

# The Irish Catholic

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# Countdown on for massive gathering of families

### Mags Gargan

Thousands of families representing dioceses across Ireland gathered at Knock Shrine on Monday, for the launch of the one-year countdown to the much anticipated World Meeting of Families (WMOF2018) in Dublin.

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, WMOF2018 president,

led the celebration which launched the preparatory programme for parishes and a new icon of the Holy Family which will now tour the dioceses. The archbishop said the programme "is a call to renew the Church so that it can enter into a new future: a future in which our Church will attract more and more people to Jesus".

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Photos: John McElroy

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362  
DAYS  
TO GO**

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## Michael Kelly's Editor's Comment returns in the autumn



# There's more to being Catholic than just being nice – bishop

### Mags Gargan

Being a Christian is about more than just being nice to people, it means "loving and trusting a God who we cannot see", according to the Bishop of Derry.

In a homily at the weekend reflecting on the messages of Fatima, Bishop Donal McKeown said following Jesus is not just about "doing the right things or even believing the right things". "We all have to make a leap of faith, trusting in the existence, forgiveness and power of God. Faith goes beyond a conviction that there must be a God some-

where. Faith goes beyond an insurance policy for the after-life," he said.

Bishop McKeown said faith in Jesus "does not just mean being nice to everybody and doing all the right things," but means "loving and trusting a God who we cannot see".

He also advised that praying and making sacrifices for sinners "is not just a nice pious practice" or "just helpful for others", but part "of our duty as followers of Christ".

The bishop said it might seem like the idea of sin was "out of fashion nowadays" as you can "see most things on regular TV channels where

anything goes" and the "internet provides instant access to everything".

"The assumption is that no-one has the right to say or believe that what somebody else does is wrong. The moral standard seems to be 'it is right for me'. 'Thou shalt not make me feel uncomfortable' appears to be the new 11th commandment," Dr McKeown said.

### Original sin

Referring to the original sin of Adam and Eve he said people have always suffered from the temptation to believe that, "because I want something, I

need it – and that, indeed, not acceding to my wants is bad for me". "Modern morality works on the basis that life is too short to say 'no'. But once you remove the idea of the Creator from the picture, then the creature becomes the ultimate source of wisdom about what is good for me – and the will of the strong dominates," he said.

Bishop Donal advised that the scripture readings each week "are not just read for curiosity value" but are meant to "form our hearts and minds in the Faith" and we are all "on a journey of permanent conversion".

## Roses bloom at Tralee Mass



Fr Padraig Walsh welcomed some of the Roses of Tralee and their escorts to Mass at Our Lady and St Brendan's Church, Tralee on Sunday: Down Rose, Orlagh McNally; Wexford Rose, Julie Sinnott; Meath Rose, Anne Lynam; Texas Rose, Lydian Lawler Lopez; Philadelphia Rose, Tara Grandich and Yorkshire Rose, Aisling McArdle. Photo: John Cleary

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# Maynooth set to re-open with fresh talk of reform in the air

**Greg Daly**

With the national seminary at Maynooth due to re-open for this year's formation programme this weekend, a key conference organised for the autumn is being seen by observers as a way of helping to show a proactive approach to reform.

This summer saw the appointment of Fr Michael Mullaney for a shortened three-year term as President of Maynooth with the trustees also announcing that they are set to appoint a separate rector to take exclusive charge of seminary formation allowing the president to focus on the Pontifical University.

Focus is also to turn to more effective vocations promotion and retention policies. Fr Christopher Jamison OSB, who is credited with being part of a renewed vocations push

in England and Wales that is bearing fruit, will be one of the keynote speakers at a conference to be held in Maynooth in the November conference on priestly formation.

Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin – who responded to last summer's controversial allegations of seminarians using gay dating apps by pulling his students from Maynooth – will also address the conference.

## Relations

This is being interpreted as a thawing in relations between the national seminary and Dr Martin after college authorities expressed frustration last summer at the archbishop's description of Maynooth as appearing to have "an atmosphere of strange goings-on". He also said at the time that Maynooth "seems like a quarrelsome place".

A Church source told *The Irish Catholic* that last year's allegations damaged Maynooth's reputation and insisted that the trustees are committed to do whatever is necessary to restore the confidence of the faithful.

Changes to the governance and structure of Maynooth are being directly supervised by the Vatican and the Pope's key adviser of seminaries, Archbishop Jorge Patrón Wong, will also attend the formation conference.

New entrants to Maynooth are expected this Sunday from Irish dioceses, along with those who have already completed a year of seminary formation.

Authorities are reluctant to talk about potential numbers in advance due to the possibility that a candidate may decide at the last minute to defer entry.

See Pages 9-11.

## Youth 2000 – festival of fun and faith



Sr Felicity Kalu with baby Ciarán Ascough enjoying the Youth 2000 Summer Festival in Roscrea, Co. Tipperary at the weekend. See Pages 16-17. Photo: Áine Ascough

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# Faith event to focus on family

## Staff Reporter

The fifth annual Ballymena roundtable gathering on faith will this year address the issue of the family in preparation for next year's WMOF in Dublin.

Held annually on a topical issue related to the intersection between faith and family life, the event has emerged as a key local initiative in Church renewal.

Due to be held at the parish centre, All Saints Church, Ballymena, Co Antrim on Saturday September 9, the guest speaker will be columnist with *The Irish Catholic* Bairbre Cahill.

The programme runs from 1pm-4.30pm and organisers say all are welcome to come along and talk and listen to Bairbre, a wife and mother of four children who is a noted author and speaker on the issue of faith in family life.

Organisers say that the issue of faith and families has emerged as a talking point at

all the gatherings in recent years. Bairbre most recently wrote about 'The Experience and Challenge of Families' in a new book called *Exploring Amoris Laetitia, Opening the Pope's Love Letter to Families*. It was launched in Knock during this year's novena.

## Opportunity

A spokesperson for the organisers said "we hope that this meeting will be an opportunity to explore ways in which we can all, young and old, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, Godparents, work to grow faith within our own hearts, our families and in the family of our parish and Church."

Other speakers are Baroness Nuala O'Loan and Fr Paddy Delargy. The event will be facilitated by Janice McKeith.

To register or for further information contact All Saints Parish Centre at 028 2563 1236, [allsaintspc@outlook.com](mailto:allsaintspc@outlook.com)

## K&L welcomes first Romanian priest

The Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin will welcome its first Romanian priest at the end of this month, who has answered the call from Bishop Denis Nulty to help solve the problem of the shortage of priests in Ireland.

Fr Eugen Dragmos Tamas (28) from the Diocese of Iasi was ordained a priest in June 2015 and will minister to the parishioners of Tinryland, following a short residency in Carlow to acclimatise to his new environment. Speaking at Sunday Mass in Tinryland, Bishop Nulty said: "You appreciate it is my expressed intention to keep all our 117 churches open. This won't happen without support from outside Ireland."

A second Romanian priest is expected to arrive in the coming months.



**PICNIC IN PUNCHESTOWN:** Bishop Denis Nulty of Kildare and Leighlin is inviting families in his diocese to a 'Picnic in Punchestown' on Sunday, August 27 (1-6pm). The picnic is part of diocesan preparations for next year's World Meeting of Families and also aims to gather all the families of the diocese together for an event filled with fun, friendship and faith. Photo: John McElroy

# CAO points for 'attractive' theology remain unchanged

## Chai Brady

Ireland's top theology courses continue to be attractive to students as CAO points drop for the majority of level-8 degrees.

Points for Theology and Arts in St Patrick's College Maynooth remain much the same, rising by just one point to 301 compared to last year. The course allows students to study Theology along with another subject such as business, economics and anthropology.

In Trinity College, points for Catholic Theological Studies, run by the Loyola Institute, rose by 30 points to 360 compared to last year – the course is only a few years old,

and currently has the lowest points requirement in Trinity College tying with Deaf Studies. World Religions and Theology in the college increased by 30 points as well, rising to 380.

An overall decrease in points reflect the change in the CAO points scale this year, but theology courses didn't follow the trend.

Dean of Theology in St Patrick's College, Fr Declan Marmion, said the course typically attracts 35-40 students, many of whom would be interested in teaching religion. In recent years there has been more of an emphasis on including Christianity's relationship with other religions such as Buddhism and Judaism.

"So, while the programme

is firmly embedded in the Christian (Catholic) tradition, there is a desire to dialogue with other religious and philosophical worldviews – all of which is in line with an increasingly pluralist Irish society in which our students will live and work," Fr Marmion told *The Irish Catholic*.

Only a small amount of students study pure Theology in the college, with many of them being mature students.

Dr Fáinche Ryan, the Director of the Loyola Institute in Trinity College, said their young students on the

undergraduate programme in Catholic Theological Studies are "fantastic".

"The dream of Loyola, its mission, is to form people who are theologically informed, who will work in journalism, in law, in media, because you have lots of people working in these areas making comments on these matters but they're not theologically informed," Dr Ryan said.

She added that the institute are introducing a Master's programme on the subject this year.

## World Meeting of Families appoints media manager

### Mags Gargan

A woman experienced in communications on a parish, diocesan and national level has been appointed Media and Communications Manager for the World Meeting of Families (WMOF).

Ms Brenda Drumm (48, pictured), a native of Belturbet, Co. Cavan and based in Newbridge, Co. Kildare, has been seconded from her current role as Communications Officer with the Catholic Communications Office of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference.

Fr Tim Bartlett, WMOF Secretary General, welcomed

the appointment saying Brenda "brings unrivalled skills in so many areas of Church communications, particularly the use of social media and is highly respected by those who work with her both nationally and internationally".

Brenda, a mother of two, produces and presents a weekly faith podcast for the bishops' conference and she is also the editor of their monthly newsletter, *Sharing the Good News*. Brenda was part of the team that developed the catholicnews.ie news source for the bishops' conference, and this autumn she will publish her second book, *The Digital Parish*.



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# Church should spur older parishioners to take in students

It's crisis-time for students, and it's especially crisis-time for students seeking accommodation. The situation, particularly in Dublin, is dire. We know it's dire for homeless families as well, although the needs of students, and of families, are different. The solution for families is for more family homes to be built, pronto. The solution – or one solution – for students is for a wider promotion and social acceptance of a return to the practice of 'digs'.

Student union leaders say there are 20,000 families, mainly in the Dublin area, who are 'empty nesters' – whose own offspring have grown and flown – and who could open their doors, and their bedrooms, to students who are coming to college next month.

This would be a reversion to a practice which worked well in times past: taking in a lodger.

In the 1911 census a high proportion of Irish households had a lodger, being a solution to accommodation for young workers needing a berth and extra revenue for a householder.

## Lodger

Not everyone wants a lodger nowadays because we've become more accustomed to privacy. And students, in general, do not enjoy a blemish-free reputation when it comes to respecting the accommodation they inhabit.

There are health, safety and insurance issues today which wouldn't have applied last century. Supposing a lodger trips



Mary Kenny



Helping hands: older people can benefit from tech-savvy students.

on your stairs and sues you for a creaky step? In our compo-driven culture, that's another consideration.

But still, with proper protocols these obstacles can be overcome, for it would surely be a good thing to encourage a reversion to the lodger habit. The Government can help with tax breaks for householders. The Church could help by underlining the social advantages for the common good.

Many older people feel lonely, while many younger people need space to study. Older people can benefit from the tech-savvy ways of the young, while younger people going to university often do need more emotional mentoring than they might admit – Oxford

University's most persistent anxiety is the number of students who become suicidal because they can't cope with the new demands of uni life.

There needs to be respect for privacy (on both sides) and ground rules too. We're terrified, these days, of seeming 'authoritarian', but when people are sharing, there must be boundaries.

The Church has shown leadership in its concern about housing; it can also be an enabler in the area of supporting students.

'Empty nest' parishioners could be encouraged to take in student lodgers – which, by the way, can also be fun. And didn't St Paul say that in giving hospitality we may well encounter angels?

● Australian states are being urged, by the recommendations of a Royal Commission, to make it mandatory for priests to break the seal of confession, if the issue of child abuse arises in the Confessional.

This is a terrible idea, and the Australian Church is right to resist it. Even leaving aside the sacramental point, even within the secular context, it would be a terrible idea. It would mean that no one could ever talk to a professional counsellor or psychiatrist in confidence ever again. By any measure, bad therapy.

## 'Burden of childcare' is the wrong term

The Taoiseach Leo Varadkar [pictured] spoke, while in Canada, of his promise "to ease the burden of childcare" on families. Yes, we should all support families in their responsibilities towards their children, but the 'burden of childcare' is such a negative phrase. As though a child were merely a burden.

I am called upon to carry out some childcare, as a grandma, and I regard it not as a burden, but as an exceptional privilege and a blessing. I only wish that geography facilitated more of it – my grandchildren live 95 miles away. I



know many grandparents who rejoice in the opportunity to do childcare, and several who feel it as an acute sorrow if grandchildren are in another country and they can't share in childcare time.

Childcare surely is a responsibility. You get desperately worried about dangerous traffic, accidental mishaps and the child victims of appalling terrorist attacks. But please, Taoiseach, don't make childcare seem like a very negative burden to carry. The care of a child is a hugely rewarding experience which deserves support. Put it that way.

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# Clontarf churches unite for peace

Mags Gargan

The Catholic and Church of Ireland parishes of Clontarf, Dublin have come together to host a number of events to promote peace in a time of "conflict, war and terrorism".

A peace tree ceremony supported by Dublin City Council in St Anne's Park, Clontarf on Friday, September 29 will launch a series of church-based peace events over the weekend built around music and poetry, and anchored in scripture readings on peace and reconciliation. St John the Baptist church, Clontarf Road and the Church of St John the Baptist, Seafield Road will host performers such as The Brass Quintet of the Royal Norwegian Navy Band, classical guitarist John Feeley and the bodhrán player, Aimee Farrell Courtney.

## Seminars

The local school, Holy Faith Secondary School, is also integrating a peace theme into their Transition Year Programme in the coming school year including seminars with a number of key speakers invited to speak on different aspects of making and keeping peace.

The organisers from the two churches, which are just 10 minutes walking distance apart, said the reason for the collaboration is "because of the importance of peace and the many challenges to it around the world from conflict, war and terrorism".

For more information contact the Parish Office, St John the Baptist Church, Clontarf Road between 9am-1pm on 01 8334606.

# Sierra Leone locals pledge to overcome devastating mudslide

Chai Brady

Locals in Sierra Leone have shown a "huge desire" to overcome the tragedy of a mudslide and floods that left hundreds dead, according to Trócaire's Sorcha Fennell.

The death toll has risen to almost 500, and over 600 people remain missing after last week's massive mudslide – caused by heavy rains. It devastated multiple communities, with at least 10,000 people being forced to leave their homes.

Upon returning to Ireland from Sierra Leone, Ms Fennell, the Head of Trócaire in Central West and Southern Africa, told *The Irish Catholic* about the situation on the ground.

"There is a lot of sadness, it's an unprecedented tragedy, there's a very heavy rainy season every year

in Sierra Leone, but a tragedy on this scale hasn't happened in the last few years, so there are communities there that are trying to come to terms with that," she said. "And then at the same time I think that there's a huge desire of people in Freetown and Sierra Leone to overcome the tragedy."

Trócaire is working with other Catholic Non-Government Organisations (NGO's), including the Justice and Peace Commission in Freetown, to deal with the crisis, and are supplying 'dignity kits' to people who have been left without homes.

The focus is on women and children, who are particularly vulnerable. The kits contain soap, towels, sanitary items and basic non-food items such as plates.

There are also plans to set up information kiosks where information will

be shared with local communities about the assistance available to them. There are additional services for those who have experienced violence.

"There is a great sense of sadness for the country, and for communities that are recovering from the ebola crisis only a couple of years ago," Ms Fennell said.

"I suppose what struck me most the day after it happened was how quickly our partner organisations and staff wanted to respond. I suppose it's the resilience and the eagerness of people to do what they can."

Last Sunday churches across the country held special services to remember those who were killed, and the government has called for the evacuation of another 10,000 people living on an unstable hillside in Freetown.

## MSCs celebrate first professions



The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart have celebrated the First Profession of five brothers in the novitiate community in Myross Woods in Co. Cork: Bro. Jaime Rosique MSC (Spanish Province), Bro. Piotr Żłobiński MSC (South German-Austrian Province), Bro. Domenico Rosa MSC (Italian Province), Bro. Giacomo Gelardi (Irish Province) and Bro. Daniel Filipek (South German-Austrian Province).

## Derry bishops to lead charity 'Tour de Foyle'

The leaders of the Christian churches in Derry are preparing to put on their running shoes and cycling helmets as part of the Tour de Foyle Charity Challenge event this weekend.

The event is aiming to help people in the community who are experiencing difficult times in their lives, and working with the help of the charities to get things back on track.

The challenge, which takes place on August 26 starting from the New Foyle Arena at 7am for an 8am departure, is planned by the North West Methodist Mission, The Churches' Trust and supported by the four Church leaders in Derry.

## Taoiseach is criticised for Canada abortion talks

Staff Reporter

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar has been asked not to endorse an attempt by foreign powers to influence abortion legislation in Ireland.

Independent TD Mattie McGrath released a statement calling on the Taoiseach to "distance himself and this country from any suggestion that we might emulate Canadian abortion policy".

