

# The Irish Catholic

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# Open eyes to 'subtle slavery' – bishops warn

Chai Brady

Irish people should watch out for migrants being exploited in our communities, and should guard against being "insular".

Responding to Pope Francis' World Message of Peace and his address to diplomats connected with the Vatican this week, Bishop Denis Brennan of Ferns said Irish people know too well the realities of migrating for a better life.

The bishop, who is involved with the Santa Marta group, an alliance of bishops and police chiefs established by Pope Francis to work with civic leaders to prevent trafficking and slavery, said: "It's very easy to see in that situation how the chances of being exploited are increased. It's almost a blank cheque for traffickers because people are so desperate and they're made great promises and then when they arrive it's a totally different situation."

Adding that Church leaders can do more to raise awareness of the issue, Dr Brennan

said: "It's one of those things that's very subtle, you can find it in all aspects of Irish life. It can be in fishing, it can be in farming, in car washing, it can be in any number of areas where individuals can be taken advantage of."

Bishop John McAreevey, Chair of the Council for Justice and Peace of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, advised that Irish people should be more alert to such problems, and warned that Ireland can sometimes have an "insular" character.

## Space

"I think sometimes we say 'well that's their problem, they're out there,'" he said. "When they come here and are sharing our space, our island space, I think at times we show ourselves to be quite insular."

"'Insular' can also mean a bit detached or a bit indifferent and I think the Pope is calling us, and I think the Gospel is calling us, to recognise this humanity of particularly

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Fr David Vard CC blesses a baby in St Peter and Paul's Church, Portlaoise at the annual blessing of babies ceremony, where Bishop Denis Nulty joined Fr Vard, Fr Paddy Byrne and Fr Tom O'Connor in blessing babies baptised in the parish over the last year.

## PLC welcomes Primate's first pro-life referendum intervention

Greg Daly

The Pro Life Campaign has welcomed Archbishop Eamon Martin's decision to begin 2018 by speaking up in defence of the right to life, ahead of the upcoming referendum debate.

In his New Year pastoral message, Dr Martin urged people not to fear speaking up for the equality of all human life in coming months.

"You have a democratic right to do so as citizens committed to the Common Good," he said.

Praising the archbishop's comments, Cora Sherlock of the PLC said there are people all over Ireland "who have family members alive because of the Eighth Amendment".

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# A tale of two countries

**R**TÉ presenter Ryan Tubridy announced on Friday on his morning radio programme that he didn't know any couples who attend Mass. Apart from the obvious question as to how Mr Tubridy would know whether or not his friends go to Mass unless he has asked them all, at face value it's an astonishingly revealing claim. The most recent European Social Survey found that some 36% of Irish adults attend church services at least once a week – a figure that led British sociologist of religion Prof. Stephen Bullivant to describe Ireland as "remarkably religious".

So, given that one in three Irish people attend Mass every Sunday morning – including many couples at the churches I attend – Mr Tubridy's experience seems extraordinarily narrow. Of course, the truth is, he'd be surprised how many people he knows who quietly attend Mass and practise their faith without announcing this fact to a fanfare.

**“The media needs to get serious about reflecting Ireland in all its richness”**

Mr Tubridy's conclusion raises an interesting point about pluralism in the media and broadcasters' ability to see what is happening outside their own circles.

My colleague and friend Mary Kenny told me on social media:



## Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

"When I was a rookie journalist, I was taught that the job of a journalist includes going out and doing the things that a community does."

"Once you cut yourself off from the people, you miss the beat of real life," according to Mary.

It seems a wise approach – particularly given that RTÉ is a taxpayer-funded broadcaster with a legal obligation to provide a public service.

In fairness, the religious output from RTÉ is of a high standard, but in the same way as people of Faith do not compartmentalise their beliefs into an hour on a Sunday morning, RTÉ should reflect the broad experience of the wider community.

When journalists – or anyone else – live in a bubble, it's impossible to know what the concerns of the average person in the street is. Politicians who cut themselves off from public opinion quickly learn their lesson at an election.

On the other hand, people have little opportunity to make their views and feelings known to RTÉ in any structured way apart from the route of complaints about a particular programme.

I don't find anything objectionable in what Ryan Tubridy said – presumably he's reflecting his own

experience. The problem is, it's such a narrow experience and not reflective of contemporary Ireland. It reminds me of a man I met recently in Dublin who told me he didn't know anyone involved in Gaelic games – this despite the fact that the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) has more than 500,000 members and some 1.5 million people attend football or hurling championship matches every summer.

If the media is serious about diversity and pluralism it needs to get serious about reflecting Ireland in all its richness rather than assuming that there is one view and one common experience.

### Bubble

People of Faith encounter (and get on well with) non-religious people every day of the week in modern Ireland.

At the same time, many non-religious people live in a bubble where they never attend church themselves and they don't know anyone who attends Mass regularly. I would suggest they widen their circle, and get to know a few of the almost two million Irish people who are at Mass every Sunday morning – otherwise they'll continue to live in a narrow parallel universe.

## People warned to watch out for 'subtle slavery'

» Continued from Page 1

the women and children who have been affected by the war in Syria."

Despite this, the bishop praised those who have shown migrants a warm welcome, commending especially the "very impressive example" shown by the

people of Ballinasloe, where many refugee and migrants have been relocated, saying that Irish people admire what has been done in terms of welcoming and integrating them.

According to the Department of Justice, 95 victims of trafficking were identified by authorities in 2016, marking

a steady increase on previous years.

### Services

Ruth Breslin from Ruhama, an Irish charity that provides frontline services for women involved in prostitution, said there are many more cases that are not heard about as women are "too frightened"

to come forward.

"I think we would feel relatively confident that the identification of human trafficking is improving and more people are understanding this issue," she said, adding that the charity works with An Garda in helping them recognise cases of human trafficking.

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# The 'flu be with you'

## Sign of peace up to bishops

**Susan Gately**

Removing the sign of peace due to flu outbreak will not be rolled out across Ireland's dioceses.

"There is not a collective position on this – it is a matter for each individual diocese," Martin Long, spokesman for the Bishops' Conference, told *The Irish Catholic*.

The HSE has called for people to get the flu vaccine, and advised people to stay home if they are exhibiting 'flu-like symptoms' including fever, headache, aches, exhaustion, sneezing, sore throat, cough or chest discomfort.

However, the agency would make no recommendations in relation to minimising the risk of infection at church services. "That decision has to be made by the Church leaders," HSE spokesperson Ann McLoone said.

Almost 200 people have been hospitalised with the Australian flu in Ireland. "That is less than last year when there were severely high numbers of hospitalisations," said Ms McLoone, continuing, "but we haven't hit the peak yet."

The flu is spread by coughing or sneezing. Sufferers are contagious from one or

two days before symptoms develop and up to five days afterwards.

The Archdiocese of Dublin has reminded those with flu symptoms that they are dispensed from their obligation to attend Sunday Mass.

In the diocese of Down and Connor, Bishop Noel Treanor has reactivated precautionary measures established in response to the 'Swine Flu' epidemic in 2009.

These include a suspension of the "customary 'sign of peace' handshake exchanged during Mass until the risk of infection is significantly reduced", the "suspension of Holy Communion under both species", and the requirement that all ministers "use alcohol gel or wash their hands in warm soapy water before Mass and after the distribution of Holy Communion to minimise risk of infection".

Parishioners are also encouraged to use "disinfecting hand gels and hand wash soaps to minimise risk of infection", said the diocesan statement.

The Australian flu strain – also known as H3N2 – has killed 300 people in Australia. It is due to peak in two weeks' time.

## Church is 'illuminating presence' in award-winning film



Saoirse Ronan in *Lady Bird*.

**Greg Daly**

Saoirse Ronan's Golden Globe triumph is for a film about "a strange and surprising breakthrough of grace", according to a prominent Los Angeles-based bishop. The 23-year-old Irish actress won her first Golden Globe award on Sunday for her performance as the title character Christine 'Lady Bird' McPherson in the film *Lady Bird*. She had previously been nominated in 2008 and 2016 for her performances in *Atonement* and *Brooklyn*.

Los Angeles-based Bishop Robert Barron, who in 2010 became the first American cleric since the 1950s to have a regular show on US commercial television, has noted how Catholicism underpins the film's complex tale of love and conflict.

"Though not a Catholic herself, *Lady Bird* attends a Catholic high school, with quite a number

of priests and nuns on the faculty. At regular intervals in the film, we see Lady Bird and her classmates attending Mass and other religious services – and none of this is presented mockingly or ironically, as we've come to expect from most Hollywood productions," he says.

Noting that "by far the most powerful and positive personages in the film are the religious sisters who staff the high school", Dr Barron says "throughout the film, the Catholic Church is an encouraging and illuminating presence", with this having a "spiritual payoff" at the story's end.

The film's director Greta Gerwig had herself studied in a Catholic high school, the bishop says, noting how she has spoken of how the priests and nuns there "inspired her to realise that there is no single path to holiness, that God can use 'whatever you've got'."

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# Irish team build dairy in Burkino Faso



**Susan Gately**

The Christmas holidays weren't just a time for family, friends and recreation for one group of Irish people who spent the week after St Stephen's day 7,000 kilometres from home, building a dairy in Burkino Faso.

Flying out on December 27 and not returning to Ireland until January 6, Cavan optician Paul Connolly and seven others laid bricks and dug a pit for a milking parlour at an agricultural school near Pahin, a town in the south

of the West African country, where 45% of the population live on little more than a Euro a day.

The project began four years ago when Mr Connolly, who is linked with the Focolare 'Economy of Communion', where about 800 businesses aim to address social problems by splitting their profits, met Fr Expedit Gnomou, a priest determined to help his people "escape from subsistence farming".

He decided to support the project and together with other collaborators, has now contributed over €50,000 to

developing the agricultural school.

Giving the project a hands-on aspect, the Irish team of seven men and one woman worked alongside 12 local men, sharing labour, meals, and "lots of craic". "I believe the value of having personal relationships with the poor of the world is better than donations," Mr Connolly told *The Irish Catholic*.

Mr Connolly is now focusing on obtaining milking equipment for the dairy, which in the meantime will be used to store maize and sorghum.

# Combat 'lethargic acceptance' of power-sharing failure – bishop

**Chai Brady**

Christians need to work towards generating a "new narrative", as the power-sharing talks resume in Northern Ireland, Bishop Noel Treanor has said.

