

The Irish Catholic

MARY KENNY

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**LISBON LIT UP
WITH LOVE**

World Youth Day 2023
Pages 12-18



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Irish youth urged to invite friends back to Church

Michael Kelly in Lisbon

The nearly 2,000 Irish pilgrims who were present at World Youth Day in Lisbon with Pope Francis have been urged to use the experience to invite their friends back to the Church.

Pope Francis told more than 1.5 million pilgrims at the weekend that the Church is a home for everyone, and that no-one should feel unwelcome in their parish.

Bishop of Elphin Kevin Doran told *The Irish Catholic* that the main message of inclusion resonated with the young pilgrims.

"Pope Francis was so generous in the gift of himself; and so energised. He didn't speak at the young people. He spoke to them as partners in mission.

"The Mass with Pope Francis is described as a 'Mass of Mission'. We know already from chatting with our group that they are open to playing their part in the mission of welcoming other young adults into a living community of faith in our diocese," Bishop Doran said.

Ger Gallagher, who has been co-ordinating Irish groups at World Youth Day for almost 30 years, said he felt the event was "an extremely good restart for youth ministry in Ireland, post-pandemic".

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All smiles in sunny Lisbon



Brothers Oisín McMahon and Niall McMahon from Dublin with brothers Michael Mullan and Mark Mullan from Derry at World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal.

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A Marian feast for all

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Irish youth urged to invite friends back to Church

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"The Pope kept underlining the need for young people to be missionaries to other young people about the Faith, it's as simple as just talking about the Faith to other young people...sharing the [World Youth Day] experience," he said.

Mr Gallagher warned that the emphasis is now on Church leaders in Ireland to translate the message into work.

"This was the smallest delegation of young Irish people

ever at World Youth Day," he said, "but we had 12 bishops, which was great, the onus is now on them to put the focus on youth ministry in Ireland."

"The young people who were in Lisbon will bring home hugely positive memories, they've been neglected by the Church – and the pandemic has worsened that, now is the time for Church leaders to invest time and energy with these young people so they can be equipped to evangelise their generation," Mr Gallagher said.

See pages 12-18



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

Vandalism reawakens desire to see Little Nellie's grave moved

Jason Osborne

Recent vandalism at Little Nellie's gravesite has resulted in renewed calls to have her grave moved somewhere safer and more accessible.

Reports of damage to the popular figure's gravesite shocked the Faithful late last week, which a descendent of Little Nellie referred to as a "targeted attack".

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* newspaper, Sue Organ Jackson said she'd "one hundred percent" like to see the gravesite moved following the recent act of vandalism.

"The reason I think it was a targeted attack is because machinery was used to cut the plaque off the headstone

and to cut the railings," Mrs Organ Jackson told this paper.

"Therefore it was premeditated – it wasn't just children messing around...there was machinery, an angle grinder used....It was a clean cut, there was no damage to the headstone."

Her concern is that the headstone or the glass case covering the grave will be next, as there's no security at the gravesite and it isn't easily accessible.

This paper previously reported following a journalist's trip to the grave that the path is overgrown and difficult to reach, with several obstacles in the way – making it almost impossible for an elderly or disabled person to access the cemetery.

Mrs Organ Jackson, who is

a fourth generation descendent of William Organ, Little Nellie's father, corroborated this, saying, "the grave is inaccessible. You have to go through an old basketball court, then you've to climb over a ditch. You've to go up a big, huge field that has a major incline. You have to climb over a wall, so the sick and people in wheelchairs and with walking sticks, they can't go up there anymore".

"I even struggle getting up there, and I go up there frequently," she said.

There have previously been calls among some of Little Nellie's devotees to have her exhumed a second time and buried in a location they feel is better suited, with Mrs Organ Jackson telling this paper in the past that

she should be exhumed and buried with her mother in Cobh. Mrs Jackson said she's hit "brick wall after brick wall" trying to speak to her local authorities regarding moving the grave.

Mrs Organ Jackson said that she's reported the incident to the police, and that following the reports of the vandalism, she was contacted by the Good Shepherd Sisters – the previous owners of the gravesite – about sourcing an alternate location for the grave.

While there is as of the time this paper went to print no alternate gravesite identified, Mrs Organ Jackson said that the religious order seems keen to cooperate with her in seeing Little Nellie's grave moved.

Meath makes moves at WYD



Following the Mass with Pope Francis at World Youth Day in Lisbon are young pilgrims from Co. Meath's Navan and Johnstown parishes.

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'Radiate hope in this troubled world' says prelate in Slane

Chai Brady

The Primate of All Ireland told pilgrims on World Youth Day to speak the "truth with love" to attract their peers to the Faith at an event in Slane, Co. Meath.

Thousands gathered to the Hill of Slane in Co. Meath on Sunday, August 6, for the 'Light the Fire' event where St Patrick defied the High King of Tara and lit the first Easter Fire at 433AD.

Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh celebrated Mass and lit a symbolic fire at the service which also featured

renowned healing sister, Sr Briege McKenna, and Eurovision's Dana Rosemary Scallan.

Singer Dana said: "Today was a joyful celebration of our Catholic faith. To watch the successor of St Patrick light the fire again on the Hill of Slane was deeply moving. So many people said how much this day has lifted their hearts. Men, women and children of all ages were praying and praising God together."

Archbishop Martin, hailing the Faith-filled actions of St Patrick on a pagan island, said it "is now our turn to shout aloud the message of salvation and tell others

about the difference that faith makes to our lives, and the value it brings". He said: "As we go out from here to spread the Gospel, we must seek to convince others, but avoid engaging in pointless polemics which make lots of noise but fail to win hearts for Jesus and the Gospel. Yes, we must stand up for the Faith; yes, we must confront falsehood and evil as Saint Patrick did. But the Gospel cannot be imposed; we must propose it with conviction and joy."

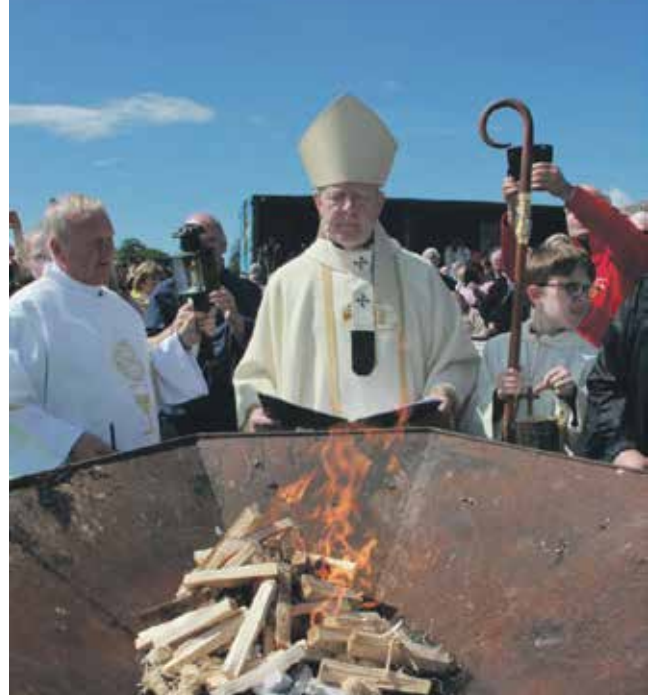
The archbishop said the way to win souls these days will be 'heart to heart', "by speaking the truth with love and

attracting others to God by the example of our lives".

"Those who meet us must see that our lives are 'transfigured' by faith, hope and love. And then they will be inspired to inquire, 'What is that treasure you have? You, believer, you live your life totally aware of this world with all its struggles and problems, but you point us to the transcendent, to our real homeland and destiny in life beyond this world, with God, in heaven; how is it that you have such meaning and purpose in your life? You radiate hope in this troubled world!' he said.

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Primate of All-Ireland Archbishop Eamon Martin lights a symbolic flame on the Hill of Slane.



Catholic colleges in NI and Australia forge new partnership

Jason Osborne

St Mary's University College Belfast and the University of Notre Dame Australia have launched a new phase of cooperation between the two institutions with the recent signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) intended to "foster collaboration and scholarly exchange".

The MOU will bring the institutions "even closer in mission and culture," and will see collaboration in areas such as academic

faculty and student exchange programmes and immersions, joint research projects, teacher education and professional development, advancement of Catholic education and the spiritual formation of students and staff.

Following the signing of the MOU, Professor Peter Finn KSG, Principal of St Mary's University College Belfast, said, "The mission of St Mary's is to make a distinctive contribution of service and excellence, in the Catholic tradition, to higher education in Northern

Ireland".

"To further our mission, we work with a wide range of partners and seek to build fruitful and enduring relationships. This new bilateral partnership is unique in that it is purposively grounded in the rich heritage of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition which informs and inspires our respective institutions in Ireland and Australia."

Speaking also about the partnership, Vice Chancellor of The University of Notre Dame Australia, Professor Francis Campbell, added,

"Our ambition is to serve society through educating and forming our students so they can in turn serve the societies in which they live.

"Two of our key strategic pillars, Integral Human Development and Universality, are designed to encourage our students and staff to flourish, using our connections, networks, and relationships to provide every possible opportunity the world has to offer them. With this MOU in place, our students and colleagues will play an active part in the realisation of this vision".

Footballer praises WYD pilgrims

Staff reporter

French football star and devout Christian Olivier Giroud had warm words for those attending the recent World Youth Day festival in Lisbon, Portugal, saying that they are a "sign of hope".

Sharing a video message August 1 addressed to the 40,000 young French people who travelled to the festivities in Lisbon, Portugal, the 36-year-old said, "You 40,000 French people, united by faith in Jesus, how beautiful you are! You who announce

the good news, you are a sign of hope".

He added: "One thing that I know and that is certain: God is waiting for you and he wants to speak to each of you. Do not be afraid to listen to him and to speak to him, so pray."

Mr Giroud went on to say that while football is one of his biggest passions, his love for Christ is just as important as his professional career, and he thanked God "for what he has done and [that he] continues to do great things in my life".



Olivier Giroud.
Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

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Cenacolo co-worker pays tribute to founder Mother Elvira

Jason Osborne

Mother Elvira Petrozzi was a “simple, Italian nun who had an amazing gift” according to close friend of, and co-worker with,

the Cenacolo community in Ireland, Fr Adrian Crowley.

Mother Elvira, who founded the Cenacolo community in 1983 to provide healing to those suf-

fering from addiction, died August 3 in the formation house and residence of her congregation in Saluzzo, Italy, at the age of 86.

Her death followed a long illness, and came

weeks after thousands of people gathered in Saluzzo to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Cenacolo Community's founding there in an abandoned home on July 16, 1983.

Fr Crowley, who met Mother Elvira on multiple occasions and worked with the Cenacolo community in Ireland over 20 years and abroad in places such as Peru, the Philippines and Liberia, told *The Irish Catholic* that “she was delightful”.

“She was a simple, Italian nun who had an amazing gift with young people and she felt very inspired to do this work, to welcome those with broken lives, with addiction and so on. All of them that I knew, they said to me, ‘We know how much she loves us’. They felt this strongly,” Fr Crowley said. “She was completely

convinced that it was God guiding her and that God wanted it [Cenacolo] in her life, and it blossomed all over the world.”

Today, there are houses across the world with over 2,000 men and women in the programme. The Cenacolo house for men in Ireland was opened in Knock, Co. Mayo in 1999.

“She was really able to look you in the eye and say something that would change your life. She did it to me a few times. It was just amazing to hear her,” Fr Crowley said.

Carrying flag for Pope was ‘absolute honour’



Charlene Duff

Michael Kelly in Lisbon

The young Irishwoman who carried the Irish tricolour flag at the opening ceremony of World Youth Day said she felt that she was representing the entire nation in Lisbon.

Charlene Duff told *The Irish Catholic* that carrying the flag was “an absolute

honour”. She described it as the “icing on the cake” as the Portlaoise-native attended her fourth World Youth Day.

“I felt like I was carrying it for the whole of Ireland, I was carrying it for all the pilgrims and the entire people of Ireland. Going down past the Pope I gave him a little wave – it was such a privilege and I feel

so blessed and honoured to carry the flag on behalf of the people of Ireland,” she said.

Ms Duff said that she hoped that the experience of World Youth Day will inspire many Catholics in Ireland. “God is good. He comes to you when you ask, when you call him – he comes when you ask and when you need

it,” she said.

She also appealed to young Irish people to be unafraid to represent their faith. “Years ago I shied away from saying that I’m religious – now I’m proud to say that I’m Catholic, I would ask other people to say the same – ‘be proud of your faith’ would be my message to young Catholics”.

‘Hearts broken’ after devastating Monaghan crash

Chai Brady

Following the car crash that killed two young women Kiea McCann and Dlava Mohamed last week, a priest has said “our hearts are broken”.

Fr John Chester PP of Roslea said at the funeral of Ms McCann that “God is in Clones and God was at the Mount of Olives the night before the death of his son Jesus, he sent his angel to comfort Jesus and give him strength. No doubt God he will send his angel to comfort Kiea’s family.”

The funeral took place in Sacred Heart Chapel, Clones, Co. Monaghan in the Diocese of Clogher last Thursday.

Ms McCann (17) and Ms Mohamed (16) died while on their way to their school Debs. Fr Chester said: “As we know family was hugely important to Kiea, she was a very family oriented girl who was everybody’s favourite, and our hearts are broken, not only for Kiea and Dlava, but for all of those left behind after this terrible tragedy.”

NEWS IN BRIEF

NI inquest ordered into killing of five Catholics by UVF

The murders of five Catholic men in Northern Ireland by the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) are to be looked at in new inquests.

The investigation into the killings in Mid-Ulster more than 30 years ago was ordered by Attorney General Dame Brenda King, who took account of “deficiencies” in the original investigations and inquests.

Sean Anderson, Thomas Armstrong, Dwayne O’Donnell, Thomas Casey and Phelim McNally died in four separate attacks. The families expect soldiers were involved in the murders.

In a letter to their solicitor, the attorney general’s office stated there was new information not considered at the first inquests.

Fifty years after the 'marriage bar' was lifted

The Department of Foreign Affairs proudly tweeted recently how Ireland was celebrating fifty years of having lifted the "marriage bar" for women working in the public service – with the support of the EU and its march towards equality.

Yes, I remember that situation well: women, on marriage, had been required to step down from their jobs in state or semi-state bodies. I had been among those who campaigned for deleting the "marriage bar".

Unjust

It seemed completely unjust to our genera-



Mary Kenny

tion that the State should decide if individuals should be employed, or let go, according to their marital status. It was up to an individual woman herself to decide whether she wished to continue to have a job outside the home after she married. I still hold that opinion: it's a personal decision.

Yet, fifty years have also taught me a lot more about the perspective of history – the long view, if you like.

I now know rather more about the back story – about how most European countries restricted state employment of married women from the 1920s. Britain did so from 1921: the Irish Free State from 1932. This was initially prompted by the number of male combatants who returned from the First World War with no employment. And then, in the 1930s, unemployment among fathers of fami-

lies was seen as the main source of poverty.

“Women continued to work in many spheres, but the attitude at the time was that a married man's wage was 'a family wage'”

Who could forget the hunger-etched faces of the men on the "Jarrow March" – the unemployed who walked the length of England in a desperate bid to raise awareness of their plight? In America, the poignant song that swept the nation was *Brother – Can You Spare a Dime?*, which tells the story

of a worker who "once built a railroad", but is now reduced to begging.

Women continued to work in many spheres, but the attitude at the time was that a married man's wage was "a family wage". This was particularly upheld by the trade unions.

Circumstances

Circumstances changed over the decades. In Britain, married women could be state-employed teachers from 1944, and in Ireland, from 1957 (a change supported by the conservative John Charles McQuaid). From the 1960s onwards, the "marriage bar" gradually faded – especially as economies improved. And so, it was part of the evolution of

social change that Ireland would abolish it in 1973.

All happily progressive? The DFA thinks so. Except that what seemed, in 1973, to be a voluntary choice, now appears to be a compulsory one. Most married women, and most mothers today, are obliged to work. No young couple could think of acquiring a home and start a family unless both are in paid employment – and even then, it can be a challenge.

In 2023, choosing not to have a job outside the home is mostly the prerogative of the affluent. You have to be rich, today, to be a stay-at-home mother! Equality?

Funny how things sometimes turn out.

● Ecclesiastics have been known to make daft statements, and surely the Anglican Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, fell into that category when he announced that the Our Father was "problematic". Some people had had "destructive and abusive" relationships with

their fathers, which hardly disposed them to view a heavenly father benignly, he said. The Archbishop sought "more inclusive" language for the Lord's Prayer

This is silly-billy territory. The Our Father comes straight out of the New Testament, in the

words of Jesus Christ himself. In 56 simple and peerless words, it says exactly what we need to say in prayer. It is, moreover, the singular most ecumenical prayer which all Christians can share, with a rhythm and a cadence that is irreplaceable.

“Who could forget the hunger-etched faces of the men on the 'Jarrow March' – the unemployed who walked the length of England in a desperate bid to raise awareness of their plight?”

A terrible toll



Ukrainian service members with the 55th Separate Artillery Brigade fire a Caesar self-propelled howitzer toward Russian troops near the town of Avdiivka in Ukraine's Donetsk region May 31, 2023, amid Russia's ongoing attack on the country. Photo: OSV News/Viacheslav Ratynskyi, Reuters

I believe that most of us are totally opposed to Putin's wanton and cruel invasion of Ukraine. But, as I've had cause to remark, that doesn't mean we don't have compassion for individual Russians and their families.

Studies by independent sources have recently been published about the number of Russian dead in the Ukraine war – and it has emerged

that Russia had lost something in the range of 40,000-50,000 men by May of this year (and these numbers are nearly all men). That amounts to as many Russians as have been lost in all other wars since 1945.

Stalin, who had little concern for human life, used to swagger that Russia had such a vast population it didn't really matter how many men died in combat, because there were

always more Russians. But I feel sure that the mothers – and fathers – of those tens of thousands of sons will suffer grief for each and every loss.

Fertility is very low in Russia, and the one-child family is the norm; for so many Russian mothers, Putin's war will have taken their only son. We all, I think, want Ukraine to claim its sovereignty, but when will the killing stop? Please God, soon.

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Primate asks that jailed Nicaraguan bishop be freed

Chai Brady

The Primate of All-Ireland has called on the Government to intervene after a bishop in Nicaragua who spoke out against the government and its dictator, President Nicolas Maduro, was given a 26-year sentence.

Bishop Rolando Álvarez of Matagalpa was arrested for his criticism of President Maduro's regime, and was subsequently convicted of treason, along with several other spurious convictions.

The archbishop said that while more than 200 political prisoners were deported to the US and stripped of their citizenship, the bishop refused to take this option.

Archbishop Martin said: "However, Monsignor Rolando Álvarez... who had

been under house arrest since August 2022, refused to board the plane. He was subsequently detained, tried and given a 26-year sentence for offences of conspiracy, spreading false news, obstruction of justice and contempt of court."