This comes as Mr Varadkar confirmed he had spoken to the Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, about abortion.

Canada has one of the most permissive abortion legislation in the world, and allows abortions throughout

the entire pregnancy term.

Dr Ruth Cullen of the Pro Life Campaign described the legislation as "truly barbaric", adding that since 2000, 491 babies in Canada survived botched abortions.

## Issue

"The Taoiseach has never formally met with groups at home representing women who regret their abortions or mums who say they owe the life of their child to the 8th Amendment. Yet, when he travels abroad he's happy to converse with foreign leaders on the issue and brief them on his plans. It doesn't make sense. In fact, it's inexcusable."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Bishops issue guidelines for priests with children

New guidelines for priests who become a father issued by the Irish Bishops' Conference, place a priority on the wellbeing of the child.

The guidelines say the priest "should face up to his responsibilities – legal, moral and financial. At a minimum, no priest should walk away from his responsibilities", adding that it is "vital" that the mother, "as the primary caregiver, and as a moral agent in her own right, be fully involved". The guidelines, 'Principles of Responsibility Regarding Priests who Father Children While in Ministry', were approved by the bishops last May, but have yet to be published online.

### Cardinal to speak at D&C convention

'Family in the Faith' will be the topical discussion of the upcoming Down and Connor diocesan Faith and Life Convention, which will welcome Cardinal Kevin Farrell as keynote speaker.

Cardinal Farrell was recently appointed by Pope Francis to lead the newly-created Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life and it was shortly after his appointment that he accepted the invitation to speak at the convention which will be picking up on subjects reflecting on how the Church, and people of faith, position themselves in the current debate.

It will take place in Our Lady and Saint Patrick's College, Knock, Belfast on Saturday, September 30.

### Boystown founder commemorated

In a centenary celebration, academics and religious figures will be commemorating the opening of Boystown in Omaha by renowned priest Fr Edward Joseph Flanagan.

The Roscommon-born priest founded the orphanage known as Boystown located in Nebraska, which now serves as a centre for troubled youth. Fr Flanagan became a household name following a 1938 film starring Spencer Tracy, *Boys Town*. The free one-day conference on August 24, as part of Heritage Week, will take place at The Library, Roscommon Town, and Bishop Kevin Doran will speak along with Prof. Daire Keogh (DCU) and journalist John Waters.

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# Divided by tradition *united in a common cause*



The fallen of World War One are no less Catholic or Irish for being British soldiers, writes **Ronan McGreevy**

**F**r Willie Doyle SJ died as he had lived: fearlessly in the service of others. He ventured into no man's land to give extreme unction to two officers lying wounded in a shell hole. Another German shell landed among them. Their bodies were never recovered from the battlefield.

Fr Doyle was one of 1,200 men from the 16th (Irish) Division and the 36th (Ulster) Division killed on August 16, 1917. These two divisions, divided by religion and identity yet united against a common enemy, first fought together at Messines Ridge in June 1917.

The attack on Frezenberg Ridge as part of the Battle of Passchendaele was an obscenity even by the debased standards of the First World War. The men from both divisions endured 12 days of shelling before going over the top into a moonscape of mud and a pitiless vista of blasted trees and broken streams. They were slaughtered, a vast expenditure of blood to no end.

## **Terrible news**

Another who died on that terrible day was Lieutenant John Dwyer O'Brien, a Catholic from Cork in a Protestant division. His chaplain imparted the terrible news to his parents. O'Brien had done his duty "nobly for King and country". He had died a "good soldier and a splendid Catholic".

Fr Doyle was one of an army of chaplains in an army of Irish Catholics. Death for these men was omnipresent; conditions were terrible.

Most lived day to day in the realisation that each day might be their last. Their faith sustained them.



Last General Absolution of the Munsters at Rue du Bois.

Fr Doyle spoke of having a pain in his arm administering the sacraments to his men. When they died, it was invariably left to the chaplain to write to his relatives.

The letter would usually state that the soldier had died a painless death, often a white lie, but those written by Catholic chaplains were careful to offer another assurance to grieving families.

**“What has been consistently overlooked is how they were encouraged to enlist by many senior clergy in the Catholic Church”**

“Your brother used to take every opportunity of going to the sacraments,” a priest wrote to the brother of one Irishman who died at the front during Easter Week 1916. “You can be perfectly satisfied that his soul is safe. He was always prepared to die.”

The most famous Irish painting of the First World War is the Last General Absolution of the Munsters at Rue du Bois. It features Fr Francis Gleeson, another stalwart Irish chaplain, blessing the Royal Munster Fusiliers men before the Battle of Aubers Ridge in May 1915.

Neither the author Jessie Louisa Rickard, whose husband

was killed at Aubers Ridge, nor the artist Fortunino Matania were there, yet they conjured up something that has more than verisimilitude: they created a work with an enduring emotional resonance strong enough to lodge in our collective imagination.

One sergeant remembered the scene. “There were no ribald jest, or courage buoyed up with alcohol...every man had his Rosary out reciting the prayers in response to Fr Gleeson, just as if at the confraternity at home, instead of having to face death in a thousand hideous forms the following morning.”

Fr Doyle remains one of the most famous Irish casualties of the war. His death is a reminder that the majority of Irishmen who served in the British Army in the First World War were from a Catholic background. This fact confounded the self-image of the two entities that emerged in Ireland after partition.

Some 270,000 Irishmen served. They joined for various reasons. What has been consistently overlooked is how they were encouraged to enlist by many senior clergy in the Catholic Church.

## **Open letter**

In an open letter published two weeks after the outbreak of war, the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin Patrick Foley exhorted “faithful citizens” to “come to the aid of

the armies which are fighting on the side of justice and right”. By one estimate 23 of the 27 Irish Catholic bishops were in favour of the British war effort as was this newspaper.

The extent to which the invasion of neutral Belgium was regarded as a moral outrage at the start of the war cannot be underestimated. Ireland and Belgium had deep ecclesiastical connections stretching back centuries. There had been an Irish College in Louvain since the early 1600s. The burning down of its library in August 1914 caused international outrage and had a particular resonance in Ireland.

**“We couldn’t possibly agree with his religious opinions, but we simply worshipped him for other things. He didn’t know the meaning of fear and he didn’t know what bigotry was”**

Today we associate Catholicism with nationalism, but it is more complicated than that. When Roger Casement tried to recruit an Irish brigade from German prisoner-of-war camps he was told by the senior Irish officers “as well as being Irish Catholics, we have the honour of being British soldiers”.

As Fr Doyle’s life testifies, these men were not less Catholic or Irish for being British soldiers.

Major Willie Redmond MP and the Church of Ireland Rev John Redmond (no relation) were among those who had expressed a hope that the experience of Catholics and Protestants fighting together in a foreign field might bring a better outcome at home. There was no realistic prospect of that happening. Nevertheless, the First World War is part of our shared history, something we have in common. Something else was the esteem Fr Doyle was held in by all who knew him.

One Belfast Presbyterian soldier wrote after his death: “We couldn’t possibly agree with his religious opinions, but we simply worshipped him for other things. He didn’t know the meaning of fear and he didn’t know what bigotry was.”

*The Irish Times’* documentary ‘United Ireland: How Nationalists and Unionists Fought Together in Flanders’ will be screened in Veritas House, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1, at 1.15pm on Friday, September 1. The trailer can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7u815NpKi4>

**1** Ronan McGreevy is the author of *Wherever the Firing Line Extends: Ireland and the Western Front* published by *The History Press*.





# The clash of extreme ideologies

In a time of political extremism, the Church is a voice of moderation, writes **David Quinn**

**E**xtrémist politics is on the rise on both left and right in Europe and America. We have just witnessed a far-right rally take place in Charlottesville, Virginia, with members of the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazis taking part. They clashed violently with members of Antifa, a far-left group.



White nationalists are met by counter-protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia. Photo: CNS

One of the far-right demonstrators ploughed his car into the counter-demonstrators killing one. The far-right demonstrators were protesting against plans to remove a statue of General Robert E. Lee from the town

centre. Lee was head of the Confederate army during the American Civil War and therefore fought for the right of Southern States to preserve slavery. The presence of his statue, and those of other Confederate

heroes, is deemed offensive to black Americans who are, of course, the descendants of slaves.

The clash between far-right and far-left demonstrators called to mind similar clashes between far-right and far-left paramilitary groups during the Weimar Republic in the run-up to Nazi rule in Germany. Is America now at that point? Absolutely not, but the echoes are there in a way we would not have thought possible only a short time ago.

In Europe, we are also witnessing the rise of the far-left and the far-right. In Ireland, there is no far-right to speak of, but there is a strong far-left and several of its representatives sit in the Dáil.

In France recently, Marine Le Pen of the far-right National Front made it into the second round of the French presidential race, the round which sees the number of candidates reduced to two. She won a third of the vote. Although she was defeated two-to-one, winning a third of the electorate to her cause, one that once attracted only a very small minority of French voters, is no mean feat.

## Polls

Meanwhile in countries like Greece, the far-left Syriza party won power and in Spain the far-left Podemos is doing very well in the polls.

In the Netherlands, far-right parties are growing in strength, even if they didn't do as well as expected in the recent elections. It is the same even in countries like Denmark and Sweden and Finland, while in Eastern Europe several right-wing, strongly nationalist parties hold power.

What is going on? Why

are the old, mainstream parties losing support? I believe there are four explanations. One is the recession that forced governments to make huge spending cuts and hike taxes, while the second is the immigration question. The third is related to the second, namely economic globalisation which sees low paid workers in the West being undercut in the labour market by lower paid workers in the developing world.

**“The political philosophy of the Church itself, based as it is on broad principles, is moderate”**

These three things are combining to make voters feel insecure. It is now extremely hard for the State to expand any further. But people want a good healthcare system, good schools and a strong safety net in times of unemployment. They also want to pay less in tax. How can these things be reconciled, especially with public debt so high?

Mass immigration is making a growing number of voters wonder at the effects on their societies. Sections of the Muslim community in Europe are radicalised and are launching terrorist attacks in our major cities. The result is soldiers on the streets in places like Rome, Paris and Brussels. This is deeply unsettling.

A fourth factor is the rise of identity politics. More and more groups seem to feel aggrieved, especially when they can claim minority status. Women, although

they make up slightly more than half the population, count as a minority because even in the West they are considered to be oppressed.

Muslims are considered to be an oppressed minority, as are various racial groups. You criticise them at your peril. Free speech is under threat as politically correct speech codes strive to ostracise those who criticise one or another minority as 'bigots'. Any criticism of Islam, for instance, is denounced as 'Islamophobia'.

Some of the speech codes are backed by law. You can now be charged with a 'hate crime' for criticising certain groups in certain ways.

A backlash against this is clearly underway and it helps to explain the election of Donald Trump who peddles his own version of 'America first' nationalism which has the support of a majority of white voters.

Where is the Catholic Church in all this? It has to be a voice against extremism of all kinds. It is itself under constant attack as a source of 'hate' because of Christian teaching with respect to the family, human sexuality and the right to life. It finds itself buckling under the attacks and many of the Church's leaders have fallen silent on these issues.

In the 20th Century the Church sometimes made very questionable alliances, for example with Franco in Spain who it saw as a bulwark against communism there.

But the political philosophy of the Church itself, based as it is on broad principles, is moderate. It puts the common good at the centre of politics and the common good is partly a via media between the extremes of capitalism and State-led socialism. Christian Democracy, which waxed strongly in Europe for several decades after World War II, was the essence of moderation, a response to the extremes of left and right which had torn Europe apart and in the case of the left, still dominated Eastern Europe until 1989.

Christian Democracy has now waned, but has anything good taken its place? The answer is certainly, no. For the most part, the parties that were once Christian Democrat, like Fine Gael, are now thoroughly globalist, liberal and secular. They are helping to cause the current electoral backlash across Europe.

The Church ought to find the nerve once again to preach a form of Christian Democracy. It is a ready remedy to many of the ills that currently ail the body politic.

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# Maynooth: *ready for a vocations reboot?*



**T**his Sunday sees the seminary at Maynooth open up for another academic year. When the men who have been chosen to discern a vocation in the seminary take up residence on the historic campus this weekend it will be after a turbulent period.

"I wasn't happy with Maynooth," Archbishop Diarmuid Martin said last summer, explaining his decision to send three Dublin seminarians to the Pontifical Irish College in Rome rather than to the national seminary.

"There seems to be an atmosphere of strange goings-on there, it seems like a quarrelsome place with anonymous letters being sent around."

"I don't think this is a good place for students," the archbishop said.

All the more curious then, perhaps, that Dublin's archbishop is to speak in Maynooth this November, drawing to a close an international conference titled 'Models of Priestly Formation: Assessing the past, reflecting on the present, and imagining the future'.

Some might see this as indicative of a thaw in relations between the Primate of

**Seminary numbers are stubbornly low, but signs are that the Church is trying to breathe new life into the national seminary, writes Greg Daly**



Ireland and the national seminary of which he is, after all, a trustee, and while this would surely be a good thing, the conference itself may prove an important pointer to how change is afoot in Maynooth and across the national vocations scene.

## Commission

The speakers at the conference are certainly impressive: Armagh's Archbishop Eamon Martin will open the conference, with Archbishop Jorge C. Patrón Wong, Secretary for Seminarians at the Vatican's Congregation for Clergy giving the opening lecture on 'The Gift of the Priestly Formation'.

Fr Hans Zollner SJ from the Pope's child protection commission, Sr Katherina Schuth OSF of Minnesota's St

Paul Seminary, Fr Christopher Jamison OSB of the National Office for Vocations in England and Wales and Fr John Kartje's of Chicago's Mundelein Seminary are just some of the other prominent names who will speak in Maynooth this November.

Not a moment too soon, one might think. St Patrick's College may have hit the mainstream headlines during last summer's 'silly season', and staunch defenders of the status quo were quick to reject criticisms, but questions have been asked for some time about whether or not it was fit for purpose.

Were allegations that some seminarians had been using gay dating apps a sign of a wider malaise? Maynooth's critics certainly believed so.

Questions about May-

nooth are hardly new. Indeed, in 2011 Ireland's seminaries were examined as part of the Vatican's visitation of the Church in Ireland, with the visitors generally praising the seminarians for their human and spiritual qualities, and their commitment to the Church and its mission, with serious attention being given to studies and formation.

In acknowledging the report, the Irish bishops highlighted these facts, while saying nothing about areas the Vatican highlighted for improvement.

The Vatican had, after all, also recommended that episcopal oversight over the seminaries be strengthened, that more consistent admission criteria be introduced, that greater concern be shown to the orthodox intellectual formation of seminarians, that the formation of seminarians for priesthood be more systematic and balanced,

that pastoral programmes be reviewed, and that seminary buildings be reserved for seminarians and those preparing them for priesthood.

With the exception of the erection of new doors (dubbed 'Dolan's doors' by seminarians after New York's Cardinal Timothy Dolan who supervised the review) there is no evidence that any of this was carried out, and last summer's problems appear to have brought this to a head, as was indicated not merely by the Archbishop of Dublin's aforementioned comments but by an August 2016 statement from the college trustees.

**“In 2011 Ireland's seminaries were examined as part of the Vatican's visitation of the Church in Ireland”**

The trustees – Ireland's four archbishops and 13 of their brother bishops – stressed then that the Church has clear instructions on the formation of seminarians with there being no place in seminary communities for any behaviours or attitudes that might run contrary to the teaching and example of Christ.

They also said they had concerns about “the unhealthy atmosphere created by anonymous accusations” along with speculative and malicious social media comments.

To address this, they undertook to review the seminary's policies and procedures for reporting complaints with the aim of adopting best practice ‘protected disclosures’, usually known as ‘whistle-blowing’.

They also said they would ask the seminary authorities to evaluate and review its policies on internet and social media use, and assess the seminary's future personnel and resource needs.

## Request

Beyond the above three things, the trustees also said they would request six things of the bishops' conference as a whole, starting with the commissioning of an independent audit into the governance and statutes of Irish seminaries, pushing ahead with a standardised national policy on seminary admission, beginning arrangements for all would-be seminarians to have a pre-seminary ‘propaedeutic’ year, conducting the triennial review of the national seminary and the

» Continued on Page 10



# 'Given how few people have been entering the national seminary

» Continued from Page 9

Irish College this spring, and setting up a subcommittee to examine the pastoral needs of priestly training in the Ireland of today.

Subsequent months saw the formal opening of a new seminary in the Archdiocese of Armagh, Dundalk's Redemptoris Mater seminary, which opened with 16 students from Ireland and several other countries, studying in Maynooth but being formed in Dundalk to be priests of the Neocatechumenal Way, and also the establishment this summer of a national vocations office.

## Discussion

Although clearly part of the overall vocations discussion, and a hopeful sign of 'joined-up thinking', these developments did not directly address the issues raised by the college trustees, and until this June little was publicly said about how these requests and plans have developed, with references to them being conspicuously absent from the reports of the bishops' conference's general meetings.

One might suspect that the subject was raised during the bishops' *Ad Limina* visit to Rome in January, but while this seems likely, it was only in June that it became clear that the trustees' plans were moving ahead in any respect.