Inspired by Pope Francis' World Day of Peace message in which he spoke of a "contemplative gaze", the bishop of Down and Connor said there was a connection between contemplation and responsible politics.

In a homily in the Parish of Drumbo in Carryduff he said a contemplative gaze on the current political situation will "highlight stagnation in politics and a lethargic acceptance and tolerance by ourselves as citizens of this state of affairs..."

He said that a Christian heritage provides the "necessary wisdom of faith" to imagine new paradigms for a politics that gives place to "all cultures and traditions".

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* after the homily he said: "We have this impasse, we have the politicians we elect, we have the polarisation that exists, but there's also a certain acceptance of this."

"I was saying we have these kids here in the world of tomorrow: what kind of soci-

ety would exist here, what kind of economy will exist, will it generate work, will it generate the respect of life and of hope?"

The bishop added that although the political impasse and the resumption of power-sharing talks is pertinent, he wanted to emphasise in the homily the "old couplet" of contemplation and prayer that Pope Francis spoke of in his New Year message as well as the responsible action the Pontiff is calling for.

January 9 marked a year since the late Martin McGuinness resigned from the governing executive at Stormont in protest at the DUP's disastrous handling of a green energy scheme.

Meanwhile, Armagh's Archbishop Eamon Martin described the standoff between Sinn Féin and the DUP as "a terrible pity" and "tribal politics" on RTÉ's Radio 1's This Week.

"This is not what the vision of the Good Friday Agreement was about, it was about shared democracy which would build our peace process," he said.

He added that it will have been 20 years since the Good Friday Agreement was developed this April, and asked all parties to make compromises.

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## Bumper year for Irish Mass streaming service

2017 was a bonanza year for Irish-based Mass streaming service Church Service TV (CSTV), with the number of parishes using the service increasing by 30%.

The Bray, Co. Wicklow-based service live-streamed 59,888 scheduled events from 108 different locations over 2017, reaching some 15 million viewers from 205 countries over the course of the year.

CSTV's biggest overall audience of the year was on

Christmas Eve, when about 110,000 people across the world logged on to watch parish services, according to CSTV CEO Tony Bolger.

More than 12,000 people logged on to www.churchservices.tv to view the Christmas Eve and Day Masses at Belfast's Clonard Monastery, for example, with almost 5,700 people viewing Christmas Eve and Day Masses at Limerick's Glenstal Abbey.

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## Nun leaves fortune in will

An England-based Irish nun died leaving estate worth over €10m in her will.

Dublin-born Sr Francis, originally Veronica Kidney, a member of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters in Littlehampton, died in September 2016, leaving estate valued at €10,187,524, according to the *Sunday Independent*.

Known to her four brothers and two sisters as 'Lal', Sr Francis was from a family prominent in Ireland's hotel and catering businesses, with substantial interests in the Jurys Hotel Group.

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# Hollywood, sex and ‘dressing like trollops’

The Hollywood actresses – sometimes they prefer to be called ‘female actors’ – made a global impact, surely, by dressing in (very chic) black for the Golden Globe awards. As did Oprah Winfrey’s electrifying speech vowing that the sexual harassment and even routine rape which has been part of Hollywood culture since Joan Crawford was a lass would be abolished forever.

Few commentators, however, have confronted the facts about this situation on a wider scale. Hollywood has always tolerated bad behaviour (Joan Crawford and Lana Turner were not only subjected to the famed ‘casting couch’, but they were forced into horrible abortions thereby), but in a larger social context, much of the culture of sexual harassment arises from the permissive society.

I lived through all this. I participated in it. Before the sex liberation decade of the 1960s, it was not the norm for women to be subjected to casual groping, lewd jokes, or even rough language. Even in Fleet Street, the newspaper industry’s notorious ‘Street of Shame’, I heard men reprimanded for swearing with the phrase: “There are ladies present.”

Yes, there were always cads, bounders and bad eggs known as “blackguards”. As we know from later disclosures, some girls were molested, sometimes by family members, sometimes by strangers.

But it was not everyday practice, and it was certainly not approved of.

## Academics

Two British academics, Simon Szreter and Kate Fisher, wrote a detailed social study called *Sex Before the Sexual Revolution*, published by Cambridge University Press, which examined the way that sexual mores began to change around about 1963. It chronicles a world of different mores before the sexual revolution of “anything goes”.

We thought we were throwing off the constricting oppressions of Victorian hypocrisy, which distinguished between



Mary Kenny



Oprah Winfrey.

ladylike and ‘common’ or ‘vulgar’ behaviour – or gentlemanly and ‘low’ conduct. And to some extent we were. But we were also throwing off the restraints which quite rightly inhibited grosser activities.

**“Show business, like the fashion industry, still encourages women to – as our mothers would have put it – ‘dress like trollops’”**

I wish the Hollywood campaigners well, and it would indeed be desirable to see a more moral and ethical framework put in place. According to reports in the *New Yorker*

magazine, the men in Hollywood are going around shaking in their shoes, and using placatory phrases like “look, I’m one of the good guys!”

Yet there are deep contradictions which remain. Show business, like the fashion industry, still encourages women to – as our mothers would have put it – ‘dress like trollops’. The visual exposure of female flesh in unrelenting – and it’s causing mental health issues among young girls.

In Britain, it’s been estimated that a quarter of teenage girls are now suffering from extreme anxiety prompted by endless full-body images of celebrities like the Kardashians which feature on their social media screens.

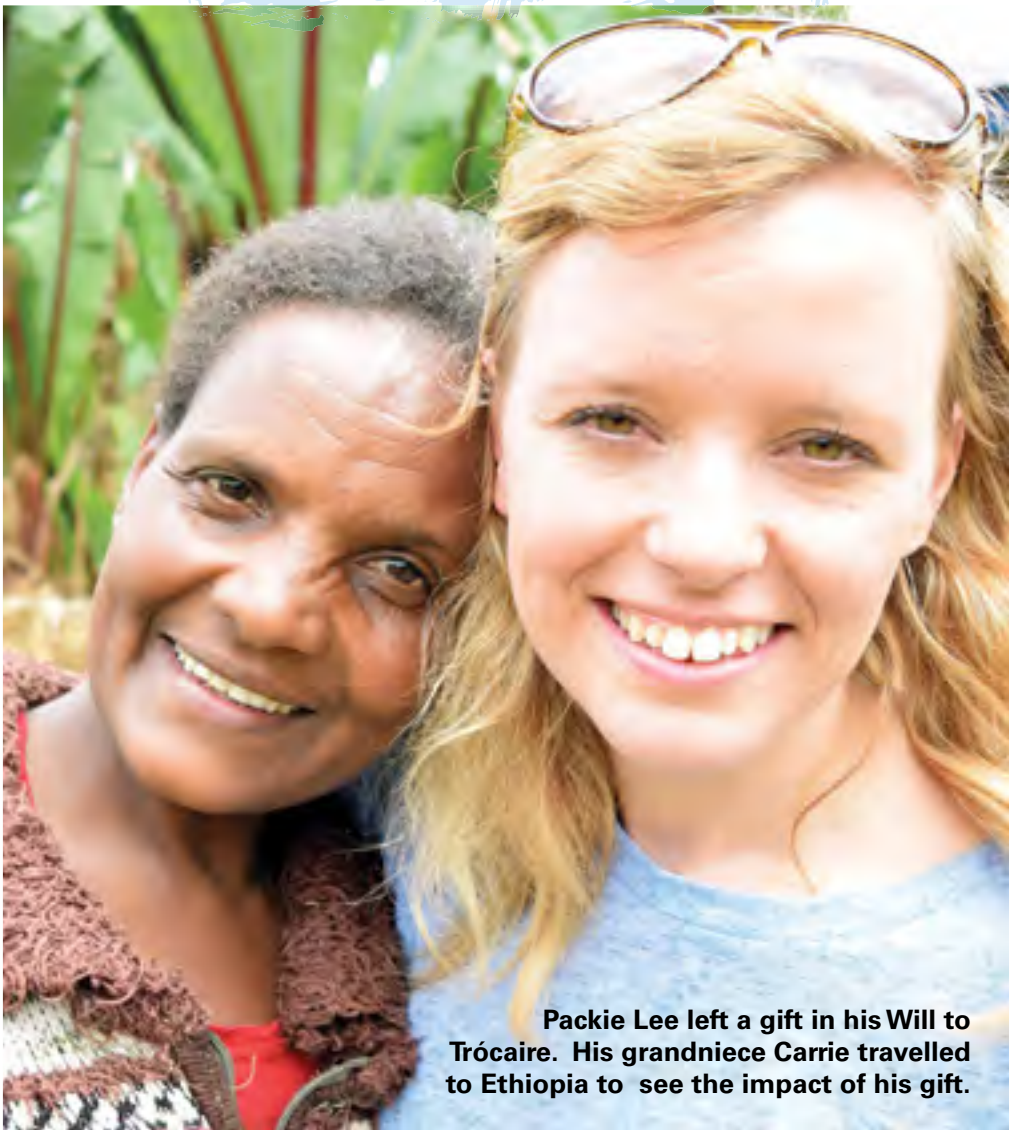
## Fond memories of Peter Sutherland

● Peter Sutherland was a good man, as his obituaries indeed show. He was privately generous to me, in a gesture that he didn’t want disclosed during his lifetime. When I was taking my play *Allegiance*, about Michael Collins and Winston Churchill, to the Edinburgh Festival back in 2006, the producers said they would need £6,000, at least, to put the production on, and they invited me to raise this sum.

Although I didn’t know him personally, I wrote to Peter Sutherland to request if he would be kind enough to help out, as I hoped it would illuminate an aspect of Irish history which led to the foundation of the State. He immediately sent me a cheque for £1,000, and wished me luck with it.

True, he could afford the donation, but the gesture was still done with such immediate grace and I greatly appreciated it.

“MY GRAND-UNCLE LEFT A GIFT IN HIS WILL THAT IS HELPING FARMING COMMUNITIES IN ETHIOPIA TO GROW POTATOES”



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Bishop Elect Dermot Farrell.

## Ossory appointment 'step into unknown' – former Maynooth President

Greg Daly

Becoming a bishop in modern Ireland is a great step into the unknown, the incoming Bishop of Ossory has said.