In correspondence seen by the *Irish Times*, Archbishop Martin wrote to the Tánaiste expressing his "grave concern at the situation in Nicaragua, and the persecution of members of the clergy as well as others who express criticism of the regime".

The archbishop said that in the last five years the Nicaraguan government had "not only incarcerated hundreds of people who challenged the increasing autocracy of the regime", but also closed down more than 3,000 non-governmental

organisations, universities and associations, including 29 religious organisations.

He stated that, Church-charity, Trócaire "was forced to close its operations in Nicaragua in early 2022".

Archbishop Martin asked the Government to "make representations to the government of Nicaragua, calling for the release of Monsignor Rolando Álvarez, and an end to the intimidation and persecution of all who defend human rights in Nicaragua".

Tánaiste Micheál Martin responded to the primate saying he was "gravely concerned" about Nicaragua's situation.

He said: "The continued crackdowns on dissenting voices, including religious leaders, and the campaign of repression against civil society and independ-

ent media, together with backsliding on democratic norms, are unacceptable."

Previously, following a parliamentary question from Carol Nolan TD the Tánaiste said: "I would like to assure the deputy that my department, together with our EU partners, and other international and civil society partners, continue to closely monitor the unacceptable detention of the individual referred to in her correspondence [Bishop Álvarez]. We will continue to call for his immediate and unconditional release, as well as that of all other remaining political prisoners."

President Maduro has continuously ramped up his persecution of the Catholic Church in the country.

Charity calls for assistance in African countries affected by climate change

Staff reporter

An Irish charity that supports international development has called on the Irish Government to ensure that extra tax this year is used for the most vulnerable abroad.

Dóchas, in a statement after there was a projected increase in tax receipts of at least 10%, said 240 million people in 69 countries require urgent humanitarian assistance.

The charity said it is vital the Irish Government puts measures in place to reach its own commitment of spending 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) by 2030.

Dóchas CEO, Jane-Ann McKenna said "For communities encountering their sixth consecutive failed rainy season in parts of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, the impacts of climate change are being

acutely felt. Drought, water scarcity and soaring food prices are pushing millions of people into extreme levels of food insecurity. Decades of progress towards ending poverty and hunger are rapidly being reversed."

Ms McKenna added: "Hunger and malnutrition are not inevitable. People capable of producing and earning enough food for themselves and their families are being starved – by conflict, climate change, and inequality. We appeal to the Irish Government to make real and tangible progress to reach our commitments on overseas development assistance. We must support those who are furthest behind in least developed countries and those worst affected by climate change and conflict."

Porsche faces backlash after airbrushing Christ statue out of ad

Jason Osborne

Iconic car brand Porsche is taking fire after releasing an advertisement celebrating 60 years of the Porsche 911 that apparently edited out Lisbon's famous 'Cristo Rei' – a statue of Jesus Christ that overlooks the Portuguese capital.

In the video, a Porsche drives across the screen before a backdrop of a bridge and a river, which the Cristo Rei usually overlooks.

However, the 25-metre-tall statue of Christ was absent from atop the concrete pedestal that remains visible across the river.

The missing statue was first spotted by a social media user on 'X' (formerly Twitter) whose post calling out the apparent edit went viral.

The viral tweet read: "Hey, @Porsche, why did you erase the statue of Jesus Christ from your video filmed in Lisbon?"

The tweet has now been seen by millions of people, as thousands of comments calling Porsche to address the issue have appeared.

The Cristo Rei statue standing over Lisbon, Portugal. Photo: Wikimedia Commons



NEWS IN BRIEF

UK man facing criminal charges for abortion clinic prayer

Criminal charges have been filed against UK army veteran and father, Adam Smith-Connor for praying silently within an abortion exclusion zone or "buffer zone".

Mr Smith-Connor had approached a British Pregnancy Advisory Service abortion facility in Bournemouth intending to pray for his unborn son, who had died in an abortion he helped procure at a similar facility more than two decades ago.

Mr Smith-Connor stood silently with his back to the clinic to respect the privacy of staff and visitors, according to Alliance Defending Freedom UK – the legal group supporting him.

Community safety officers inquired about what he was doing, and Mr Smith-Connor replied: "Praying for my son, who is deceased."

'Not enough time' to hold referendums in November

A "proper information campaign" ahead of as many as three referendums on gender equality will take up to 16 weeks, according to the chief executive of the Electoral Commission, Art O'Leary.

Mr O'Leary's comments to the *Irish Times* expanded doubts over the Government's plans for a November date for a vote on the issues of gender equality, the definition of "family" and the "place of women in the home".

The plans for either an omnibus vote on all of the issues, or three separate referendums, were announced in March in what Taoiseach Leo Varadkar described then as a "tight timeline".

KNOCK NOVENA FEATURE

Caring for Creation



National Novena to Our Lady of Knock

14 – 22 August

*Ceremonies:
3pm & 8pm at
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The highly anticipated National Novena to Our Lady of Knock is set to take place from 14th to 22nd August at the serene and beautiful grounds of Knock Shrine. This nine-day gathering offers attendees a chance to step away from their everyday lives and immerse themselves in prayer, reflection, and exploration of their faith.

Under the theme of 'Caring for Creation,' the Novena will provide a unique opportunity for individuals to reflect on their role in embracing the challenges faced by our faith and our planet. Throughout the event, esteemed guest Homilists and Speakers will share their insights on a wide range of topics, including personal faith stories and responses to our ever-changing world.

Guest Speakers and Homilists include: Fr John Joe Duffy, His Excellency, Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor - Papal Nuncio, Paula McKeown, Sean O'Rourke, Noirin Lynch, Geraldine Mullan, Most Rev. Alan McGuckian SJ - Bishop of Raphoe, Julianne Moran, Most Rev. Kevin Doran - Bishop of Elphin, Elma Walsh, Fr Shane Costello, Fr Richard Gibbons and Fr Tony O'Riordan.

The Novena Ceremonies will be held at

3pm and 8pm each day at Knock Basilica, offering attendees the chance to come together in prayer and worship. In addition, the 'Novena Village' will host daily workshops at 12 noon, where participants can engage in meaningful discussions and learn from experts in various fields related to faith and sustainability.

One of the highlights of the event is the series of guided walks that will take place at 10:30 am daily, starting from the Novena Village. Led by staff from the award-winning Knock Museum, these walks will provide a historical perspective on the 1879 Apparition.

Family Day (Sunday 20 August)

The Family Day has become a popular addition to the Novena programme. Taking place in the Novena Village on the grounds of Knock Shrine from 11am - 3pm, the Family Day offers a range of outdoor activities (free of charge) and marquees with indoor workshops, games and more. A variety of food vendors will be available. All are welcome.

**See the full programme at
www.knockshrine.ie**

Rory Fitzgerald

The View



State funded media is a risk to democracy

Nobody should be forced to pay for a service they do not want. People should certainly not be required to fund obscene salaries and political activism under threat of imprisonment. There is no longer any need to force everyone with a television to pay for RTÉ. Instead, only those who wish to actually watch RTÉ should pay for it, in much the same way as only people who want to watch Netflix or Sky pay for those services.

Before the advent of radio and television, governments did not publish national newspapers and force everyone to buy them each week. However, when radio arrived, the technological limitations of the time meant that anyone with a radio would be able to freely receive the broadcasts. Therefore, it was thought reasonable to charge a licence fee which funded the national broadcaster. When television arrived, the same logic applied.

However, it is now possible to encrypt broadcasts or streamed television services. Therefore only those who actually want to watch RTÉ need to pay to access it. I rarely watch RTÉ and regard it as both politically biased and overly commercially driven. I would see no point in paying for it and many others would feel the same.

Scandal

The recent furore over the obscene salaries paid to RTÉ presenters missed what I regard as a far bigger scandal around RTÉ. While serving as a vehicle for a small coterie of people to enrich themselves, it also acts as a vehicle for people determined to advance their political agendas and engage in outright activism.

RTÉ is the centre-piece of the Irish media. Like a medieval prince handing out favours to loyal followers, it holds the entire court of Irish journalism in its thrall. If you're an Irish journalist, you naturally want to be invited to appear on RTÉ's major radio and television programmes. Perhaps, one day, RTÉ will commission



you to present a documentary on your topic of interest. Maybe, in a few years' time, RTÉ will give you a plum and pensionable job.

“The 60s generation took over, and were on the whole more liberal. Dublin 4 weighed more heavily with RTÉ than county Mayo or Donegal”

Many former RTÉ former staff have frankly admitted that the station was predominantly left wing and pursued various secular-liberal goals throughout its history.

A 2012 documentary *Battle Station* made to mark 50 years of RTÉ television, painted a picture of brave young radicals in miniskirts taking on Archbishop McQuaid. It was replete with frank admissions of political bias.

Former RTÉ reporter Doireann ni Bhriain said, “we were impatient for

change... we were part of that change. We weren't just reflecting what was happening, we were in there in the middle of it”. Eugene Murray, former editor of *Today Tonight* said, “there's no doubt that many people who came into broadcasting, myself included, would have been left wing, and would have had sympathies with the Worker's Party position”.

It goes without saying that there was little sympathy for the Catholic Church or the traditional values of rural Ireland within RTÉ. The documentary *By the 1970s*, as Mary Kenny had it, “the 60s generation took over, and were on the whole more liberal. Dublin 4 weighed more heavily with RTÉ than county Mayo or Donegal”.

Objective

Yet if journalists pursue personal ideological agendas under the guise of objective reporting, it can be a serious breach of journalistic ethics. The Council of Europe's 1993 resolution on the ethics of journalism states: “journalism should not alter truthful, impartial information or honest opinions, or exploit them

for media purposes, in an attempt to create or shape public opinion, since its legitimacy rests on effective respect for the citizen's fundamental right to information as part of respect for democratic values.”

The Council of Europe is being crystal clear: If you abuse the media to manipulate public opinion, democracy suffers. Irish media coverage, day-in day-out, for decades has shaped the electorate to the point where the 2018 referendum on abortion was possible.

“I am in no doubt that the left-wing and even some pretty extreme elements of it have a good footing in RTÉ”

Michael D. Higgins was elected president in the wake of a scandalous RTÉ *Frontline* programme where a fake tweet was read on air, which scuppered the presidential bid of the popular

Catholic and conservative candidate Sean Gallagher.

Inevitability

As early as 1970, Minister Gerard Collins advised that the government should accept the inevitability that RTÉ would be left-of-centre, writing, “I am in no doubt that the left-wing and even some pretty extreme elements of it have a good footing in RTÉ but it would be very easy in attempting to deal with that situation to do a lot more harm than good. It is perfectly natural that a new exciting service such as RTÉ would attract very many young people to its staff and without considering the possibility of deliberate infiltration by hardline communists, the probability in present day circumstances is that a great number of these young people will be of left-wing sympathies. There can be no question of eliminating these influences in RTÉ but what we can and will do is ensure to the utmost extent possible that they will not be able by their influence to bring about the presentation of programmes biased in favour of their views.”

RTÉ exposed itself

to accusations of spreading anti-Catholic sentiment in the wake of its grotesque libel of Fr Kevin Reynolds in 2011. In that same year I wrote a series of interviews for this newspaper on the question, “Is the Irish media biased against Catholicism?” I interviewed a number of leading media figures, and even Fintan O'Toole frankly admitted that the Irish media is a “very hostile environment” for people of faith, and that it can be “snobbish and dismissive” to them, saying “I think people are quite right to be upset about that and critical of the attitude – I think it is there”. In the years since, these attitudes have only become more entrenched.

There are serious democratic issues at play when the State becomes involved in subsidising particular media outlets. Far from protecting democracy, it is a real risk to democracy to have any State funded media outlets. A media landscape funded by citizens' individual purchasing decisions would naturally be far more diverse and representative.

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Thousands called to carry 'torch of Faith' on WYD in Slane

Chai Brady

Thousands of pilgrims swarmed to the Hill of Slane on World Youth Day for an event called 'Light the Fire' where they were asked to carry the "torch of Faith with courage and conviction".

Pilgrims of all ages gathered for praise and worship, rosary, Mass, and adoration, and prayed as Primate of All Ireland Archbishop Eamon Martin lit a symbolic fire on the hillside as well as four candles, one for each of the provinces and archdioceses of Ireland. The Hill of Slane is where St Patrick defied the High King of Tara and lit the first Easter Fire on 433AD.

The Archbishop of Armagh also consecrated Ireland to the Most Holy Trinity through the intercession of St Patrick, St Brigid and St Colmcille on Sunday, August 6.

He also noted that on the same day the conclusion of the near week-long 37th World Youth Day festival in Lisbon, Portugal, took place.

Archbishop Martin said: "I ask for the grace of God... to raise up ambassadors, witnesses, missionaries for Christ among us. Our need is great. For, sadly, many sons and daughters of Ireland are drifting away from the practice of the Faith; some may even have abandoned God. How much our land needs the uplifting power of faith, hope and love - today, more than ever!"

"Similarly God has called us to Slane today, to give us new life in the Holy Spirit and to send us out from here, carrying the torch of faith with courage and conviction," he said.

Dana with musicians at the Light the Fire event with young singer and musicians in Slane.



Left: Parishioners from St Michael the Archangel parish, Belfast, prepare to travel to Light the Fire at Slane. Also pictured are Fr Ciaran Feeney PP and Martina Purdy and Elaine Kelly, St Patrick's Way pilgrim guides.



Primate of All-Ireland Archbishop Eamon Martin lights a symbolic flame on the Hill of Slane.



Grace and Teresa, her grandmother, enjoying the day at Light the Fire.



Pilgrims make their way up Slane Hill, en route to the Light the Fire event.



The Irish Catholic

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Pope in plea for youth to change the world



Waking up: a French Boy Scout puts on his boots after waking up early August 6, 2023, before attending the closing Mass of World Youth Day celebrated by Pope Francis at Campo da Graça in Park Tejo in Lisbon. Photo: OSV News, Bob Roller



Pope Francis salutes the crowd at the end of Mass in Tejo Park in Lisbon during World Youth Day, Portugal, August 6. Photo: CNS/Vatican Media.



Flying the Irish flag at World Youth Day. Photo: OSV News, Bob Roller



Armagh pilgrims at World Youth Day



Part of the delegation from Dublin at World Youth Day

Pope Francis told 1.5 million weary-eyed and sleep-deprived young people in Lisbon not to let their “great dreams” of changing the world be “stopped by fear”. In his homily for the closing Mass of World Youth Day on Sunday the Pope asked for “a bit of silence” from the pilgrims who, after staying overnight in Lisbon’s Tejo Park following the previous night’s vigil, at 6am were already dancing to techno music mixed by a DJ priest before the Pope’s arrival.

“Let’s all repeat this phrase in our hearts: ‘Don’t be afraid,’” he told the hushed crowd. “Jesus knows the hearts of each one of you, the successes and the failures, he knows your hearts,” Pope Francis said. “And today he tells you, here in Lisbon for this World Youth Day: ‘Don’t be afraid.’”

As dawn broke over the riverside park, pilgrims emerged from tents and sleeping bags to prepare for Mass.

At the front of the crowd, which extended across both banks of Lisbon’s Trancão River, 30 cardinals, 700 bishops and 10,000 priests concelebrated the Mass with Pope Francis. Portuguese

President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa was seated in the front row.

Cardinal Manuel do Nascimento Clemente of Lisbon thanked the Pope for making World Youth Day an opportunity for young people to come together and build a better tomorrow “after a pandemic that has confined them and otherwise distanced them from each other and from the best (version) of themselves.”

Irishman Cardinal Kevin Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life, which organises World Youth Day, thanked Pope Francis for bringing together in Lisbon young people “who have been pilgrims of peace in times in which many, too many, wars are being fought in so many parts of the world”.

Before revealing the location of the next World Youth Day, Pope Francis invited young people to travel to Rome for a youth celebration during the Holy Year 2025. The next World Youth Day, to take place in 2027, he continued, “will be in South Korea, in Seoul,” he said to cheers from the sizeable groups of Koreans

scattered in the crowd.

In remarks after Mass, the Pope also recalled the suffering of Ukraine and asked young people if he, “an old man,” could share a dream of his: “the dream of peace, the dream that young people may pray for peace, live in peace and build a peaceful future.”

Using the Portuguese word for thank you – ‘*obrigado*’ – the Pope thanked the organisers of World Youth Day, the volunteers who made it possible and the city of Lisbon, which he prayed would “remain in the memory of these young people as a house of fraternity and a city of dreams”.

“And ‘*obrigado*’ to all of you, dear young people,” he said before praying the Angelus. “God sees all the good you are, and only he knows what he has planted in your heart. Go from here with what God put in your heart.”

The crowd dispersed after Mass, streaming through the streets of Lisbon, filling closed-down streets while waving the flags of the world.



Pope calls for new Marian devotion: 'Our Lady in a Hurry'

Before 200,000 pilgrims at Fátima, many of them with tears in their eyes, Pope Francis called for a new Marian devotional title – 'Our Lady in a Hurry' – to describe how Mary hastens to care for all her children.

"There are many Marian invocations," he told the crowd at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fátima on Saturday, but one that is not common and should be comes from the biblical account of the visitation when Mary sets off to see her cousin who also is pregnant.

"It's a loose translation, but where the Gospel says she set out 'in haste,' we would say she went out running," he said; "she went out running with that eagerness to be present."

"Our Lady in a Hurry,' do you like that?" Pope Francis asked his fellow pilgrims. "Let's all say it together: 'Our Lady in a Hurry.' She hurries to be close to us. She hurries because she is a mother."

"Every time there is a problem, every time we invoke her, she doesn't delay, she hurries," the Pope told the crowd, which was a mix of young people visiting Portugal for World Youth Day and thousands of locals who came from across the country to Fátima to see the Pope.

Pope Francis' morning in Fátima, about 75 miles north of Lisbon where World Youth Day was taking place, marked his second visit to the Marian shrine. In 2017, he celebrated Mass there to mark the 100th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fátima to three Portuguese children.

Ukraine

Fátima also has been connected to Pope Francis' public prayer appeals for an end to the war in Ukraine. In March 2022, just over one month after Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Pope consecrated both countries to Mary's Immaculate Heart, praying before a statue of Our Lady of Fátima in St Peter's Basilica.

Sister Lúcia dos Santos, one of the three Fátima visionaries, had said Mary requested that Russia be consecrated to her Immaculate Heart by a reigning Pope to bring peace to the world. Previous popes had consecrated Russia to Mary's immaculate heart in various forms but had never mentioned the country by name as Pope Francis did in 2022.

In Fátima, however, Pope Francis made no mention of war or peace in Ukraine or elsewhere, instead putting aside a prepared text to tell hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to invite Mary into their heart.