June saw the announcement that Fr Michael Mullaney, vice-president of St Patrick's College since 2007 and acting president since August 2016, was to become president of the college as a whole for a three-year term, Mullaney. but – and this was a startling and unprecedented development – the trustees said they plan, in time, to look elsewhere to appoint a priest with direct responsibility for the seminary.

**“Even with this decline, there are 90.1 seminarians for every million Catholics around the world”**

Pointing out that St Patrick's College is home not merely to the national seminary, but to the Pontifical University that offers courses to almost 1,000 students, Archbishop Eamon Martin explained that: “In appointing Fr Mullaney as President

for a period of three years, the trustees of the college, in consultation with the relevant congregations of the Holy See, have agreed to revise the governance structures of the college, with particular reference to the seminary and the pontifical university as two interrelated but distinct entities.”

He continued: “Plans for the further development of a vibrant pontifical university, alongside the implementation of the vision for priestly formation set out in the new universal norms *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation* published by the Congregation for the Clergy last December, have led us to reflect on the complementary but distinct roles and responsibilities of a seminary rector and the president of a pontifical university.

**“Last year's census suggests that about 3.71 million people in the Republic self-identify as Catholics”**

“We have therefore decided to prepare for the appointment in due course of a pro-rector with dedicated responsibility for seminary formation at Maynooth.”

The new pro-rector has yet to be announced, and indeed it seems that the college is currently in need of several other key staff: conspicuous absences from the annual *Kalendarium* are professors of homiletics and moral theology, and the post of vice-president is also vacant following Fr Mullaney's promotion.

It would appear that many questions about how Maynooth is to be organised, staffed and run have yet to be answered.

In this light, November's conference looks remarkably timely. Indeed, intended to coincide with the 25th anniversary of *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, St John Paul's 1992 exhortation on the formation of priests in the present day, it's a timely conference given vocational figures not merely in Ireland but across the whole global Church.

While it's well known that the number of priests worldwide declined dramatically in the 1970s, what's not often recognised is the extent to which a recovery began under St John Paul, continuing into the papacy of Pope Benedict

XVI. Annual global seminarian figures stood at 63,882 when the Polish Pontiff was elected in 1978, reaching 114,439 by 2005, the year of his death, and continuing to rise to 120,616 in 2011.

Since then, however, it looks as though vocational numbers have been slipping year on year, to judge by the *Annuario Statistic Ecclesiae* – the Vatican's statistical yearbook of the Church – which shows numbers dropping four years in a row, with there only being 116,843 seminarians worldwide in 2015, the most recent year for which figures are available.

If these figures aren't enough to bother Irish Catholics, one figure probably should do the trick: even with this decline, there are 90.1 seminarians for every million Catholics around the world.

Last year's census suggests that about 3.71 million people in the Republic self-identify as Catholics, with there being over 730,000 self-identifying Catholics in Northern Ireland. With upwards of 4.44 million people in Ireland identifying as Catholic, one would have expected that just going by global averages, the country would have about 400 clergy in formation.

The real figure, of course, is not even a quarter of this. Last year the national seminary had just 39 resident students, down from 56 the previous year and 65 the year before that. Even when we allow for those seminarians in the Irish College in Rome, St Malachy's College in Belfast, and the various student houses for the Dominicans, the Capuchins and others, it seems unlikely that there are more than 100 students in formation for the Church in Ireland.

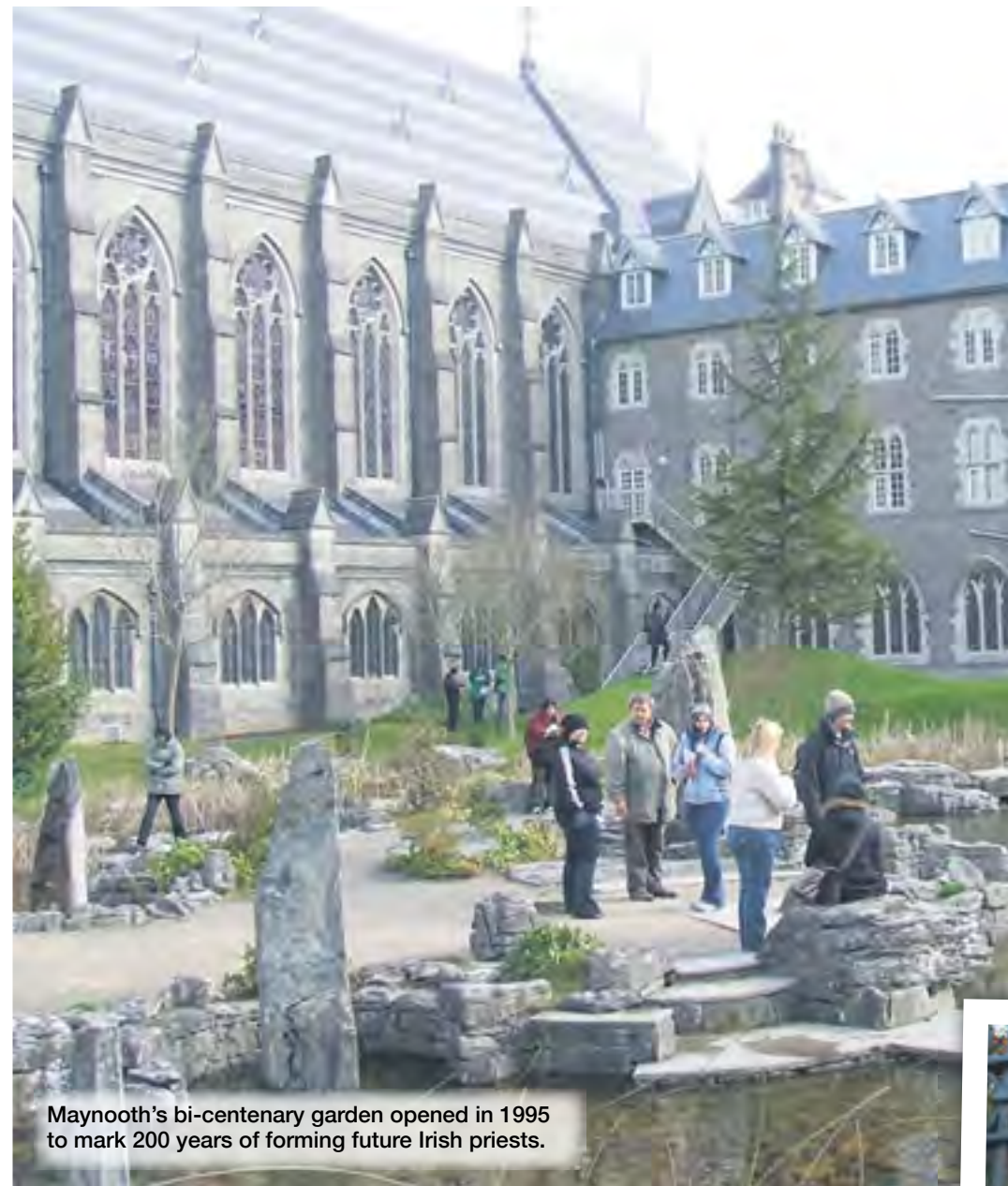
\* \* \* \* \*

To judge by raw numbers, Maynooth seems to be in terminal decline, such that a 'reboot' of some sort seems necessary there, and across the Irish vocational scene in general, especially given how it appears that vocational declines elsewhere in the English-speaking world look to have been stemmed.

In England and Wales, for instance, a general decline in ordinations to the diocesan priesthood set in during the 1980s.

This was disguised in part by an influx of formerly Anglican clergy in the 1990s, but by the turn of the century the decline was impossible to hide: numbers collapsed from 84 in 1999 to 33 the following year, dropping steadily to 2008, when only 15 men were ordained to the secular priesthood.

Since then, however, the



Maynooth's bi-centenary garden opened in 1995 to mark 200 years of forming future Irish priests.

story has been very different, with numbers gradually rising to 39 diocesan ordinations in 2013. Numbers fell back to 22 the following year, but since then have been broadly stable, with – leaving aside the formerly Anglican seminarians of the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham – 24 and 18 new priests for the dioceses of England and Wales in 2015 and 2016, with 26 priests expected to be ordained this year, 27 next year, and 26 in 2019.

Seminary entry figures tell a similar story: while in 2001, just 22 men began formation for the diocesan priesthood in England and Wales, 40 or more did so during each year of Pope Benedict's papacy with 53 doing so in 2013. Since then numbers have slipped – to 48, then 45, and more worryingly to 30 in 2016.

## Formation

Similarly, while just 10 men across England and Wales entered formation for the priesthood in religious orders in 2003, since 2009 the average number of entrants each year has been over 22, with

29 men beginning formation last year.

North of the British border there are signs that a similar story might be in the offing, with 12 men being ordained to the Scottish diocesan priesthood this year, a number not seen in Scotland since 1997.

**“Just eight priests were ordained for Irish dioceses between last December and this July, down from 10 last year and 15 in 2015”**

Over the past 20 years the average number of annual ordinations has been five, but it is understood that this figure is not level: it tended towards three or four per year for a long time and six or seven has been the norm in more recent years.

“On top of that there seems to be a general rise in the number of men approaching our vocations directors to

apply for seminary,” Bishop John Keenan, President of Priests for Scotland, told *The Scottish Catholic Observer*, thanking those in daily rosary groups who'd been praying for vocations and praising Scotland's vocation directors for “putting together new structures with fresh ideas, through social media and monthly get-togethers and the like, to help identify and accompany those who feel God calling them. We can see this good work beginning to pay off.”

Making the Scottish and Anglo-Welsh figures particularly interesting is how they compare with those in Ireland: Scottish government figures suggest that up to 840,000 people in Scotland are Catholic, while according to Prof. Stephen Bullivant of the Benedict XVI Centre for Religion and Society in St Mary's University, Twickenham, about 3.8 million people across England and Wales self-identify as Catholic.

With roughly 4.4 million self-identifying Catholics across the island of Ireland, one might expect there to be 30 diocesan ordinations



# in recent years there is no sign of these figures improving...'



Dublin's seminarians were transferred to Rome's Irish College.

in Ireland this year if Ireland were to have ordinations proportionate to the number in England and Wales, or 62 if our figures were more like those for Scotland.

## Dream

Predictably, however, the Church in Ireland can right now merely dream of such figures. According to Maynooth's *Kalendarium*, just eight priests were ordained for Irish dioceses between last December and this July, down from 10 last year and 15 in 2015.

Given how few people have been entering the national seminary in recent

years – typically about 16 a year for each of the last five years – there is no sign of these figures improving in the immediate future.

Scotland's bumper figures for this year look tied to a 'Benedict bounce' from the 2010 papal visit, with most of this year's ordinands having entered seminary around the time of the then Pope's visit to Edinburgh, so an obvious question is whether Ireland could hope to capitalise on a 'Francis effect' should the Pontiff visit Ireland for the World Meeting of Families next year.

Catholic will hope and pray for such a boost, of course, but

figures from the United States suggest that vocations come above all from the nurturing of a vocational culture.

In the US, where the annual number of priestly ordinations dropped from 771 in 1975 to 442 in 2000, diocesan vocations reached 595 in 2015, with 2016 seeing 548 men ordained and 590 men lined up for ordination this year.

\* \* \* \* \*

Research for Georgetown University's Centre for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) found last year that most new priests first considered their vocation when they were about 17, with 70% being encouraged towards the priesthood by parish priests, 48% by friends, 46% by parishioners, and 42% by their mothers.

This year's research found that 82% of the 2017 new priests were encouraged by about four people to answer their vocation, with most first feeling a call to priestly life around 16 and with religious ordinands typically having known their order for about six years before joining. The average age for this year's ordinands is 34, reflecting a drop in ordination age of about two months a year since 1999.

Almost half of this year's ordinands attended a Catholic school for at least part of their schooling, with 59% participating in parish religious education programmes lasting an average of seven years, and 47% having participated in 'come and see' weekends at their seminary or religious institute.

**“Serious questions need to be asked about the extent to which our immigrant families are integrated into the mainstream Church here”**

Simple encouragement, then, not least from priests themselves, clearly plays a big role in helping people try to answer God's call. Priests and other Catholics should perhaps ask themselves whether they are doing this – or whether they are doing the opposite.

The US figures suggest that 30% of ordinands are born outside the US, 8% are converts and 35% have a relative who is a priest or a religious; while Ireland has few converts to draw from, given how many Irish people now are from Polish or other fami-



Cardinal Timothy Dolan who led the Visitation of Irish seminaries.

lies, it looks as though serious questions need to be asked about the extent to which our immigrant families are integrated into the mainstream Church here and whether future seminarians might come from the 'new Irish'.

Strikingly, 70% of US ordinands had served as altar servers, with 53% being readers at Mass, and 17% having attended World Youth Day; 73% report regularly praying the rosary before entering seminary and the same number participating in Eucharistic adoration ahead of entry.

*The Irish Catholic* reported last week on how a third of this year's new Irish priests – secular and religious – had had Legion of Mary connections, and links with Youth 2000 have often been noted, so it looks as though thought needs to be given to the extent to which new movements, traditional devotions, and the application of Church teaching in the streets draw people towards priestly devotions.

Such data will be vital in building our own culture of vocation in Ireland, and if our new National Office for Vocations can gather similar data here, it should be possible to help Ireland's youth once again hear God's call to the priesthood. If November's conference in Maynooth pays off, our national seminary may yet look like a credible place to try to discern that call.



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Legion of Mary project



Photos: John McElroy



# Counting down to family congress



**W**ith the one year countdown to the World Meeting of Families in Dublin (WMOF) officially launched on Monday, preparations for the event have now entered phase two according to the Secretary General, Fr Tim Bartlett.

Sitting in the sunny WMOF offices in the beautiful grounds of Dublin's Clonliffe College, Fr Tim explains that the last year has been spent organising the foundations for the event: office space, staff, designing the programme etc. Now it's time to prepare the parishes of Ireland to take part in the event.

Started in 1994 by Pope St John Paul II, WMOF is a major international event that brings together families from across the world every three years to celebrate, pray and reflect upon the central importance of marriage and the family as the cornerstone of our lives, of society and of the Church. The last one was held in Philadelphia in 2015 and then Ireland was chosen personally by Pope Francis to host the ninth WMOF in 2018.

## Papal visit

The question on everyone's lips is whether Pope Francis will attend the Dublin event and what a papal visit to Ireland might involve. Fr Tim can only say that the Pope "has repeatedly indicated his desire to join us for the WMOF in Ireland, however you still require a formal announcement that that will actually take place". That confirma-



**Mags Gargan speaks to the Secretary General of World Meeting of Families**



Fr Tim Bartlett.

tion is not expected until at least early next year and in the meantime the WMOF organisers are planning provisionally that he will attend and "remain very hopeful and optimistic", although there is a plan B in place too.

This will be the first WMOF since the two Synods of Bishops which reflected on marriage and the family, and the theme 'The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World' comes from the opening paragraph from the Pope's exhortation *The Joy of Love*

(*Amoris Laetitia*), which Fr Tim says will be the guiding document for the whole of the preparation period and the event itself.

**“We’ve invited every diocese to nominate representatives”**

“In the formal letter convening the WMOF in Dublin, the Holy Father very specifically asked that the period of



Pilgrims admire the new icon of the Holy Family written by the Redemptoristine Sisters.

preparation would assist families in discussing and reflecting upon *Amoris Laetitia*, so the way we’ve approached that was to launch a one-year period of preparation in Knock on Monday,” Fr Tim says.

“We have worked out how to prepare a programme of structured reflection for parishes which go online this week and hard copies are being sent to parishes across the country over the follow-

ing weeks. We’ve invited every diocese to nominate representatives, whether at diocesan or parish level, who will liaise with us in the preparations for WMOF, and particularly in helping families and parishes during the coming year to reflect through this programme.”

There are four elements to WMOF: a national opening, a three-day congress, the Festival of Families and the

final Mass. There will also be programmes specifically for children and young people.

Normally the WMOF formal opening ceremony would take place in the conference venue, but the Irish organisers have decided to do things a little differently with 26 ceremonies happening concurrently across each of the dioceses on the island on the opening day, Tuesday, August 21, “to give





Diocesan representatives (left) carry petition boxes to the altar for a blessing and families take part in workshops at the WMOF launch in Knock.



expression to the fact that this is a national event, as well as an international event”.

The international pastoral congress will then run from the Wednesday to Friday and on the Saturday evening there will be a Festival of Families. Much like the Eucharistic Congress of 2012, the pastoral congress will host a series of panels and workshops as well as daily Mass and family activities. “All of the workshops during that congress, and all of the panels and discussions, will somewhere take up themes from *Amoris Laetitia*,” explains Fr Tim.

**“At the heart of this are the testimonies of five families chosen from around the world representing the five main continents of the world”**

“That ranges from things like, ‘Is there a crisis of commitment in our world today that is inhibiting many young couples who otherwise would appear to be in a married relationship from actually formally getting married?’

“We would also be looking at very real, practical issues that come up in *Amoris Laetitia* like the impact of technology on families today.”

The Festival of Families meanwhile is a more “reflective” event with prayer, music and drama. At the heart of this Fr Tim says, are “the testimonies of five families chosen from around the world representing the

five main continents of the world, giving their testimony of what it is – the joys and the challenges – to be a Christian family in the world today”.

