Team on 01 687 4027 or email advertising@irishcatholic.ie

We will pass on the flame of faith.

For over 130 years, The Irish Catholic has been a voice of hope and inspiration for Catholics in Ireland.

Find out more by scanning the QR code below



Phone: 01 6874028
The Irish Catholic

FRIENDSHIP SEARCHING

GOOD WOMAN Retired Carer, 68 years, divorced, don't drive, ns, nd, VGSOH, family-grown up, Love to meet a respectable man, king hearted with VG-SOH, good manners and very trustworthy, good RC, would like to become good friends before relationship. All letters treated with love and respect. Tel: 0871357115 / PO Box No: 979

FOCUS Ireland

Challenging homelessness. Changing lives.

Your Lasting Legacy
Many people are choosing to include a legacy gift in their will to support families, children and young people experiencing homelessness.

You can make a real difference by helping future generations find a place called home.

For more information, please contact Aislin:
088 303 3330
aislin.stuart@nicolobrand.ie

FOCUS Ireland is a 12 High Street, Dublin 8, D08 D9K7
Incorporated in Ireland. RCN 200887

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



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.

LOUGH DERG

3-DAY PILGRIMAGE CO. DONEGAL. 2024 dates are: 31st May – 2nd June; 5th July – 7th July; 9th Aug – 11th Aug. Tel: 0863853027 / 01-4941171

Remembering
MEMORIAM CARDS
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
CARDS & NOTELETS
BOOKMARKS

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

Listen to
The Confession Box

Available now on all major podcast streaming services!

The Gift Of A Lifetime
Be there for others after you're gone.

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

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

www.hospicefoundation.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@mscmissions.ie

www.mscmissions.ie

in search of truth, goodness and beauty

Where will **my child** learn what **really matters?**
School, Home Education or a Hybrid?

Sunday, April 28th from 10.30 am

Holy Mass at 11am
Celebrant: Bishop Paul Connell
Keynote Speaker: Fr. Conor McDonough O.P.

Join parents and teachers for a one-day conference exploring your options for both primary and secondary education.

De La Salle Retreat Centre, Castletown, Co. Laois, R32 N6D8.

Holy Mass, Invited Speakers, Presentations, Panel Discussion, Lunch provided. Cost: €10.

MATER DEI EDUCATION
Classical Homeschooling for Ireland

To register and find out more visit <http://www.materdeieducation.ie>

MATER DEI ACADEMY
Independent Catholic Education for Boys and Girls

E: info@materdeieducation.ie T: 021 2021 229

Please pray for the beatification of
Little Nellie of Holy God

“May God enrich with every blessing all those who recommend frequent Communion to little boys and girls proposing Nellie as their model”
– Pope St Pius X, June 4, 1912

SERVICES

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

MQI
Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

You're Invited

Come for a FREE, behind-the-scenes tour of Merchants Quay Ireland's homeless drop-in centre.

See first-hand how your kind donations and legacy bequests work to bring hope and relief to people who've slept rough overnight.

To find out more please ring Shauna at 01 524 0139.

We'd love to meet you

A hot meal. A helping hand. A fresh start.

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

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

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

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

Key topics include:

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

Undergraduate enquiries:
E: john.murray@dcu.ie P. 086 087 3438 W: www.dcu.ie/dc300