But Bishop José Ornelas Carvalho of Leiria-Fátima welcomed the Pope and introduced the event by turning people's attention to "the war in Ukraine and so many other hotbeds of conflict in the world, which weigh dramatically on the lives and futures especially of children and young people."

Those joining the Pope in prayer, he said, were mindful of "the maternal concern of the mother of Jesus, revealed here to three children, simple and poor shepherd children, during a bloody war," World War I.

Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office, told journalists after the ceremony that when the Pope prayed in front of the statue of Our Lady of Fátima "he prayed in silence and with pain for peace." Mr Bruni also noted that the fourth mystery of the rosary at the event was a prayer for peace.

The Pope had been expected to offer a special prayer to Mary for peace after his remarks at Fátima, but instead the Vatican posted an abbreviated version of it on the Pope's Twitter account.



A Ukrainian flag waves in the crowd gathered as Pope Francis recites the rosary with young people who are ill at the Chapel of Apparitions at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fátima in Fátima, Portugal, August 5. Photo: CNS/Lola Gomez

"To you, we consecrate the Church and the world, especially those countries at war. Obtain peace for us," the tweet said. "You, virgin of the way, open paths where it seems that none exist. You who untie knots, loosen the tangle of self-centeredness and the snares of power."

“Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office, told journalists after the ceremony that when the Pope prayed in front of the statue of Our Lady of Fátima ‘he prayed in silence and with pain for peace’”

The day before his Fátima visit, the Pope did not read two prepared speeches, instead improvising his remarks after joking that his glasses "aren't working" and that he didn't want to strain his vision.

Mr Bruni told reporters, "There is no vision problem. Yesterday morning in the course of the meeting with charitable institutions there was a problem with the lighting that made a reflection on his glasses, and he wasn't able to read."

Speaking off the cuff "is not a vision problem," Mr Bruni repeated, but the "choice of a pastor in regard to the people".

Rosary

In the Chapel of the Apparitions, marking the exact spot where the three children saw Mary in 1917, Pope Francis prayed the rosary with 106 young disabled and sick people and six residents of a young offenders' centre.

The chapel, located in the centre of the shrine, "is like a beautiful image of the Church, welcoming, without doors, so that all can enter," he said.

And at Fátima, too, Pope Francis noted, "we can say that all can come, because this is the house of the mother, and a mother always has her heart open to all of her children".



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After many of the 1.5 million young people gathered in Lisbon's Tejo Park waited for hours in near 40-degree weather to participate in the World Youth Day vigil with Pope Francis on Saturday, the Pope asked them, "Have you ever been tired?"

Even when tempted to "throw in the towel" or stop along the journey of life, the Pope said, the young people must pick themselves up and walk toward joy.

"Joy is not hidden, it's not kept under key, we have to look for it," he said, "and that is tiring".

Rise up

Yet, Pope Francis urged them to "rise up" when they fall along the path toward joy.

Before the Pope's improvised speech, synchronised drones flew over the massive crowd, which extended across both banks of Lisbon's Trancão River, forming messages that read 'Rise Up' and 'Follow Me' in different languages.

After a lengthy tour in the popemobile among the pilgrims, Pope Francis listened to two testimonies from people who talked about how their experience of faith formed their youth. Marta Luis, 18, from Mozambique, told Pope Francis how her home province had been ravaged by a civil war and how her family had to leave her village due to a terrorist attack.

While they were sleeping in a forest after they left their home, "we didn't sleep the whole night, but we prayed the Hail Mary and the Our Father," before trekking to another province where they reached family members and were taken in by a local parish.

"Amid so much suffering, we never lost the faith and hope of rebuilding our life," she said.

Seeing the Pope

Pilgrims had begun filling the park in the morning. Many young people waited as much as nine hours to see the Pope, but they remained in high spirits playing games, singing songs and doing the occasional wave.

Only reading the first few words of his prepared remarks, Pope Francis put down the text in his hand and spoke openly with the young people.

"Do you like soccer?" he asked the audience to loud applause. "I like it," he said with a smile, noting that "behind every goal there is much training, behind each success there is much training, and what can I do in life? Train myself."

But the Pope added that "there isn't any course on learning how to walk in life," but rather that it learned from parents and grandparents, teachers and friends.

Look within

Pope Francis urged the young people to look within themselves and find the "roots of joy" that exist within them, roots planted by the people who have touched their lives.

"We come from roots of joy, and we can be roots of joy for others," the Pope said. "Not a joy of the moment, but a joy that gives roots."



Pope Francis arrives in the popemobile for his last appointment in Portugal: a meeting to thank World Youth Day volunteers at a concert venue in Algés, Portugal, August 6. Photo: CNS/Lola Gomez

Pursue joy, even when you're tired – Pope



Part of the delegation from the Archdiocese of Armagh.



Part of the Irish delegation from the Dominicans of Don Bosco.



Part of the delegation from the Association of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland (AMRI).



'Do you cry?' Pope asks 800,000 young people at WYD

When feelings of suffering, anxiety and loneliness bring young people to tears, Jesus cries with them and walks alongside them on the way of the cross, Pope Francis has said.

After hundreds of thousands of young people spent hours singing, dancing and chanting under the sun waiting for the Pope to arrive in Lisbon's Eduardo VII Park to pray the Stations of the Cross on Friday, the Pope asked them to be silent.

Do you cry?

"I'll ask a question, but don't answer out loud," he said. "Do I cry from time to time? Are there things in life that make me cry?"

"All of us in life have cried, and we cry still. And there is Jesus with us, he cries with us, because he accompanies us in the darkness that leads us to tears," he continued. "I'm going to be silent for a bit and everyone tell God what in your life makes you cry."

While many in the crowd did not understand the Pope's Spanish, the 800,000 people gathered in Lisbon's central park fell into silence for 10 seconds at the Pope's request.

After joking in the morning that his glasses "aren't working"

and that he couldn't read well, the Pope entirely set aside his prepared remarks for the Stations of the Cross, improvising his whole speech.

When chants broke out after Pope Francis began to speak, he smiled and lifted his hand to quiet the crowd.

"Today you are going to walk with Jesus," he said. "Jesus is the path, and we are going to walk with him because he walked" while healing, preaching and caring for the poor, and ultimately toward the cross.

The cross

"The cross is the greatest meaning of the greatest love, the love with which Jesus wants to embrace our life," he said gesturing to the crowd. "Jesus walks for me, we all have to say it, 'Jesus begins this path for me, to give his life for me.'"

Before young people presented their meditations on the Stations of the Cross, the Pope urged them to walk with Jesus on "the path of your suffering, the path of our anxieties, the path of our loneliness".

Again, he asked the young people to be silent and to think about their anxieties and misfortunes, "don't be afraid, think of them, and think about your desire for the soul to smile again".

"Jesus walks to the cross, dies on the cross, so our soul can smile," he said to break the silence.

The meditations read in a different language at each station aimed to address the challenges young people face today, such as the pressures of social media, anxiety about climate change, and falling into drugs, pornography and alcohol.

Videos

Videos of young people from different countries sharing testimonies of faith were played on the video screens scattered throughout the park.

Caleb, 29, from the United States, described how he was a "lost sheep" that Jesus left the flock to find. He said that after growing up in an abusive household and living through the painful divorce of his parents, he fell into drug abuse and developed suicidal thoughts. Yet it was at his lowest point that he met his future wife who would eventually lead him back to God.

As Pope Francis gave his blessing in Portuguese, the giant screens set up throughout the park showed close-ups of young pilgrims in tears. But just as quickly as they fell into silence to hear the Pope, they cheered loudly when he waved goodbye.



Pope Francis recites the closing prayer at the end of the World Youth Day Stations of the Cross at Eduardo VII Park in Lisbon, Portugal, August 4. Photo: CNS/Lola Gomez



Pilgrims from the Diocese of Ferns.

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Pope hears young people's confessions in 'Reconciliation Park'



Pope Francis hears the confession of a World Youth Day pilgrim in Vasco da Gama Garden in Lisbon, Portugal, August 4 The Pope administered the Sacrament to three pilgrims: young men from Italy and Spain, and a young woman from Guatemala. Photo: CNS/Vatican Media)

Young people were going to Confession on street corners and park benches throughout Lisbon during World Youth Day, but in the 150 plywood confessionals set up in Vasco da Gama Garden three of them found themselves face to face with Pope Francis.

Donning a purple stole, the Pope heard their confessions in the riverside garden, which was converted into 'Reconciliation Park' and lined with white confessionals built by inmates from three Portuguese prisons.

While a confessional with a white chair bearing the papal insignia and visible to the press had been set up, Pope Francis opted for one of the regular, more private, confessionals instead.

The Pope sat across from Francisco, 21, from Spain, followed by Yesvi, 33, from Guatemala and Samuel, 19, from Italy. The three confessions lasted some 10 minutes all together before Pope Francis left the area in a wheelchair and waving to the crowd gathered nearby.

106-year-old

Before going to the garden, Pope Francis met privately at the Vatican nunciature with Maria da Conceição Brito Mendonça, a 106-year-old Portuguese woman, who was born May 13, 1917 – the day of the first Fátima apparition. He also met with Edna Pina Lopes Rodrigues, a young woman with a serious illness; the Pope had sent a message "of affection and prayer" to her in June.

Priests ministering to pilgrims in 'Reconciliation Park' were offering the Sacrament of Reconciliation in 50 different spoken languages and various sign languages.



Many of the Irish pilgrims at the Dominican church.



Pilgrims from Armagh.



A pilgrim prays as Pope Francis celebrates the closing Mass during World Youth Day at Campo da Graça in Park Tejo in Lisbon, Portugal, August 6. Photo: OSV News/Bob Roller



Bishop of Ferns Ger Nash with Bishop of Waterford and Lismore Phonsie Cullinan.

Left: Bishop of Raphoe Alan McGuckian SJ with pilgrims.

Below: Irish pilgrims of Nigerian heritage in Lisbon.



Bishop of Derry Donal McKeown with Bishop of Limerick Brendan Leahy.



Irish pilgrims gathered at evening prayer in Lisbon.

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Pope: God calls your authentic not virtual self

Before a sea of waving flags representing countries large and small from across the globe, Pope Francis told some 500,000 singing, shouting and swaying young people that God has called each person to him by name, not their social media handle.

"You are not here by mistake," he told the mass of people in Lisbon's Eduardo VII Park for the welcome ceremony for World Youth Day. "You, you, you, over there, all of us, me, we were all called by our names."

While social networks know young people's names, tastes and preferences, "all this does not understand your uniqueness, but rather your usefulness for market research," he said at his first World Youth Day event.

Virtual illusions

The "illusions" of the virtual world "attract us and promise happiness" but later show themselves to be "vain, superfluous things, substitutes that leave us empty inside," the Pope said. "I'll tell you something, Jesus is not like that; he believes in you, in each one of you and us, because to him each one of us is important, and that is Jesus."

In the Church, Pope Francis said, "there is space for everyone, and when there isn't, please, let's work so that there is - also for who makes mistakes, for who falls, for who it is difficult."

Departing from his prepared speech, he asked all the young people to "repeat with me: 'Everyone, everyone, everyone!'" before waves of 'todos, todos, todos' - 'everyone' in Spanish and Portuguese - spread throughout the crowd.

Room for all

"That is the Church," he said, "the mother of all; there is room for all."

Throughout the crowd there were flags from countries with large Catholic populations such as Spain and Brazil, but also proudly displayed banners from countries where Catholics represent a small portion of the population.

After a greeting from Cardinal Manuel do Nascimento Clemente of Lisbon, young people read messages in various languages sent to the Pope asking for advice and sharing the personal challenges they face in life and in the Faith, from migration problems and hunger to hopelessness and a loss of faith.

But rather than give direct responses, the Pope told the young people that asking questions is "often better than giving answers, because one who asks remains restless, and restlessness is the best remedy for routine, which is sometimes a form of normalcy that numbs the soul."

Prayer

Pope Francis urged them to never stop asking themselves questions and to bring them before God in prayer. "Life goes on giving answers, we just have to wait for them," he said.

"I invite you think - this is so beautiful - that God loves us as we are, not how we would like to be or how society wants us to be, as we are," he said looking up from his prepared text. "He loves us with the limits we have, with the defects we have, and with the desire we have to keep moving forward in life!"

"God loves us like that; believe it, because God is the Father," he said over cheers from the crowd. He then gestured toward an icon of Mary alongside him onstage. "It's not easy," he said, but "we have a great help in the mother of the Lord. She is our mother, too."



Pope Francis poses for a selfie with World Youth Day volunteers at a concert venue in Algés, Portugal, August 6. Photo: CNS/Vatican Media



Irish pilgrims helped provide the music.



Almost 2,000 Irish pilgrims made this trip



Fr Roger O'Neill, Bishop Ger Nash and Fr Brian Whelan from Ferns Diocese.



Bishop Michael Router with Armagh pilgrims.



Irish pilgrims at the catechesis session.

Out&About

'Sing a new song to the Lord'



MAYO: Pictured are Meath diocesan choir who sang recently at the Pioneer pilgrimage to Knock Shrine.



MAYO: A large rosary procession takes place at Knock Shrine during the Pioneer's pilgrimage to the shrine.



MAYO: Fr Robert McCabe, central spiritual director of the Pioneers, preaches the homily encouraging Pioneers to sow seeds of hope for people who are living under the shadow of addiction during the Pioneer pilgrimage to Knock Shrine.

IN SHORT

Cork guide map highlights Christian heritage

A guide map offering insight into 101 archaeological sites around north and east Cork has been launched by County Mayor, Cllr Frank O'Flynn.

The map promotes significant rural monuments and sights, including many from the early Christian period of Ireland.

Mayor O'Flynn welcomed Cork County Council's latest heritage publication and said he was delighted to present the '101 Archaeological Sites to Visit in north and east Cork' guide map to the Cork community and visitors.

"This remarkable map offers a unique opportunity to explore the fascinating

Knock Shrine. archaeological heritage of our county," said Cllr O'Flynn.

The early Christian period has left a rich legacy in the area and many important early monastic sites feature on the map.

These include Tullylease, with its internationally renowned carved cross, Labbamol-laga, where the shrine tomb of its founding saint St Molaga can be seen and Cloyne in east Cork, with its tall round tower and medieval cathedral.

The prehistoric period is represented by monuments that show the importance that people in that period placed in venerating the dead and how their beliefs were tied into a worship of the sun.

There are numerous castles of different periods across north and east Cork on the map, such as the great stone edifice at Glan-

worth, where an important medieval bridge is still in use.

Mercy sisters host future female leaders

The Mercy International Centre in Dublin hosted the final leg of the 2023 global Mercy emerging leaders fellowship programme.

Prior events took place in Siam Ream in Cambodia and New York in the United States and includes participants from Kenya, Canada, New Zealand, US, Australia and the Philippines.

As part of the culmination of their programme in Dublin, the participants will make presentations built around the themes

of mobilisation and creativity above.

Previously, they undertook human rights and advocacy training delivered by the UN Commission on the Status of Women, a statement from the Mercy Sisters says.

"We are privileged in Dublin to be able to host this group of exceptional young women, from across four continents, who are set to become leaders of the future around the world and to make a decisive and meaningful contribution to major societal issues," said Sr Patricia O'Donovan, CEO Mercy International Association.

One Irish participant said she was "grateful to have been part of the inaugural group of Mercy global action emerging leaders, and to have had the opportunity to carry out research on homelessness in Ireland".

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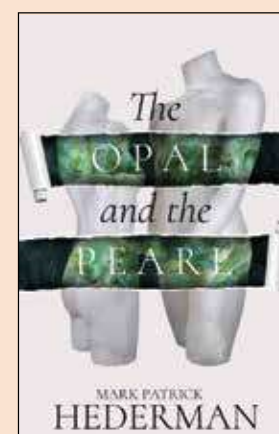
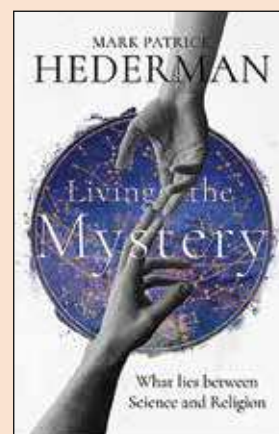
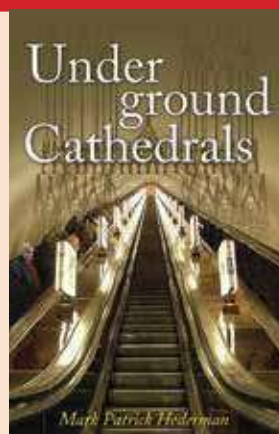
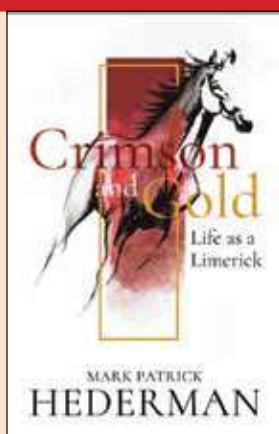
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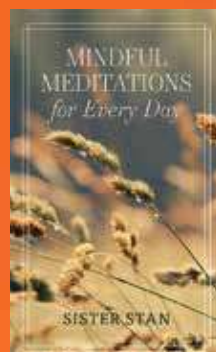
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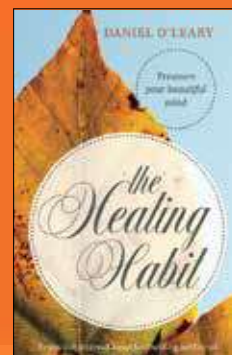
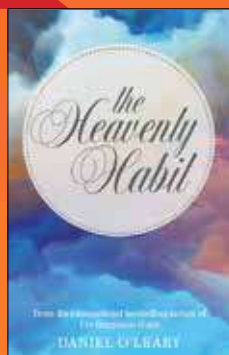
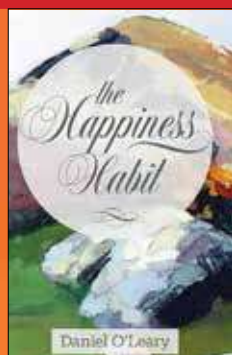
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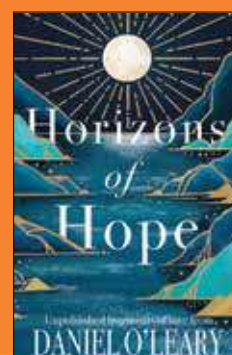
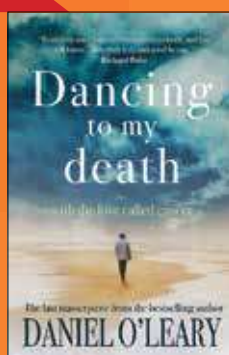
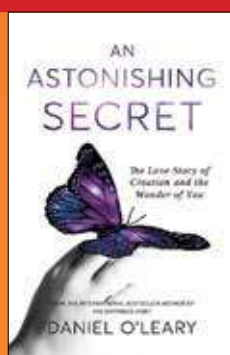
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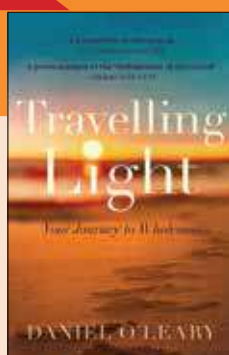
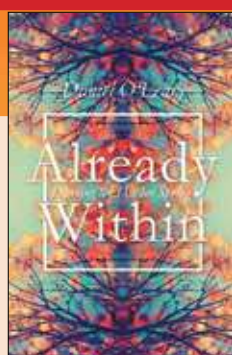
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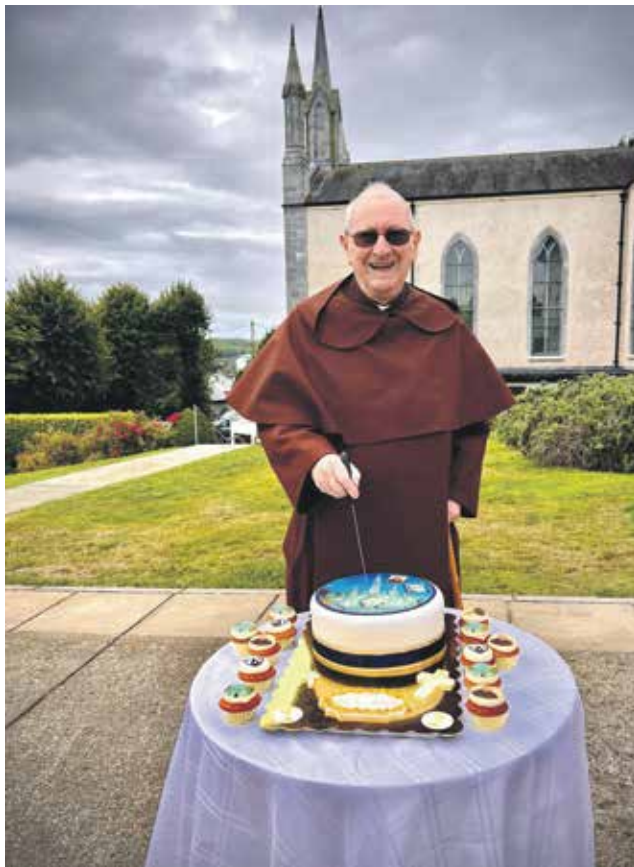
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CORK: Fr Stan Hession O. Carm is pictured as he marks 60 years of priesthood at Carmelite Friary Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Kinsale on July 23.