“At the end of that, if the Holy Father is present among us, he would address the Festival of Families and particularly those testimonies of those families at the end of that event,” he says.

The final part of the WMOF is the concluding Mass on Sunday, hopefully celebrated by Pope Francis, which is a commissioning out and a celebration of what has happened during the week.

A number of elements of the WMOF preparations were launched at Knock Shrine, including the official prayer, an icon of the Holy Family which was written by the Redemptoristine Sisters and will now travel around the dioceses, and a parish programme called ‘*Amoris*: Let’s Talk Family, Let’s Be Family!’

This programme will provide a number of resources throughout the year on the websites [www.worldmeeting2018.ie](http://www.worldmeeting2018.ie) and [www.amoris.ie](http://www.amoris.ie) such as animations and “video interviews with key international and national figures on themes to do with family, and studio programmes in a new dedicated studio will be produced with iCatholic and Kairos communications”.

There is also a parish-based discussion programme for families, which includes a facilitator’s guide (the WMOF office is offering training for facilitators), a six-session parish conversation programme which takes up themes from *Amoris Laetitia* and a third booklet offering practical initiatives for popular moments

for families.

“It has set out a series of initiatives carrying us through the whole of next year which tie into popular moments which touch people’s experience of family. So, for example, we produced a special gift card for children being baptised through the coming year in our parishes across Ireland, and a card commemorating those getting married during the year of preparation for the WMOF,” says Fr Tim.

At Christmas, the WMOF team hope to give a copy of the new icon to everybody who attends Mass. There are also a number of activities planned for Lent and for Easter, such as blessing the family home with Easter water.

**“We produced a special gift card for children being baptised through the coming year in our parishes across Ireland”**

“There’s a whole programme of practical, simple initiatives, a menu that parishes can choose from of practical initiatives which lead to reflection and connections to *Amoris Laetitia*,” Fr Tim says. “In this way, you will hear a lot about the WMOF hopefully through your parish during the coming year.”

Looking forward to the week of WMOF, Fr Tim says he has “absolutely no doubt that the event will be a positive experience for those who come to it and a joyful experience of being together” and he thinks it will “build up

people in the sense of faith and solidarity and being part of a universal church”.

“I hope it will lift people.

I hope it will help us to see and engage with the Church universally, and be lifted and encouraged,” he says, “and of

course if Pope Francis joins us, that in itself will be a tremendous grace and strengthening and support.”

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KNOCK SHRINE NOVENA 2017



Marty Morrissey with some GAA fans at the National Novena to Our Lady of Knock.



A pilgrim family at the novena.



Pilgrims line up to touch the old gable wall.



To mark 500 years of the Reformation, Church of Ireland Bishop of Tuam, Killala & Achonry Diocese, Rt Revd Patrick Rooke was welcomed for the ceremonies last Friday and conducted a workshop with Dr Salvador Ryan, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

**Workshops**

On Saturday Bishop Philip Boyce, retired Bishop of Raphoe, was joined by writer and theologian Fr Daniel O'Leary to facilitate workshops.

Then on Sunday Bishop Kevin Doran of Elphin spoke during the ceremonies and workshops which were facilitated by Dr Aoife McGrath, lecturer in Pastoral Theology and Parish Placement Coordinator at the

Pontifical University, Maynooth.

One of the main highlights of the Novena took place on Monday with the launch of the World Meeting of Families 2018 programme 'Amoris: Let's talk Family, Let's be Family!' with families representing each diocese arriving at Knock for this special day. Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin gave a talk on 'When Plates Fly! Pope Francis on the joys and challenges of family life' and workshops were facilitated by Fr Tim Bartlett on how to make technology more family friendly.

The Novena came to a close on Tuesday with Maria Steen, spokesperson for the Iona Institute speaking at the ceremonies and workshops with Cora Sherlock, Deputy Chairperson of the Pro Life Campaign.

Mags Gargan

The National Novena to Our Lady of Knock once again attracted over 100,000 pilgrims this year for nine days of reflection and prayer.

Fr Richard Gibbons PP, Rector of Knock Shrine, said the novena is "about embracing our spiritual selves and in today's world it is a valuable thing to take some time alone or with family and friends to experience the richness of our faith and to escape the material and fast-paced world".

With the theme 'Living Life to the Full', the programme included a high quality line-up of guest speakers and workshops to help enrich and enliven faith. The novena opened on Monday, August 14 with Dr Mary Healy, international speaker on scripture and healing, followed by Redemptorists Fr Seamus Enright, CSsR and Fr Michael Cusack, CSsR on Tuesday.

**“There were genuine, thought-provoking and inspiring moments of sadness, humour, joy and pride”**

Sport was the topic on Wednesday with RTÉ sports commentator Marty Morrissey making his debut public appearance at Knock to a packed crowd and Fr Kevin O'Gorman, author of *Saving Sport: Sport, Society and Spirituality*, offering a workshop. There were many moments of laughter and amusement, particularly when Marty encouraged each person present to say "I love you" to their neighbour. Amongst all of the laughter and banter, there were genuine, thought-provoking and inspiring moments of sadness, humour, joy and pride when he talked about his personal life, the importance of friendship in our overall happiness, family life and appreciating every day as a beautiful gift.

There was a local flavour last Thursday, when Knock native Bernadette McNeive and professional motivational speaker Darren Cawley both delivered moving accounts of their own personal stories of organ donation.



Photo:  
Michael  
McLaughlin



Marty Morrissey with David McConn  
(manager at Knock Shrine) and Fr Richard  
Gibbons.



Two young GAA fans at the novena.



Two pilgrims at the novena in Knock.



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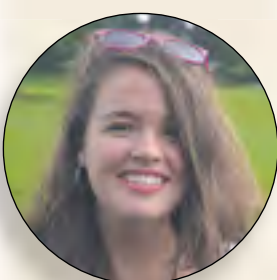


# Faith shines brightly at

## Why are you here?



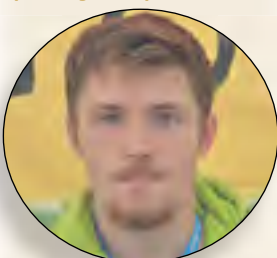
I wanted to discover my vocation and want to reinforce the call to the priesthood – **Martin Breslin, 17 (Derry)**



For me, it's about strengthening my relationship with God, meeting new people and having a fun time – **Lucy Kelly, 20 (Belfast)**



Youth 2000 allows me to grow in my faith and meet other young people who are as interested in their faith as I am – **Séimhin Or Ni Dhonnghaile, 21 (Co. Tyrone)**



Music is good, fun is great, it's just amazing to be here – **Thomas Boylan, 18 (Dublin)**



Youth 2000 Summer Festival has become my second home. The people are so welcoming and the atmosphere is something everyone should witness – **Jemma Wilders, 19 (Kells, Co. Meath)**



Attendees from Youth 2000 Mitchelstown Prayer Group



**Colm Fitzpatrick**

Over 1,000 young Catholics from across the island of Ireland came together in the Cistercian College, Roscrea at the weekend – not to study – but to celebrate their faith at the annual Youth 2000 Summer Festival.

Youth 2000 is a Catholic youth organisation that organises lively faith festivals, retreats, prayer groups and other events for young people aged 16-35 across the island of Ireland. It began as one young English man's response to Pope John Paul II's call at World Youth Day in 1989 for young people to evangelise young people and it has spread to more than 25 countries all over the world, coming to Ireland in 1993.

Attending the event in Co. Tipperary, Fr Chris Hayden, from the Diocese of Ferns, said: "I'm here because I want to see what Youth 2000 is like, I want to become more familiar with it, and maybe catch some of the enthusiasm."

The spiritual initiative was established to draw young people back to Christ and the Church, especially in the Eucharist, and so many of the events are orientated towards this aim including adoration, Rosary recitals and personal testimonies.

The organisation carries out its mission in three ways: devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, devotion to Our Lady particularly through the Rosary, and

fidelity to the teaching of the Church, including a deep love for Sacred Scripture.

Fr Shane Sullivan from the Archdiocese of Tuam provided an insightful and helpful talk about the true meaning of the Eucharist, and also described the importance of various parts of the Mass. His energy and zeal were a complimentary accompaniment to the profundity of his words.

"The second half of the Mass is going to blow your mind," he said. "The second half is Calvary. Jesus becomes truly present – we become present at Calvary."

## Relationship

Retreats like this allow young people the opportunity to develop a relationship with Christ in a richer and more spiritual away, or perhaps even encounter him for the first time, particularly through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In his homily at the Mass on Friday – which was offered for the victims and families of the attacks in Barcelona – Bishop Fintan Monahan of the Diocese of Killaloe praised the work that Youth 2000 carries out. His homily addressed the value of silence, and how this can help one come closer to God. In the tiny moments of "nothing", something divine can occur.

Alongside these elements of devotion, participants attended workshops, danced and sang, and conversed about what their faith means to them.

"I thought faith in Ireland was dead," said Brian O'Driscoll, Secretary of Youth 2000, "but at Youth 2000 you realise you're not alone and by meeting other young people and walking with them it's special and alive."





# youth summer festival



Emma Sisk, one of the keynote speakers at the festival, addressing the crowd during the 'True Womanhood' presentation on Saturday.



Keynote speakers Sr Colleen Mattingly, Emma Sisk and Katie Ascough.



Keynote speakers Peter Sands, Pat Reynolds and Fr Shane Sullivan.

## Why are you here?



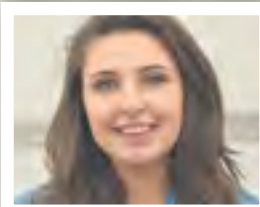
I've been living in Ireland for two weeks and I want to get involved in Catholic activities like back at home – **Mina Soliman, 28 (Egypt)**



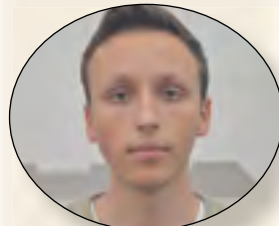
The joy that the people have – they're not afraid. It's wonderful to say I believe in God – **Kayode Adebisin, 21 (Newbridge)**



It's become a place of community and support in the Faith – **Paula Frenay, 20 (Co. Mayo)**



Youth 2000 is a place of true joy, true love and true friendship. It's the highlight of my summer every year and I wouldn't want to spend those four days anywhere else! – **Klaudia Broda, 20 (Co. Longford)**



Youth 2000 has helped me to rediscover my faith, and taught me the truth, truth about life, and that God loves us unconditionally. Personal relationship with God our Father is possible. He awaits us with open hands – **Radko Vykukal, 21 (Galway)**



# Out&About

## St Aloysius Faith Camp in Mallow



**CORK:** Participants and leaders at this year's St Aloysius Faith Camp in Mallow.



**MEDJUGORJE:** Three priests, 97 young people and 16 leaders, all part of the Kilkenny Medjugorje youth group and who hail from 24 parishes in the Diocese of Ossory, represented Ireland at the Medjugorje Youth Festival.



**MEATH:** Sr M. Consilio Rock and Sr M. Celestine Daly with Fr William Coleman on the occasion of their Golden Jubilee of religious profession at St Joseph's Convent of Mercy in Navan.

### IN SHORT

#### National Traditional Pilgrimage to Knock

The Archbishop of Tuam, Dr Michael Neary established the National Latin Mass Pilgrimage in 2002. It was his expressed wish that all Traditional Catholics in good standing be invited to Knock on the first Saturday in September. The National Pilgrimage this year takes place on Saturday, September 2 commencing with a *Missa Cantata* at 2pm followed by Stations of the Cross and Traditional Benediction. All events take place in the old church.

#### Clondalkin hosts Pilgrim Mass at holy well

The annual pilgrim walk and Mass to St Brigid's Well, Clondalkin in Dublin took

place at the end of July. Starting off at 7am, in solidarity with fellow pilgrims who climb Croagh Patrick each year, organisers say there was a great turnout for this bi-lingual Mass (Irish and English), celebrated by Fr Pearse Mullen SSCC of the Sacred Heart parish, Sruleen. Pilgrims were treated to hot refreshments after Mass, including homemade doughnuts.

#### Elphin bishop celebrates Mass on Sliabh Ban

Bishop Kevin Doran celebrated Mass on the Mass Rock on Sliabh Ban on the boundary between the parishes of Strokestown and Kilgefin in the Diocese of Elphin last week.

It was the first Mass to be celebrated there since penal times and a large congregation from the surrounding area walked up Sliabh Ban to join in the celebration. The survival of

the Mass rock and other sacred places on the mountain is due to the efforts of the Sliabh Ban committee.

This year, in the context of the recent development of a wind farm on the mountain the local community has engaged with Coillte to bring about improved access to the Mass Rock so that future generations will have this link to the faith of previous generations.

#### Successful summer faith camp in Mallow

This year's CDYS Youth Ministry St Aloysius Summer Faith Camp in Mallow, Co. Cork exceeded expected numbers. Aimed at boys and girls aged 5-14 years, it was an action packed week with Morning Prayer each day followed by a variety of activities such as drama, sports, music, arts & crafts and Good Shepherd Catechesis delivered by Sr Agnes

Mary and Sr Angelita from the Missionaries of Charity, Blarney.

Thanks to Sr Ita the young people also had the opportunity to have Adoration every day.

The day finished with Mass where the young people participated in the singing, the readings and altar severing. During his first week as the new Parish Priest, Canon Anthony O'Brien celebrated Mass and heard Confessions along with Fr Sean Corkery, Fr Andrew Carville CC and Fr James Greene CC (Carrigtwohill).

In total 54 children participated in the camp and 20 leaders and junior leaders from Mallow Parish Youth Ministry-CDYS, Jesus Youth Movement and Pope John Paul II Award participants. There were also leaders from the Holy Rosary Faith Camp in Midleton and St Therese Faith Camp in Mitchelstown.

If you would like to get involved in this camp next year contact Bernadette, Mallow Parish Youth Ministry on 086 8031126.



Edited by Mags Gargan  
mags@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



**WEXFORD:** Bishop Denis Brennan and priests of the Diocese of Ferns lead the pilgrimage at the opening of the pilgrimage on Our Lady's Island. Photo: Patrick Hogan



◀ **GALWAY:** Fr Kevin Blade MSC PP (left) and Charles Sweeney MSC with Frances Egan, Alice Carr, Brian Duffy and John Giblin who were presented with Bene Merenti medals for their service to Ballinfoyle church and school.

▼ **ROSCOMMON:** Bishop Kevin Doran with concelebrants (l-r) Fr Tommy Gillooly SPS, a missionary in Kenya; Fr Ciaran Flynn CC SPS Strokestown; Fr Eamonn O'Connor PP Strokestown at the Mass Rock on Sliabh Ban on the boundary between the parishes of Strokestown and Kilgefin.



▲ **KERRY:** Pictured at the blessing of the Nun's field for Austin Stack's GAA Club by Bishop Ray Browne are, from left, Fr Padraig Walsh PP, Jim Naughton, Co. Board Delegate, Bishop Ray Browne, Mairead Fernane, Vice chairman Austin Stack's Club and Chairman Austin Stack's Club Liam Lynch. Photo: John Cleary

► **DONEGAL:** Parishioners from Ennis, Co. Clare at the conclusion of their pilgrimage to Lough Derg.



## ARMAGH

Adoration chapel, Edwards St, Lurgan, adoration weekdays, 9am-9pm.

## CLARE

Charismatic Renewal Service in Killaloe Diocese on Sunday, August 27 from 2-5pm in Clare Care Centre, Hill Road, Killaloe (white building opposite nursing home).

## CORK

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

## DONEGAL

Solemn Novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help in St Patrick's Church, Ballyshannon from September 11-19 with Redemptorist novena team, Fr Johnny Doherty and Fr Peter Burns, based on Pope Francis's Joy of Love and WMOF preparation.

## DUBLIN

The Dublin 15 Faith and Justice Group welcomes new members and currently meet on the first Friday of the month in Harts-town Church. For information contact Fr Joe 087 6632944.

Agape Charismatic prayer meeting in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, Tuesdays, 8pm (Mass last Tues of the month), Disciples of the Divine Master Oratory, Junction of Newtownpark Av/Stillorgan Rd. Bus: 46A/C/D or 58C. Tel: 087-6509465.

Divine Mercy Mass and holy hour 7.30pm every Tuesday in St Saviour's Church, Dominick Street. Also daily Divine Mercy prayers at 2.30pm at the shrine with the relic of St Faustina.

Life to the Full Book Club for young adults (20's & 30's) to reflect and discuss a chosen spiritual book over a few weeks. Every Thursday from 7-8.30pm in St Paul's Church Arran Quay (Smithfield). Email: michelle.manley@dublindiocese

A special Mass for the anointing of the sick will be held on Sunday, September 3 at 3pm in St Patrick's Church, Ringsend.

Visit of the National Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima to Good Shepherd Parish Church, Nutgrove Ave, Churchtown on Wednesday, August 30. Holy Hour 7.30-8.30pm - meditated Rosary, talk on Fatima, Benediction and veneration of the relics.

## FERMANAGH

Mass to St Peregrine for all the sick every Wednesday evening in St Patrick's Church, Derrygonnelly at 7.30pm. www.churchservices.tv/derrygonnelly

## KILDARE

Kildare & Leighlin Diocesan Family Picnic Day in Punchestown Racecourse on Sunday, August 27 from 1-6pm, with the official opening liturgy at 3pm. Bishop Denis Nulty will lead a 4km fun walk around the race track and there will be face-painting, children's disco, stilt walkers, a pet corner and games.