Speaking on Kilkenny's St Mary's Cathedral on the announcement of his episcopal appointment, Bishop Elect Dermot Farrell said he will have much to learn in the years ahead, and that being called to be a bishop is a step into the unknown.

"If we are honest, to be called to be a bishop in the Ireland of today is even more a step into the unknown," he said. "It is also a call to trust in the Lord, and in the providence of God. I am glad to accept the call to serve here in Ossory, to be a pastor in this place, and in this community of Faith."

Westmeath-born Bishop Elect Farrell, who succeeds Bishop Emeritus Seamus Freeman, studied in Maynooth and Rome, where he served as director of formation in the Irish College before returning to Ireland in 1987.

### Appointment

A curate in Tullamore, he taught moral theology in Maynooth, where he became president of the college in 1996. In 2007, he returned to his home diocese as Parish Priest of Dunboyne & Kilbride, becoming Vicar General of the Diocese of Meath in 2009.

The appointment leaves the Dioceses of Clogher and Achonry as the only Irish dioceses without bishops, while three other diocesan bishops who have submitted their resignations remain in place pending the appointment of their successors.

# Primate fires first shot in abortion debate

Susan Gately

Catholics and people of goodwill should be "missionaries for the cause of life", Armagh's Archbishop Eamon Martin has said in a new year pastoral message that has been seen as the Church's first major intervention ahead of next year's expected referendum on abortion.

"To serve human life is to serve God," he said, quoting Pope Francis. "Speak to your families, your children and grandchildren, friends and colleagues about cherishing the precious gift of life at all times from conception to natural death."

He urged people not to be afraid to witness to the equality of all life in private conversations and public discussions in the coming months.

You have a democratic right to do so, he said, "as citizens committed to the Common Good".

### Unplanned

Welcoming his intervention, Cora Sherlock of the Pro Life Campaign said the 'middle ground' in the abortion debate were people around the country "who have family members alive because of the Eighth Amendment".

"Everybody knows somebody who is affected by an unplanned pregnancy and who chose to go ahead and give birth to their baby and now there is a family member who has affected their lives in a positive way," she told *The Irish Catholic*.

These children are not fantasies, said Ms Sherlock. "They are children going to school today – real people who need to be acknowledged."

She said people were will-



Archbishop Eamon Martin.

ing to speak out but were nervous about telling personal stories "in a climate that would not welcome them". In this regard, she said, both the Citizens' Assembly and the Oireachtas Committee had been "wasted" opportunities.

On RTE's *This Week* programme on Sunday, Archbishop Eamon Martin insisted

abortion was wrong in itself, and that this is not solely a 'Catholic' issue.

### Control

"We, like many other people of good will, believe that the right to life is a fundamental right," he said. "All other rights including the right to choice or to controls on our

lives, are predicated on the fundamental right which is the right to life. If we take that away everything else falls."

He appealed to people to talk to their public representatives so they are "grounded, [to know] what people are thinking".

## The Far East magazine is 100

Ireland's oldest Catholic mission magazine is celebrating 100 years of continuous publication this month. *The Far East* magazine was first published in January 1918 by the Missionary Society of St Columban, originally known as the Maynooth Mission to China.

Marking the event, the magazine is running two competitions for would-be journalists aged 15 to 18 – one in Ireland, the other in Britain. Articles or video reports on 'Migrants Are

Our Neighbours' must be submitted by February 8, 2018 and will be judged by *The Irish Catholic* editor Michael Kelly, Irish Independent editor Fionnán Sheahan, Patsy McGarry of the *Irish Times* and migrants' rights campaigner Bobby Gilmore SSC.

Winners will be announced on March 15 with former President of Ireland, Dr Mary McAleese presenting prizes on June 29.

For further information see [www.columbancompetition.com](http://www.columbancompetition.com)

## Living Water plan Life in the Spirit seminars this month

A series of seminars called 'Transformer: Life in Spirit', organised by Catholic charismatic group Living Water, will take place this month.

The Life in Spirit programme, which takes place every two years, will begin on January 17 at 7pm in the Edith Stein Room, St Teresa's Church on Claredon Street, Co Dublin, and will continue for eight weeks.

Normally the attendance is between 80-120 people and the age range is 18-39 years. Registration through [www.livingwater.ie](http://www.livingwater.ie)

Each evening starts with prayerful music followed with a talk by an invited guest on a different aspect of the Good News, and then people are broken up into groups.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Jesuits' deaths 'shock' to Dublin school

One of Dublin's most prestigious schools has expressed its "deep shock" after the deaths of two long-serving staff members on the same day.

Staff and students at Gonzaga College were informed on Monday of the deaths of Fr Joe Brennan SJ and Fr Kennedy O'Brien.

"As you can imagine, the college community is in deep shock at the loss of these men who gave their lives in service of Gonzaga College and its students," the school said, describing the Jesuits as "irreplaceable".

The 61-year-old Fr O'Brien was the school's last remaining Jesuit serving as a full-time teacher

### PR industry honours bishops' spokesman

The chief spokesman for the Irish hierarchy has been awarded a fellowship of the Public Relations Institute of Ireland (PRII) by the institute's national council.

Martin Long became Director of the Catholic Communications Office (CCO) of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference since 2003, after working as an associate director with Bill O'Herlihy Communications and as public relations manager with the Irish Insurance Federation, where he devised the industry's award winning anti-fraud awareness campaign.

Fellows of the PRII are recognised leaders in the public relations and communications profession, deemed to "have made a notable contribution to the development of the profession".

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23 Merrion Square,  
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## Nuala O'Loan

### The View



# Collusion: it's time to face up to the truth

**W**hen someone you love dies suddenly, it is a terrible moment, often of disbelief because the person who went out to work or to school, or the little child who went out to play is never coming back. All your realities are shattered, things can never be the same again. Gradually there comes the realisation that you must lay a loved one to rest, that they are never coming back again, that you will never hear the voice, look into the eyes, hold the hand, be held and loved by them again in this world. Their going does indeed seem annihilation.

When that happens as the consequence of sudden catastrophic illness it is very hard. When the dying is the result of an accident, we so often need to know why, what happened? 'Did they suffer?' 'What was their pain?'

Thousands of people on the island of Ireland over the past nearly half century have known that moment, not through illness, or accident, but through terrorism. Their reality is that some other human being decided that their loved one would die that day.

Sometimes the killers did not know or care who they were setting out to kill. Sometimes there was an identified target, a person chosen for death because of their faith, or their job, or because they were associated with a particular tradition or group.

When such things happen we want to know why: 'Why did my loved one die through bomb or bullet?' 'Who did it?' 'How did the killers manage to do what they did?'

### Property

When this happens there is another group of people charged with the protection of life and property whose job it is to do all they can to detect the criminal(s) and to bring them to justice. We call them the police. It is their duty to investigate in an attempt to identify suspected killers for prosecution, with the possibility that, if there is no reasonable doubt, then the accused will be convicted and sentenced, all in accordance with the Rule of Law.

That is the theory. However, we know only too well now that in Northern Ireland things did not always work like that. We know because it has been shown to be the case, that the normal rules were not always followed, that in some cases, even where people admitted murder, they were not charged, that evidence was lost, that searches were forbidden, that arrests were not permitted.

We even know that in some cases the police had prior information that something was going to happen, but no action was taken. Sometimes the failure to act is inexplicable and unexplained.

**“For MI5 and the military in the UK, the disclosure that collusion was a reality has been terrible”**

When these things happen we talk of collusion. So many inquiries have been held into collusion in Northern Ireland that we have a number of definitions – by Canadian Judge Cory, De Silva, John Stevens. The essence of these definitions is that something which should have been done has not been done, or something which should not have been done has occurred, allowing the murderer to walk free: free, if he or she chooses to do so, to kill again.

These things happened in Northern Ireland, just as they have happened in so many wars over the centuries, where alliances were formed between terrorists and those charged with the fight against terrorism.

Collusion is not a crime. Nobody can be convicted of collusion. Yet it can be shown that it happened. Rarely is it possible to convict someone for conspiracy to commit murder, or misconduct in public office. Just as terrorists do not keep

detailed records of their activities to assist those investigating their crimes, so those who collude with them, do not keep a record of their decision making, of who actually destroyed the evidence, who authorised the decision to arrest someone in connection with a murder, hold them for a period of time, and then let them go without even questioning them, so that it looks as if investigation occurred. That is how collusion happens.

The NI Assembly has shown itself incapable of handling these and other legacy matters in the interests of the victims. The British Government has a duty now, almost 20 years after the Good Friday Agreement, to provide an independent historical inquiries commission, properly empowered to investigate all the crimes of the Troubles, with an adequate budget, and total cooperation from all the agencies in both Ireland and the UK. This is not happening.

The resources cannot be taken from the PSNI budget. They must be provided by Government in the same way that it has funded enquiries such as Hillsborough, Gossport, Litvinenko and others in the rest of the UK.

**“Even where people admitted murder, they were not charged, that evidence was lost”**

There are, of course, reasons why the IRA, the UVF, the UDA, the INLA and all the other terrorist organisations do not want this to happen. They all killed their own, as well as the other, and some of those who were once involved in terrorism have now moved on, and are said to be contributors to the Peace Process.

For MI5 and the military in the UK, the disclosure that collusion was a reality has been terrible. That

agents of the state, who supplied information for “the fight against terrorism” were allowed to continue their murderous activities without being made accountable, as they could have been, for their crimes is something which, for most people, is unthinkable.

It has grown significant distrust in the authorities. Yet it happened. De Silva, Cory, Stevens, and even I, as Police Ombudsman, told how it happened. I am still working on cases allegedly involving collusion by members of state agencies

working with the UVF, and with the IRA in the case of the alleged agent known as Stakeknife.

There are two reasons why independent investigation must occur. One is that we need to learn the lessons of the past.

We need to be able to show precisely how it happened, so that we can put in place the mechanisms to prevent it happening again; to prevent communities being unable through fear or otherwise from helping the police with today's

fight against terrorism.

The other is that those who have suffered so much, in the loss of their loved ones through terrorism, will at last know as much as is to be known about the circumstances in which those deaths occurred.

### Suspects

In the rare cases where prosecution is a possibility, suspects should be placed before the courts and dealt with in accordance with the Rule of Law which is one of the foundations of both states, and of which we proclaim ourselves to be so proud.

We must not forget or ignore the bereaved. We must comfort them by ensuring that these issues are dealt with. We must build the future on integrity and honesty.