TIPPERARY: Silvermine's choir are pictured singing at St Cunlán's Well in Youghalarra, on July 24.



WATERFORD: Some of the 230 pilgrims who braved the weather for a pilgrim walk on St Declan's way, as Waterford and Lismore diocese honoured St Declan and prayed for vocations at prayer stations along the way.



TIPPERARY: Bishop of Killaloe Fintan Monahan is pictured at the cemetery Mass in Dromineer, Puckane Parish on the shores of Lough Derg on July 19. Photo: Pdraig Ó Flannabhra



CAVAN: Pictured are three generations of the McMahon family of Kingscourt at the special grandparents Mass at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Kingscourt, marking Catholic Grandparents Sunday in the parish.



DERRY: Fr Gerard Mongan and Mayor of Derry and Strabane Cllr Patricia Logue are pictured admiring Long Tower church at the launch of the new audio guide, a step-by-step journey of the art, artefacts and architecture of the church narrated by Bishop Donal McKeown on July 25.



DUBLIN: Pictured is the group of future female leaders who took part in the Mercy emerging leaders fellowship programme hosted by the Mercy International Association at the Mercy Centre.

Edited by Ruadhán Jones
Ruadhan@irishcatholic.ie

Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



CORK: Cllr. Frank O'Flynn, Mayor of the County of Cork, is pictured at the launch of Cork County Council's '101 Archaeological Sites to visit in North and East Cork' guide map which took place at Bridgetown Priory in Castletownroche.



SLIGO: Pictured are concelebrants and servers after the Mass of thanksgiving to mark the 54th Anniversary of Fr Frank O'Grady, who is retired from the US Military Chaplaincy and now ministers at Knock Shrine.



SLIGO: Bishop of Achonry Paul Dempsey and Fr Vincent Sherlock are pictured with Fr Frank O'Grady following a Mass of thanksgiving to mark Fr O'Grady's 54th anniversary of ordination in St Patrick's Church, Gurteen.

ANTRIM

Eucharistic adoration takes place 10am-7pm every Tuesday and Thursday in St Peter's Cathedral's adoration chapel.

A Youth 2000 prayer meeting for young adults (18-35) takes place in St Comgall's Church, Castle Street on Sundays at 7pm. For more information contact Fr James O'Reilly on 0044 2894 429 103.

ARMAGH

An outdoor festival for families is to take place in the Shambles Yard on Thursday, August 24, from 5-7pm. It will include music and a wide range of entertainment for families throughout the diocese and beyond.

CAVAN

Eucharistic adoration takes place in St Clare's Chapel, Cavan Town parish, from 11am-7pm daily.

CLARE

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place daily 3-7pm, with Benediction and evening prayer at 5.30pm on Sundays in the Poor Clare's oratory.

CORK

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in Skibbereen every Monday and Friday from 10am-6pm each day.

The rosary is prayed at the Grotto in Dripsey every night of the year at 8pm, either outdoors or if the weather is inclement, from the car.

Rosary followed by Divine Mercy devotions take place at 8pm every night year-round at the Grotto in 'Carraig an Aifreann' Mass rock, Glenville.

DERRY

The Sr Clare Crockett rosary continues every Monday night, at 8.30pm, in St Joseph's Room, at the Carmelite Retreat Centre, Termonbacca.

Coleraine parish will host a parish family picnic on Sunday, August 20, from 2pm in the grounds of Chapelfield House. Families are asked to bring their own rug and picnic.

DONEGAL

Buncrana parish is to host a family fun day on the grounds of Scoil Mhuire on Sunday, August 27, from 3-6pm.

DOWN

The Blessed Sacrament is exposed in Newry Cathedral every Thursday from 5-9pm, on Saturday after 10.30am Mass until 5.30pm and Sunday from after the 12 noon Mass until 5.30pm.

DUBLIN

Donnybrook parish hosts coffee mornings in the pastoral centre after 10am Mass on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Candlelit adoration takes place 6.30-7.30pm on Friday nights in Gardiner Street parish.

FERMANAGH

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place after 10am Mass until 1pm each Tuesday in St Michael's Church, Enniskillen during July and August.

GALWAY

Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Saturday evenings from 7-8pm and on Monday evenings from 6-9pm in Galway Cathedral.

A Youth 2000 prayer meeting for young adults (18-35) takes place in the Church of St Oliver Plunkett, Renmore, on Fridays 8:15pm.

KILDARE

Mass for the African Community is celebrated in St Brigid's Parish Church on the third Sunday of each month.

KILKENNY

St John's Parish Scripture group meets in the presbytery at 7.30pm each Thursday to reflect on Scripture texts for the following Sunday's Mass.

LAOIS

Eucharistic Adoration takes place in St Michael's Church, Portarlington after 10 o'clock Mass each Tuesday, with rosary at 7pm followed by prayers to the Holy Face. The rosary is prayed each night at 7pm live on the webcam.

LEITRIM

Daily rosary at 6pm in St Joseph's Church, Leitrim Village.

MAYO

Elphin diocesan pilgrimage to Knock Shrine takes place on August 20 from 2pm.

The next Latin Mass will take place on Sunday, August 13,

at 6pm in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel Knock Shrine.

MEATH

Navan parish novena in honour of the Sacred Heart takes place Fridays in St Oliver's Church with 7.30pm Mass and devotions.

MONAGHAN

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place every Tuesday from 2-4pm in Muckno parish, St Mary's Church.

OFFALY

Clonminch cemetery Sunday in Tullamore Parish takes place on Sunday, August 20, at 1pm.

ROSCOMMON

Eucharistic adoration takes place the first Friday of each Month in Drumboylan Church (Ardcarne Parish) from 9am-10pm.

SLIGO

Cemetery Sunday will take place on August 13 at 3pm in Sligo Cemetery.

TIPPERARY

A Medjugorje prayer night takes place the second Thursday of every month in Glencomeragh house, beginning with the rosary at 8pm during which confessions will be available, followed by Mass, adoration and prayers for healing.

TYRONE

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Mondays and Wednesdays in St Lúarán's Church from 11am-5pm.

WATERFORD

A Divine Mercy prayer group meets in the Church of the Sacred Heart, the Folly, Waterford City, every Friday from 3-3.45pm. Mass is celebrated every first Friday at 3pm.

WESTMEATH

A Divine Mercy prayer group takes place in at 3pm in Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, Coosan.

WEXFORD

The annual Grantstown rosary takes place in the Augustinian Priory, Grantstown, Wellington Bridge, on Sunday, August 13 at 3pm.



World Report

IN BRIEF

Bankruptcy for San Francisco diocese 'very likely'

● San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone revealed that it was "very likely" that the archdiocese would be filing for bankruptcy in the near future due to the hundreds of clerical abuse lawsuits that have been filed against it.

The prelate revealed the news in an announcement on the archdiocesan website, August 4, in which he noted that, following a 2019 California law that lifted the statute of limitations on certain sexual abuse claims, the archdiocese was ultimately served with "more than 500 civil lawsuits" related to clerical sexual abuse.

The "vast majority of the alleged abuse occurred in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s and involved priests who are deceased or no longer in ministry," Archbishop Cordileone noted, while others involved "unnamed individuals or named individuals who are unknown to the archdiocese".

Pope confirms Vatican envoy's visit to China in wide-ranging interview

● In a newly published interview, Pope Francis described the ongoing Synod on Synodality as fulfilling "the dream of Paul VI" and underscored that the process is about recovering a lost form of ecclesial participation, not changing doctrine.

The Holy Father also confirmed rumours that Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, the Vatican's special envoy for peace in Ukraine, will soon be visiting China. The Pope described Cardinal

Zuppi's "scheduled stopover" in Beijing as part of the Vatican's "peace offensive", which has already included visits to Kyiv, Moscow, and Washington, DC. The Pope said he is considering appointing a permanent representative to serve as a bridge between Russia and Ukraine.

Pope Francis also shared his concerns over what he called "ideological" youth groups and "rigid" priests and seminarians.

Pope receives posthumous letter from young Carmelite who wanted to attend WYD

● Pope Francis has received a posthumous letter from the young Spanish Carmelite Pablo María de la Cruz who entered the religious order with special permission *in articulo mortis* (at the point of death) and who died on July 15 at the age of 21.

Eva Fernández, the Vatican correspondent for COPE, the radio station of the Spanish Bishops' Conference, was asked to deliver the letter to the Pontiff along with a holy card designed by the priest for his wake.

The Pope, on board the plane en route to the World Youth Day (WYD) in Lisbon, Portugal, let the journalist know that he was aware of the story of the young Spaniard.

In the letter, the Carmelite expressed to the Pope his desire to have participated in WYD in person, but in the event that he died before, as happened, he pledged his prayers and support.

Cloistered nuns attend WYD for the first time

● They never, or almost never leave, the convent where they live totally devoted to God, but one lively group of cloistered nuns participated for the first time in World Youth Day 2023.

Four Perpetual Adoration Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament from the congregation's community in San Francisco shared their personal experiences with EWTN News at the event that took place in Lisbon, Portugal.

Mother Alma Ruth (63), the superior of the community who has been in religious life for 39 years, spoke excitedly and with great expectation about WYD.

"It's the first time that we have come to this beautiful event that will encourage us more, going back to our monastery to pray for all these young people. It's a joy to see so many young people looking to see what God wants of them," she said.

World Youth Day 2027 to take place in South Korean capital

World Youth Day is returning to Asia in 2027 and will be hosted in Seoul, South Korea.

Pope Francis announced the location on August 6 to some 1.5 million pilgrims who attended the closing Mass of World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon.

"The next World Youth Day will take place in Asia. It will be in South Korea, in Seoul," he said to cheers from the estimated 1,000 South Korean pilgrims, many of them proudly waving their country's flag.

"In 2027, from the western border of Europe, (World Youth Day) will move to the Far East, and this is a beautiful sign of the universality of the Church and the dream of unity of which you are witnesses," the Pope said.

Pope Francis prefaced his announcement by urging young people to travel to Rome in 2025 to participate in youth celebrations during the jubilee year, when Vatican officials expect more than 30 million pilgrims to flock to the Eternal City.

The Pope's decision marks the second time the international gathering of young people will take place in Asia. In 1995, an estimated 5 million people attended World Youth Day in Manila, Philippines, with St John Paul II.

Archbishop Peter Chung Soon-taick of Seoul said at a news conference on August 6 that while it is unrealistic



South Korean flags are seen as Pope Francis celebrates the closing Mass during World Youth Day at Campo da Graça in Park Tejo in Lisbon, Portugal, August 6. The Pope announced after the Mass that Korea would be the site of the next World Youth Day in 2027. Photo: OSV News/Bob Roller

to expect millions to participate in Seoul's World Youth Day, he anticipates many young foreigners – Catholics and not – will come to South Korea for the event drawn by their many cultural offerings, including K-pop, the popular Korean music.

Archbishop Chung said he hoped to achieve similar participation numbers as World Youth Day 2008 in Sydney – about 300,000 – which also involved a significant number of foreign-

ers traveling to the country.

"World Youth Day is not just a Catholic event, it is a global celebration and a platform for interreligious encounters," he said speaking through a translator. He also acknowledged the "immense challenge" of welcoming young people around the world to Seoul but said that South Korea is a highly efficient country capable of hosting the event.

The archbishop said the next World Youth Day

"aspires to become a radiant beacon of unity embracing the rich culture of East Asia".

The event would be the first time World Youth Day is held in a Christian-minority country. Catholics make up an estimated 11% of the country's population – about 5.7 million people – according to a 2020 report from the Korean bishops' conference.

Pope Francis travelled to South Korea in 2014 to beatify 124 Korean martyrs at a ceremony in Seoul.

Pope responds to abuse questions aboard Papal flight

After a five-day trip to Portugal, which recently came to terms with its own clerical sex abuse crisis, Pope Francis said the Catholic Church must abandon its practice of covering up abuse and instead be "very open" about how it is confronting the crime.

During a news conference on the Pope's return flight to Rome from Lisbon, Portugal, August 6, the Pope said bishops who have not adopted a "zero tolerance" policy toward abuse need to "take charge of that irresponsibility".

Pope Francis had met privately with abuse survivors for more than an hour

on August 2 during his stay in Lisbon for World Youth Day; he told reporters they "dialogued about this plague" of abuse.

"The Church used to follow the conduct that is followed in families and neighbourhoods: it covers up," he said, adding that addressing abuse must take in those places, too.

Speaking directly with abuse survivors, as he has done on several of his international trips, is "good for me, not because I like to listen to it but because it helps me take charge of that tragedy," he said.

Speaking about abuse more generally,

Pope Francis called child abuse imagery "one of the gravest plagues in the whole world," noting how it has become easily accessible on any cell phone.

"This comes into our homes. Sexual abuse with minors is filmed live. Where is it filmed? Who is responsible?" the Pope asked. "I want to stress this, because we don't realise that things are so radical."

He also identified other types of abuse that need to be addressed in the word, such as child labour and the ongoing practice of female genital mutilation.

Cenacolo community founder dies aged 86

Mother Elvira Petrozzi, who founded the Cenacolo community in 1983 to provide hope and healing to those suffering from addiction, died on August 3 in the formation house and residence of her congregation in Saluzzo, Italy. She was 86.

Her death, following a long illness, came just weeks after thousands of people gathered in Saluzzo, a hill-top town in Italy's northwest Piedmont region about an hour's drive south of Turin, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Cenacolo Com-

munity's founding there in an abandoned home on July 16, 1983.

In the decades since, the community has grown to encompass 72 Cenacolo houses in 20 countries.

Mother Elvira called the Cenacolo a "School of

Life" because it took people off the streets and gave them a "rebirth" that was "based on a simple, family-oriented, orderly life" with the foundation of prayer, physical labour, discipline and fraternal sharing.



Edited by Jason Osborne
jason@irishcatholic.ie

Penance with the Pope...



Pope Francis embraces a World Youth Day pilgrim after hearing her Confession in Vasco da Gama Garden in Lisbon, Portugal, August 4. The Pope administered the Sacrament to three pilgrims: young men from Italy and Spain, and the young woman from Guatemala. Photo: CNS/Vatican Media

Survey: Gen Xers' church attendance drops to millennial levels

Church attendance has dropped off since the pandemic for Generation X more sharply than for other age groups, according to a new survey.

The survey of 2,000 adults conducted by the Cultural Research Centre at Arizona Christian University in the US found that the percentage of people ages 39 to 57 who attended a worship service during the week, either in person or online, fell to 28% in 2023, down from 41% in 2020, the *Wall Street Journal* reported. Gen Xers saw the largest percentage drop among the age groups surveyed.

The percentage of Gen Xers who worship weekly is now as low as among millennials, at 28%, the survey posits. In fact, the oft-maligned millennial generation experienced during the pandemic the least amount of change in their perspectives about the Christian faith and their participation in biblical practice, the researchers assert.

In contrast, "no generation endured greater spiritual turbulence than Gen X during the pandemic," said George Barna, director of research at the Cultural Research Centre. "Among the biggest changes in their religious perspective were declines

in believing God created humans, that he is the basis of truth, and that he is the omniscient and omnipotent ruler of the universe. Those doubts have precipitated important transitions in religious behaviour, including less frequent Bible reading, church attendance, confession of personal sin, seeking to do God's will, and worshipping God," the report says.

Among baby boomers, the results of this survey suggest a slight upward trend in church attendance in the past three years, the only age group for which this was true. Participation among the elderly fell only slightly.

Experts cited by the *WSJ* said many people in their 40s and 50s were raised in a church and did not seriously question their faith practice until the pandemic.

In addition, parents often attend places of worship to get their kids through certain religious milestones, after which their participation begins to wane. A few experts described the drop in church participation as a form of "quiet quitting," with attendees lacking a deep participation to the point of stopping attending and donating while remaining, officially, on membership rolls.

Ukraine moves Christmas observance to December 25 in 'cultural shift'

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has signed into law a bill moving the official observance of Christmas Day to December 25 from January 7, when Moscow and the Russian Orthodox Church mark the holiday.

Ukraine's parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, approved the measure – which also adjusts the dates of the Day of Ukrainian Statehood and the Day of Defenders of Ukraine – on July 14, with Zelenskyy formalising it on July 28.

President Zelenskyy had introduced

the legislation June 28, with an explanatory note that the change would "discard the Russian legacy of celebrating Christmas on January 7," the date for the holiday according to the Julian calendar, which is used by the Russian Orthodox and other Eastern Orthodox churches.