Suncroft parish church: Eucharistic Adoration each Wednesday in the sacristy 10am to 6pm.

## KILKENNY

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

## LIMERICK

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

## MAYO

The National Traditional Pilgrimage to Knock will take place on Saturday, September 2 commencing with a High Mass/Missa Cantata at 2pm, followed by Stations of the Cross and Traditional Benediction. All events in the old church.

Grandparents' National Annual Pilgrimage on September 10 in Knock Shrine at 2.30pm. Chief celebrant Archbishop Eamon Martin with Ballina School Choir providing music and Dana will sing Our Lady of Knock.

The National Legion of Mary Pilgrimage to Knock takes place on Sunday, September 24 with Bishop Fintan Monahan as chief celebrant and homilist.

## MEATH

Tara-Slane pilgrim walk departing from the Hill of Tara at 9am sharp on Saturday, August 26. Estimated time of arrival on the Hill of Slane is 4.30pm with conclusion of pilgrimage by 5pm. Mass at 3pm in Slane parish hall. See www.navanparish.ie

## OFFALY

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

Eucharistic Adoration in the chapel of Tullamore General Hospital 24/7.

## ROSCOMMON

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

## TIPPERARY

National pilgrimage celebrating the Fatima centenary on Sunday, August 27 at Holycross Abbey, organised by the World Apostolate of Our Lady of Fatima. Rosary Procession at 2.30pm followed by Stations of the Cross, Anointing of the Sick, blessings with relics of Ss Francisco and Jacinta and Mass at 4pm celebrated by Cashel and Emly's Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly.

## WICKLOW

Eucharistic adoration, St Mary & Peter Church, Arklow, every Tuesday & Friday 2-7pm & Sunday 2-5pm.

Holy Rosary for priests, Aras Lorcain, every Friday at 7.45pm.

St Patrick's Prayer Meeting on Thursday evenings at 8pm in the De La Salle Pastoral Centre, Wicklow. Come for prayer, scripture, music and a cuppa.





# World Report

## IN BRIEF

### Blind priest to celebrate three decades of service

● A blind priest in the US will celebrate the 30th anniversary since his ordination next year despite all the odds.

Fr Bernard Ezaki holds a micro cassette in his left hand, and with one earphone in his left ear he is able to conduct all the Mass prayers and readings.

He also distributes Holy Communion to the faithful just like any other priest, though he has one rule: Be still. "I need a big landing field," he said. "I tell them, especially at funerals, 'I don't want to put my fingers in your mouth'."

Fr Ezaki, a priest in the Diocese of Allentown in Pennsylvania, has been legally blind since he was given too much oxygen after being born prematurely. His affliction has never slowed him down.

### Indonesia president's warning

The president of Indonesia has said extremism and terrorism are among the greatest threats facing their Muslim-majority nation. He highlighted the need for a united front to safeguard the country's secular society. "We are still confronted with poverty and injustice, we are still facing global economic uncertainty, and we are also facing movements of extremism, radicalism and terrorism," President Joko Widodo said in a speech to parliament last week. Pancasila, the nation's secular ideology enshrined in the charter's preamble, stipulates belief in one God, a civilised society, a united Indonesia, democracy guided by consensus, and social justice for all citizens.



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## ‘Every indication’ Medjugorje apparitions will receive approval

Reports of apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Medjugorje could be recognised by the Vatican as early as this year according to an archbishop appointed by the Pope.

Archbishop Henryk Hoser was given the task to study the pastoral care given to the town's residents and pilgrims who arrive in their millions each year to climb Mt Podbrdno, where the apparitions are said to have occurred.

Archbishop Hoser said that "from a pastoral point of view, there is a very positive result".

"My mission was not to make a judgement on Medjugorje, but to evaluate whether the pastoral ministry was proper and consistent with the doctrine and teaching of the Church; and effective and well organised. I concluded that this is the case," the archbishop told the Catholic Information Agency in Poland.

### Character

The site has the same character as holy places of pilgrimage such as Lourdes, Lisieux, Czestochowa and Fatima according to the archbishop, who said the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has provided all the



Pilgrims pray around a statue of Mary on Apparition Hill in Medjugorje.

documentation surrounding the alleged apparitions to the Secretary of State.

Archbishop Hoser said that there has been "every indication" that the apparition will be approved, saying: "Specifically, I think it's possible to recognise the authenticity of the first [seven] apparitions as proposed by the

Ruini commission," Hoser said. "Besides, it is difficult to get another verdict, because it's difficult to believe that six seers will lie for 36 years. What they say has been consistent. They are not mentally incompetent. A strong argument for the authenticity of the apparitions is their faithfulness to the doctrine of

the Church."

He encouraged believers to go to Medjugorje, calling it "the pilgrimage of spiritual change, conversion and strengthening of faith".

The alleged apparitions of the Virgin Mary occurred for the first time on June 24, 1981, according to six boys and girls.

## Spain terror attacks condemned by Pope Francis and bishops

Pope Francis has condemned last week's terrorist attack in Barcelona and was "greatly disturbed" by the horrific violence.

The Pontiff expressed his closeness with the people of Spain, in particular the injured and their families, and prayed for the victims.

Last Thursday the so-called Islamic State claimed responsibility for what is believed to be three coordinated attacks that killed 15 people.

An Irish family of four were injured in the attack – a mother, father and two children, with one child suffering a broken femur.

In Barcelona a van zigzagged at high speed in the busy tourist area of Las Ramblas, leading to the deaths of 13 people and leaving up to 100 people injured – some severely.

### Terrorists

In Cambrils, a town 120km from Barcelona, one woman was killed and five bystanders and a police officer were injured when a car drove into them.

Five suspected terrorists were killed at the scene, some were wearing what was later discovered to be fake suicide vests.

A third explosion occurred the day before, on Wednesday in Alcanor – 200km from Barcelona – and destroyed a house killing one person.

The Spanish Catholic Bishops' Conference immediately called it a "lamentable and detestable act" and expressed their solidarity with the victims.

The Spanish bishops went on to condemn "every demonstration of terrorism" as "an intrinsically perverse practice, completely incompatible with a just, reasonable, and moral view of life."

## EU and UK fail to deliver share of aid for Africa – UN

The US, Canada and the UK among others have pledged large sums of money to assist countries facing severe food emergencies, but a gap exists between pledged aid and the amount of aid collected.

A report from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs stated

that South Sudan, Somalia, northeast Nigeria and Yemen need more than €5.4bn in humanitarian aid if they are to "avert a humanitarian catastrophe" affecting 20 million people.

At least €4.2bn of the requested €5.4bn is needed for immediate needs. At the

time of the report, only 51% of €4.2bn had been received since the initial request in early spring.

The UN reported that the US, Canada and Australia have completed funding their pledges, but not all contributions from the UK and the EU have been

received. The same report stated the US made contributions to the Central Emergency Response Fund as well, providing humanitarian aid to "scale up mitigation measures" specifically addressing famine, malnutrition and food insecurity in Africa and Yemen.





Edited by Chai Brady  
chai@irishcatholic.ie

## Magnificent eclipse



The solar eclipse as seen from Pope John Paul II School in Hendersonville, Tennessee on August 21.

# Parishioners advised on same-sex vote in Australia

As moves are being made to legalise same-sex marriage in Australia, an archbishop has released a pastoral letter to his parishes outlining the Church's stance on same-sex marriage.

Archbishop Timothy Costello, from the Diocese of Perth, aimed to clarify the reasons behind the Church's opposition to changing the legal definition of marriage, encouraging parishioners to "reflect deeply on this issue".

This comes as the government aims to hold a voluntary postal plebiscite, which is similar to a referendum but doesn't deal with matters that can

change the constitution. The result of the referendum is not binding, which means a government vote could fail even if the population votes for same-sex marriage.

The archbishop said marriage is "understood as the union of a man and a woman for life, and as the best way to provide the upbringing of children".

He said that the Catholic community in Australia has a right to propose its views in what they believe would best serve society "as a whole", but has "no right to impose our views on others".

Archbishop Costello continues saying

that although the Church sets forth an ideal, it is not always realised in practice due to marriage breakdowns, couples unable to have children and more, but it doesn't make "the ideal any less worth striving for".

"None of this suggests that there should be any unjust discrimination against same-sex couples. Nor does it suggest that legal protections and government benefits should be denied to same-sex couples," he added, saying that many people have family and friends who are in same-sex couples that they "love and respect".

## Bolivian bishops defend natives and national park

Catholic Church leaders in Bolivia are opposing a controversial new law that strips protection from a national park and indigenous peoples' territory. The measure signed into law by President Evo Morales in mid-August opens the Isiboro Secure National Park and Indigenous Territory, known as TIPNIS, to highway construction and other development.

"The government doesn't listen to the people, especially not indigenous people," Bishop Eugenio



Isiboro Secure National Park.

Coter, Bolivian coordinator of the Pan-Amazonian Church Network, said.

"Knowing that the indigenous people of TIPNIS have expressed their opposition to this highway,

the government is imposing its will on the people who live in the territory."

Currently 14,000 indigenous people live in the region. Plans for a 300km highway, which will split the

park in two, can now legally go ahead.

In 2011, indigenous people from the territory staged a two-month protest march to La Paz to stop plans to build a highway through the protected area – which aimed to link several towns.

After that march, which met with a harsh crackdown from government security forces, the Morales administration placed TIPNIS under the strictest form of protection. The new law reverses that.

## Vatican roundup

### Condolences sent to people in 'agony' after Africa mudslide

After a major mudslide and flooding led to the deaths of hundreds of people and displaced thousands, Pope Francis offered his condolences and his prayers to the people of Sierra Leone.

"Deeply saddened by the devastating consequences of the mudslide on the outskirts of Freetown, His Holiness Pope Francis assures those who have lost loved ones of his closeness at this difficult time," said a message sent to Archbishop Edward Tamba Charles of Freetown from the Vatican Secretary of State.

Pope Francis "prays for all who have died, and upon their grieving families and friends he invokes the divine blessings of strength and consolation", said the message.

The Pope also "expresses his prayerful solidarity with the rescue workers and all involved in providing the much-needed relief and support to the victims of this disaster."

Ishmeal Alfred Charles, who is managing Caritas' emergency response, said: "There is so much agony and pain here."

The body count has continued to grow as hundreds were killed in one of Africa's worst mudslides, 600 people are still missing and about 500 are believed to be dead.

### Cardinal to build bridges with Russian Orthodox

Cardinal Pietro Parolin travelled to Russia this week in order to "build bridges and increase mutual understanding and dialogue" according to Archbishop Celestino Migliore.

Archbishop Migliore, the Vatican's Apostolic Nuncio to the Russian Federation also told Vatican Radio that the Holy See "is following with attention and concern the various crises underway throughout the world".

Archbishop Migliore said that Pope Francis' meeting with Patriarch Kiril of the Russian Orthodox Church in Havana last year "led to an important new stage in the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church".

"It is now a question of walking together in the Gospel footsteps, multiplying opportunities for fraternal encounter, exchange of views and experiences," he said.

### Congregation supports Eastern Catholics for 100 years

The Vatican celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Congregation of Eastern Churches, a congregation that has continually contended with the persecution of Eastern Catholic Churches.

It strives to ensure that the universal Catholic Church treasures its diversity, including its liturgy, spirituality and canon law.

Until 1990 many of the Byzantine Churches, including the Ukrainian Catholic Church which is the largest, were outlawed and suppressed by communist governments according to Archbishop Cyril Vasil, the secretary of the congregation.

After the Soviet bloc disintegrated the Gulf War occurred, followed by the invasion of Iraq, then there was the turmoil of the Arab Spring across North Africa, followed by war in Syria. The Chaldean, Syriac Catholic, Coptic Catholic, Melkite and Maronite churches have paid a high price as a result.

"In all of this, the Eastern churches suffer the most because they find themselves crushed in the struggle between bigger powers, both local and global," Archbishop Vasil said.

However he said this has led to Eastern Churches being found all over the world. "The greatest danger in the coming years is extinction," Archbishop Vasil added.



# Letters

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

## Letter of the week

### Deacons can ease overworked priests' burden

**Dear Editor,** The leadership of the Association of Catholic Priests (ACP) have been particularly successful in recent times of getting their opinions broadcast and published in national media. I accept that all priests need to have a voice in representing their views and that the demands of priesthood in 2017 are very onerous, as older men undertake more duties.

However, I do wonder if the ACP appreciate the contradictions of some of their statements. Objecting to plans for the continued introduction of male only diaconate because it may disrespect women while bemoaning the workloads, stress and isolation felt

by many priests, makes little sense to me. I am sure our bishops appreciate that, unlike the priesthood, there are no theological reasons why a woman should not become a deacon, indeed St Paul refers in Romans 16:1 to "our sister Phoebe, a deacon".

Even with a committed parish team of lay people to support the priest, sacramental duties can only be performed by an ordained minister of the Church. The role of the deacon is one of service and it does not command a controlling position in any parish that I am aware of, indeed St Francis of Assisi was a deacon and he clearly had no intent on exercising

power.

The value of the permanent diaconate even if it is only open to males at this time, is that it offers support now, to priests in sharing the sacramental workload. But I would argue also that rather than disrespecting women it offers the opportunity for a process of cultural change within parishes, as people become accustomed to seeing married men, often with families, undertaking sacramental duties such as baptisms, weddings and funeral services.

*Yours etc.,  
Frank Browne,  
Templeogue, Dublin 16.*

### Cardinal Müller and the 'elephant in the room'

**Dear Editor,** I can't help noticing that, in Christopher Altieri's Notebook about the papal sacking of Cardinal Gerhard Müller as Prefect for the Doctrine of the Faith (IC 10/08/2017), he carefully avoids mentioning the 'elephant in the room' – Cardinal Müller's attitude to the dubia expressed by four cardinals about the Pope's teaching on *Amoris Laetitia*.

For those who don't know, Pope Francis has told the

bishops of Argentina that his apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* means that divorced and remarried Catholics can receive Holy Communion. Four cardinals – Raymond Burke, Carlo Caffarra, the retired archbishop of Bologna, and German cardinals Walter Brandmüller and Joachim Meisner – eventually sent five questions, called *dubia* (Latin for 'doubts') to the Holy Father and Cardinal Müller, last September. They

have asked Pope Francis to clarify how his teaching can be read in the context of the Catholic tradition. He has refused.

Cardinal Müller told EWTN's Raymond Arroyo in May that the *dubia* contained "legitimate questions to the Pope". The cardinal also addressed the issue of deaconesses (female priests "will not come," he said), Rome's efforts to reconcile with the Society of St Pius X (SSPX) and

"liturgical abuses" in the Church.

Now Cardinal Muller has been sacked as head of the CDF, Cardinal Burke has been dismissed as head of the Apostolic Signatura and the other three cardinals wait to learn whether their red hats will be taken away by the Pope.

*Yours etc.,  
Kieron Wood,  
Rathfarnham,  
Dublin 16.*

### New nuncio a welcome sight

**Dear Editor,** I was glad to see our new nuncio has arrived in Ireland (IC 17/08/2017). Perhaps now the elderly bishops awaiting permission to retire can finally be replaced with some young bloods who can lead the charge of the mission of re-energising the Irish Church. And dare I say it, could we also maybe see some of the smaller dioceses amalgamated so we have a more realistic number of dioceses for the size of the island?

*Yours etc.,  
Deirdre Burke,  
Bray,  
Co. Wicklow.*

### Jesuits' amazing survival of atomic bomb

**Dear Editor,** In relation to the article of David Quinn (IC 10/08/2017) on the atomic bomb, your readers might like to know that when that bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, on August 6, 1945 four Jesuit priests were saying the Rosary in a house at the epicentre of the blast, where every building was demolished and people were vaporised in the terrific heat generated by the blast.

Later photographs showed the house in which the priests were praying

remained intact and they suffered no aftereffects.

Over many subsequent years they were examined by various medical specialists and scientists, none of whom could explain their survival unscathed. All four priests remained healthy and died of natural causes in their old age.

In 1969, the French government was carrying out nuclear tests on the island of Moruroa in the south Pacific. In photographs of the mushroom

generated by the blast, at the bottom left hand corner of the mushroom can be clearly seen Christ on His Cross, with the Blessed Virgin kneeling at the bottom of the Cross. And this was well before digital photography came into being.

*Yours etc.,  
Pat Mullin,  
Drumcondra,  
Dublin 9.*



### We shouldn't limit avenues of faith formation

**Dear Editor,** I agree with Fr Patrick Seaver (IC Letters 03/08/2017) regarding the centrality of parents in the faith formation of children. The family, as a 'domestic church' is of crucial importance in the handing on of faith. I also concede that sacramental preparation may be best served solely in a parish context, once adequate resources, particularly well-trained catechists, are in place to facilitate this. Parents may also require formation to enable them to live a truly sacramental life as a family.

I also agree that knowledge of the Faith alone does not suffice. However, I do not view Catholic education as a simple imparting of knowledge. A teacher who lives his/her Catholic faith with conviction and integrity, has great influence regarding the attitudes children develop about God and faith. I am fully aware that my witness or the school's alone is no guarantee that my pupils will become intentional disciples actively involved in their parishes. However, the witness of a significant person could ignite a spark.