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## Primate leads tributes to Sutherland

Greg Daly

Dublin's Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, Primate of Ireland, has praised the late Peter Sutherland for his support and advice to Church institutions, and his work on behalf of migrants and refugees.

"He was a man of deep faith and a devoted Catholic but also one who was critical when necessary," he said.

"He worked to ensure greater transparency in the administration of the Vatican's financial system. He reformed the International Catholic Committee of Migration and brought it into good working commission with the United Nations bodies".

### Adviser

Mr Sutherland became a financial adviser to the Vatican in 2006, in 2015 becoming President of the International Catholic Migration Commission.

Archbishop Martin added that even when in poor health, the Dublin-born Mr Sutherland was "tireless" in his work for the UN Secretary General as special representative for Migration.

"The quality, the passion and the commitment of his work for refugees and migrants was the fruit of a genuine conviction of his faith, reflecting the dignity of every human person and the fundamental unity of the human family," he said.

### Contribution

Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster, in whose diocese Mr Sutherland had lived, said he was "an immensely gifted and principled man", who made an outstanding contribution to public life, not least to the Church.

Cardinal Nichols said Mr Sutherland "was always willing to help the Church, whether in the local parish or assisting the Holy See more widely", adding that "his wisdom, shrewdness and passion for justice were a powerful combination, and he was a fearless and courageous public witness".



John Bruton

**P**eter Sutherland was a brave and highly competent Attorney General of Ireland, between 1981 and 1984, and also one of its youngest ever. He impressed civil servants and Ministers by his decisiveness and his grace under pressure, especially in dealing with difficult terrorist/extradition cases.

Although his subsequent public and business career took him to live in Brussels, Geneva, Spain and London, he remained deeply committed to this country, and helped Irish causes through his exceptional generosity, notably by donations to educational institutions.

Peter was a loving husband and father, as shown in the beautiful tribute to him paid by his three adult children.

His self-deprecating humour helped him defuse many difficult situations in his business career.

**“His talents brought him great success, but he was always conscious of his responsibility to help others and give back to society”**

In late 1984, he was appointed to the European Commission. Peter was especially proud of his initiative in setting up the Erasmus Student Exchange programme, which has had a profound and beneficial effect on the lives of hundreds of thousands of young Europeans.

As Competition Commissioner, he was aggressive in pursuing cases of unfair state aid, an activity which sometimes brought him into conflict with the Commission President, Jacques Delors, with President Mitterand and with Mrs Thatcher. He was unafraid and stood his ground, and vindicated the independence of the Commission.

His most remarkable achievement was, as Director General of the GATT, in getting the agreement at a meeting of 130 nations in Marrakesh in 1994 to the establishment of the WTO, and to complex new agreements on textiles and agriculture, designed to help developing nations.

### Panels

The WTO established supra-national panels to arbitrate trade disputes. It thus built the foundation for a rules-based international order in international trade, which has contributed to a quarter century of global prosperity. The rules protected the weak as well as the strong.

# Reconciling faith and modernity – a tribute to Peter Sutherland



He was a man of faith, who showed, through his life, that faith and modernity can be reconciled. His talents brought him great success, but he was always conscious of his responsibility to help others and give back to society.

This concern to protect the weak, on the basis of rules understood and accepted by all, inspired his work for asylum seekers and refugees in

more recent times.

In his speech to the International Eucharistic Congress in 2012, Peter eloquently demonstrated the connection between his Catholic faith and his commitment to refugees and asylum seekers, many of whom did not share his Christian faith.

He said that the Mass offers us as individuals "a pathway out of our

isolation and selfishness" and is an act of communion with others. "For us as Catholics," he said, "a global outlook should be inescapable."

He said the challenge of the 21st Century is finding a way to live together in harmony.

He said that migration was making our towns and villages more diverse than ever, but that new technologies were working against the acceptance of diversity by encouraging people to live "wholly separate lives, imprisoned by smart phones and iPads", that feed our separateness and "block out the community around us".

He stressed the important role of schools in inculcating charity and tolerance of difference. They must encourage acceptance of multiple identities, and educate children to understand that working together requires effort and compromise, and that "democrats are made, and not born".

### Commitment

Peter Sutherland's commitment to European Unity also sprang from his Christian faith, something he demonstrated very clearly, when giving the Cardinal Newman lecture in Oxford in 2010.

He said then: "The federalism of the Founding Fathers (of the European Union) was founded upon the belief that national sovereignty, constrained only from within, was not merely dangerous but essentially evil because it postulated a greater power than man alone can possess."

He continued: "Jacques Maritain, the Catholic philosopher who most influenced the process (of the EU) in its conception wrote 'God alone is sovereign... this concept (of sovereignty) is intrinsically wrong'."

He made his talents freely available to the Catholic Church.

He served on a body advising the Vatican on its finances, and headed a Catholic body dealing with Migration, alongside the similar work he did for the United Nations.

He was good company, took great interest in his friends, and looked after them.

He will be remembered with great affection.

**John Bruton was Taoiseach from 1994 to 1997, and subsequently served as EU ambassador to the USA.**

**“He stressed the important role of schools in inculcating charity and tolerance of difference. They must encourage acceptance of multiple identities, and educate children to understand that working together requires effort and compromise”**





# The Irish Church and the 'Benedict option'

The Church needs to hold to its principles and pick its battles, writes **David Quinn**

**T**he Churches in Ireland tend to have an extremely softly-softly attitude towards the State and the Government of the day. They rarely criticise either and when they do, it is in a very muted way. There are several reasons for this. One is that they feel they are too weak to do so. This is particularly so in the case of the Catholic Church.

The moral authority of the Catholic Church has been very badly damaged by the scandals, and also by the previous dominant, often domineering position of the Church in Irish society.

Another reason, related to this, is a mostly very hostile media. Any bishop who launched a strong attack on the Government of the day – unless it was to do with an issue like poverty or immigration or the environment – could expect a strong counter-attack.

A further reason Church leaders tend not to attack Governments is because it does not come naturally to them. If politicians in the past were deferential towards the Church, the Church has tended to be deferential towards politicians and the State as well. This persists even though the last few Governments have gone out of their way to avoid meaningful contact with the bishops and the last one closed the Irish embassy to the Holy See.

## Active debate

In America there is an active debate within the Church as to what the proper posture of the Church is towards the modern, secular, liberal State.

By this, I don't mean the democratic State, or a State that is separate from the Church. What I mean instead is a State that pushes secularism, seeks to make religion an almost wholly private matter, and which pushes an extreme kind of individualism.

Is the proper posture



to this State one of accommodation, that is, to act as a kind of handmaiden to the State and its aims? This would involve supporting it when it can and staying silent, or as close to silent as makes no difference, when it cannot.

Accommodation can be a principled or a pragmatic stance. You can actually believe in the goodness of the secular State, or else you can believe that it is so powerful that accommodation is the only option.

Another possible posture is confrontation, which is to say being willing to attack the State when need be even where there will be a backlash. This would be the stance of a Church willing to be prophetic because the role of the prophet is always to challenge the authority of the day, or the populace if need be, even at the cost of popularity or, in extremis, martyrdom.

**“We need to become much better at building up communities of highly committed, highly motivated Christians”**

A third posture is retreat. The American writer Rod Dreher has spoken of “the Benedict option”. Dreher does not mean by this a total retreat from the world by Christians, but he does believe we need to become much better at building up communities of highly-committed, highly-motivated Christians and

accept our minority status.

I don't believe accommodation with the secular State is possible because the State is not neutral and is intent upon pushing and enforcing a kind of individualism that is often totally at odds with Christian morality.

We see this most dramatically in the issue of abortion. Health Minister Simon Harris has said that if we vote for abortion later this year then abortions will be paid for by all of us out of our taxes. It will, therefore, be impossible to fully opt out of the ‘culture of death’.

## Conscience

In addition, scant regard will be shown towards conscience rights. The abortion law of 2013 said that even Catholic hospitals had to perform abortions under the terms of that law. A future abortion law is quite likely to have similar stipulations in the name of ‘health’ and pro-life doctors will be forced to refer women to pro-abortion doctors.

Let's bear in mind that in countries like Sweden, midwives and doctors must be willing to perform abortions. There is no opt-out.

With regard to same-sex marriage, the new view of marriage will place the Churches and individual Christians under increasing pressure. In Denmark the State has told the Lutheran Church it must perform same-sex marriage ceremonies.

Christian wedding florists etc. are granted no protections in countries that have introduced same-sex marriage.

Opposition to both

abortion and same-sex marriage is seen as a form of ‘bigotry’, and the State must allow no hiding place for ‘bigotry’. This is what Pope Benedict called the ‘dictatorship of relativism’.

How do you accommodate yourself to a State that is not willing to respect your beliefs and practices except when it suits it?

My own view is that the Church has to be both highly tactical and highly principled in dealing with the aggressively secular, liberal State, with a dash of the Benedict Option thrown in.

**“When you see Catholics coming out of Mass...professing pro-choice views, then we know we are in trouble”**

To begin with, we do need to ensure that Christian communities exist which are very committed, educated and motivated. This will require hard, evangelistic work. Christians will need to know that while they can be

in the world, they cannot be of a world that is increasingly hostile to their values. When you see Catholics coming out of Mass, as they did in an RTÉ news report last Sunday, professing pro-choice views, then we know we are in trouble.

Secondly, the Church should give support to the State when it can, on issues like the environment or poverty, for instance.

Thirdly, it has to be willing to confront it where necessary. It must give prophetic witness and expect that witness to come at a cost in terms of worldly prestige and standing. It will be in a stronger position to do this with a motivated, educated laity behind it.

Finally, we need to have a debate about this. We need to openly debate among ourselves the proper attitude towards the modern State. The debate should be opened up by our bishops.

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# Homelessness:

## *numbers to spike in January*



**Greg Daly**

**J**onathan Corrie's death in December 2014 seemed set to transform national attitudes to homelessness, but more than three years later, not merely has the situation not improved, but things have got much worse.

With roughly 9,000 people homeless in Ireland now, it seems the country now has more than twice as many people homeless as it did when then-minister Alan Kelly declared his intention to eradicate homelessness by the end of 2016.