The change signals "a huge cultural shift," while "recognising what's been in practice anyway for quite some time," said Nicholas Rudnytzy, professor of history and dean of academic services at Manor College in Jenkintown, Penn-

sylvania, a school with deep roots in the Ukrainian-American community.

Close to 80% of Ukraine's population identifies as Orthodox, but that affiliation has become increasingly complex in light of Russia's decade of aggression against Ukraine, which began in 2014 with attacks on the Donbas region and the attempted annexation of Crimea.

Mr Rudnytzy said the date change "will serve towards the paradigm shift – not by itself, but as part of the whole package".

Vatican roundup

Pope Francis calls to recover eucharistic adoration in the Church

● From Lisbon, Portugal, Pope Francis reflected on the urgency of taking up again "the prayer of adoration" before the tabernacle to recover "the taste and passion for evangelisation" in a message addressed to bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated women religious and seminarians.

"I would like to ask a question here, but each one should answer it interiorly. How do I pray? Like a parrot – blah blah blah blah? Or taking a nap in front of the tabernacle because I don't know how to talk to the Lord? I pray? How do I pray? Only in adoration, only before the Lord can the taste and passion for evangelisation be recovered," the Pontiff said during his August 2 homily for vespers at the Jerónimos Monastery.

After noting that "to trust every day in the Lord and in his word, words are not enough" but rather "a lot of prayer is needed," he pointed out to the approximately 1,100 attendees that the Church has abandoned prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

"Curiously, the prayer of adoration – we have lost it. We have lost it, and everyone – priests, bishops, consecrated men and women, laypeople – have to recover it. It's to be in silence, before the Lord," Francis urged.

World Youth Day papal prayer intention for August

● Pope Francis' prayer intention for the month of August is for World Youth Day (WYD).

The video promoting the Pope's prayer intention starts with a group of young people on a video chat saying that when they go to church they only see "old people".

They then ask, "Is the Church only for old people?"

"The Church is not an old people's club any more than it is a youth club," the Pope replied.

He added: "If it becomes something for old people, it will die." Pope Francis

references St John Paul II, who said: "If you live with young people you become young yourself."

Another group of young people then asked Pope Francis why he chose the theme "Mary arose and went with haste" for this WYD.

He answered: "Because as soon as Mary knew she was going to be the mother of God, she didn't stay there taking a selfie or showing off. The first thing she did was to set out on a journey, in haste, to serve, to help."

"You too have to learn from her to set out on a journey to help others," he said.

'The pope's university' gets a new rector

● Pope Francis has appointed an Italian moral theologian to head the Pontifical Lateran University, an influential Roman institute known as 'the pope's university,' which has incorporated many of the current pontiff's priorities into its curriculum.

But that's not the only change at the Lateran. The new rector, Archbishop Alfonso V. Amarante, will also be aided by a papally appointed management director, a new post at the Lateran.

The appointment of Archbishop Amarante, a member of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (the Redemptorists), to serve as the Lateran's new rector, was announced by the Vatican August 1, the feast day of the Redemptorist order's founder, St Alphonsus Liguori. On the same day, the Vatican announced that the Pope had picked the Lateran's current rector, Vincenzo Buonomo, to serve as the general councillor of the Vatican City.



Letter from Rome



John L. Allen Jr

At the end of the 2007 movie *Charley Wilson's War*, about how covert American support for the mujahadeen in Afghanistan helped bring down the Soviet empire, a quote appears from the real Texas congressman played in the film by Tom Hanks: "All these things happened, and they were glorious and they changed the world."

"Then, we ..."

Well, I can't actually quote what Wilson said at that point, because this is a family news outlet. Suffice it to say, his point was that the people in charge didn't handle the aftermath very well.

A just society

If a movie is ever made about the famed Italian *Codice di Camaldoli* (Code of Camaldoli), a blueprint for a just society produced by a cross-section of Catholic intellectuals and activists in July 1943 at a Benedictine monastery in Tuscany, that Wilson quote easily could serve as its denouement too ... though, perhaps, not quite its final word.

Among the participants in that fabled summit 80 years ago last month were two future Prime Ministers of Italy, Aldo Moro and Giulio Andreotti; the future Mayor of Florence, Giorgio La Pira; and a future Cardinal of the Catholic Church, Pietro Pavan, who would go on to ghostwrite the social encyclicals *Mater et Magistra* and *Pacem in Terris* for Pope John XXIII.

The work was coordinated by Italian economist and intellectual Sergio Paronetto, a leader in the Catholic Action movement and a close friend and advisor to both Monsignor Giovanni Battista Montini, who would become St Pope Paul VI, and Alcide de Gasperi, who would serve as Italy's Prime Minister from 1946 to 1953, and who would also become one of the founders of the European Union and a candidate for sainthood himself.

It's almost impossible to overstate the centrality of Catholicism for this cohort.

Andreotti, who would serve as Prime Minister in seven different governments, first met de Gasperi when both were young activists in FUCI (the 'Italian Catholic University Federation,' basically the youth arm of Catholic Action) and they were studying together in the Vatican Library. When a prominent journalist later would say the difference was that when de Gasperi went to church, he talked to God, while Andreotti spoke to the priests, Andreotti shot back: "Priests vote, God doesn't."

History's greatest dream of Catholic social teaching



Camaldoli Monastery. Photo: Wikimedia

Organised in seven sections and 99 individual propositions, the *Codice di Camaldoli* would become a key source for Italy's post-war constitution and also serve as inspiration for the political platform of the Christian Democratic party, which governed the country for the next 50 years.

Backdrop

The backdrop to the gathering at Camaldoli was the stuff of high drama. Just eight days before the group assembled, American forces had launched the invasion of Sicily; the day after the meeting began, American bombers strafed Rome, dropping more than 1,000 tons of explosives and killing 3,000 people.

One day after the Camaldoli meeting concluded, Mussolini was ousted by the Grand Council of Fascism and placed under arrest, which would lead to the German occupation of northern and central Italy by September.

As a result, it was clear to the thinkers in Camaldoli that the old order was crumbling, and that something new would have to be built. It was, to some extent, an Italian analogue to the US constitutional convention in 1787, in that participants weren't just considering reforms to an existing system but trying to imagine a new government from the ground up.

One key difference is that unlike what happened in Philadelphia

more than two centuries ago, these Italian founding fathers were all Catholic and self-consciously trying to imagine a state rooted in Catholic social doctrine. To extend the analogy, the *Codice di Camaldoli* is akin to the American "Federalist Papers," in that it reveals the aspirations of the architects of the *novus ordo seclorum*.

Core pillars

In terms of content, the *Codice di Camaldoli* identified two core pillars of a just society: The "common good," and "social harmony".

Beyond that, it listed eight principles which should govern economic activity (listed below in my translation from Italian).

1. The dignity of the human person, which requires a well-ordered freedom of the individual also in the economic field.
2. Equality of personal rights, notwithstanding deep individual differences as a result of different degrees of intelligence, ability, physical strength, etc.
3. Solidarity, that is, the duty of collaboration also in the economic arena to reach the common goals of society.
4. The primary destination of material goods for the advantage of all people.
5. The possibility of ownership in various legitimate ways, among which work is preeminent.
6. Free commerce of goods with respect for commutative justice.
7. Respect for the exigencies of commutative justice in payment for work.
8. Respect for the exigencies of distributive and legal justice in the interventions of the state.

One of its best-known prescriptions is this: "A good economic system must avoid excessive enrichment which damages equitable distribution. In any case, it must prevent the excessive power of small groups over the economy through the control of a few [individuals] over concentrations of wealth."

Papal social teaching

In effect, the *Codice di Camaldoli* was an attempt to answer one of the most fascinating thought exercises in Catholic intellectual life of the last 150 years: What would an actual, real-world government

based on papal social teaching since Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 look like?

In some ways, the *Codice* was a rousing success.

Led by statesmen such as de Gasperi and the Christian Democratic coalition he founded, Italy negotiated the transition from fascism to democracy, constructed a social welfare state that aspires to guarantee a certain minimum dignity to citizens, held Communism at bay, and tried its best to balance growing secularisation and religious pluralism with respect for the country's traditional Catholic identity. In general terms, the Christian Democrats were also able to hold the political left and right together in a rough consensus.

On the other hand, we all know how the story ended: The Christian Democrats imploded in 1994 amid a series of corruption scandals known as *Tangentopoli*, or "Bribe City," and many of the core principles of the *Codice di Camaldoli* were more honoured in the breach than the observance. Despite the emphasis on a right to work, for example, Italy has long been plagued with one of the highest youth unemployment rates in Europe, especially in the chronically underdeveloped south, where talk of the "common good" and "social harmony" often seem little more than a cruel joke.

Ideal

De Gasperi himself seemed to anticipate that the real-world application of the *Codice* would fall short of the ideal.

Here's what he said at the time: "Approaching this session of Catholic Action is like climbing a great mountain. You find yourself in an oxygenated atmosphere. When you come down, it's not always possible to maintain the same atmosphere ... [one] has to seek a third way between the aspirations of principle and the possibilities of action."

And, yet.

Despite it all, the *Codice di Camaldoli* remains arguably the most thoughtful, thorough and provocative effort in history to apply the principles of Catholic social doctrine to the hard work of real-world governance. The fact that it took shape in a famed monastery of the Benedictines, who have been in the business of sustaining and saving Western civilisation for 1,500 years, probably isn't an accident.

Perhaps the dream the *Codice* represents has never been fully realised ... but that, by no means, suggests the dream is dead.

John L. Allen Jr. is editor of *Crux*.

Despite the emphasis on a right to work, for example, Italy has long been plagued with one of the highest youth unemployment rates in Europe, especially in the chronically underdeveloped south, where talk of the 'common good' and 'social harmony' often seem little more than a cruel joke"

Barriers a sign of worsening conditions for Holy Land Christians



Judith Sudilovsky

The Stella Maris Carmelite monastery has seen destruction and banishment over its centuries-old history, dating back to the mid-13th Century. The recent attempts by a group of Jewish religious extremists to declare the monastery a Jewish holy site has however, for the first time, led to the monks installing metal fencing around its entrance.

"I understand this is to keep those extremists we don't want out, but the problem is the fence also keeps the community out," said Rania Laham Grayeb (47) a member of the Haifa Christian community. "For us as Christians this is a very popular holy site for all denominations. We come here often as a family."

And indeed, the mountaintop monastery at Mount Carmel in Haifa, Israel, facing the sea, has been a place of pilgrimage and tours for peoples of all faiths. Jewish, Christian and Muslim residents of the surrounding neighbourhood took pride and respected the beauty and tranquility of the monastery in their midst.

In early May, however, a few fringe members of the Breslov ultra-orthodox sect began arriving at the monastery, claiming it was a Jewish holy site and the burial site of the prophet Elisha, the successor of the prophet Elijah – both of whom are venerated by Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Substantiate

No archaeological remains have been found to substantiate their claims, noted Wadie Abunassar, coordinator of the Holy Land Christian Forum.

According to Christian tradition, the cave where the Old Testament says Elijah lived for a period is located under the church's raised altar. Another site, also on Mount Carmel, is also associated with Elijah, and revered by Christians, Jews, Muslims and Druze.

Successive greater numbers of fringe members of the sect, followers of radical rabbi Eliezer Berland, have come to the Carmelite monastery since then, some demanding to be let inside, others praying at the walls of the church, with scuffles breaking out as Christian guards demand they leave. At least once, they physically

“Many in the Christian community are wondering whether a fringe minority might indeed start a trend that might lead to stronger and stronger outside intervention by such extremist groups at this Christian site”



Holy Land Christians protest outside the Stella Maris Monastery in Haifa, Israel, against what they see as insufficient action by the Israeli police regarding provocations by radical Jews at the monastery, July 30. Photo: OSV News/Debbie Hill

pushed two men outside the courtyard.

“I do expect the local municipal police to protect the safety of the residents and take steps to stop this. Haifa is a mixed city ... for all religions”

"To be here when (the sect members) are here is frightening," said Laham Grayeb. "We are not a violent community. Why are they using these means against us? We don't go storm synagogues. It is very sad for us because Haifa isn't like this ... we respect each other. But this is part of the atmosphere of what is happening in the country, part of what (Minister of National Security) Itamar Ben-Gvir is trying to do with the Arabs here."

Ben-Gvir, leader of the extremist Otzma Yehudit, Jewish Power, political party, is known for his extremist racist views and was convicted of inciting racism and supporting a terrorist organisation in 2008.

"The police must act (more decisively) against this phenomenon and not allow it to grow," said Jewish

resident Gil Meller, who lives near the monastery. "I don't expect Ben-Gvir to do anything, but I do expect the local municipal police to protect the safety of the residents and take steps to stop this. Haifa is a mixed city ... for all religions."

On July 27, as the Israeli parliament – led by the most religious and nationalist extremist government in Israel's history – was busy passing the controversial "reasonableness bill", which will reduce the power of the Supreme Court to overrule unreasonable government rulings, a full busload of the religious extremists along with members of the racist 'La Familia' group made their way onto the grounds of the monastery and were met by young Christians protecting the monastery.

That evening Christian leaders and thousands of local Christians and their supporters gathered at the monastery to express solidarity with the monastery and demand greater police action against the trespassers.

Fringe

"Many in the Christian community are wondering whether a fringe minority might indeed start a trend that might lead to stronger and stronger outside intervention by such extremist groups at this Christian site and may eventually end in them taking full control over the site, as previously happened in Nablus and Hebron," said the Justice and Peace Commission Assembly of the Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land in a statement released on July 28.

"The State of Israel repeatedly professes to guarantee all of its citizens freedom of religious practice. The State also professes to protect its citizens

from crime and unrest, guaranteeing law and order. It is incomprehensible that these manifestations of contempt can be allowed to continue."

“The police and the inspection division of the Haifa municipality invest every effort even today, and prepare to protect the city of Haifa”

Christian leaders and members of the Christian community say that while Haifa mayor Einat Kalisch Rotem has come out against the attempted take-over of the holy site, they still fear that if something substantial is not done to stop the members of the sect from coming to the monastery with their claims, it will soon become a Jewish pilgrimage site.

In a July 27 Twitter post, Kalisch Rotem wrote pledging support for the monastery: "The church of the order of the Discalced Carmelites in Stella Maris belongs to the Christians. We will not allow foreigners to enter it and we will not allow external factors to break the deep and delicate relationship in the city. The police and the inspection division of the Haifa municipality invest every effort even today, and prepare to protect the city of Haifa. Together we will succeed, sanity will win."

The monastery has always been a place of peace and unity, said recently arrived monastery superior Fr Jean Joseph Bergara, and it must continue to be so.

"But we need to be respected also,"

Fr Bergara told OSV News on July 30, standing in front of the church just prior to beginning a prayer for the thousands of local Christians. They had arrived that afternoon at the monastery in a convoy from Galilee, following a call for a show of Christian support.

Solidarity

"We have received a lot of solidarity and support," the monastery's superior said. "Also our Jewish neighbours say they are opposed to what is happening, reminding us of the unity we have here. I think we can create better things from what is happening. We have to answer a new call from God for ourselves and our people to help the country reflect on what is peace and justice. Everyone is the child of God and beloved by God."

Members of Christian youth groups and families from Galilee filled the courtyard of the monastery, singing, chanting and beating drums.

The neighbourhood has always been an exemplary model of respect and tolerance among all religions, noted resident Rozet Hazzan, who was among those coming to show her presence at the monastery.

"We have never felt this racism. There is a small group trying to destroy our relations," she said. "There is no question that this is a part of what is happening in this country (with the current government). The whole country is falling apart. It is very sad. We are afraid of the future for our children."

① Judith Sudilovsky writes for OSV News from Jerusalem.

Letters

Post to: Letters to the Editor, The Irish Catholic,
Unit 3b, Bracken Business Park, Bracken Road, Sandyford,
Dublin 18, D18 K277 or email: letters@irishcatholic.ie

Letter of the week

No investigation into the treatment of the unborn

Dear Editor, I was, like most people, horrified at the treatment of the young calves at marts around the country as portrayed on the national news and shown on the *Prime Time Investigates* programme aired on RTÉ, Monday, July 10. These young calves are going to slaughter (something that

is not spoken about, the presenter said) and being shipped overseas, a journey that can take more than 18 hours in unfavourable conditions. I was brought up on a small farm and instinctively my parents treated the animals as members of our extended family.

While listening to this report,

I could not but draw a shocking comparison; firstly, in our country's laws and secondly the nature in which we interpret them. The presenter stated: "It is illegal to pull a calf by the tail or ears or to use a stick on a calf younger than 42 days." This law is appropriate and right with regard to animal wel-

fare. Yet, when it comes to the laws governing the most vulnerable humans in our society, the unborn, it seems that these too are viewed as "appropriate and right". There is no investigative programme to highlight the treatment of the unborn because if the truth of abortion were ever made

public, the public could not stand over it; nor the laws that the majority of voted so enthusiastically to implement. This analogy is indeed a sad indictment of our nation's conscience and nature.

Yours etc.,
B. Ward
Inver, Co. Donegal

Pope Francis' declining health

Dear Editor, It seems Pope Francis' papacy may be close to an end, given his age and declining health.

Over the years he has faced significant challenges and controversies, which have led to a decline in popularity among some. As he faces these challenges, it is important for the Church to prepare for possible transitions ahead. Let us keep Pope Francis in our prayers during this time, trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Yours etc.,
James Moore
Swords, Dublin 15



Positive actions to shape a better society

Dear Editor, In response to David Quinn's article [*The Irish Catholic* – July 20, 2023], which highlights significant changes in social policy and the departure from Catholic teachings in Ireland, I would like to suggest positive actions to address these concerns.

It is essential to foster open dialogue between the Catholic Church, policymakers, and the wider society. Engaging in respectful conversations can help build understanding and promote the enduring values that have shaped our country.

- Promoting Catholic education and raising awareness of the Church's teachings can help reinforce the values that once resonated strongly with the majority of the population.

- Protecting religious freedom ensures that the Church can continue to uphold its beliefs and principles without interference from the State or other groups.

- Supporting grassroots movements that promote Catholic values and advocate for the dignity of life, marriage, and family can have a positive impact on shaping public opinion.

- Encouraging Catholics to participate actively in public life, including voting and engaging in democratic processes.

- Emphasising the Church's commitment to compassion, solidarity, and care for the marginalised can foster a culture of inclusivity and understanding.

- We can engage constructively with the Government, presenting well-reasoned arguments and suggestions to counter proposals that may contradict Catholic values.

- Encouragement to actively engage with the media, including writing op-eds and sharing stories that promote Catholic perspectives, can help shape public discourse.

- Engaging in prayer and reflection can strengthen the spiritual foundation of the Faithful and inspire actions that reflect its values.

- Collaborating with like-minded groups and individuals who share similar values can amplify the Catholic community's voice and influence.