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

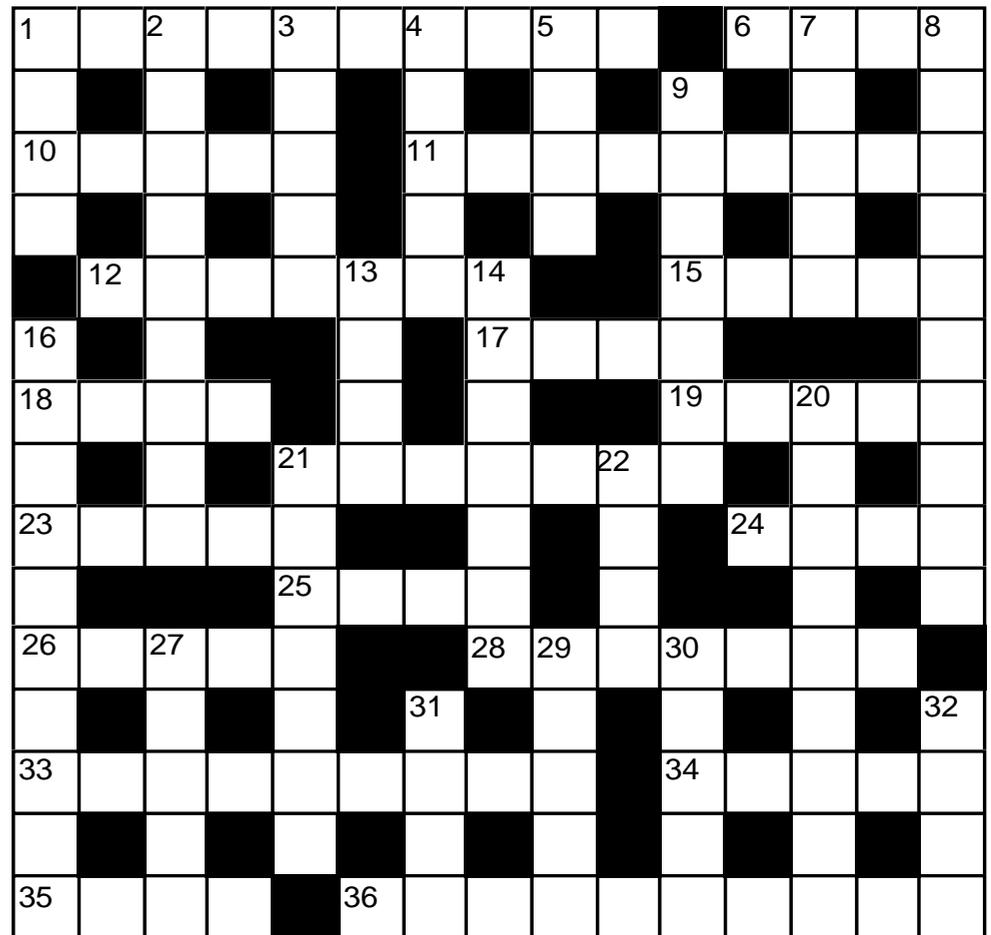
Leisure time

Crossword

Gordius 659

Across

- 1 & 16d Feast acknowledging that Our Lady never had Original Sin (10,10)
- 6 Slide it to lock the door (4)
- 10 Flinch (5)
- 11 Demanding request (4,5)
- 12 Spotted cat (7)
- 15 Canal boat (5)
- 17 St Colmcille's Scottish monastic home (4)
- 18 Woodwind instrument (4)
- 19 Sod displaced by a golfer (5)
- 21 Baby frog (7)
- 23 Provide food at a function (5)
- 24 Smirk (4)
- 25 Pain (4)
- 26 Contagious fear (5)
- 28 Traditional long, cutting tools (7)
- 33 This sport features a bully-off with a puck (3-6)
- 34 City in Northern Italy, home to Juventus (5)
- 35 Birds' home (4)
- 36 As traditionally called by barmen just before closing time (4,6)



Down

- 1 American State, capital Des Moines (4)
- 2 Vegetable whose name means 'eat all' (9)
- 3 Inexpensive (5)
- 4 Subsequently (5)
- 5 Cause to incline (4)
- 7 More ancient (5)
- 8 Thinning spirit (10)
- 9 Prohibited (7)
- 13 Glow, emanation (4)
- 14 These may accompany a smile (7)
- 16 See 1 across
- 20 Spinal bones (9)
- 21 Agricultural vehicle (7)
- 22 Indolent (4)
- 27 Requirements (5)
- 29 Underground tomb (5)
- 30 Teacher (5)
- 31 Seabird (4)
- 32 Insects which live in a colony (4)