Further, while the home may be the primary evangelising agent, it can happen that a young person can choose God even without home-based faith formation.

Ultimately, is it truly wise to limit the avenues within which God can work? Is it wise for Catholics to support school secularisation when in countries like France, all religious symbols are now banned from schools, 'strict neutrality' is demanded from all teachers with regards to faith, and no leeway whatsoever is given for teachers to witness to their religious convictions in the classroom (Secularism Charter, 2013)?

Not only do I see school secularisation as a bad move for our young people, but inevitably for teachers of faith too.

*Yours etc.,  
Róisín O'Rourke,  
Leitrim Village,  
Co. Leitrim.*

### Be careful of wording of old prayers

**Dear Editor,** I would like through the columns of your newspaper to call on people to be careful about the prayers they use which belong to a different time and era. They reflect a bad theology.

I would suggest that people stop using a prayer which contains these words: "O Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell..." This prayer is sometimes used during the public recitation of the Rosary. It is claimed that it originated in Fatima.

Wherever it originated it should be abolished forever. I would also ask people to refrain from the old versions of the Act of Sorrow about "offending" God and to use the new one learned by children in school. It is short and meaningful.

*Yours etc.,  
Fr Joe McVeigh,  
Enniskillen,  
Co. Fermanagh.*

### Letters to the Editor

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

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

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



# Around the world



**SPAIN:** People pay tribute to victims on the site of a deadly van attack. Police shot dead on Monday a man who was believed to be the driver of the vehicle that drove into civilians in the busy Las Ramblas area of Barcelona, killing 14 and injuring 100.



**SOUTH SUDAN:** A woman carry bags of sorghum and split yellow peas in Pajut. Up to 20 million people in South Sudan, Yemen, Somalia and northeast Nigeria face the prospect of famine this year.



**SAN SALVADOR:** Parishioners from Immaculate Conception Parish in Chicago pose for a photo with Cardinal Gregorio Rosa Chavez during a three-day pilgrimage to Ciudad Barrios, the birthplace of Blessed Oscar Romero.



**USA:** Fr Bernard Ezaki, parochial vicar at St Jane Frances de Chantal Church in Easton, Pennsylvania, gives Communion at Mass. He has been legally blind since birth.



**CANADA:** A Haitian refugee sticks his head out from a tent set up by the Canadian Armed Forces near Lacolle, Quebec. Pope Francis released a statement urging respect for the life and dignity of migrants and refugees.



**FINLAND:** A girl in Turku plays an instrument and sings a lullaby at the site where one person was stabbed to death. Pope Francis asked an estimated 10,000 people in St Peter's Square on Sunday to pray in silence and to join him in reciting the Hail Mary for the victims of the attacks the previous week in Burkina Faso, Spain and Finland.





# TAKING THE LONG ROAD

Some of the 24 students from DCU who went on Camino with chaplain Fr Séamus McEntee (first left).

**O**ne-time car salesman Fr Séamus McEntee has set his keys aside, and is now being driven by the Faith to reach out to marginalised communities, his parishioners and the students in DCU.

Born in the village of Rathcoole, Co. Dublin Fr Séamus McEntee was reared in a traditional Catholic household, where together his family prayed the Rosary and attended Mass on Sunday. His father passed away during his mid-teens and so it was his mother who was integral in the formation of his faith, often “blessing him with holy water” and “praying to guardian angels for protection and support”, he says. At 81, she remains a devout Catholic upon which Fr Séamus continues to draw his inspiration.

## Dreams

Despite his religious upbringing, Fr Séamus initially stayed away from the priesthood and decided to study ‘Marketing Management’, and then moved to London for three years to pursue his dreams of playing bass guitar in his band. Although persistent, they eventually split up: “It was devastating,” says Fr Séamus adding, “I really wanted to do it.”

Not only had his ambitions been shattered, but after being away from Ireland for so long, he began to feel “homesick”. “It was dreadful, I didn’t like the big city...I lived in four different places in London”, he says. During this harrowing time, Fr Séamus continued to attend Mass, reminiscing that, “it connected me with home – it was something familiar”. After travelling to Medjugorje in 1988, which was a “transformative experience” for his faith, Fr Séamus decided to play a more personal role in his parish, Church of Our Lady of Good Counsel, by starting up a prayer group and playing bass in the choir.

He returned to Ireland in 1990 with no job and a feeling of being “fed up”. This dejection propelled him to travel to Australia for a year and on the way back home he stopped off at India for seven months and soon after another five months, eventually ending up in Calcutta. While working in a home for the dying, his

## Colm Fitzpatrick talks to a Dublin chaplain about finding his faith



attraction to the spiritual life intensified. “It was like a hammer shattering a pain of glass,” he says, “God wanted all of my life, not just part of it”.

After his application to join the Jesuits was rejected, he decided to write to the Missionaries of Charity Fathers, and subsequently joined them in 1993. He studied in Mexico for four years, taking his first vows in 1997, and afterwards went back to Rome and studied theology in Angelicum University. However, in 1998, he chose not to renew his vows, which resulted in his “identity” being deeply affected, as his sense of “spirituality”, “fraternity” and “community” was fractured, he says.

Returning home, Fr Séamus decided to get involved in sales in the motor industry, selling commercial vehicles for over 10 years. The lifestyle was initially appealing because of the “variety and the glamour of it”, he says, including “the networking and the trips away”.

## “He returned to Ireland in 1990 with a feeling of being ‘fed up’”

His faith persisted during this job, and he still tried to live out the charisms of the Church. “It wasn’t about the sale,” he says, “it was about treating [customers] with respect, kindness and charity.” This sense of spirituality and generosity began to build up leaving Fr Séamus feeling that he had “more to do and more to give”.

In June 2008, he felt an “overwhelming sense of God’s love and mercy”, and had an eagerness to attend adorations. With this unshakeable desire for the religious life, he decided to join Maynooth seminary in 2009 and was ordained in 2014. “It was an adjustment for me,” he says, adding that “the pastoral formation was good...I’m looking forward all the time and not looking back.”

Fr Séamus has been appointed to many roles following his ordination including National Chaplain of St Joseph’s Young Priests Society, Dublin Diocesan Chaplain, Assistant Director of Vocations, and more recently a chaplain in DCU. He was “a bit daunted” by this new role, but by emulating the actions of Mother Teresa who never refused Jesus, Fr Séamus chose to take on this intimidating task.

## “The religious dimension of the university was an ‘eye-opener’ for him”

He initially felt a lot of pressure, especially entering during the busy second semester, he said, but now he feels a lot more “confident”, and even began working in the DCU Interfaith Centre. The religious dimension of the university was an “eye-opener” for him, because although he was aware of “apathy and indifference” as well as an “anti-Church element” in the university environment, he was surprised that there were so many “people openly celebrating their faith”.

Fr Séamus is a chaplain to “all faiths and none”, he says, and so “I try to be inclusive and open as I can to everybody”. This embracing ethos compelled him to bring a group of students on pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago this year, so that students could pray, practice Spanish, make friends or search for something that is missing in their lives.

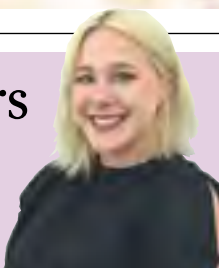
For Fr Séamus, it was an “ideal opportunity that was spiritual and engaging”, and so he hopes to set up the DCU Camino Society soon, in order “to plan different events throughout the year”.

Although his journey to the priesthood was not a straightforward one, Fr Séamus McEntee has “no regrets”, and is excited about exploring his new dynamic vocation.

# Exploring the great outdoors



## Victoria Holthaus offers ideas for getting more fresh air as a family



**W**ith the popularity of electronics growing every day, it can be a challenge to get your children outdoors and into nature. To make the most of what is left of the summer weather, you should get out to explore the beauty that Ireland has to offer. So how do you get your whole family to experience some fresh air and enjoy the sunshine? Here are 11 ways to do just that.

### 1. Colourful scavenger hunt

Take your child’s eye off technology and onto some nature. With a piece of paper and some crayons, create boxes with different colours for a guide. Once you see an animal or plant with the same colour, you can make a little checkmark in the box.

Make it a competition to see who can get the most boxes ticked on a certain outing or save one for each occasion to spread across the summer.

### 2. Family camping

There’s no better way to have your kids experience the outdoors than a night under the stars. Pack up some treats for the campfire and a few songs as well for some great memories. If they aren’t ready for the wilderness, try hosting it in your backyard. This way they can have the security of being somewhere they know but still getting outdoors.

### 3. Geocaching

Have a little nature, a little technology and a lot of fun with geocaching. Ireland has 9,824 geocaches across the island so there is a good chance one is close to you. Create a free membership, choose one from the list and get to tracking. Once you find the logbook for you geocache, sign your names, take a photo for the memories and put it back.

### 4. Rock collection

After a family walk, your child may have picked up a rock or two along the way. Instead of throwing them into the grass, set up a table outside to showcase these rocks.

You can make it a goal every time you go out to find a rock different from the rest. If you want to include some arts and crafts to the collection, paint faces or drawings to add some colour.

### 5. Plant a garden

Teach kids about plants, nutrition, the cycle of life and other lessons with a garden. You can decide what to grow together after you find a space. Pick up a few seeds at your local market and some cute signs to mark the different types. You can start with a small amount and expand it as your love for it grows along with your expertise. Allow your kids to water them each day and watch as the plants go from seeds, to sprouts, to full bloom.





with instructions but be sure to check in on them along the way for faults in the structure.

#### 8. Cloud watching

Look to the sky for a fun art project. Find shapes and figures in the fluffy clouds and sketch them out in different colours or just an outline. Frame them for the walls or put them on the fridge as a reminder to get outdoors each and every day.

#### 9. Puddle jumping

Not every day can be full of sunshine but don't let that stop your family from getting outside. Rainy days are a great time to put your child's rain boots to good use and explore puddles. Be sure to have a towel or two handy for when the dancing and splashing stops.

#### 10. Create a nature notebook

Put those unused notebooks to good use with a nature notebook for the family. Have your children use different things from nature to decorate it such as flowers or leaves.

Tell them to keep track of all your outdoor fun by writing down stories of your adventures or drawings of what they found. Make a list at the beginning of the book with all the things your family wishes to do over the summer and check them off as you go.

#### 11. Pass on your childhood games

Be a great role model for your kids and reminisce on good times. Teach them things like skipping stones or how to play games that you invented. Not only is this a good way to get all of you moving but it may just create a tradition for them to pass on to their kids.

Summer camps for young girls are well underway across Ireland instilling values like friendship, loyalty and faith in remembrance and celebration of Michaela McAreavey.

In July St Peter's Primary School Cloughreagh outside Newry in Co. Down hosted the Michaela Foundation Girls' Summer Camp for the fifth year running. The Armagh camp was one of 19 camps throughout Ireland in 2017.

The fully booked camp offered girls aged 11-13 a week of unforgettable fun-filled activities in each of five elements: fun, faith, fashion, well-being and fáilte.

Attendees from this year's camp have given outstanding feedback about the effect the camp had on their lives.

"I love camp. The elements and the leaders are very special to me. I can't believe I ever had a summer without it," said one campette.

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

The idea of the foundation is to commemorate and celebrate Michaela's life, keeping her spirit alive by continually spreading the values by which she lived. Michaela taught Irish in school, and her profound happiness and fun-loving way of life was motivated by her faith and love of God.

She was adamant about enjoying life without the aid of alcohol or other additives, encouraging those around her to avoid peer pressure and societal norms and to be who they truly are.

Promoting these values, the camp offers young women throughout Ireland different programmes tailored to establish a happy, confident and faith-filled life.

**“The success of the 19 camps rests upon the strong team of voluntary leaders”**

Once again, the Cloughreagh camp was a great success with full attendance and a stimulating programme of activities including arts and crafts, dancing and a wide range of sports. The campettes are given the opportunity to express themselves in creative ways, make new friendships and grow in their own faith.

The success of the 19 camps, which run in 14 different counties, across three provinces, rests upon the strong team of voluntary leaders who generously donate their time and talents to make each camp a unique experience for all who attend. All of the camp leaders act as role-models for the girls, and as leaders emphasise the importance of loyalty to friendships, being true to one-self and encourage the girls to enjoy the amazing gifts they've been given as individuals.

Not only do camp leaders make a real difference to



A happy camper at the Michaela Foundation Girls Summer Camp in Newry, Co. Down.

the lives of the campettes, but they get a lot out of the experience, too.

"It's been such a fantastic week! Each year brings something so special and different," said Camp Co-Ordinator Clare Conlon, adding "Our campettes have inspired our leaders, given them a renewed lease of life and for that we will be forever indebted. We love Michaela Foundation Camp to the moon and back here in Cloughreagh."

Since the first camp in Glencull Primary School, Tyrone in 2012, the Michaela Foundation has run over 50 more camps giving almost 4,000 campettes this formative and life-changing experience, alongside, for example, the over 400 strong team of volunteers in 2016 alone who made the camps a reality. The phenomenal growth of the camps highlight the commitment of the voluntary leaders and their parents.

#### Sentiment

Speaking on behalf of Michaela Foundation about the Cloughreagh Camp, Úna Kelly said, "We were delighted to bring the Michaela Girls Summer Camp back to St Peter's Primary School in 2017. The support of the management and staff was integral to making the camp a success. The staff is so welcoming and accommodating, a sentiment which our camp leaders would reiterate. A special word of thanks to John Campbell and Suzanne Burns for their continued support."

The staff and volunteers in the Michaela Foundation are committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all

young people who participate in activities, so that the campettes are able to fully immerse themselves into the dynamic, convivial and faith-filled atmosphere.

"I believe that the ethos of St Peter's Primary School and Michaela Foundation are well aligned, and that is the basis of a strong partnership," said Úna, adding, "Having such a host location enables us to provide an excellent setting for campettes to enjoy and express themselves."

The Michaela Foundation relies heavily on donations and fundraising events to allow outreach initiatives such as the summer camps to happen, and

raise funds all year round in order to continue and increase their presence in Ireland.

Since its founding, there have been many prominent supporters helping to grow the foundation's profile including Jim Eastwood, Paddy KIELTY and Ardal O'Hanlon. These celebrities have made huge contributions in support of the Michaela Foundation and are a testament to the influential and positive role it plays across the island.

**i** For more information about the Michaela Foundation, check out <http://michaelafoundation.com/>

## YOUTH SPACE A camp like no other

### Colm Fitzpatrick visits a Michaela Foundation Summer Camp

Campettes at the Michaela Foundation Girls Summer Camp in Cloughreagh.





# THE POWER OF RITUAL



I don't always find it easy to pray. Often I'm over-tired, distracted, caught-up in tasks, pressured by work, short on time, lacking the appetite for prayer, or more strongly drawn to do something else. But I do pray daily; despite the fact that I often don't want to and despite the fact that many times prayer can be boring and uninteresting.

I pray daily because I'm committed to a number of rituals for prayer, the office of the Church, lauds and vespers, the Eucharist and daily meditation.

And these rituals serve me well. They hold me, keep me steady and keep me praying regularly even when, many times, I don't feel like praying. That's the power of ritual. If I only prayed when I felt like it, I wouldn't pray very regularly.

## Polite

Ritual practice keeps us doing what we should be doing (praying, working, being at table with our families, being polite) even when our feelings aren't always onside. We need to do certain things not because we always feel like doing them, but because it's right to do them.

And this is true for many areas of our lives, not just for prayer. Take, for example, the social rituals of propriety and good manners that we lean on each day. Our heart isn't always in the greetings or the expressions of love, appreciation, and gratitude



## Fr Rolheiser

[www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com)

that we give to each other each day. We greet each other, we say goodbye to each other, we express love for each other, and we express gratitude to each other through a number of social formulae, ritual words: Good morning! Good to see you! Have a great day! Have a great evening! Sleep well! Nice meeting you! Nice to work with you! I love you! Thank you!

**“If we only expressed affection, love and gratitude at those times when our feelings were completely onside, we wouldn't express these very often”**

We say these things to each other daily, even though we have to admit that there are times, many times, when these expressions appear to be purely formal and seem not at all honest to how we are feeling at that time.

Yet we say them and they are true in that they express what lies in our hearts at a deeper level than our more momentary and ephemeral feelings of distraction, irritation, disappointment or anger.

Moreover these words hold us in civility, in good manners, in graciousness, in neighbourliness, in respect, and in love despite the fluctuations in our energy, mood, and feelings.

Our energy, mood, and feelings, at any given moment, are not a true indication of what's in our hearts, as all of us know and frequently need to apologise for. Who of us has not at some time been upset and bitter towards someone who we love deeply? The deep truth is that we love that person, but that's not what we're feeling at the moment.

If we only expressed affection, love and gratitude at those times when our feelings were completely onside, we wouldn't express these very often.

Thank God for the ordinary, social rituals which hold us in love, affection, graciousness, civility and good manners at those times when our feelings are out of sorts with our truer selves. These rituals, like a sturdy container, hold us safe until the good feelings return.