By taking these positive actions, we can contribute to shaping a society that reflects its enduring values while fostering understanding and mutual respect among diverse perspectives.

Yours etc.,
Jo Daly
Tralee, Co. Kerry

No child should suffer these horrors

Dear Editor, Niamh Uí Bhriain's article, 'Would they care more if the nuns could be blamed?' [*The Irish Catholic* – July 20, 2023] really highlighted the hypocrisy of our State and politicians. Her words shed light on a deeply disturbing and distressing reality—the sexual exploitation and abuse of vulnerable children in the care of Tusla.

Ms Uí Bhriain's questioning of why there seems to be a muted response from the establishment and media

regarding this grave crisis resonates deeply. Children are being coerced and exploited by gangs of men while the State concerns itself with gender ideology issues. The mind boggles.

It is disheartening to witness the focus on issues of lesser significance while the heinous crimes against these innocent children go seemingly unaddressed. Our society must prioritise protecting the well-being of our most vulnerable citizens over trivial debates.

It is incumbent upon those in authority to act swiftly and decisively to rectify the shortcomings of the child-care services and address the systemic failures that have allowed such atrocities to persist. The lack of foster care, residential placements, and qualified staff cannot be allowed to continue as excuses for inaction.

We must not shy away from discussing these harrowing realities simply because they are uncomfortable or difficult to compre-

hend. Rather, we should face them head-on and hold those responsible accountable for their inaction.

I hope that these revelations will spark the much-needed urgency for action, prompting our supposedly progressive State to prioritise the welfare of our children and take decisive measures to ensure their protection.

No child should suffer these horrors.

Yours etc.,
Cathy Clarke
Wicklow Town, Wicklow

Learning from the failure of the World Meeting of Families

Dear Editor, As we approach the five-year anniversary of the World Meeting of Families in 2018, I find myself reflecting on what was meant to be a momentous occasion for the Church in Ireland. Sadly, I cannot help but lament its failure.

Despite hopes for a strong showing of support and enthusiasm the numbers fell far short of expectations. This lack of engagement from laity and even some members of the clergy was disheartening.

The media's fearmongering (older people will drop dead from fatigue and die or catch some unmentionable disease if they go to the Phoenix

Park for the Mass!) and massive focus on historic abuse undoubtedly had a detrimental impact on its success. Instead of promoting understanding and unity, the media seemed determined to undermine the event, focusing on negative narratives rather than highlighting the positive message it conveyed.

In the face of these challenges, it is essential to reflect on our collective responsibility. As we mark this anniversary, let us use it as an opportunity for introspection and renewal.

While we cannot control the media's narrative, we can respond with humility, love, and a steadfast commitment

to the truth. Let us demonstrate through our actions and words that our faith is a source of hope, love, and unity for all.

Remembering the World Meeting of Families in 2018, let us not dwell on its perceived shortcomings, but instead, let it serve as a catalyst for positive change. May we rekindle the fire of enthusiasm for our identity and embrace the call to be active and vibrant witnesses of God's love in our lives.

Yours etc.,
Gemma Grady
Cork City, Cork

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.

Your Faith

The Irish Catholic, August 10, 2023

How to
criticise like
a Christian

Page 31



For many centuries, the Feast of the Assumption was celebrated in the Church without any formal definition of the doctrine. In most places, it was the principal feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary and it is the patronal festival of many of Europe's great Marian cathedrals, such as Notre Dame de Paris. But that Mary "was assumed, body and soul, into heavenly glory", was made an official teaching of the Catholic Church in 1950, when Pope Pius XII promulgated the Bull *Munificentissimus Deus*. Many people believe that he was motivated to do this by the horrors of the Second World War, in which so many human bodies were tortured and desecrated. The doctrine proclaims the precious nature of the human body, which, in a way we



August 15 is the great Marian feast that honours the whole human person, writes Dr Sarah Jane Boss

cannot yet understand, is destined for heavenly glory and deserves to be treated with the highest respect.

Assumption

To the urban world of the early 21st Century, the Feast of Our Lady's Assumption may seem strange. It is a feast that honours the whole human person, body and soul; but, even though our society is obsessed with material

objects, we often fail to notice the God-given dignity of our material bodies. The Assumption is also an invitation to celebrate the goodness and the joy that God promises us at the end of time, and in many parts of Europe the feast remains a major event. So let us look at some of the history of what should be a glorious celebration.

The earliest textual evidence for the Feast of the Assumption

comes from the turn of the 5th and 6th Centuries, although scholars think that these texts contain material from at least as far back as the 3rd Century. The early texts are known as *Transitus* narratives (that is, they relate the Virgin's passing), and they contain quite wide variations in their detail, probably reflecting the fact that they arose out of different local customs. However, certain

elements are constant. For example, the Virgin is told in advance – usually by an angel – that she is about to die, and the apostles are miraculously transported from around the world to be present at her bedside. Christ comes to receive her soul, which takes the form of a small child, and he takes the soul to heaven.

“One of the most interesting aspects of the early texts is that Mary is presented very strongly as a teacher of the apostles”

Some time after the funeral and burial (most texts say three days after the death), the apostles see the body of the Mother of God being miraculously taken heavenwards. In the tradition that was spread in the Western Church, Mary's body and soul are re-united in heaven. All these events are depicted frequently in the art of the medieval and renaissance periods, and can be readily recognised.

As teacher

One of the most interesting aspects of the early texts is that Mary is presented very strongly as a teacher of the apostles. We are sometimes told that she had received teachings from Christ which she passed on to St John before she died. In other texts, from the Coptic and Ethiopic traditions, the apostles call her their teacher or mistress. It seems as though she has received teachings from Christ which will enable a smooth transition to heaven, and that those who follow her and receive these teachings will enjoy an initiation into heavenly matters, and will then pass to heaven at death.

At the same time, some of the early *Transitus* texts – notably, the Coptic ones (from Egypt) – make it clear that the liturgy of the Assumption is for an August harvest festival; indeed, the feast continued to be a harvest celebration in many places for many centuries. From earliest times, then, the celebration of the Assumption was concerned with both spiritual enlightenment and bodily sustenance. That Mary was assumed into heaven in her body and her soul reminds us that we are bound both to the earth, with the cycle of the seasons, and also to the realm of that which is spiritual and timeless. As we have become so detached from the land that sustains us, we have forgotten about our dependence upon the harvest and have largely lost the sense of the Assumption as a harvest festival, but the feast is still the day on which many communities bless their herbs, or bless the sea and its harvest.

Death

For all its joy, however, the Assumption is a feast that arises out of human awareness of death. We are all made of the dust of the earth, and will rot in the ground or in ashes. At the same time, we all have the possibility of attaining eternal life. In the end, these are the truths that matter, and these are the truths that undergird the stories of Mary's passing from this world to the next. It is often when people come to a deep realisation of their own mortality – when they see that death is an end which they cannot escape – that they turn to seek spiritual enlightenment. And in discovering the mystery of the cross and resurrection, they find that there is something truer and deeper even than death. What Christ accomplished as God and man is shared with all those who participate in his life; and Mary, as a woman who is solely human, reveals to us what this means. The traditional iconography of Mary's Dormition – her 'falling asleep' – shows Christ taking her soul as a baby, and it thus mirrors images of the Virgin herself holding Christ as



Caravaggio's painting 'Death of the Virgin'

“It is often when people come to a deep realisation of their own mortality – when they see that death is an end which they cannot escape – that they turn to seek spiritual enlightenment”

an infant. As he descended to Earth by her actions, so he now takes her to be with him in heaven. It was she who gave us the Word of God in his human birth, and it is she whose heavenly rebirth teaches the truth of what Christ's divine humanity offers to each one of us.

Many people will be familiar with Caravaggio's painting, *The Death of the Virgin*. When it was first painted for a private chapel in a Carmelite church in Rome, the Carmelites rejected the painting as unsuitable. It shows the Virgin not in the dignified death-bed posture associated with traditional representations of the Dormition, but lying dead on her back, with bare feet and swollen ankles. The apostles look on, and Mary Magdalene sits weeping between the viewer and the corpse. Some of the apostles are also weeping; but there is one who holds his hand up in a gesture that seems to show sudden recognition or realisation

of something. For he has seen that, in this sorry state – in the death that comes to all of us – there is hope. This hope is not shown by an image of angels and Christ in human form, but only by a light that crosses the canvas and shines upon the belly of the Mother of God – on the body that bore God incarnate. This body, which is the body of a very ordinary woman, was chosen by God for his dwelling, and this body will not be left to the decay which, from the look of it, has already set in.

We cannot properly articulate what the hope is that has been revealed to the apostles, but the viewer is invited to share the revelation. For because he became human from this woman, Christ promises all human beings, and all creation, a share in his glory.

i Dr Sarah Jane Boss is Director of the Centre for Marian Studies at the University of Roehampton.

Two tips to learn how to criticise like a Christian



David Mills

Some years ago, a priest sent me occasional criticism of something I'd written. He tended to pick at small points.

We'd had dinner a couple of times and were friendly, and I eventually responded that I'd find it easier to hear his criticism if he'd ever offered any comment but criticism. I was hoping for some relief from the sniping but also trying to do him some good, because if he was annoying me, whom he only slightly knew, he was almost certainly annoying other people as well.

He responded that I was a good writer but he sometimes disagreed with what I said, and he said we should meet for coffee. He stopped correcting me, though he never did say anything supportive. He meant well, but he hadn't thought about the total effect his messages had on the poor guy at the other end.

Discrete acts

Most people don't see one crucial thing about the way they talk about others. If they think about what they're saying (and not enough people do), they think about their speech as discrete acts. They said one thing an hour ago, another thing now, and will say something else later.

That's true especially when someone criticises them for saying something uncharitable or unkind. They defend the single statement for which they're being criticised.

But the important thing in the way we speak about others isn't the single statement, it's the pattern. It's our practice over time. It's the total effect of our words on those to whom we direct them and to those listening in. They feel every word, especially if they're the target.

Ongoing criticism

Yes, you may be able to justify your hard criticism of things that X says. Maybe he did say something that needs to be slapped down. But you can't so easily justify your ongoing criticism of X over time, unbroken with any kind of sympathy or praise.

For example, people who attack X will explain that attacking him is the charitable thing to do because he needs to know he's wrong and other people need to be protected from his errors. They may claim that they must say "the hard word," and that no one else cares enough about X, or about the truth, to say it.

Let's say they're right, looking at the single error. But what if, as is so often the case, they only attack what X says and never support him or cheer him on and never defend

him when he's being attacked unfairly? Do they really care about him? Or do they just like criticising and correcting and look for targets?

More to the point, can X genuinely hear what they say? Will he feel like they've knocked him out of the way of a speeding truck or like they've hit him with a bat for fun?

Like most such things, we can see this more easily when we're the victims than the ones speaking unkindly to others. Think of the people, some of them real friends, whose appearance in your Facebook feed means (and only

ever means) you're about to be sniped or picked at. Just once in a while you'd like to see them saying "I liked that" or "Good job".

Impulsive

We can see this more easily when we're the victims, but many of us are also the attackers. We suffer from that "someone's wrong on the internet!" feeling and often know exactly who that someone is. I know that impulse too well — and the joy of charging into battle to smite down the error. It's addictive. As a practiced offender, I have two suggestions for dealing with it.

First, pray for your target before criticising. "We would all much better mend our ways," wrote St Thomas More in his *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, "if we were as ready to pray for one another as we are to offer one another reproach and rebuke".

An engaged Hail Mary would do, or an Our Father and Hail Mary if you're really eager to jump on your target. You may find — I often do — that you don't need to criticise. And if you do, you can say what you have to say with sympathy and fellow-feeling in a way that might be heard.

Second, if you still think you need to speak critically to X, and that you need to keep doing it over time, try to say at least one supportive thing for every two or three critical things. Set a ratio and keep track.

Supportive

The effort to find something supportive to say will help you become more sympathetic and may help you speak so X hears you. It may also help you see why X says the things he does and what good thing he's trying to defend or promote.

If you see that, you will (assuming you're right) also see his mistake more clearly, and your criticism will cut more deeply. And (because you're probably not completely right and you may, in fact, be wrong) you may clarify, deepen and correct your own understanding.

You want to learn to speak to him more as a friend than as a judge, because most people take criticism from friends better than they do judgments from judges.

“The effort to find something supportive to say will help you become more sympathetic and may help you speak so X hears you. It may also help you see why X says the things he does and what good thing he's trying to defend or promote”

David Mills is a regular contributor to OSV News



Reading aloud to another makes a gift of your presence



Elizabeth Scalia

In Harper Lee's classic novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, there is a point where Atticus Finch, seeking to teach his son about making reparation for damaging another's property (and about something else, too) orders his young son Jem to visit the bedside of sickly old Mrs Henry Lafayette Dubose and read aloud to her.

Jem, naturally, doesn't want to do it. He tells Atticus that inside the house is creepy in precisely the manner the mostly-empty house of a sick and elderly person can seem creepy to children. And Mrs Dubose is "nasty" both of tongue and tremor. Atticus acknowledges that "When people are sick they don't look nice sometimes". Nevertheless, Jem must continue to read to her for as long as Mrs Dubose wishes.

We learn later in the book that Jem's reluctant service helped the mortally ill woman to get through the misery of withdrawal from morphine, a patient addiction she wished to be free of, in order to depart from this life as much on her own terms as possible.

"Did she die free?" asked Jem, when informed of her death.

"As the mountain air," said Atticus.

Reading aloud

It can be a great service to a sick person – whether seriously ill or post-operative or simply down with the flu – to take the time to read aloud to them. Sickness often makes reading difficult. Sometimes it can also make it taxing to keep up a flow of conversation with well-meaning visitors. Offering to read aloud to a patient can occupy their mind and help distract from



their discomfort, as in Mrs Dubose's case, and it can banish awkward silences. Moreover, reading to someone is a different way of saying to them, "I am present and here for you".

“Reading to someone is a different way of saying to them, ‘I am present and here for you’”

It works as a distraction, too, for people who are feeling blue or are tense or beset with worry. As a restless flier, I was never so happy as when I discovered that my trans-Atlantic in-flight entertainment options included a selection of audible books. Selecting Dickens' *Great Expectations*, I spent the long flight in the company of Pip and Miss Havisham as read by a brilliant British actor and was wonderfully distracted from my usual miseries. Immersed within my own imaginings, and with the help of an expressive reader who helped me to find humorous bits that had eluded me when reading to myself, the flight was a rare delight. I was almost sorry to land. Almost.

The recording provided a most

enjoyable means of making it across an ocean; the only way it could be improved upon would have been a reading in person. But reading aloud to another is not really a public act. It is intrusive to others but more importantly such reading carries with it a unique kind of intimacy, unspoken between all the words, particularly when it goes on beyond a day, and especially if it is a book both the reader and listener are enjoying.

Great present

An audible book, in fact, is a great present to bring to someone who is ill or depressed. But one's presence is even better. The next time you are planning to visit a patient, whether in hospital or at home, take a look at your bookshelf, or any magazines you have handy. They might make a lovely gift for someone, made even lovelier if they come with the self-offering behind the simple question, "Would you like me to read some of this to you?"

It is good – and a nearly painless sort of gift of oneself – to read to, and for, someone else.

i Elizabeth Scalia is culture editor for OSV News.



Questions of Faith?

Jenna Maria Cooper

Reconciling Adam and Eve and evolutionary science



Q: How do we reconcile the story of Adam and Eve and original sin with evolution?

A: We can say the creation story in the Book of Genesis – while being true – was not meant as a literal or technical scientific account of how the material world was formed.

Although we often refer to the Bible as one book, it's a library of different books. And while all sacred Scripture is the inspired word of God, the human drafters of the various books within the Bible were writing at different times, for different reasons and in different literary genres. Within the Bible, we have books which are plainly intended as eyewitness historical accounts (e.g., the Gospel of John); along with other works which were obviously meant as symbolic allegories (e.g., Revelation). Likewise, we have works that spell out practical laws (Leviticus) along with sacred poetry (Psalms).

To draw a comparison with secular literature, it would be unreasonable to criticise a cookbook for not having much of a plot, and it would be silly to say that a fantasy novel was "wrong" because it didn't teach you how to do your taxes or fix a leaky faucet. We understand that different kinds of books have different purposes, and that no one kind of book can meet every need. Just so, we could describe the beginning of the Book of Genesis as a sort of "theological history," because it tells us, in narrative form, some real and important things about the nature of God and his relationship to creation. Namely, from Genesis we know that God created everything out of nothing in an act of pure will; that he considers his creation to be good; that God wished to create humanity in his own image and likeness

– meaning that humans have free will – and that the first humans abused this power of free will to turn away from God.

Significantly, from the creation story we learn that God did not actively desire humanity to experience suffering or death, but rather that this fundamental disorder in the universe came about because of a primordial human choice.

Conversely, the creation story in Genesis is not the equivalent of a textbook in geology, physics or biology. The creation story doesn't try to concern itself with details such as the wavelength of the first light created, or where exactly the first plants and animals would fit into our modern biological classification systems. We don't even know exactly how long each of the first seven "days" were in Genesis, since the term "day" in this context is used in a clearly poetic sense – that is, the author of Genesis couldn't have intended to speak of "days" in literal astronomical terms, since the sun itself was only created on the fourth "day" (Gen 1:14-19).

Still, it is legitimate for us to be curious and ask questions about how God's process of creation manifested itself concretely in the physical world. That type of scientific inquiry, however, proposes the answers to different kinds of questions than what the Book of Genesis seeks to address – though it is interesting that even Genesis seems to allude to a certain evolutionary process of sorts, with God creating simpler life forms before the more complex ones, and with humanity being the capstone of creation.

As St John Paul II writes at the very start of his 1998 encyclical letter, *Fides et Ratio*: "Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth."

i Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News.

The illusion of self-sufficiency



A number of years ago, I attended the funeral of a man who died at the age of ninety. From every indication, he had been a good man, solidly religious, the father of a large family, a man respected in the community, and a man with a generous heart. However, he had also been a strong man, a gifted man, a natural leader, someone to whom a group would naturally look to take the reins and lead. Hence, he held a number of prominent positions in the community. He was a man very much in charge.

Mellowing

One of his sons, a Catholic priest, gave the homily at his funeral. He began with these words: Scripture tells us that the sum of a man's life is seventy years, eighty for those who are strong. Now our dad lived for ninety years. Why the extra twenty years? Well, it's no mystery. He was too strong and too much in charge of things to die at seventy or eighty. It took God an extra twenty years to mellow him out. And it worked. The last ten years of his life were years of massive diminishment. His wife died, and he never got over that. He had a stroke which put him into assisted living and that was a massive blow to him. Then he spent the last years of his life with others having to help him take care of his basic bodily needs. For a man like him, that was humbling.