Fr Peter McVerry seems thoroughly vindicated now in his dismissal of this claim as "Alice in Wonderland politics", with Bro. Kevin Crowley of Dublin's Capuchin Day Centre angrily declaring as 2016 drew to a close that poverty levels in the capital in the year that marked the centenary of the Easter Rising rivalled those of a century earlier.

**“The real homeless figure will be significantly higher now if the pattern of recent years is repeated”**

The seemingly inexorable rise in homelessness comes despite minister after minister declaring that the Government was making the national homelessness crisis a priority. Fine words, of course, and strategic plan after strategic plan has clearly been well meant, but to date the Government's record has been dismal in hitting its targets for completing rapid-build schemes, acquiring vacant properties, or increasing the number of social housing units in general.

Over the last three years homelessness campaigners have welcomed how awareness of the problem has increased, while time and again expressing frustration with Government failures to tackle the structural causes of homelessness, whether by increasing housing supply, raising rent supplements or introducing rent controls, or safeguarding



**A homeless person seeks shelter at Dublin's GPO.**  
Photo: Greg Daly

tenants' rights in cases when landlords decide to sell properties or use them for family members.

### **Immigration**

While some have sought to blame immigration for the rise in

homelessness, the reality is that the heart of the problem lies in the fundamentally dysfunctional nature of Ireland's post-crash private rental market, with Central Bank lending rules making it impossible for professionals to

get mortgages to buy homes, leaving them trapped in rental arrangements paying exorbitant rents that leave them incapable of saving towards ownership.

With 8,857 people known to have been homeless in the country

in November, the real homeless figure will be significantly higher now if the pattern of recent years is repeated. The weeks after Christmas invariably see a spike in Ireland's homelessness figures: landlords who had refrained from evicting tenants before Christmas issue notices to quit after the festive season, while otherwise homeless families who stayed with relations or friends over Christmas turn to homeless charities for help.

Homeless people tend to be at the forefront of people's minds over Christmas, whether because of the constant reminders from charities, the increasingly bitter weather, or the implications of the Christmas story and the child who was born in a stable because there was no room in the inn, but January is a different matter, and with homelessness set to spike again, there could hardly be a worse time for the homeless to fall off the national radar.

In an attempt to keep the spotlight on this national tragedy, *The Irish Catholic* will be running a series of features in coming weeks addressing the homeless crisis.

Next week sees Focus Ireland exploring family homelessness against a background of the number of homeless families in Ireland rising from 396 to 1,530 in the three years to last November, while the following week DePaul will address the issue of youth homelessness, with the number of young people between 18 and 24 having almost doubled from 456 to 845 in the same period.



**“The seemingly inexorable rise in homelessness comes despite minister after minister declaring that the Government was making the national homelessness crisis a priority”**



# Archbishop Martin and Ireland's 'dying breed' of Catholics



Far from being a burden, older Catholics are a source of renewal and new growth, writes **Fr Paddy Gleeson**



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin anointing a lady during the World Day of the Sick mass in the Church of Our Lady Queen of Peace, Merrion Road, Dublin. Photo: John McElroy

An article in the *New York Times* in early December spoke of the dramatic decline of the Catholic Church in Ireland in recent decades. Towards the end of the article, the Archbishop of Dublin Dr Diarmuid Martin was quoted as referring to the people who still come to church as "a dying breed".

This remark set me thinking about a possible alternative vision. I knew that I had heard a similar remark before, and it was from a Russian tour guide.

In 1986, I went on a study trip to the then Soviet Union with a group of priests and religious. It was organised by the state-run 'Intourist' agency.

A few cathedrals and monasteries were still open – mostly as museums.

## Worshippers

We did see a small number of elderly worshippers, but the guide was of the opinion that these "would soon die out".

There was no mention of the savage persecution of religion which followed the October revolution of 1917. Countless thousands of bishops, priests and faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as Catholics and other Christians were imprisoned.

Remnants of the church, which were allowed to remain for the sake of appearances, were closely supervised by the Soviet security agency the KGB.

**“Hundreds of churches and convents have been restored with thousands of vocations to the priesthood and religious life”**

During our visit we did manage to meet one or two priests. One of them enquired furtively about the latest news of the message of Fatima. Later I realised the significance of this as at Fatima Our Lady had asked for prayers for the conversion of Russia.

Only five years after our visit, the Soviet Union was peacefully transformed into the Russian Federation. In the decades which followed the Russian Orthodox Church has experienced a miraculous revival.

Hundreds of cathedrals and churches, monasteries and convents have been restored with thousands of vocations to the priesthood and religious life. What has now emerged is that the Faith and traditions of the Church had been preserved by the elderly. Grandparents who had persevered in their religious practice in old age had secretly baptised their grandchildren.

These elders appeared to be no threat to the regime and could safely be dismissed as 'dying out'. In fact, the elderly generations were a reservoir of faith and prayer. They provided the foundation for the remarkable revival of the Church which occurred.

Pope Francis has spoken frequently about the valuable place of the elderly in the life of the Church and in society. At his catechesis in St Peter's Square in March 2015, he spoke at length on this subject, dwelling especially

on the valuable contribution of grandparents in the family, as bearers of tradition and memory, and as witnesses to the faith.

When he visited the Philippines, Pope Francis was very moved to be greeted as 'Lolo Kiko' which means 'Grandpa Francis'.

The Pope also spoke of how moved he was by the day dedicated to the elderly which was celebrated in St Peter's Square. He noted the number of couples celebrating their 50th or 60th wedding anniversary, and the importance of presenting this witness to young people who can tire so easily.

**“Pope Francis also speaks of the prayer of the elderly as a great gift for the Church”**

He reflected on the witness of the elderly worshippers in the Temple, Simeon and Anna, recounted in the Gospel of Luke. "The Gospel says that these elderly people awaited the coming of God every day, with great trust, for many years. They truly wanted to see him that day".

Pope Francis also speaks of the prayer of the elderly as a great gift for the Church: "Above all, we need old people who pray." Quoting the Orthodox theologian Olivier Clément, Pope Francis continued: "This (prayer) is the very

purpose of old age."

The Holy Father praises the wisdom which elders have to offer. They may not have the knowledge and familiarity with the latest technology

which can so dazzle the young. But they have a level of wisdom, gained through experience, which can give meaning and hope to our lives. The many people who

return to religious faith and practice in their later years, is a testimony to this.

The Catholic Church in Ireland has in its older members, including its older religious and priests, a resource of faith and prayer which can be seen as a source of renewal and new growth.

## Holiness

Far from being a burden or a 'dying breed', they can be seen as a blessing for the Church and for society. In my own ministry, I have come to realise that many of our elderly parishioners live lives of extraordinary holiness.

In the Church their prayer and witness of faith can be directed to address our greatest needs today – vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and the evangelisation of those who no longer believe.

*Fr Paddy Gleeson is retired and lives at the pro-cathedral in Dublin.*

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# A bunker mentality when is simply self-defeating

Church leaders need a cultural shift to see the media as a partner rather than an adversary, writes **Martin O'Brien**



**W**hat is the perception of the Irish Churches among the secular media in terms of getting out their story? Dynamic and missionary, which are words that I would associate with an 81-year-old man, Pope Francis, for example, do not trip off the tongue although there are dynamic and missionary individuals in all the Churches.

When I think of the Churches in Ireland words and phrases such as not proactive, nice, well-meaning, overly cautious, complacent, passive, boring even, come to mind.

Most of those words would most certainly not have applied to the Apostle Paul, arguably the greatest communicator in world history, when he was defying shipwrecks, earthquakes, prison, and the threat of death to proclaim the Good News of salvation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the end, he paid with his life.

The Churches appear to be institutions, unwilling to make waves; by that I mean itching to reveal or say something very newsworthy, very striking and on the odd time you have potential to make waves you don't appear to know how to press home the advantage or you are not too bothered.

## Reflection

You may wonder, as I did, on reflection if those adjectives I used a moment ago are fair. To test myself I turned to a colleague, a senior media figure in Northern Ireland who is sympathetically disposed to the Churches and who deals with a wide range of organisations including the Churches.

I asked that person where do the Churches fit in, among those organisations who are knocking at the media's door to elbow their way on to the news agenda with their sto-

ries.

My colleague replied: "They don't fit in at all. They have dropped so far down the list that they don't really feature any more."

"The only way a member of the clergy will get on the media these days is if there has been a really serious act of vandalism on their church," he said.

That person added: "Churches often give me the impression that they are relieved we haven't bothered them."

That sort of bunker mentality, that apparent unwillingness to put your head above the parapet, is self-defeating and sells Jesus short.

Of course, Churches believe that they are different from every other organisation because they are carrying out a divine commission. But that doesn't mean that normal rules of media engagement, in relation to news values, do not apply.

**“Main Churches are no longer on a pedestal from where they could previously lecture a docile, deferential, uneducated people”**

Equally, it goes without saying that the Churches are entitled to be fairly treated, like everyone else.

And when the media, particularly the publicly-funded BBC and RTE, fall short you should not be slow to complain, and you are slow, or do not complain at all.

That senior media figure recalled a time, as I do, less than 20 years ago, when the media would clamour to ensure that a statement from the then four Church leaders would be carried live on TV news.

Like after a violent atrocity, during a critical stage in



the peace process or during a crisis like Drumcree.

We are in a different world now. Post-conflict yes, but also post-pedestal, where the main Churches are no longer on a pedestal from where they could previously lecture a docile, deferential, uneducated people.

Now you are struggling to be heard in the public square, struggling to demonstrate that you matter a lot in the realm of everyday life.

And that must mean that you are seen to be relevant in relation to the family, in a society where families, to quote Lord Sentamu, the Archbishop of York in the House of Lords last year, "particularly poor families, come in different shapes and sizes".

So, it goes without saying that the Churches should

have an inclusive, realistic, non-preachy approach to what constitutes a family, recognising the love and commitment and sacrifice that is at the heart of a family unit, including what Pope Francis has coyly called "irregular situations" where we should, to quote the Pope again "avoid judgements which do not take into account the complexity of various situations".

Not bad advice when you consider that a priest told me the other day that over the past 25 years he has not officiated at a single marriage where the bride and groom did not share the same address, this in an Ireland where nearly 40% of births take place outside marriage.

So, the Churches are challenged to adapt to that reality in love and compassion

while at the same time holding to the truth that the best context for the upbringing of children is within marriage, a Biblically-ordained institution which makes a vital contribution to society.