SOLUTIONS, APRIL 11

GORDIUS No. 658

Across

- 1 Sun 3 South Dakota 8 Advent calendar 10 Angle 11 Dared 13 Gruel 15 Iceberg 16 Curator 20 Hutch 21 Skier 23 Opera 24 Draughts 25 Damask 26 Middle class 27 Ear

Down

- 1 Stalactites 2 Navigate 3 Synge 4 Tactful 5 Amend 6 Orders 7 Air 12 Deerstalker 13 Girth 14 Louth 17 Tolerate 18 Utensil 19 Wizard 22 Regal 23 Orals 24 Dim

Let Your Compassion Live On



A gift in your Will to the Mater Hospital Foundation is the promise of help, hope and healing for the next 100 years...



CHY: 9768 | RCN: 20024505

For more information, please contact James at jsullivan@materfoundation.ie or phone 01 830 3482.

Leave a Lasting Legacy to Rehab Group: Empower others through your will.

RehabGroup

Investing in People, Changing Perspectives

Leaving a gift in your will to Rehab Group enables people to pursue opportunities, be more independent, participate in society and live the life of their choosing.

To learn more about the difference your legacy will make.

Call: (01) 2057200

Email: fundraising@rehab.ie



For further enquiries contact:

Fundraising Department
 Rehab Group Head Office
 10D Beckett Way, Park West Business Park, Dublin D12 K276
 Charity number: CHY 4940
 Registered Charity Number (RCN): 20006716

Sudoku Corner

529

Easy

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

Hard

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

Last week's Easy 528

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

Last week's Hard 528

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

Notebook

Fr Vincent Sherlock



A significant difference in the lives of many

Like Ben Bulben, Fr John Carroll is a cherished landmark around Sligo! Like Ben Bulben, the shadow of his presence crosses county boundaries. For many years he was the chaplain in the town's hospitals and continues to have a very active and pastoral presence to this day. It is impossible to put a number on the amount of people he has met and ministered to in the drama of life. Suffice it to say, John has made a significant difference in the lives of many people and has been there for them at some of their lowest and darkest moments. A truly wonderful man.

The other side of John's ministry, includes a deep love and respect for those living with additional and intellectual needs. He was attached to Cregg House for many years and lives in its shadow in his so-called retirement. There he ministered to residents and staff, with equal and committed dedication. He was at home in their home, and they were at home with him.

You might well think he must have died! Usually and regretfully, we spare words of praise and recognition for people's funeral Masses, but John, thankfully, is very much alive. A lady once



told me, when I wrote something about my own father on Father's Day, that it was the right thing to do and that we should, to use her words: "Give them flowers while they can smell them!" She was right.

Celebration

Just over a week ago, I attended a Mass in St Anne's Church in Sligo where many hundreds of people gathered to celebrate Fr John's Diamond Jubilee of Ordination. For 60 years this man has given of himself so freely and meaningfully that people gathered to say thanks. Fr John celebrated the Mass and was joined by priests and deacons of Elphin diocese and beyond, by priests of St Patrick's Missionary Society (Kiltegan),

of which he is a member. The celebration was just that – celebration. It was Eucharist, thanksgiving for God's many blessings given to and received from the hands of Fr John.

“It was incredible to watch and a privilege to be part of such an outpouring of goodwill and faith”

Much of the congregation was made up of John's friends from his time in Cregg House and St Cecilia's School. John's wish was that this Mass would be "inclusive" – and so it was. Liturgically, the flow of the Mass may have

been stretched a little, with the Kyrie being "interrupted" by one of the congregation who wanted to lead us in her 'Prayer of The Faithful'. She was not alone. John went through the church, radio microphone in hand, to several of the congregation who led us to a place where we responded "Lord, graciously hear us" to their prayers and all this somewhere between "Christ have mercy" and the opening prayer of the Mass. It was incredible to watch and a privilege to be part of such an outpouring of goodwill and faith.