But this was the effect of all that. It mellowed him. In those last years, whenever you visited him,



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

he would take your hand and say, "help me". He hadn't been able to say those words since he was five years old and unable to tie his own shoelaces. By the time he died, he was ready. When he met Jesus and Saint Peter on the other side, I'm sure he simply reached for a hand and said, "help me". Ten and twenty years ago, he would, I'm sure, have given Jesus and Peter some advice as to how they might run the pearly gates more efficiently.

That's a parable that speaks deeply and directly about a place we must all eventually come to,

either through proactive choice or by submission to circumstance; we all must eventually come to a place where we accept that we are not self-sufficient, that we need help, that we need others, that we need community, that we need grace, that we need God.

Grace

Why is that so important? Because we are not God and we become wise and more loving when we realise and accept that. Classical Christian theologians defined God as self-sufficient being, and highlight that only God is self-

sufficient. God alone has no need of anything beyond himself. Everything else, everything that is not God, is defined as contingent, as not self-sufficient, as needing something beyond itself to bring it into existence and to keep it in existence every second of its being.

That can sound like abstract theology, but ironically it's little children who get it, who have an awareness of this. They know that they cannot provide for themselves and that all comes to us as gift. They know they need help. However, not long after they learn to tie their own shoelaces this awareness begins to fade and as they grow into adolescence and then adulthood, particularly if they are healthy, strong, and successful, they begin to live with the illusion of self-sufficiency. I provide for myself!

Illusion

And, that in fact serves them well in terms of making their way in this world. But it doesn't serve truth, community, love, or the soul. It's an illusion, the greatest of all illusions. None of us will enter deeply into community as long as we nurse the illusion of self-sufficiency, when we are still saying, I don't need others! I choose who and what I let into my life!

GK Chesterton once wrote that familiarity is the greatest of all illusions. He's right, and what we are most familiar with is taking care of ourselves and believing that we are sufficient unto ourselves. As we know, this serves us well in terms of getting ahead in this life. However, fortunate for us, though painful, God and nature are always conspiring together to teach us that we are not self-sufficient. The process of maturing, aging, and eventually dying is calibrated to teach us, whether we welcome the lesson or not, that we are not in charge, that self-sufficiency is an illusion. Eventually for all of us there will come a day when, as it was with us before we could tie our own shoelaces, we will have to reach out for a hand and say, "help me".

The philosopher Eric Mascall has an axiom that says we are neither wise nor mature as long as we take life for granted. We become wise and mature precisely when we take it as granted – by God, by others, by love.

“God alone has no need of anything beyond himself. Everything else, everything that is not God, is defined as contingent, as not self-sufficient, as needing something beyond itself to bring it into existence and to keep it in existence every second of its being”

Faith is the divine response to fear



August 13
9th Sunday in Ordinary
Time
1 Kgs 19:9a, 11-13a
Ps 85:9, 10, 11-12, 13-14
Rom 9:1-5
Mt 14:22-33

The Sunday Gospel

Jem Sullivan



lenges of this world. Peter, at Jesus' invitation, attempts to walk on the water but falters in fear and begins to sink into the sea. Jesus reminds the disciples of the need for faith in him to overcome the storm of the sea and the storms of life.

Faith in Jesus is the antidote to the fears that can disturb or even paralyse us.

As the world began to grapple with an unprecedented global lockdown, Pope Francis preached a powerful homily to all of us. Standing in a deserted Saint Peter's Square on March 27, the Holy Father spoke these reassuring words to the world, "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" Faith

Utter disbelief was the sentiment deeply felt in the hearts and minds of many as the rapid spread of Covid-19 brought normal life to a shuddering halt in March 2020. We might remember vividly how our daily routines changed instantly in the face of the viral threat. The most gifted writers and filmmakers could not have imagined the unfolding scene as the coronavirus unleashed its devastating effects on a vulnerable world. As it spread rapidly, the disease left in its trail, fear, uncertainty, hardship, suffering and loss.

The strange sense of helplessness that gripped the world during the global pandemic helps us identify with the disciples who were tossed about in their boat on a stormy sea, as recounted in this Sunday's Gospel. We are told that "during the fourth watch of the night, Jesus

came toward them walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified. 'It is a ghost,' they said, and they cried out in fear".

Jesus responds with deeply assuring words to his disciples, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid". Jesus offers faith as the divine response to the deep, even irrational fears that threaten to overcome us amid the chal-

“Let us invite Jesus into the boats of our lives. Let us hand over our fears to him so that he can conquer them”



Saint Peter Walks on the Sea (c. 1886 -1894) by James Tissot (1836-1902) reflecting a scene from Matthew's Gospel (14:22-33). Photo: OSV News/courtesy Brooklyn Museum

begins when we realise we are in need of salvation. We are not self-sufficient; by ourselves we flounder; we need the Lord, like ancient navigators needed the stars." Pope Francis added, "Let us invite Jesus into the boats of our lives. Let us hand over our fears to him so that he can conquer them."

In the first reading, the prophet Elijah encounters the Lord not in the noise of the wind, fire or earthquake. Rather, God is revealed in a tiny whispering sound that calms the prophet's fears and brings him into loving contact with God. Even today, God's word continues to speak to the depths of our fears and anxieties, as we pray with confident hope, "Speak to me, Lord".

Question: How do Jesus' words in today's Gospel speak to your fears and anxieties?

iJem 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



The Church's youthful face was front and centre

Going to Sunday Mass these days you can be demoralised by the lack of young people present. It's great then to see young people enthused by their faith, and so it was on World Youth Day in Lisbon last weekend.

So many of the events were impressive and I managed to follow many of them. **The Way of the Cross** (EWTN, Friday) was very striking, artistic and innovative. A large cross was passed across different levels of scaffold-like staging, with beautiful music, interpretative dance and contemporary reflection. It was so moving, and there were many tears in the young audience. The infectiousness of joy at the end when the young performers met Pope Francis was very moving. Young Irish journalist Colm Flynn made an excellent presenter during the studio commentary. Throughout this event and for the whole weekend the WYD choir and orchestra was a joy to watch and listen to – the signing group were particularly graceful in their movements.

The **World Youth Day Vigil** (EWTN, Saturday) was impressive as it always is. By then it was reckoned that 1.5 million people were in attendance. It was a marvellous combination of spoken word testimonies and music that was at once contemporary, dignified and reflective. The Eucharistic adoration was particularly striking as it stilled the massive crowd. Pope Francis urged the young

A pilgrim takes a cellphone photo as he waits for Pope Francis to arrive to lead a prayer vigil during World Youth Day at Campo da Graça in Park Tejo in Lisbon, Portugal, August 5. Photo: OSV News/Bob Roller



people to be 'joyous missionaries'. As I noticed in the case of John Paul II over the years, the event seemed to energise the Holy Father, especially as he made his way in the Popemobile.

Sunday morning's **World Youth Day Mass** (RTE One) was impressive and inspirational. Another young Irish journalist, Wendy Grace, did really well with the commentary, including with some useful background information – e.g. about 15,000 confessions heard every day during the event. She rightly pointed out how the young pilgrims in Lisbon were exposed to the 'universality of the Catholic

Church'. They need never feel alone in their faith, and it was great for them to see so many young priests and religious. Pope Francis' address spoke to the hearts and souls of the young worshippers, urging them to shine, listen and 'be not afraid'. He thus linked in to the Gospel of the day – the Transfiguration – how good it was to be there! One of his most important points was asking what the young people would take back to their own parishes and countries. He urged them to be confident in doing so. I'd say the 200 Irish priests in attendance will be instrumental in continuing the good work blessed here.

We saw the best of human nature in Lisbon. It's worth noting that wise adult guidance must have facilitated the gathering of so many enthusiastic young pilgrims. Also, the coverage from mainstream was pretty poor considering the nature of the event. If there had been such an assembly of over a million young people for almost any other reason, I suspect it would have been bumped up the news agenda and dominated the weekend current affairs show.

Meanwhile, at home, the whole back to school thing rolls on, predictably. The supermarkets promote their

PICK OF THE WEEK

SUNDAY

BBC Radio 4, Sunday August 13, 7am

Topical discussion of the latest religious and ethical issues.

KATERI

EWTN, Sunday August 13, 9pm

Orphaned and ostracised by smallpox and traumatised by war, Kateri embraced the Catholic Faith, became a missionary to her people and the first Native American saint.

AR SON NA POBLACHTA

TG4, Tuesday August 15, 8pm

The role played by a group of Capuchin Franciscans to end the 1916 Rising and change the path of Ireland's history.

back to school offers in late June or early July. Then the media gets interested and August is riddled with debates about uniforms, costs, shortage of school places.

On **Lunchtime Live** (Newstalk, Wednesday) the cost of uniforms figured large. I was never a fan of school uniforms – I think they cause more trouble than they're worth in terms of cost and disciplinary issues in schools, and I think they militate against individuality. Other countries can manage fine without them. If they're a must, then problems can be alleviated by the schools, and surely Catholic schools should be in the forefront. Callers to the show were giving out about uniforms being

made expensive by the schools insisting on the uniforms being supplied by one shop only, or insisting on a jacket or jumper with pre-sown crest. I was on the side of those callers who favoured being able to get generic uniform components and adding the crest themselves.

I know many parents will prefer to have a simple uniform to prevent rows at home as to what can be worn each morning, and maybe in these days of gender controversy a simple gender fluid uniform (!) might avoid a lot a hassle in school and at home. But I'm still agin 'em!

Music

Pat O'Kelly



Orchestral success breeding further success

The National Youth Orchestra of Ireland (NYOI) was founded in 1971 by the redoubtable Olive Smith, a woman of unusual vision when it came to getting young people involved in music.

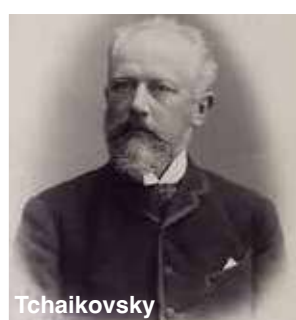
In her quest she was ably assisted by a number of similarly minded individuals not least Dublin-born violinist Hugh Maguire who at various times in his career was leader of the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden and the London and BBC Symphony Orchestras.

Last month's NYOI concerts took it to Drogheda, Waterford and Cork in a programme including Richard Strauss' *Four Last Songs*, with soprano Ailish Tynan,

and Rakhmaninov's *Symphonic Dances* celebrating the composer's sesquicentenary. Jamaican-born Andrew Gourlay conducted.

Maybe taking a cue from NYOI's successes, the Ulster Youth Orchestra was established in 1993. The principal event of its 30th anniversary takes place in Belfast's Ulster Hall next Saturday August 12. Under the baton of Venezuelan Ilyich Rivas, internationally acclaimed Ulster pianists Barry Douglas and Michael McHale are the soloists.

The programme's concerto centrepieces are Tchaikovsky's First and Gershwin's in F – masterpieces in their own right. There is a commissioned *Fanfare and Over-*



ture by Ulsterman Greg Caffrey and the concert ends with *Symphonic Dances* from Bernstein's *West Side Story*. *The Belfast celebration is being previewed at the National Concert Hall this evening, Thursday August 10.*

Tchaikovsky's concerto dates from 1874. Bringing the

score to his eminent pianist friend Nikolay Rubinstein, the composer hoped Rubinstein would take it into his repertoire and ensure the piece international recognition.

Tchaikovsky's hopes were dashed. Rubinstein dismissed the concerto as 'worthless, absolutely unplayable; so unskillfully written that passages could not even be improved; the work is trivial and common with only one or two pages worth anything. The rest had better be destroyed'. The disgruntled Tchaikovsky was adamant, 'I shall not alter a single note'. He didn't with the concerto now ranking among the most admired in the romantic

repertoire. Rubinstein later changed his mind!

The work is one of Barry Douglas' favourites and it brought him first prize at the Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition in Moscow in 1986.

Gershwin's concerto followed the enormous success of his *Rhapsody in Blue* that had its first performance in New York in 1924 with the Paul Whiteman Band and the composer at the piano.

Among the distinguished audience were composers John Philip Sousa, Rakhmaninov and Stravinsky, violinist Fritz Kreisler, tenor John McCormack and Walter Damrosch, conductor of the New York Symphony, who asked

Gershwin for a concerto.

The composer obliged and, jotting down ideas in London in May 1925, had the work completed by the following November. Gershwin gave the first performance on December 3rd in New York's Carnegie Hall with Damrosch conducting.

The composer described the piece as having a 'quick and pulsating first movement with a Charleston rhythm; an adagio that creates a poetic and nocturnal atmosphere and a finale, in the style of the first movement, that has an orgy of rhythms, starting violently and keeping the same pace throughout'.

Michael McHale will be the gallant interpreter.



Whatever became of those other apostles?

Peter Costello

This week we conclude our 'Summer Series' with a final group, this time of five apostles, with very varied if obscure lives.

The profusion of persons named James surrounding Jesus in the years of his public life led in time to a sense of confusion, which the writings of the Fathers of the Church, of other commentators, and of modern scholars have done very little to untangle.

It is little wonder that the cults of the saints came into disrepute at the time of the Reformation and have not revived among some Christian persuasions of today.

Yet as one reads through these valiant efforts to cast light into dark places, which humans always like to do, one senses what a loss a knowledge of the saints would be. This is

especially true of the Apostles.

They provide a substantial image of faith in action, which is always instructive and very inspiring, whatever confusions remain.

As with the Jameses, a large part of the trouble about knowing about these saints arises from the several Marys that are referred to in the New Testament. We must always bear in mind in Marian disputes that 'Mary' was a very common name in those days in Palestine, so that it simply does not mean that when a Mary is referred to the reference is to Mary the mother of Jesus.

But to return to what might be a little more certain, here are the

James the Less



The martyrdom of James the Less in an early Greek image.

facts about James son of Alphaeus. He is generally identified with the references to James the Less. He is mentioned only four times in the New Testament. This tradition is

emphasised by St Jerome, which gave it great authority, but the matter is still debated by recent scholars.

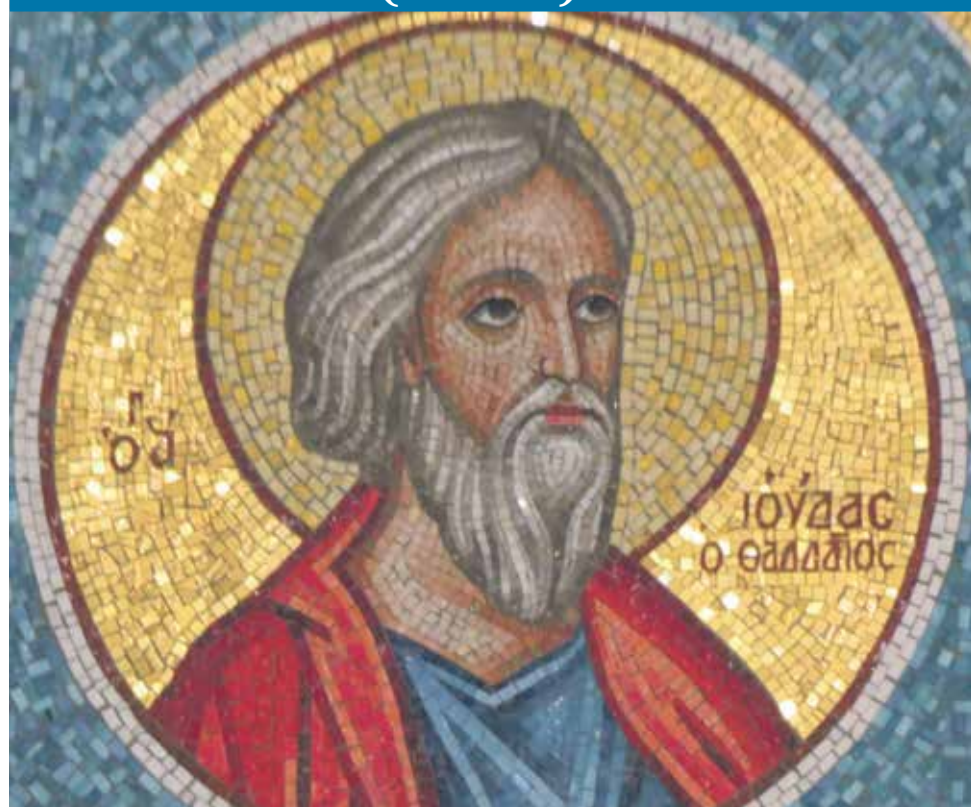
How James died is also unclear, though he is often shown carrying a fuller's

club, a heavy working implement of wood, which might suggest he was clubbed to death, which is confirmed in fact by some early sacred images of the saint.

A later tradition claimed

he was put to death on a cross while teaching about Jesus at a place in Lower Egypt. There is really no certainty about any of this. But we still have what we are told in the scriptures.

Thaddeus Judas (St Jude)



St Thaddeus Judas in the tradition of Greek Orthodoxy.

The tradition arose, so it is said, that in the Middle Ages many Christians were afraid, because of the confusion of names, that in praying to Thaddeus as one of the Apostles, they might be praying to Judas the betrayer of Jesus.

Hence he became for a time a quite neglected saint. But then people came to believe (for this is a popular tale) that because so few prayed directly to him, the saint became anxious to help those few who did so, even in the most hopeless of cases.

Hence arose the prayers that are used in a devotion that remains one of those aspects of traditional Catholicism that so many are sad to have seen decline or disappear.

Perhaps they are right, for it encourages people not to give up hope, nor to simply despair. To do something about a situa-

tion, St Jude in fact encourages people to take action, and so to take command of their lives in a new way. And all of that cannot but be a good thing.

Yet novenas to St Jude, such as those held in Dublin's Whitefriar's Street, can be quite crowded. We should remember that a saint such as St Jude was an important if mysterious figure to Irish people of earlier generations. Little may be known about St Jude, but that does not mean he should therefore be forgotten.

But to return to the historical Thaddeus Judas. A later tradition says he went to the city of Edessa, where he cured Abgar the King. Eurabbies in 4th Century claimed that there were full records of him in the royal archives there. But these are lost.

But it should not be overlooked, amid this welter of legend and tradition and pious belief, that there

is an important occasion on which Thaddeus appeals to Jesus to make clear to the Apostles his mission.

In John (14:22-23), at the Last Supper, Thaddeus Judas in all simplicity asks Jesus, "Lord, how is it that you will show yourself to us and not to the world?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone who loves me will obey my teaching, my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them".

These are the direct words of Jesus to Thaddeus Judas, among the last words he directs to the Apostle. They are more important surely in their significance than all the later traditions, for whatever way one reads them, they go to the heart of the teachings of the gospels and make Thaddeus Judas a more significant person than one might have guessed.

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.

If little is known about some of the Apostles, it can be said that Simon the Zealot is the most obscure. Even the Greek Fathers are silent about him.

His name has led some in recent times to think he was one of those primitive rebels the Romans called the Zealots; with which some writers have associated Jesus too, thinking they were Temple priests.