**“Churches should have an inclusive, realistic, non-preachy approach to what constitutes a family”**

And that children have a right to grow up with a mother and a father in their family, notwithstanding the Churches' responsibility to pastor lovingly to gay persons and their families, and to acknowledge the virtue

present in loving, committed, faithful gay relationships.

How do the Churches set about communicating a vision for the family? I think there are three aspects to this.

■ What individual Churches do themselves to communicate directly with their members, lapsed members and possible new members, using personal visits, knocking on doors, social media, Twitter, Facebook etc. and traditional leafleting;

■ What individual churches do to communicate with the secular media in terms of using it as a vehicle to communicate their message of the Gospel; and

■ What you, the Irish Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church together can



# it comes to the media for the Church



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin and Bishop Eamon Conway at a news conference and, left, Archbishop Diarmuid speaking to the media about his predecessor's death.

pro-activity today and that in part explains the perceptions that I spoke of in the first part of this talk.

You need a conversion, a cultural shift if you like, to see the media, regardless of how hostile it may seem, as a partner rather than an adversary, working for the betterment of society.

**“A study has shown that social media has overtaken television as young people's main source of news”**

A start would be for the Churches, the members of the Irish Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, in a spirit of appropriate ecumenical endeavour, to devise a media strategy, that could be part of a wider communications strategy involving the whole gamut of public affairs. This could incorporate engagement with government and civic society generally – including the universities where research is conducted, research that uncovers so many stories about social injustice. Of course, individual Churches have their own individual interests and concerns and they will continue.

And in approaching your task you should keep to the fore the words of Fard Johnmar, the American communication guru who says: “Remember, we may live in a new world, but the old rules still apply. Powerful communication has always been about getting people to pay attention and take action.”

science or sport does.

Not surprisingly, there is no silver bullet regarding the task of harnessing the media to communicate your message about the family. But there is something that would help.

And that is, to use a religious term that you are all familiar with, there must be something of a conversion, on the part of the Churches towards engaging with media organisations in a professional, pro-active, constructive and productive manner to get key messages into the public domain and to your audiences. Those audiences are your parishioners, prospective parishioners, funders, opinion formers, the commentariat, policymakers, law-makers etc.

I do not see that necessary

.....

The most effective way of getting people to pay attention, is by making personal face-to-face contact, introducing yourself, saying what your business is and establishing a relationship, however brief or however long, because even in this day and age of smartphones and Facebook, we are still, by and large, and I believe always will be, relational creatures.

In terms of establishing a relationship with the media the people you first must get to pay attention are the editors, producers and correspondents who decide what the news is and what the issues are on TV, radio and social media.

I should point that a report last year by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism showed that social media has overtaken television as young people's main source of news.

But do not forget the newspapers, all of whom have got websites, and are in Ireland and Britain extremely influential in determining what stories broadcasters pick up and discuss.

## Campaign

I suggest that the 15 Churches who constitute the Irish Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, maybe re-branding yourselves as Irish Churches Together agree a vision for the family, and then identify a number of social justice issues centring on the family that you can campaign on together using all available media platforms to press home your message, in the pursuit of the common good,

demonstrating your zeal to spread the Gospel of Christ's love.

My point here is that if the churches can unite around the radicality of the Gospel then people would see them standing up for them against the powerful, like the tax dodgers of the Paradise Papers, and the banks, who have contributed so much to the assault on families that is the homeless crisis, by evicting people from their homes and pulling the plug on landlords, also not been able to keep up with their payments due to circumstances beyond their control.

A Church that speaks truth to power as Jesus did in his time is more credible in its mission to evangelise.

You might consider organising pan-Church campaigns on a range of issues around social justice issues, followed up by intensive comparable outreach by the individual churches to your respective parishioners and would-be parishioners – and if you are unsure about it, naturally cautious folks that you are, give it a go and see how it goes!

**“Research in the US shows that the most effective way to recruit volunteers is to ask people directly”**

There is no shortage of issues. Suicide, debt, mental health, child poverty, homelessness, food banks – a scandal in the fifth biggest economy in the world; addiction; human trafficking; harassment and bullying at work – and of course domestic and sexual violence.

If the politicians at Stormont fail, a scenario that cannot be ruled out, there will be a dangerous vacuum that the Churches will have to help fill.

In your list of ‘Priority Concerns’ right at the top you identify “the challenge of recruiting, keeping and supporting volunteers” who are essential to the work that churches do to support families.

I couldn't help asking myself why have I never heard a news story about the volunteer crisis making the headlines on, e.g. the Stephen Nolan radio or TV show on the BBC.

**i** Martin O'Brien – northern correspondent with The Irish Catholic and a communications consultant – is a former senior producer with the BBC and editor of The Irish News. This is an edited version of a talk given at the recent Irish Inter-Church Meeting at Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre, Co. Down.

Has anyone tried to quantify the problem, do the necessary research, and catapult it on to the news agenda?

I wonder have you ever considered asking an economist to quantify in hard cash the social contribution of Church volunteers in Ireland. That would be some story!

In Scotland an Evangelical Alliance study released in September showed that 9,000 faith groups in the Serve Scotland coalition of Church charities (not including the main Churches) contributed more than 11 million hours, totalling almost £100m in time and resources to social projects around foodbanks, debt advice, night shelters and refugee support work each year which prompted an hour-long debate in the Scottish Parliament that celebrated Church volunteering.

I would like to see a similar debate in Dáil Éireann and in Stormont – if and when it returns – with a media plan around it to garner maximum publicity.

## Volunteer crisis

Nearer to home, could steps be taken to ensure that the volunteer crisis could be addressed by the priest or minister in every church in Ireland on a given Sunday? That would take leadership and co-ordination on a big scale but is quite doable.

Research in the US shows that the most effective way to recruit volunteers is to ask people directly. People like to be asked.

I accept that research normally but not always costs money and research needs to be commissioned so I wonder have you considered a strategic partnership with the universities and charities to explore this?

No news-maker, including the Church, can expect to deal with the media only on their terms. There should be mutual respect, media and Church each genuinely welcoming the different role of the other.

Some years ago, Dr Joseph Stowell, the prolific American evangelical Christian author and associate of Dr Billy Graham, said: “Communication is a two-way street. And while we revel in the reality that we can always get through to heaven, our concern should be whether our Lord can always get through to us.”



# Out&About

Lovely hurling, bishop!



**CORK:** Bishop John Buckley, combining his hurling and bowl playing skills, getting the St Vincent's GAA Poc Fada under way at Kerry Pike. Photo: Mike English



**CLARE:** Tulla parishioners bringing in the New Year before the Blessed Sacrament in Ss Peter and Paul's Church.



**▲ KILKENNY:** Bishop emeritus Laurence Forristal of the Diocese of Ossory with Caroline Cummins and Margaret Logue who work for the parish of St Canice in Kilkenny.



**KILKENNY:** Bishop elect Monsignor Dermot Farrell greets students from St Kieran's College following the announcement that he is to be the next bishop of the Diocese of Ossory.



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Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



**ANTRIM:** Pupils from the Confirmation Class in St James' PS Whiteabbey, attending an 'Advent Amoris Retreat' given by young leaders from St Louis House, West Belfast, as part of their commitment to sharing the Good News with other primary schools.

▼ **MAYO:** Pádraig Walsh and Pat Boyle, surrounded by schoolchildren, present the Pride of Place award to At-tymass in the Fr Peyton Centre which is named after Fr Patrick Peyton – recently declared Venerable by the Pope.



**DUBLIN:** Jenelyn Narciso with her grandson Liam Zuo greeting Archbishop Diarmuid Martin after the World Day of Peace Mass in Donnybrook Church. The theme Pope Francis has chosen for World Day of Peace is Migrants and Refugees – Men and Women in Search of Hope. Msgr Lorcan O'Brien gave the homily. Photo: John McElroy



## IN SHORT

### Cork natives thanked for generous SHARE support

Pupils from 21 Cork schools were encouraged by the "outpouring of support" during their fundraising for SHARE (Students Harvest Aid for Relief of the Elderly).

The 10-day Christmas campaign saw 1,800 students work together to raise funds for the elderly.

Ben Corcoran, Chairperson of the SHARE Executive said: "As students in Cork we have heard of the generosity the people of Cork show to SHARE

each year, but experiencing it first-hand this year has blown us away."

The 5th year student at Presentation Brothers College went on to explain that the generosity of the public was particularly poignant, saying: "The experiences my fellow students and I have had the pleasure of gaining this year have been humbling, enlightening, and have helped to mould us in ways we never expected."

He added that while the students tried to motivate each other as they braved the rain and cold, the people of Cork where the true

motivators.

The appeal is vital in order to maintain SHARE's 146 housing units, which are located in seven locations across Cork City. This annual campaign also allows for the provision of much-needed services for the older people at The Brother Jerome Kelly Day Care Centre at Sheare's Street, Cork on an on-going basis.

Students also give their time throughout the year to visit residents of the SHARE community, with Mr Corcoran saying: "We have laughed and cried and become firm friends with not only our peers but also with

the residents we visit. It has been surprisingly rewarding as well as enjoyable."

### Waterford & Lismore Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes

The annual diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes takes place from June 6-11 with bookings opening at the Joe Walsh Tours office at St Patrick's Pastoral Centre, John's Hill, Waterford.

Bookings opened on January 8. This year Lourdes celebrates the 160th Anniversary of the Apparition.

## ARMAGH

Eucharistic Adoration in St Malachy's Church daily from 6am to midnight, and all night on Wednesdays. Adoration chapel, Edwards Street, Lurgan, adoration on weekdays from 9am-9pm.

## CORK

Life in the Spirit Seminar in Knockavilla Community Centre (Innishannon/Knockavilla parish). Introductory night on Friday February 2 at 7.30pm, followed by 7 weeks Life in Spirit Talks, every Friday, from February 9 to March 23 at 7.30pm. Tel. 087 4589133.

A pro-life Mass is held on the last Friday of every month at the Poor Clares monastery, College Road, at 7.30pm.

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.

Maria Vadia and Fr John Keane will lead a day of Prayer, Praise, Worship and Healing in Rochestown Park Hotel, Douglas on Sunday March 4, commencing at 9am and concluding with Holy Mass at 5pm. Registration not required. Contact Celia on 087 2405568.

## DERRY

Dungiven Parish: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Mon-Fri, 8am-noon and 3-9pm.