Today, in too many areas of life, we no longer understand ritual. That leaves us trying to live our lives by our feelings; not that feelings are bad, but rather that they come

upon us as wild, unbidden guests. Iris Murdoch asserts that our world can change in 15 seconds because we can fall in love in 15 seconds. But we can also fall out of love in 15 seconds! Feelings work that way! And so we cannot sustain love, marriage, family, friendship, collegial relationships, and neighborliness by feelings.

We need help. Rituals can help sustain our relationships beyond feelings.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer used to give this instruction to a couple when he was officiating at their wedding.



He would tell them: Today you are in love and you believe that your love can sustain your marriage. But it can't. However your marriage can sustain your love. Marriage is a not

just a sacrament, it's also a ritual container.

Ritual not only can help sustain a marriage, it can also help sustain our prayer lives, our civility, our manners, our graciousness, our humor, our gratitude, and our balance in life.

Be wary of anyone who in the name of psychology, love, or spirituality tells you that ritual is empty and you must rely on your energy, mood, and feelings as your guiding compass. They won't carry you far.

**“John of the Cross tells us that, during our generative years, one of the biggest problems we will face daily in our prayer is simple boredom”**

Daniel Berrigan once wrote: “Don't travel with anyone who expects you to be interesting all the time.”

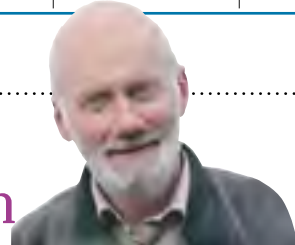
On a long journey there are bound to be some boring stretches. John of the Cross echoes this when talking about prayer. He tells us that, during our generative years, one of the biggest problems we will face daily in our prayer is simple boredom.

And so we can be sure our feelings won't sustain us, but ritual practices can.



# TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



## Sometimes a plot is just plain implausible

I was looking forward to the new drama **Trust Me** (BBC 1, Tuesday nights) – it looked promising from the trailers and starred Jodie Whittaker, impressive as the bereaved mother in *Broadchurch*, and soon to become the new *Doctor Who* (more on the gender issue later).

Here she plays a nurse who turns whistle-blower but is victimised and suspended for her trouble (that's not the implausible bit!). Then, whatever conscience prompted her concern for neglected patients was abandoned and she pretended to be a doctor – stealing the identity of a doctor friend who was emigrating.

I'm not sure whether it is the character or the scriptwriter that was so naive in thinking this would work – the very idea that no one would recognise her or know the departed doctor or look up images on the internet stretches credulity.

Being a good nurse, she passes muster for a while and draws people by her warm personality, but finally, in last week's episode the colleague she is having an affair with finally does check her out on the web.

Warm or not, her moral compass is in terminal decline, and there's no way it can end well, is there?

For all that, it holds the attention, largely thanks to Whittaker's performance, but the gruesome medical

scenes and the tension inherent in her duplicity make for uncomfortable viewing.

With modern gender obsession so prevalent it was no surprise to find a programme **No More Boys and Girls: Can Our Kids Go Gender-Free?** (Part 1, BBC 2, Wednesday of last week). I'd question the ethics of Dr Javid Abdelmoneim taking over a Year 3 Primary School class (seven-year olds) to see if teaching without what he regarded as gender-loaded language and stereotypes would equalise outcomes.

I'd suspect this is very much a minority interest and anyway, such a short, localised study wasn't that much more than gimmicky and I think he went into the show with too many preconceptions, so it became more preachy than exploratory.

I had no problem, however, with him identifying poor self-esteem or poor perceived



President Rodrigo Duterte.



Jodie Whittaker in new BBC drama *Trust Me*.

intelligence in girls – they did better than they thought they would in selected activities, while the boys tended to overestimate their abilities.

### Differences

There were interesting angles on the age old debate about how much nature and nurture influence our upbringing.

Apart from basic biological differences Dr Abdelmoneim wanted to erase all differences between the boys and girls. Offending books were removed from the class library! Strangely some of

the covers were blurred out. Gender stereotypes relating to work were challenged, e.g. they were introduced to a female magician, a female mechanic, a male dancer, a male make-up artist and that's fair enough, but just because a seven-year-old has stereotyped notions doesn't mean they'll carry these harmfully into later life.

I thought the doctor was rather alarmist about the issues and it was all too much like him being the messiah figure bringing enlightenment to these allegedly rigid

little thinkers. Actually, the children were the stars of the show, very endearing, and I felt it was rather off for them to have this agenda-driven social engineering experiment visited on them.

Finally, last week I wrote about America's Donald Trump and North Korea's Kim Jong-Un, whose leadership styles don't exactly give the male gender a good name. On **Channel 4 News** (Wednesday of last week) there was a detailed report on another dodgy leader – President Rodrigo Duterte of The Philippines.

### Ruthless

I had heard of his ruthless attitude to drug dealers and here he was giving speeches to his army, urging them to kill – “If you have to shoot, shoot them dead”. The evening before, a record number of 32 people, allegedly involved in the drugs trade, had been killed in what reporter Jonathan Miller described as “this nightly back alley bloodbath”.

Duterte's claim that he had killed some himself in the past was reported, and, in regard to complaints, he referred to “human rights idiots”.

He intimidated critics in the media, judiciary and Church, insulted Pope Francis and yet apparently was still popular.

Former Justice Secretary Leila de Lima was in deten-

### PICK OF THE WEEK

**THE CHOICES WE FACE**  
EWTN, Sunday, August 27, 9.30am

The CEO and President of Life Teen shares his own story of deeper conversion and how Life Teen is helping teens advance in their faith.

**MASS**  
RTÉ One, Sunday, August 27, 11am  
Fr Martin Noone celebrant, with a congregation from Dublin Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrim Group.

**THE LATE LATE SHOW**  
RTÉ One, Friday, September 1, 9.35pm  
The longest continuously running chat show in the world returns for a 56th series of chat, music and craic.

tion, a human rights lawyer said the authoritarian régime was conducting a “war on the rule of law”, and Fr Amado Picardal of the Catholic Bishops' Conference said the Duterte régime “reflects the worst version of ourselves”, was brutal and “lacks mercy and compassion”.

Worrying.

1 [boregan@hotmail.com](mailto:boregan@hotmail.com)



Aubrey Malone

# Film

## Sixties blitzkrieg of racist Michigan violence

### Detroit (15)

A bullet rings out in the night sky. It's been discharged from a toy gun by a black man in a hotel room. Shortly afterwards the room is stormed by policemen. The people in the room are thrown against a wall.

For the next hour they're insulted, assaulted and threatened with death. Then murder occurs (I won't say how). The culprits are three trigger-happy policemen. They're all racists. They're confident their actions will go unpunished.

Krauss (Will Poulter) is the main culprit. At first glance he looks like he's not long out of High School. His eyebrows



Will Poulter in *Detroit*.

Excellent  
★★★★★

are 'V'-shaped. It gives him a vulpine edge. His partners in crime ape his callousness. Will they be convicted or will a whitewash from the powers-that-be exculpate them?

We're in Detroit in 1967,

the year before Martin Luther King was assassinated. A time when black anger threatens to explode at any moment. There's rioting and looting. Members of the National Guard patrol the streets.

At almost three hours long this (fact-based) film is a modern-day epic. It wipes you out emotionally. It's so good you feel like standing up at the end and applauding. If you thought *Zero Dark Thirty* – Kathryn Bigelow's last 'big' venture – was something, think again. This puts it in the shade.

### Duty

Teaming up with writer Mark Boal for the third time – he did duty on *Zero Dark Thirty* as well as *The Hurt Locker* – Bigelow has crafted a pulverising long night's journey into day. What she's given us isn't so much a movie as an experience. You live every moment of her visceral magic.

Films like this only come along once in a blue moon. That's why we should treasure it. From the moment she sets her sights on the powder keg that's Detroit we're hooked. The first half hour is brilliantly recreated. It's like watching documentary footage on CNN. We're in a war zone. Thereafter the turbulence becomes centralised into the stand-off in the Algiers Motel, the guts of the film.

Fasten your seatbelts for a pulsating odyssey into hell. Watch a group of defenceless victims face a barrage of abuse – and bullets – from bigots protected from justice by their uniforms and a culture of silence.

We're back in the time when black people sat at the back of the bus. One thinks of the great protest songs of Bob Dylan 'Hurricane', 'The Death of Emmett Till', 'The Ballad of Hollis Brown', 'Only a Pawn in their Game.' One thinks of Malcolm X, James Baldwin, Muhammad Ali.

Black men – and two white women – with nothing on their minds but a night out are sent like lambs to the slaughter as the rampaging wolves of the Michigan Police Force – the protectors of law and order, ha ha – promulgate their reign of terror.

A bullet rings out in the night sky and the horror begins. Be there to witness it. It will chill you to the bone.



# BookReviews

Peter Costello



## Recent books in brief

### Matt Talbot: An Introduction

(Veritas, €4.99)  
Though this little book is unsigned on the title page, it is actually extracted from Mary Purcell's *Remembering Matt Talbot* published in 1954. Mary Purcell was once a well known writer and her authorship should be recognised on the title page.

When local veneration of Matt Talbot began to emerge in 1930s Dublin the focus was on Matt Talbot's stoic abasement of his flesh – this is the figure of Tom Kilroy's play *Talbot's Box*. Today, however, as his shrine in Sean McDermott Street shows, his name is associated with prayers for those who struggle with addiction to drugs or drink.

He was a quintessential working class Dubliner, and his life and circumstances will always be of interest. His escape from poverty was through the wonders of religious faith and a vision of something better, though the sinner in Matt Talbot was easier for the Church he lived with to encompass than the saint was.

Irish society has so greatly changed that many of the younger generations have only the vaguest idea of what life and religion were like in the early part of the 20th Century. This little booklet will be a step towards deepening their knowledge.

### A Beautiful Fragrance: The Life of Margaret Sinclair

by John Watts  
(Office for the Cause of Margaret Sinclair, Edinburgh, £4.99)

Mary Sinclair was born in Edinburgh in 1900 and died of TB 25 years later. Yet she lived in those short years a remarkable life. Leaving school at 14 she worked until 1923 when she entered a Poor Clare convent. Given her experience of life she was made an extern sister for the convent.

She was declared Venerable and there are many in Scotland working for her beatification. John Paul II

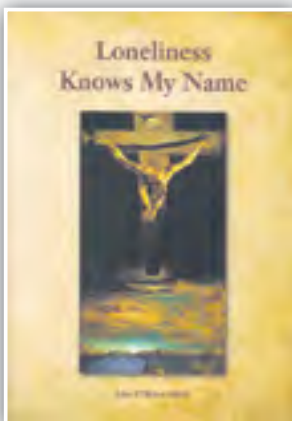
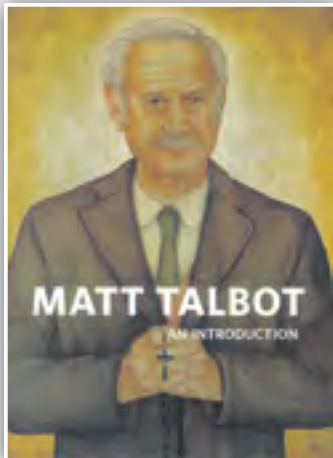
once said of her: "Margaret could well be described as one of God's little ones, who through her very simplicity, was touched by God with the strength of real holiness of life, whether as a child, a young woman, an apprentice, a factory worker, a member of a trade union or a professed sister of religion." John Watts' little book will introduce this remarkable woman to a wider audience.

### Loneliness Knows My Name

by John O'Brien OFM  
(The Franciscan Priory, Athlone; available on Amazon. UK, £10.00)

The painter Vincent Van Gogh passed his final years in an asylum at Saint-Remy in Provence. Fr O'Brien takes his cue from one of the paintings he did there, *Olive Trees* which recalled to him the experience of Jesus "the 'man of sorrows' in the Garden of Gethsemane".

This is the inspiration for this reflection of loneliness and how it endangers the spirit in a way which mere physical pain, dreadful as it often is, never does. It is widely recognised that in this era of specious "communication" all too many people have lost the comforts of love and companionship, and live out lives of lonely desolation. Fr O'Brien explores this phenomenon and ways of counteracting through faith and friendship.



## A mature and loving faith world today

### What Does It All Mean? A Guide to Being More Faithful, Hopeful and Loving

by Richard Leonard SJ  
(Paulist Press / Alban Books, £17.99)

Peter Costello

If Catholicism is what Catholics believe, then sometimes these days it is not what the Church purports to teach. Take for instance the question of angels. These days many Catholics believe that these are the spirits of the dead, especially the spirits of their dead children, rather than spiritual entities created before man was.

This is only one small example. From the outside it certainly seems that many Catholics hold what might be called unorthodox views hence the public controversies that arise so often. Of course religious practice and belief changes all the time, and these quirks of faith in modern Ireland may not be of real concern. What



is appropriate here would be a pastoral rather than a theological approach.

**“This is not so much prescriptive, as suggestive”**

But some guide to the essentials of a faith suitable for modern times and circumstances would be widely useful to young people, confused adults trying to live by what they can recall of their school catechism, or indeed some commentators of all persua-



Fr Richard Leonard speaking with pilgrims in Knock.

sions, who are all too ready to announced with certainly what it is "that Catholics believe".

Richard Leonard, an Australian Jesuit, in his new book provides just such a guide, which will be found very useful by many readers, not all of them religious by any means.

The author, who holds a

degree in theology also has a doctorate in cinema studies, and is the director of the Australian Office for Film and Broadcasting and a consultant to the Australian Catholic Bishop's Media Council. (Alas no such entities exists here.) He is the author of *Where the Hell is God?*, a book which made a big impact on publi-

## The social history of modern Ireland

Edited by Eugenio F. Biagini & Mary E. Daly  
(Cambridge University Press, £24.99)

Ian d'Alton

This substantial and weighty (literally – it's 635 pages come in at a little under 3lbs) is self-described as a textbook. This does it both justice and injustice. The textbook element – the extraordinary breadth of topics covered, and the timespan it professes to speak of (1740 to the present) – will comprehensively fill the well of knowledge. But it is much more.

Advanced students will come away with pithy and well-expressed insights; and signposts, principally in 'further reading' sections appended to each chapter.

There are healthily different perspectives on similar topics. For instance, Andrew Holmes and Eugenio Biagini characterise the 1951 'mother-and-child' controversy as a process whereby 'the Catholic hierarchy was perceived to oppose essential welfare

legislation in order to retain control of the care for pregnant women'.

Colin Barr and Daithí Ó Corráin claim that 'too much' has been made of the scheme, which, they suggest, was less a Church-state crisis than an internal government one.

Such nuances might have been commented upon in the editors' introduction, highlighted as evidence of the ongoing debates that are the hallmark of lively historiography. Incidentally, this example points up a weakness in the comprehensiveness and reach of the index, important in a textbook – the Holmes and Biagini reference is indexed, the Barr and Ó Corráin one not.

### Occupations

The volume is arranged in three parts. The first, 'geography, occupations and social classes', contains excellent and comprehensible chapters on demography from John Fitzgerald, 'Town and city' by David Dickson, and 'The farmers since 1850' by Paul

Rouse.

An extensive chapter (20 pages) deals with 'Catholic Ireland, 1740-2016'; that seems a tad ambitious, and it is.

The division into two very long periods (1740-1878, and 1878-2016) is separated by Cardinal Cullen's death; the authors accept Emmet Larkin's view that Cullen produced a 'revolution' in Catholic observance, devotional and respectful life.

And yet, there is a significant subversive underground in the latter period (not just from the 1970s onward) in which Catholic mores and morals were in constant conflict with everyday life –with land agitation and other advanced nationalist movements, as well as the social phenomena of jazz, radio, dance, cinema, dress, drink and the like.

In that context, the authority of the Church in recent years was, in many respects, just waiting for a tap before it would shatter.

The second part of the book is 'People, culture

and communities', dealing with such matters as living conditions and housing, food, education, childhood, crime, associational life and gender roles. Full of the nuts-and-bolts of getting and spending, this is the sort of grounded history that is properly at the heart of Irish social history.

**'Like most western democracies, Ireland was becoming a society of minorities...'**

Migration occupies the third part. Seeing ourselves going out, and others coming in, puts our well-known propensity for Irish 'exceptionalism' into perspective – we are not so different, after all. Bronwen Walter's essay on 'The diaspora in comparative and multi-generational perspective' deserves mention as a significant addition to our understanding.

Eugenio Biagini's (second) essay is on 'Minorities', in which he excavates the histories of Huguenots, Jews and Travellers. His perceptive conclusion – that



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.

# for living in the



cations. The present book is by way of being a summation of what he had to say to the bewildered and the suffering in previous books.

Hence its four sections which begin with suggesting the grounds on which faith might be built, the challenges today in believing, the problem of evil which provides a serious

barrier to many believing in a "loving God", and finally some ideas about prayer and spirituality in everyday life in the modern world.

**“Richard Leonard knows enough of life to write that ‘faith is not certainty’”**

But unlike many books of this kind, this is not so much prescriptive, as suggestive. The arguments and ideas are illustrated by brief life vignettes, of people like St Thomas More, Oscar Romero, St Mary McKillop, St Teresa of Calcutta, the great Dorothy Day and St Ignatius Loyola. These are famous names, their stories have often been told, sometimes at great length.

They provide real life models of what the author is putting forward.