But the term in this instance must be taken to read 'Simon the Zealous', that is the enthusiast for the faith.

Indeed the saint is almost a case study of the variety of traditions and interpretations

possible in scripture history. He is even claimed to have gone to Britain (by those strange obsessionists, the British Israelites) at the time of the revolt of Boudicca of the Iceni and to have been martyred there himself.

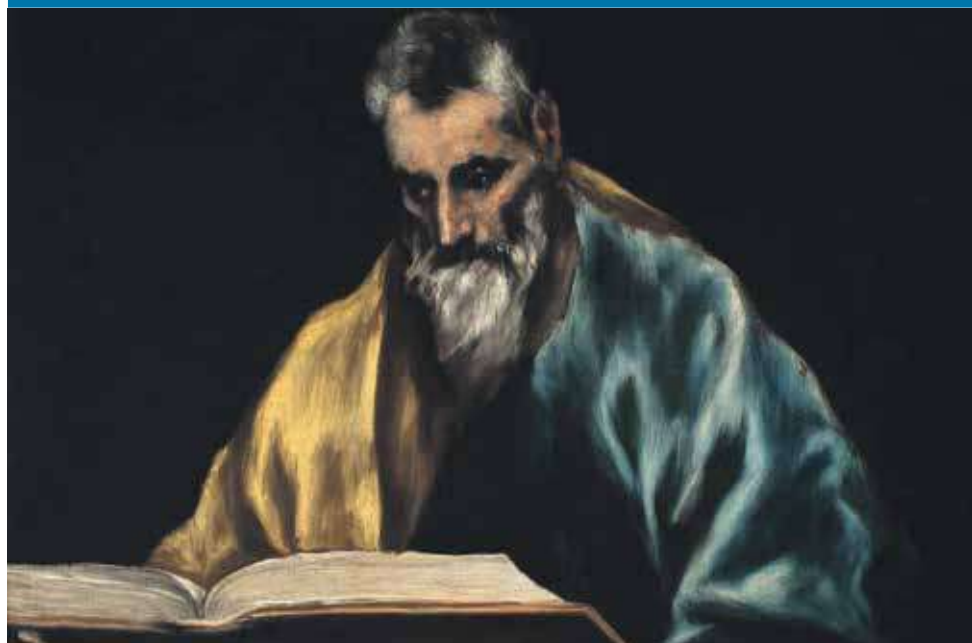
However, in Islamic tradition, to which Christian scholars often pay too little attention, he is said to have preached the name of God (rather than the teaching of the Son of Man) to the Berbers outside north Africa, by which seems to be meant those who lived further south in the deserts of Mauretania. This is an idea drawn from

the writings of the Greek writer Nikephoros in the 9th Century.

But these are two extreme traditions of a very confused life which was spent according to more mainstream sources in other more familiar missionary fields.

It is a warning to always bear in mind just how limited our knowledge of the early Church is and to be careful about being too rigid in the way we speak about it, in claiming some things would have been impossible. We need often enough to respect our own ignorance.

Simon the Zealot



St Simon the Zealot as imagined in the Renaissance.

Bartholomew



St Bartholomew as depicted by El Greco.

St Bartholomew seems to have been close to me, at least in a geographic sense, for much of my life.

When I lived in the City of London (as distinct from Greater London), the great hospital dedicated to the saint, commonly referred to as St Bart's was where I went to have occasional treatment.

But here in Dublin the connection continues. I live near the Anglo-Catholic Anglican parish church of St Bartholomew's, whose bells mark off our hours even at night. The church is famous, too, for its fine choir and its music.

So medicine, Catholic faith, music: how are these connected then with the actual apostle? They are in a roundabout way.

The main tradition about the saint is, however, that he went to India like St Thomas, but to the

great port of what is now called Mumbai (which was certainly known to Greek geographers in the century of Jesus).

So Bartholomew is another apostle who went to India: that two out of the 12 did so is certainly worth considering. But they went by two very different and distinct routes.

As I have suggested Thomas went by way of the regular seasonal crossing of the Arabian Sea. Bartholomew, to reach Mumbai, would have taken the northern coastal route from the mouth of the Tigris along the coast of Persia, to the mouth of the Ganges.

India was the newest place for developing trade: it was calculated at the time that a merchant could make the journey from Italy by sea and land to India in 16 weeks.

The East then seems to have meant more to

the first Christians than the West, seems to be the conclusion. We with our Eurocentric views of history might not have thought that. He then returned perhaps along the same route to labour in Greater Armenia.

St Bartholomew's Hospital (to return to that) was found in 1123 by a city merchant named Rahere. Having suffered a tragic loss he went on a pilgrimage to Rome and while on this he had a vision of St Bartholomew, who told him to return home and to found a hospital outside the city wall of London, but within its suburbs.

This he did, becoming its first prior. The charity he established lasted down to the Reformation. After that it was passed over intact to the City of London, who continued funding as it was, and it has continued to flourish and to grow. This

summer is the 900th anniversary of its founding.

But sadly aside from these good things the saint's name in history is also associated with one of the grimmest events in Church history, the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre in Paris, so called because it began on the eve of the saint's feast day in August 1572, when the largely Catholic population of the city set upon their Huguenot neighbours.

This would long remain a crime to be often cast up in the face of Catholic claims of intolerance against them by Protestants. An ugly business for such a saint to have his name linked to.

But such is the history of religion, so that it is reasonable to lay our emphasis of respect on the good things associated with his name. In the end the evil fades, the good things remain, even 900 years later.

It was said of St Matthias (by no less an authority than the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, whose terminal information date is just after 1900) that aside from the information in the Acts "all further information concerning the life of and death of Matthias is vague and contradictory".

Of the *Gospel of Matthias*, mentioned by a few of the Fathers, nothing survives but possibly some sentences. All the rest of his supposed writings are apocryphal.

In the 120 years since nothing has really changed. However this does not take from the basic fact that the man himself is undoubtedly of great importance in the history of the early Church.

After the departure and death of Judas Iscariot, the remaining apostles were faced with a problem. They had all been called

by Jesus. Now to make up their number they must decide what to do (Acts I: 21-26).

"Therefore, it is necessary that one of the men who accompanied us the whole time the Lord Jesus came and went among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day on which he was taken up from us, become with us a witness to his resurrection.

"So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias.

"Then they prayed, 'You, Lord, who knows the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this apostolic ministry from which Judas turned away to go to his own place.' Then they gave lots to them, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was counted with the eleven

apostles."

Later it was emphasised by interpreters that he was one of those upon whom the Holy Spirit descended at the first Pentecost. This event granted the Apostles the gift of tongues, so that when they preached publicly in Jerusalem "every man of them heard them speak in his own tongue".

This surely is a figure of the need for the Apostles to scatter and carry the new creed to the wider world.

The importance of Matthias historically is that the Apostles had provided for both the continuity and renewal of their new movement. It was from this fact that the idea of a universal Church that Christians hold today sprang.

For this fact alone he should be better remembered.

Matthias



The Martyrdom of St Matthias, by the German master Stephan Lochner after 1435.

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The Irish Catholic

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poorest places

Trócaire

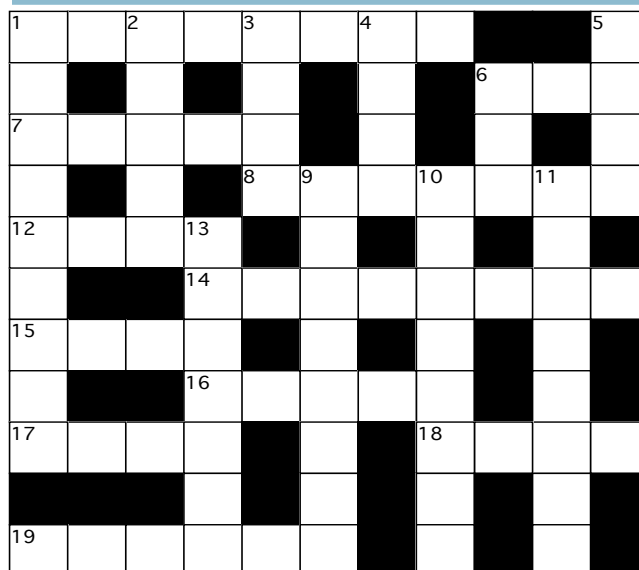
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One day, parents and their children will tell the story of how your legacy of love changed their lives. Thank you for considering a gift to Trócaire in your Will.

Leisure time

Crossword Junior

Gordius 495



Across

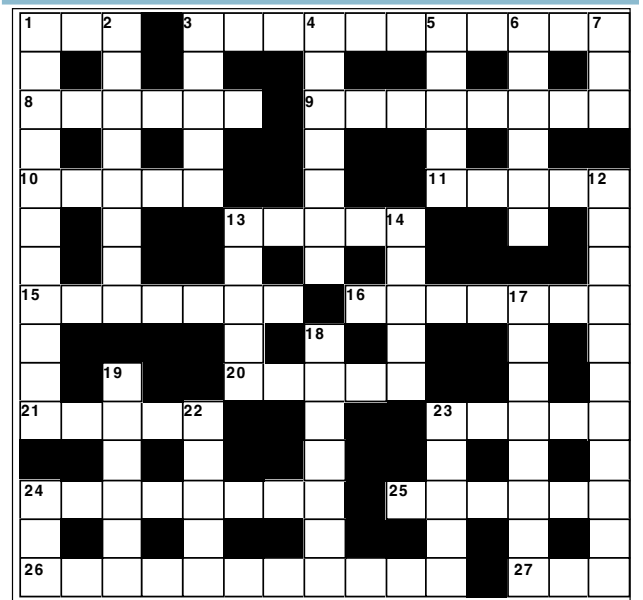
- 1 Fancy drink - a combination of several drinks (8)
- 6 We use 'he' for a boy and ___ for a girl (3)
- 7 Church music is often played on it (5)
- 8 Having a nicer or more noticeable flavour (7)
- 12 You use them when rowing a boat (4)
- 14 Put in jail (8)
- 15 Points a gun at a target (4)
- 16 Locomotive (5)
- 17 "Don't go near the ___ of the cliff" (4)
- 18 Well-behaved (4)
- 19 Robinson ___ met Man Friday (6)

Down

- 1 This tasty treat might be described as milk or dark (9)
- 2 This is made of tobacco alone, and may be hand-rolled before it is bought and smoked (5)
- 3 You camp in this (4)
- 4 Hotels or taverns (4)
- 5 Costing a lot of money (4)
- 6 One way to travel over snow (3)
- 9 When you clap, you give someone a round of ___ (8)
- 10 Three-sided shape (8)
- 11 Huge (8)
- 13 These girls have the same parents as you (7)

Crossword

Gordius 623



Across

- 1 Infant's bed (3)
- 3 & 27a Landmark hill in Somerset topped by St Michael's Tower (11,3)
- 8 In the USA, a five-cent coin (6)
- 9 Gesture of approval or satisfaction (6,2)
- 10 Attempted (5)
- 11 Explosive found on the beach? (5)
- 13 Larceny (5)
- 15 Unit of measurement of energy, often applied to food (7)
- 16 Lulled, assuaged (7)
- 20 Big cats that form a pride (5)
- 21 Motored (5)
- 23 Equine creature (5)
- 24 & 25 Natural aptitude, a gift from the Almighty (3-5,6)
- 26 Compares the prices and quality of various retailers (5,6)
- 27 See 3 across

Down

- 1 Built (11)
- 2 Strategic (8)
- 3 Avarice (5)
- 4 Schoolbag made of broken latches (7)
- 5 Identifies (5)
- 6 The Red Hand province (6)
- 7 Bark sharply, as a small dog may do (3)
- 12 How the octet relied on a polygraph (3,8)
- 13 Spin a baton (5)
- 14 Implements (5)
- 17 Most hirsute (8)
- 18 Canada's most populous city (7)
- 19 Superstition associated with the West Indies (6)
- 22 Gives out, radiates (5)
- 23 Noticed a sound (5)
- 24 Oxygen at room temperature, for example (3)

SOLUTIONS, AUGUST 03

GORDIUS NO. 622

Across - 1 Big 3 Basset hound 8 Awning 9 Implicit 10 Paris 11 Sting 13 Joust 15 Mistake 16 Deduced 20 Rocks 21 Sales 23 Psalm 24 Stone Age 25 Winter 26 Inexpensive 27 Ate

Down - 1 Blasphemous 2 Generous 3 Bonus 4 Stirrup 5 Holes 6 Urchin 7 Dot 12 Gendarmerie 13 Joker 14 Tress 17 Cream tea 18 Actress 19 Alcove 22 Sweep 23 Prize 24 Ski

CHILDREN'S No. 494

Across - 1 Florence 6 Gale 7 Untidy 9 Inches 11 Toffee 12 Laptop 14 Earned 16 Cello 17 Persia 18 Fur 19 Knelt 20 Blue

Down - 1 Fourteen 2 Out of order 3 End 4 Eggcup 5 Glue 8 Yield 10 Support 13 Talked 15 Easel 16 Cake 17 Pup

Sudoku Corner

495

Easy

1		8	7			3		6
				9	5	7		
7	4		8					1
	3			6		8		2
	2		4		8		1	
9		7		2			6	
3					7		2	8
		9	2	8				
8		2			3	1		9

Hard

		9		3	8	7	4	
					5		9	2
1				6	4			
	5				7			
		7				4		
				5			2	
			3	8				5
6	3		4					
	8	5	1	7		9		

Last week's Easy 494

6	7	9	5	1	4	3	8	2
2	4	3	9	7	8	6	5	1
5	1	8	2	6	3	9	7	4
4	5	6	1	9	2	7	3	8
7	3	1	4	8	6	2	9	5
9	8	2	3	5	7	1	4	6
8	9	4	6	3	1	5	2	7
1	2	5	7	4	9	8	6	3
3	6	7	8	2	5	4	1	9

Last week's Hard 494

6	5	7	8	9	1	4	2	3
9	8	3	2	4	5	7	6	1
2	4	1	6	3	7	8	9	5
5	3	9	7	2	8	1	4	6
4	2	8	1	6	9	5	3	7
7	1	6	4	5	3	2	8	9
1	9	2	3	7	4	6	5	8
3	7	4	5	8	6	9	1	2
8	6	5	9	1	2	3	7	4

Notebook

Fr John Harris OP



Ireland needs witnesses not detached observers

Over the summer many of us will visit Knock. Visiting Knock is unlike visiting any other Marian shrine. For example, during the apparitions of Fatima and Lourdes, nobody saw or heard anything except Bernadette at Lourdes, and the children at Fatima. Whereas the story of Knock is completely different.

The story of Knock is about what was seen, the message is in what is seen. There are no visionaries in Knock. There are the official 15 witnesses. These official witnesses did have the gift of interpretation. They could tell us it was St Joseph, Our Blessed Lady, St John the Evangelist and the Lamb of God. But apart from that there's really no difference between us at the gable end and the 15 official witnesses.

In a real sense what they saw that night, 21, August 1879, and what you see every time you visit Knock, you are witnessing exactly what they saw. In that sense, all of us are witnesses of the apparition of Knock.

What does it mean to witness what they witnessed? So, I invite you as you visit the shrine, not just to be passers-by or worse



Knock shrine

still tourists to Knock, but to be witnesses. As people of Faith, we see things differently. In this sacred scene God is speaking to us. God is speaking to you. What is God saying to you as you look?

Too many of us Catholics in Ireland stand at the side line and look on but do not allow the message to penetrate our hearts and lives. At Knock if we are simply detached observers then we do not see what is to be seen. Knock invites us to come to this place in prayer. This means that we place all our hope and trust in God and in the ultimate victory

of the Lamb, that is to say of the victory of good over evil, life over death, mercy over sin. The Church in Ireland needs witnesses to the joy of the Gospel. It needs people who are not just detached observers of the Faith, but people who really have allowed the

The Big Bang

One of my Dominican brethren says that the Big Bang is really the sound of God clapping with delight at the moment of creation, a faith-filled vision of a scientific theory.

message of Jesus' saving love to enter into their hearts and minds. The dynamic of Knock is the dynamic of heaven. To truly visit Knock is to allow the vision to penetrate deeply into your life. Knock is extraordinary. It is a mystical vision, a vision of heaven, a vision of the Church in glory, it is a vision of being loved. Witnesses means to truly see what is to be seen.

When at Knock, when you look at the gable end, it is not statues you're looking at, but what the statues represent. What you are seeing is what the other witnesses saw. Ireland needs the victory of the Lamb. The message of Knock can be alive and active if you become a witness.

By visiting the shrine, by spending time at that gable end, and looking at those figures, heaven is speaking to you. What heaven is saying to you, is desperately personal, open your hearts and minds as to listen to what you are witnessing. Not just the fifteen official witnesses are called to tell of the vision of Knock. Each of us believers are called to give witness to our faith in the victory of the Lamb.

Change of plan

I heard once that just before a wedding ceremony the priest noticed there were no musicians present. He asked the best man who promptly rang the musicians. They confidently informed him that they were in the church and all set up. Then he asked "What church?" Alas, things had moved on since the initial plans and the venue had changed but nobody had told the musicians of the change of plan. All had to wait, even the bride, for the musicians. But all turned out well in the end. It was a wonderful ceremony with beautiful music. So be careful when planning a wedding, if you are changing venues make sure everyone knows of the change of plan.



Impoverished Catholic community in D.R. Congo badly needs our help to build a solid and dignified chapel

Fr Cesar Balayulu, a Consolata priest working on the outskirts of Kinshasa, has told us about his Catholic faithful at serie Dix, about ten miles from his parish church. "The people live in small houses often made from metal sheets or straw. Because of their poverty our people cannot help us financially with the cost of building the chapel dedicated to Our Lady Consolata which we wish to construct. At present Mass is offered under a large metal sheet on poles, this becoming impossible in bad weather.

"The new chapel, when completed, will help our Christians to participate with dignity in the Holy Eucharist, no longer having to carry chairs from their homes every Sunday. It will enable them to focus more on prayer and not to be distracted by noise from outside. It will promote the social life of the Christian community. We turn to you, Little Way, with great confidence that you will support us with your aid."

Will you please help these Christian brothers and sisters of ours to turn their dream of a chapel into reality?

(If we receive more funds than are required for this project they will be used for similar chapel projects).

Every euro you send will be sent direct to help build a mission chapel.



PLEASE HELP FEED HUNGRY CHILDREN

Fr Eamonn Gowing is a Redemptorist priest working in a favela/shanty town in the Brazilian city of Fortaleza. He reports of the great poverty there and how more than 200 children benefit from a feeding programme he has started which provides a nutritious meal each day. For many of the children it is the only regular meal they receive. Fr Eamonn is one of the many missionaries The Little Way Association supports with funds to feed hungry children.

Can you spare a donation, large or small, to feed a hungry child?

Every euro you send to our fund for Needy Children will be used, without deduction, to provide food, health-supplies and basic necessities for deprived children.

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