A 'Celebration of Family' will take place in St Mary's College, Derry, on Saturday February 3, from 10am-6pm.

## DUBLIN

Nine days novena, Mass and activities from January 12 to January 20 for the Feast of Santo Nino (Holy Infant). Outdoor procession "Walk with Mary" on January 13 at 2pm followed by Mass. Blessing of Children on January 20 at 5.10pm. Outdoor procession on January 21 at 1.15pm followed by Mass, dance offering and Sinulog. All events: St Joseph's Church, Berkeley Road.

Divine Mercy Devotions in the Church of Three Patrons, Rathgar every First Friday at 7pm. Mass, Benediction, chaplet and blessing with relic of St Faustina. Confessions available.

The Dublin 15 Faith and Justice Group welcomes new members and currently meet on the first Friday of the month in Hartstown Church. Contact Fr Joe 087 6632944.

Divine Mercy Mass and holy hour takes place at 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.

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

Life to the Full (John 10:10) book club for young adults meets every Thursday from 7-8.30pm in St Paul's Church, Arran

Quay (Smithfield) to meditate, share and discuss life and Faith. Refreshments provided. [www.facebook.com/lifetothe-fullbookclub](http://www.facebook.com/lifetothe-fullbookclub)

## FERMANAGH

A Mass to St Peregrine for all the sick is prayed each Wednesday evening in St Patrick's Church, Derrygonnelly at 7.30pm. [www.churchservices.tv/derrygonnelly](http://www.churchservices.tv/derrygonnelly)

## KERRY

Share The Living Word of God: A six week programme of prayer and reflection, creating a presentation and giving talks and reflections to one another on Tuesday January 23 and 30 from 7.30pm to 9pm, and Tuesday February 6, 13, 20 and 27 from 7.30pm to 9pm in the Ardferret Retreat Centre.

The Practice of Lectio Divina: Fr Brendan Clifford OP, Thursday January 18 from 7pm-9.30pm in the Ardferret Retreat Centre.

## KILDARE

A centring/contemplative prayer group meets in the Old Baptistery of St Michael's parish church in Athy every Thursday at 8pm. For more info ring Dolores at 086-3474679.

## LOUTH

A Centre Prayer Meeting is held at Mount Oliver (near Bal-lymascanlon, Dundalk) every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm. Contact 00353 863623361 from Northern Ireland or 0863623361 from ROI.

## MAYO

The next Latin Mass in the extraordinary form will take place in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel Knock, on Sunday January 14, at 5.30pm.

## 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.

## SLIGO

Latin Mass in Carraroe church on the last Sunday of each month at 3pm.

## WATERFORD

Exploring St John's Gospel with Fr Michael Mullins, Tuesdays 8-9pm in the Edmund Rice Centre.

## WICKLOW

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

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

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

### Candidate for sainthood exhumed in Philippines

● The remains of a Filipino archbishop, a candidate for sainthood, underwent a nine-hour forensic examination this week as part of the process for his possible canonisation. Lawyer Persida Rueda-Acosta, head of a team of forensic experts who examined the remains of Archbishop Teofilo Camomot of Cebu, expressed surprise that they did not exude a foul smell despite decay, which he considered “miraculous” as the archbishop died 30 years ago. Some saints’ bodies, when exhumed, have been found not to have decayed and to exude a sweet smell. Also in his report he noted that Archbishop Camomot’s vestments were in “pristine condition” and “uncorrupted by any form of infestation and insect activity”.

### Murdered Algerian martyrs to be beatified

● A bishop, seven Trappist monks and 11 other religious men and women killed in Algeria in the 1990s will soon be recognised as martyrs, the postulator for their causes said. The decree for their beatification should be published sometime in January, Trappist Father Thomas Georgeon said. A 10-year-long armed conflict between government forces and extremist Islamic rebel groups left tens of thousands of people dead, making the deaths of the 19 religious “a martyrdom in the midst of a sea of violence that devastated Algeria”, he said.

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## Respect for life attained through peace and disarmament – Pope

Nations must find peaceful ways to deal with conflict, because everyone has the right to life and liberty, Pope Francis told diplomats accredited to the Vatican while outlining the need for disarmament and dialogue.

The Pope called for debate on the stockpiling of weapons and conflict resolution that “avoids polarising the international community” in his annual address.

At the start of a new year, the Pope dedicated his speech to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which will celebrate the 70th anniversary of its adoption by the UN General Assembly in December.

Francis cautioned that there is a movement to create “new rights” that conflict with each other as well the traditional values and cultures of many countries.

“Somewhat paradoxically, there is a risk that, in the very



name of human rights, we will see the rise of modern forms of ideological colonisation by the stronger and the wealthier, to the detriment of the poorer and the most vulnerable,” he said.

### Declaration

Seven decades after the creation of the universal declaration, Pope Francis said, “it

is painful to see how many fundamental rights continue to be violated today. First among all of these is the right of every human person to life, liberty and personal security.”

He said that not only are innocent unborn children discarded because they are “ill or malformed, or as a result of the selfishness of adults,” the elderly are often cast

aside especially when they are infirm.

Disarmament is integral to development, he told the diplomats, as the proliferation of weapons aggravates situations and requires huge material and human cost.

“The stockpiles of armaments which have been built up in various countries must be reduced” and “nuclear weapons must be banned”, particularly given the risk that a nuclear conflagration could be started by accident, Pope Francis said, quoting St John XXIII’s encyclical on peace, *Pacem in Terris*.

“In this regard, it is of paramount importance to support every effort at dialogue on the Korean peninsula, in order to find new ways of overcoming the current disputes, increasing mutual trust and ensuring a peaceful future for the Korean people and the entire world.”

## Church leaders condemn violence against Congo Catholics

Church leaders in the Congo have condemned security forces’ attacks on Catholic protestors that have left at least eight people dead and 120 detained.

The Vatican Embassy in Kinshasa backed local church officials, saying that “the promotion of social justice and the defence of political and civil rights of citizens are an integral part of the social doctrine of the church”.

During a protest against rule by President Joseph Kabila which was organised by the Kinshasa archdiocesan lay coordination committee, at least a dozen priests were detained.

“We condemn with utmost vigour this unjustified violence,” the Congolese

bishops’ conference said in a statement this week.

“We similarly denounce this attack on freedom of worship, which is guaranteed in every democratic state, as well as the profanation of churches and physical aggression against the faithful and their priests.”

The statement said the bishops were “profoundly shocked by such ignoble acts” and would demand a “serious and objective inquiry” into who was responsible.

Police also used tear gas and batons against Massgoers in some of the capital’s 150 parishes and violently broke up attempted marches in which protesters demanded fresh elections in

the country.

The incidents were described as “nothing short of barbaric” by Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya of Kinshasa.

“How can we trust leaders incapable of protecting the population, of guaranteeing peace, justice and love of people?” the cardinal asked a news conference. “How can we trust leaders who trample on religious freedom of the people, religious freedom which is the foundation of all freedom?”

A UN spokeswoman said seven deaths had been recorded in Kinshasa, and another at Kananga. Congolese authorities denied that the deaths were linked to the protests.

## No Communion for remarried Catholics, say bishops

Seven bishops have responded to bishops’ conferences that issued guidelines that foresee the possibility of divorced and civilly remarried Catholics returning to the Sacraments in some circumstances.

The norms and guidelines are the bishops’ responses to Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*.

Archbishop Tomash Peta and Auxiliary Bishop Athanasius Schneider [pictured] of Astana and retired Archbishop Jan Pawel Lenga of Karaganda, all from Kazakhstan, published a

statement on “the immutable truths about sacramental marriage”.

In Kazakhstan, “divorced people living with someone else would not dare ask for Holy Communion because they know they are living in a situation of sin. It would be blasphemy,” said Auxiliary Bishop Athanasius Schneider of Astana.

Two retired Italian prelates, Archbishop Carlo Vigano, former papal nuncio to the United States and Archbishop Emeritus Luigi Negri have since added their signatures, as have Latvia’s retired Cardinal Janis Pujats and

Austria’s retired auxiliary bishop of Salzburg, Andreas Laun.

Bishop Schneider told CNS that “if different people read our statement as a confrontation with the Pope, that is their view, not ours. It is not a rebuke, confrontation or challenge, but a service in charity and truth”.

*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, the official record of Vatican documents and acts, published the guidelines of the bishops in Argentina’s Buenos Aires region and a letter from Pope Francis approving the bishops’ interpretation of *Amoris Laetitia*.







Edited by Chai Brady  
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## Icy start to the new year in New York



People struggle against wind and snow as they cross a street in the Brooklyn borough of New York City. Photo: CNS

# Church assist poor in freak American 'bomb cyclone'

Catholic agencies in the US have been struggling to keep vulnerable people warm as a spate of brutally cold weather envelops the eastern two-thirds of the country.

Temperatures plunged to -15C in some places. From Montana to Florida and Texas to Maine homeless shelters opened additional hours to shield people from frosty Arctic winds, which have been described as a temperature anomaly in the region.

"It literally cuts through you," Michael Acaldo, executive director of the Council of the Society of St Vincent de Paul in Baton Rouge, Louisiana said.

Temperatures in southeastern Louisiana forced dozens of people into three emergency shelters the council

operates, Acaldo said. During the cold snap, about 120 men, women and children have been at the shelters. A normal night would see 80 people.

"We're making the best of it. Everybody's trying to stay warm," he said.

### Homeless

Farther north in the Diocese of Little Rock, Arkansas, staff members at Jericho Way, a homeless day resource centre operated by the Catholic non-profit Depaul USA, has seen an increase in clients at their doors.

Director Mandy Davis said they have opened earlier and stayed open later to accommodate those in need. Churches and temporary warming shelters have opened for people

needing a place to stay as well, she said.

In the Diocese of Joliet, Illinois, the shelters have been filled for much of December as cold weather settled in early, said Pam Terrell, division director of community services for the diocese's Catholic Charities program.

The agency has established cold shelter nights, allowing more than the usual 80 people to seek warmth during any given evening.

"Both of our shelters serve as warming centers during inclement weather," Ms Terrell said. "And both have 24-hour call numbers for those who may be searching for cold shelter. So we go over census and take anybody in."

## Poor can teach us 'true wealth' says cardinal

Witnessing the situations certain people are living in around the world is a reminder of the true meaning of hope according to a Philippines cardinal.