But it is the final one of these vignettes of life and faith that is the most powerful. It is the story from Leonard's own experience of Jenny and her baby Sebastian.

It is most moving narra-

tive from almost the lowest depths of life in Australia which cannot really be summarised without damage to its truth. But it goes to the heart of what this whole book is about. The books is worth reading for this tale alone. But it had a happy outcome after all. "With the eyes of faith and a heart of love, the trauma of death and pain can give way to trusting that some good, any good, can emerge from evil, and life will prevail where death had been before," the author concludes.

From years of pastoral work and the study of how we communicate our truths, Richard Leonard knows enough of life to write that "faith is not certainty". But that being so we have in a sense to live with and for others, with mutual respect and accommodation.

Here, as I say, is a handbook for faith in modern times. Let us hope it comes into the hands of as many troubled folk as possible. But for those self-satisfied about what they believe – and there are many of them – it might also prove to be life-changing.



An Irish 'minority': a wagon-family of Irish Travellers on their way to Puck Fair photographed by Inge Morath in the early 1950s.

in recent times 'Like most western democracies, Ireland was becoming a society of minorities...' – is an eloquent counterpoint to the historical tradition that still sees a simple bi-polarity between Catholics and Protestants as the principal one to be examined and discussed.

A final section of the volume sees two thoughtful essays, from Guy Beiner and Eunan O'Hallpin, on 'Remembering and forgetting in Irish history'.

Volumes like this cannot be comprehensive; this is a

social history, not the social history.

**“The introduction is concise but leaves us wanting more”**

Two points might be mentioned. One significant omission is the absence of a chapter on the influence of the press – newspapers, journals, periodicals and the like. These were not just the transmitters and recorder of social values: the press

formed them too. Even if ephemeral, it was more than a wrapper for a fish-and-chip supper.

Again, while the introduction, at barely three pages, might be regarded as admirably concise, it leaves us wanting considerably more. Just as a fish-and-chip supper requires salt and vinegar for flavouring, so this volume tantalises with what the editors might have given us – an extensive overview contextualising the many fine individual essays it contains.

## WebWatch

# Converts, critics and clerical errors

Online debate over converts in the Church, addressed in *The Irish Catholic* in the August 3 article 'Late labourers can do vital work', shows no sign of going away.

Joseph Shaw, who blogs at [imschairman.org](http://imschairman.org), posted on Twitter an interesting passage from Joseph Pearce's book *Literary Converts*, detailing how the converts Arnold Lunn and Frank Sheed debated in 1933 whether converts or cradle Catholics are of more value to the Church.

Converts, answered Sheed, especially because "of what they had done for the Catholic intellectual revival"; Lunn, meanwhile, "found it hard to think of anything at all to be said for born Catholics".

Reading such comments, one wonders whether the prayers of the vast majority of cradle Catholic laity – overwhelmingly working-class Catholics of Irish birth or background – counted for nothing to their literary judges, whether the pennies and shillings they scrimped and saved and offered up to build churches and schools across England mattered not a jot, whether their everyday acts of love and mortification were somehow valued less than the ability to turn a phrase.

### General rule

The line that converts as a general rule are better Catholics and know more about the Faith than those raised in the Church was a deafening refrain among those who vented their fury online about Austen Ivereigh's [cruxnow.com](http://cruxnow.com) piece 'Pope Francis and the convert problem'; it wasn't long before Dr Ivereigh donned figurative sackcloth and ashes for a second *Crux* article headed 'An apology for needless offence – and how to disagree better'.

Over at [ncronline.org](http://ncronline.org), Michael Sean Winters, who could be said to have lit the fuse in this explosive debate, expands on the subject in 'A deeper look at the controversy over converts who criticise the Pope'.

Stressing that he



Austen Ivereigh.

had clearly expressed a frustration only with those converts who criticise the Pope, Winters emphasises – as someone who runs Rite of Catholic Initiation for Adults courses – how converts can renew cradle Catholics' faith and how much work is involved in conversion.

**“Not that all critics of current matters in the Church are converts”**

"You see, conversion doesn't stop when you join the Catholic Church," he writes, observing that we should all be constantly converting to "an ever more faithful clinging to Christ" that calls us to a humility often lacking in criticisms of the Pope.

Such humility stands at the heart of David Mills' [cruxnow.com](http://cruxnow.com) article 'Newcomers to the Church should speak less, listen more'. A convert himself, the former *First Things* executive editor, now editorial director of [ethikapolitika.org](http://ethikapolitika.org), distinguishes between knowing 'Catholic stuff' and internalising Catholic attitudes, and – pointing to the example of Blessed John Henry Newman – calls on converts to focus more on discipleship than criticism.

Not, of course, as Winters rightly points out, that all critics of current matters in the Church are

converts, with perhaps the archcritic of the current papacy being Cardinal Raymond Burke [pictured].

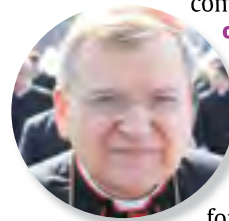
Interviewed at [thewandererpress.com](http://thewandererpress.com), the Wisconsin-born prelate claims that the Church is in danger of schism in the aftermath of *Amoris Laetitia*, and says: "The Popes are all to proclaim and be obedient to the one true Catholic Faith. If not, they have been deposed, as in the case of Pope Honorius."

None of the Popes named Honorius was, in fact, deposed – a glaring error that is curiously passed over without comment in [ncregister.com](http://ncregister.com) and [lifesitenews.com](http://lifesitenews.com).

[lifesitenews.com](http://lifesitenews.com) reports on the interview – but what's striking here is that a cardinal who has been speaking for months about 'correcting' the Pope should raise such a point.

Turning to how he would 'correct' the Pope, he says: "It is done very simply by a formal declaration to which the Holy Father would be obliged to respond." This is necessary, he says, because the Church's teaching on such matters as marriage, the family, acts that are intrinsically evil "are not clear in the current teachings of the Roman Pontiff".

Of course, there are plenty to whom the Pope's teaching on these matters is utterly clear, but that's perhaps where the old saying "what people hear depends on who is doing the hearing" comes into play.





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*Dear Heart of Jesus,  
In the past I have asked for  
many favours.*

*This time I ask for a  
special one. (mention here)*

*Take it, dear Heart of Jesus, and  
place it within your own broken  
Heart where your  
Father sees it.*

*Then, in his merciful eyes,  
it will become your favour,  
not mine. Amen.*

*Say this prayer for three days.*

S.McC.

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# Leisure time

**Crossword Junior**

Gordius 196



- ACROSS**

1 Sport with batsmen and bowlers (7)

4 Ocean (3)

7 This reptile looks a bit like an crocodile (9)

8 Use it when frying (3)

9 Sculptors make them (7)

11 Cosy (4)

12 Many people keep their money in one (4)

13 Film (5)

14 The head of a company (4)

15 Travel by boat (4)
- DOWN**

1 Bubbly wine (9)

2 It's completely surrounded by water (6)

3 Spot on, not just close (5)

5 Book of maps (5)

6 It's white and fluffy (6,4)

9 Sorrow (7)

10 Coming from London or Manchester, perhaps (7)

12 You read it (4)

**LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS**

**GORDIUS No.312**

**Across** – 1 Mat 3 Enlightened 8 Mirage 9 Stealthy 10 Taper 11 Solar 13 Adios 15 Wrestle 16 Coeliac 20 Noose 21 Drank 23 Claps 24 Primrose 25 On file 26 Eschatology 27 Tot

**Down** – 1 Mum's the word 2 Turnpike 3 Edgar Allan Poe 4 Insulin 5 Traps 6 Nettle 7 DIY 12 Red Crescent 14 Smoke 17 Idealist 18 Conceal 19 Maniac 22 Korea 23 Coney

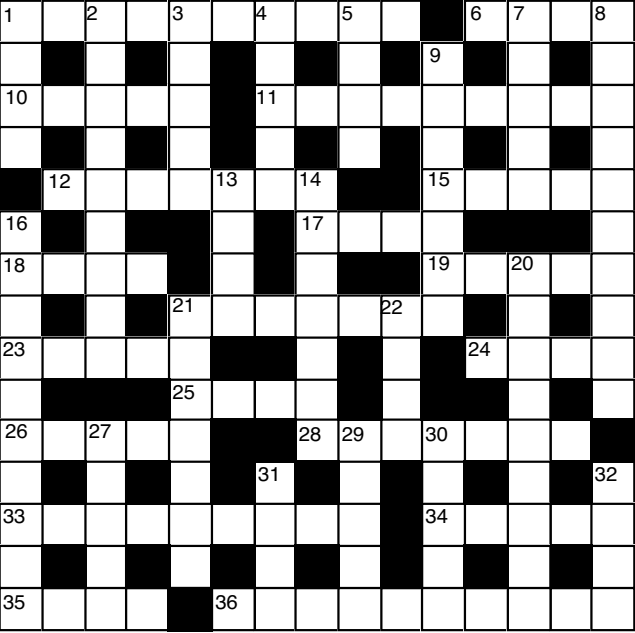
**CHILDREN'S No.195**

**Across** – 1 Wedding 5 Aunt 6 Thinking 7 Heels 9 India 10 Tiny 11 Opera 14 Tuesday 16 Train 27 Thanks

**Down** – 1 Watchdog 2 Drive 3 Nail 4 Unfair5 Agony 8 Station 9 Insects 12 Earth 13 Ideas 15 Yank

**Crossword**

Gordius 313



- ACROSS**

1 One's stock of words and phrases (10)

6 A Pole with a feline? Get away! (4)

10 Prone to deceit (5)

11 Systematically harass the Pet Rescue organization (9)

12 & 19a Welsh monastic building that inspired William Wordsworth (7,5)

15 Traditional Inuit dwelling (5)

17 Test (4)

18 Stumble on an excursion (4)

19 See 12 across

21 Versatile bag (7)

23 A Stallone character is right beside 31 down (5)

24 Sweet bakery product (4)

25 Molten rock from a volcano (4)

26 Slightly inebriated (5)

28 Such crime can rely on confusion (7)

33 In need of shaping up, I get in wearing livery (9)

34 Huge marine mammal (5)

35 Ms Winslet chops steak (4)

36 Blimey, Edward, a complaint about some meat! (6,4)
- DOWN**

1 Short-tailed rodent (4)

2 Comment that is often unfavourable (9)

3 It's OT, not ot, for a prejudiced person (5)

4 One suffering from Hansen's disease (5)

5 Uncommon (4)

7 Heartless (5)

8 It may be the Pope's diocese, yet he holes out somehow (3,4,3)

9 & 27d In Maths, Dot indicates this form of medicinal pot (7,5)

13 Reverberate (4)

14 Unused wood is what Roosevelt promised Americans (3,4)

16 Captivated by the fame of the actor's lorry (4-6)

20 Undergarment in the tide? What an inspirational idea! (9)

21 How pious (if informal) is that St Joseph? (4,3)

22 Tragic king with three daughters (4)

27 See 9 down

29 Append (3,2)

30 Intimidated the firm, then got married (5)

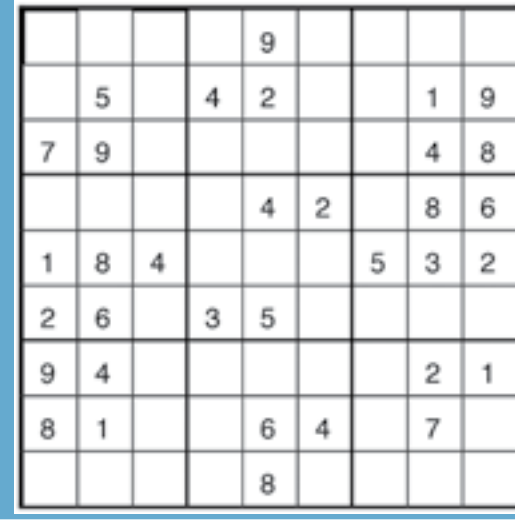
31 Some bamboo is needed for this feature of the church (4)

32 Piece of foliage (4)

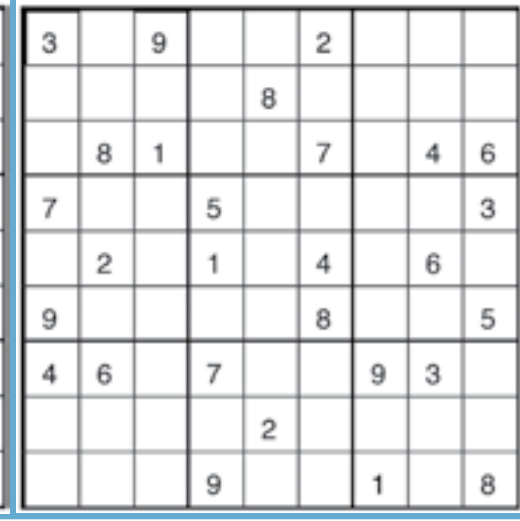
**Sudoku Corner**

196

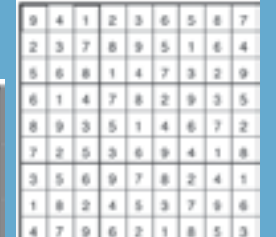
**Easy**



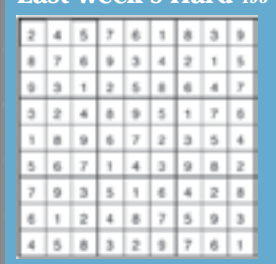
**Hard**



**Last week's Easy** 195



**Last week's Hard** 195





# Notebook

Fr Martin Delaney



## Mass Pit and Mass Path; memory and celebration

**I AM REMINDED** of the somewhat cynical remark made by someone a few years ago when he said “it’s well for those who can afford to say their prayers abroad”. It was a comment on the many thousands of Irish people who every year travel to places of pilgrimage like Lourdes, Fatima, Medjugorje, Rome, the Holy Land and the Camino.

Of course thousands more do stay closer to home as they climb Croagh Patrick, spend a few nights on Lough Derg or travel in busloads to Knock Shrine. Others prefer to stay even closer to home as they visit holy wells and smaller shrines. These very local places of pilgrimage create a different dimension to prayer and spirituality. The gatherings recall local faith history and tell the story in a much more intimate and personal way.

### Great shrines

On the Feast of the Assumption this year I experienced such a local gathering and it affirmed and celebrated my faith as much as any pilgrimage I have made to the great shrines of the world. The local story is all important and in our case it was all about a



Carrying the roof to form a canopy over a new altar at Grogan.

roof! During the 18th Century the only place Mass was celebrated in Rathdowney parish was a ‘Mass Pit’ in the corner of a big field in the townland of Graigueavalla. The Mass Pit did have a fairly simple church building. Towards the end of the century when things got better for the Catholic community the local parish priest was given an acre of land to build a new church about two miles from the Mass Pit. Building work began

immediately but when the walls were built there were no funds to roof the new chapel. Resourceful local men decided to lift the roof from the building in the Mass Pit and carried it the two miles “whole and intact” and placed it on the walls of the new church at Grogan. Grogan then became the main place of worship in our parish for a further 200 years.

One of the great local features is the ‘Mass Path’ which led to

Grogan. Countless generations of Mass-goers arrived on foot, on bicycles or by pony and trap and then walked the mile-long Mass Path together. Before the opening words of the Mass were uttered the gathering rites were well under way along the Mass Path.

August 15 this year turned out to be a balmy summer evening as our parish revisited this unique chapter of our local faith story. We gathered in the Mass Pit in Graigueavalla for a sprinkling rite to recall our Baptism. Then we began the two mile walk, again carrying the ‘roof’ which this time was going to form a canopy over a new altar at Grogan. Along the way we paused at the beginning of *The Mass Path* as Liam Lawton sang his haunting piece: “For all those whom we remember there will always be a place...”

Almost 600 locals and our diaspora walked the path of our ancestors, many of them carrying a memory card, a Rosary or some other symbol of those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith, a faith they passed on to us. The Mass in Grogan that evening was full of memory, emotion and celebration... ‘Do This in Memory of Me...’ Absolutely!

### The Mass Path

A winding way through meadows sweet

A course shaped out by faithful feet

Though centuries long have flown

That beaten track at once will tell  
It bore the people when the bell  
Called them to God’s dear home

A narrow road amongst the trees  
Mid summer’s sun and winter’s breeze

The fervent people come  
The old go slow, the young run fast

Until their goal is reached at last  
The gates of God’s own home...

– From *The Mass Path* by Andy Dowling



## VULNERABLE, MALNOURISHED PEOPLE IN KENYA NEED YOUR HELP URGENTLY

“Please help us support 150 children, 200 mothers and 80 elderly and terminally ill,” writes Sr Modesta Karuri to the Little Way Association from East Pokot Medical Project, Kenya.

She continues: “A 10-month drought has killed livestock and armed conflict has closed the markets and the roads. Malnutrition among pregnant mothers increases the risk of miscarriages, premature births, anaemia and low weight babies, so we desperately need to give mothers folic acid, iron sulphate and food supplements. Malnourished children can’t absorb medication and elderly women have no one to support them. Unicef left here in February, so people are now imploring the church to provide healthcare and food. Please Little Way we need your assistance urgently!”

**Please help the Incarnate Word Sisters to save the lives of many suffering people.**

As is customary, **The Little Way Association will not deduct anything from your donations** for this project.

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