One of John's friends was in the sanctuary to ring the bell and she rang on cue. She then joined Fr John to lead us in the echoed singing of the Our Father. The response from all gathered matched her faith-filled enthusiasm. As Fr John was about to continue with the prayer after the Our Father and lead us to a place where the sign of peace might be exchanged, she held her place at the microphone and began to sing 'Congratulation and Celebrations' and the church was alive.

Humility

Fr John did not preach at the Mass. He didn't need to. There was noth-

ing he could have said that would have added to the wonder of God present in that place of worship. He never spoke of himself or his 60 years of priesthood. He didn't need to. There was nothing he could have said that would have added to the truth of his vocation and his gratitude to all who have touched his heart and life.

I came away from that Mass, a little teary but blessed for having been there. I came away too, challenged, wondering about my own life as a priest and the difference it makes. I came away with great hope and optimism, that Fr John witnesses to something I deeply believe in, and that people continue to value dearly – priesthood and ministry. Finally, I came away with a word in my heart that John has for all people, 'respect'.



YOUR EASTERTIDE GIFT TO OUR RISEN SAVIOUR

HELP TRAIN A YOUNG MAN FOR THE LITTLE WAY MISSIONARY PRIESTHOOD IN MYANMAR

The Little Way Missionary Priests of St Therese were founded in Myanmar by Archbishop Mang Thang with the assistance of the late Miss Mary Dooan, founder of The Little Way Association. There are now 27 LWM priests, six major seminarians and 77 minor seminarians in various dioceses in Myanmar. Two LWM priests are now serving in Cambodia and four in Papua New Guinea, in tribal areas. Our Association has funded the Little Way Priests since their inception, especially with the costs involved in training and maintaining them as seminarians, paying for food, medical aid, clothing, housing and other needs.

It costs approximately €84 a month (€1,000 per year) to feed and educate a student for the priesthood.

The great majority of young men who come forward to offer their lives to God, and His people, come from poor families. Their parents do not have the means to support them financially.

These young men are Myanmar's future priests, carrying the Gospel and message of Christ's love to people who would otherwise have little or no opportunity of hearing it.

His Grace asks you urgently, our faithful supporters, for any donation you can send this Eastertide to help with the heavy costs involved in training and supporting a seminarian for the priesthood.

Archbishop Nicholas and our Little Way Missionary Priests of St Therese remember all Little Way friends and benefactors every day in their prayers and Masses. On their behalf, we appeal to you wholeheartedly this Eastertide for ANY gift, large or small, you can send us. They will be forever grateful to you. Please pray for them, for Myanmar and for all its people, in the ongoing conflict.



“True glory is that which will last eternally, and to reach it, it isn't necessary to perform striking works but to hide oneself and practice virtue in such a way that the left hand knows not what the right is doing.” – St Therese

HELP FEED THE HUNGRY

Please spare a thought for the thousands who die each year of hunger and disease. Your donation will be forwarded intact to enable a missionary to provide food and medicines for the needy..

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER AT OUR THERESIAN HOUSE IN KNOCK?

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 Maria Grcar at the address in the coupon, giving details, experience and a contact telephone number.

Email: contact@littlewayassociation.com

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

THE LITTLEWAY 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:

€..... **TRAINING LITTLE WAY MISSIONARY PRIESTS OF ST THERESE**

€..... **HUNGRY, SICK, AND DEPRIVED**

€..... **REPAIRING MISSION CHAPELS**

€..... **MASSES** (please state no.)
We ask for a minimum of €6.50 or more for each Mass

€..... **LITTLEWAY ADMIN EXPENSES**

Please tick if you would like an acknowledgement

Name (Rev. Mr. Mrs. Miss) (Block letters please)

Address

IC/04/18

To donate online go to
www.littlewaysassociation.com

DONATIONS FOR THE MISSIONS ARE SENT WITHOUT DEDUCTION FOR ANY EXPENSES.