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle said that in his ministry as Archbishop of Manila and in his travels for church-charity Caritas he sees people living in situations the world would see as hopeless.

"The poor know the frustration of dreaming and working hard with not much result," Cardinal Tagle said.

"They are betrayed by persons and institutions. But in their raw poverty, what is left for them is their humanity. They remind all of us that being human is our true and only wealth."

While anyone can be tempted to see the fulfilment of hope in accomplishments,

improved numbers and bigger bank balances, the poor celebrate the gift of life and praise the giver of life, the cardinal said.

"This is the secret of their enduring and persistent hope, which those who enjoy comfortable living, yet complain unceasingly, should discover," he said.

"Of the many challenges to hope, I consider pride the most dangerous. Pride

weakens faith that gives assurance to hope. Pride makes me think I can do better than God. Pride makes me place my hope in myself. Pride makes me a pseudo-saviour."

In addition to serving as archbishop of Manila and president of Caritas Internationalis, Cardinal Tagle also is president of the Catholic Biblical Federation.

## Vatican roundup

### Admit sins and recognise faults urges Pope

Fear and the shame of admitting one's own sins leads to pointing fingers and accusing others rather than recognising one's own faults, Pope Francis said.

"It's difficult to admit being guilty, but it does so much good to confess with sincerity. But you must confess your own sins," the Pope said at his first general audience of the New Year.

A person who has a heart "full of himself, of his own success" receives nothing because he is already satiated by his "presumed justice".

"Listening to the voice of conscience in silence allows us to realise that our thoughts are far from divine thoughts, that our words and our actions are often worldly, guided by choices that are contrary to the Gospel," the Pope said.

Confessing one's sins to God and the Church helps people understand that sin not only "separates us from God but also from our brothers and sisters," he added.

"Sin cuts, it cuts our relationship with God and with our brothers and sisters, in our family, in society, in the community," the Pope said. "Sin always cuts, separates, divides."

### Pope visits sick children

On the eve of Epiphany, when most Italian children wake up to find gifts and sweets, Pope Francis visited a paediatric hospital outside Rome.

The Pope arrived at the Palidoro Bambino Gesù Hospital at about 3pm and visited the various wards where about 120 children are receiving treatment, according to the Vatican press office.

The Pope greeted the

children and "exchanged some words of comfort with the parents who are caring for their children in their tiring and painful trials," the statement said.

Visiting the hospital, Pope Francis was "continuing the experience of the Mercy Fridays," visits he made to hospitals, orphanages and other care facilities during the 2015-16 Year of Mercy.

### Pupils must learn care for all creation

A green lifestyle must be consistent and complete, driven by a love for God the creator and all of his creation, the Pope [pictured] said in a speech to the Italian Association of Catholic Teachers.

The primary school teachers must help children from a young age understand and practice an environmentally ethical lifestyle that must not be "schizophrenic", that is, a kind of disconnected concern for "taking care of animals in extinction, but ignoring problems facing the elderly. No. Or defending the Amazon rainforest, but neglecting the rights of workers to have a fair wage", he said.

This approach demands teaching the importance of personal responsibility, not bombarding the children with slogans or catchy commands that someone else will have to carry out, he said. Teach children to have an enthusiastic appetite for "experiencing an environmental ethics that stem from the choices and behaviours in daily life", he said.

The Pope also encouraged teachers and schools to rebuild a new alliance with families that mutually supports and strengthens each other.

The educational alliance or "pact" that once existed among the state, schools and parents unfortunately "is broken" and must be repaired, he said.





# Letter from Rome



John L. Allen Jr

Observers who've watched waves of attempted reforms wash over the Vatican across the years and then recede, often leaving very little changed in their wake, always marvel at the place's ability to absorb a shock without really giving way.

While there are many factors that help explain the staying power, here's something one dares never discount: basically speaking, you can't fire anybody.

The Vatican, we need to remember, is a small world, with a total workforce of just under 5,000 (that includes the Roman curia, the governing bureaucracy for the universal church, with around 3,000, and the Vatican City State, which administers the physical 108-acre territory of the Vatican itself, with 2,000).

In that context, personnel is policy here more than most places. If you want to ensure basic continuity in how things are done, limiting turnover is a terrific way to go about it, and a combination of culture and law in the Vatican cuts in precisely that direction.

## Frustration

Recently, a colleague and I had lunch with a Vatican official who was put in charge of a department about a year ago. When I asked what his major frustration was so far, he said it's having to work with people who would never get a job from him if, say, this were a diocese and he was the bishop.

When my colleague asked about his ability to hire and fire, he just laughed.

"Firing is impossible," he said, "so you don't even try. If you're lucky, you can hire somebody once in a while."

Of course, like so many things said of the Vatican, the claim that firing is "impossible" actually isn't quite true. During just the past year, we've seen a few high-profile instances in which somebody was not only fired, but physically escorted off Vatican property by the gendarmes to make sure they didn't miss the



Pope Francis leaves in procession after celebrating Mass marking the feast of the Epiphany in St Peter's Basilica. Photo: CNS

# Ruthless reform is not likely for Vatican

point that their services were no longer required.

In general, however, labour laws within the Vatican afford personnel multiple opportunities to takes leaves or shift to new assignments before termination. The net result is that offices get used to working around dysfunctional employees rather than replacing them – I know one office, for instance, where a troublesome receptionist has been on 'maternity leave' going on five years now.

It should be said, of course, that such firebreaks aren't just a matter of the Vatican being obtuse.

In effect, they're an attempt to put Catholic social teaching into action, trying to protect both jobs and workers. In a heavily clerical environment, they're also a sort of firebreak against personal capriciousness – and anyone who's ever worked in an American diocese and laid up at night in a cold sweat worried about who the new bishop will be, and what sort of "housecleaning" he may

have in mind, will appreciate its relevance.

Moreover, the strong worker protections inside the Vatican largely reflect the law in Italy. Should anyone make a serious push to change them, the political and social backlash, not to mention the possibility of legal challenges, would be enormous. Bear in mind we're not talking about firing cardinals here, but mid-level employees, mostly underpaid laity.

**“Many of the apartments owned by the Vatican in Rome don't earn nearly as much in rent as they should”**

The basic take-away (one can see the protest signs now) would be that you can't reform a system on the backs of the people you're asking to serve it.

Another point worth making is that at the moment, many Vatican employees don't exactly feel

safe in their jobs, whatever the formal policies may say. All the talk of "change" and "reform" over the last several years have left people wondering if their office will even be there six months from now, and, if so, if it will still have room for them.

To take another for-instance, when Pope Francis put together a study commission on Vatican finances in 2013, one of its conclusions was that many of the apartments owned by the Vatican in Rome don't earn nearly as much in rent as they should, because they're leased for long terms to employees at below-market rates.

That's long been a part of the basic compensation arrangement. Vatican salaries are stable but often strikingly low in comparison to what the same work might command someplace else, so traditionally a low-cost apartment is about the only way of making Rome survivable.

A Italian businessman who advises the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic

See (APSA) once explained the Vatican's personnel policy to me this way: "*Ti pago poco, ma ti do una casa*", meaning, "I won't pay you much, but I'll give you a house".

**“Is the Pope ready for the demonstrations in St Peter's Square by his own workers...”**

Nonetheless, back in 2013 a consulting firm brought in as part of the study process recommended that those apartments be emptied out, fixed up (many suffer from significant deferred maintenance), and then put on the market at their real value, concluding the Vatican would realise tens of millions in additional income every year.

During conversation among the Pope's advisers, an Italian finance expert posed the following question: "Okay, let's suppose we do that. Is the Pope ready for the

demonstrations in St Peter's Square by his own workers, who he's just kicked out of their homes, asking him, 'Where's the justice for us?'"

Nobody had a good answer to that question, and the idea was quietly shelved.

Certainly, there are alternatives one might envision which could inject a certain degree of fresh blood into the system on a more regular basis. Perhaps Vatican departments, for instance, could develop a more explicit distinction between 'political' appointments and civil service jobs – with the political roles coming and going at the discretion of whoever's in charge, while the other positions enjoy the traditional protections.

Until such solutions are identified, the bottom line is that if the price of Vatican reform is ruthlessness with employees, it's probably not on the cards, and there are some good reasons why that's the case.

**i** John L. Allen Jr is Editor of CruxNow.com



# Papal trip looms as Peruvians protest pardon of ex-president



Peruvian President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski's Christmas Eve pardon of ex-president Alberto Fujimori has sparks protests in Peru. Photo: news.cgtn

**N**ever one to choose easy destinations for his foreign trips, Pope Francis heads to Chile and Peru next week for his sixth visit to Latin America, and to say he'll have to face a few challenges is an understatement.

Recent days have presented him with yet another challenge: a presidential pardon in Peru for former president Alberto Fujimori, who was in prison for a series of financial crimes and human rights violations during his term in the 1990s.

The decision was made by President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, three days after the party of Fujimori's son refused to give congress the supermajority needed to impeach Kuczynski for allegedly accepting \$5 million from Odebrecht, a Brazilian, scandal-plagued construction company.

The Brazilian giant has been accused of paying bribes to political leaders in several countries, including the United States, Peru, Angola, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Mozambique, Panama, Dominican Republic, Venezuela and Brazil.

## Record

Since Kuczynski announced the decision to pardon Fujimori on December 24, only two voices in Peru's Catholic hierarchy have voiced an opinion, and both were unfavourable. Previously, several bishops in the country, including the cardinal of the national capital Lima, have been on record favouring an early release for Fujimori, a man many in the country, including Kuczynski himself still consider the best president Peru has ever had.

Now 79, Fujimori had been serv-



**Inés San Martín**

ing a 25-year sentence for human rights violations that a military death squad carried out under his watch, and also for financial crimes. Ahead of the pardon, an estimated 73% of Peruvians were in favour of it. One week later, amid a strong media campaign and protests in the streets, the number had gone down to 56%.

Federico Prieto, a Peruvian lawyer and journalist who's long been following the Fujimori case, believes that around the Pope's visit, the polls will settle back to what they've shown for the past few years: for every person against freeing Fujimori, two are in favour.

Fujimori was extradited from Chile to Peru in 2007, when he was sentenced under different charges. However, Prieto told *Crux*, the sentence was invalid.

He gave several reasons, including the fact that the man heading the supreme court at the time had previously been removed from his post by Fujimori, so he should have recused himself and didn't. Another is that among the charges brought by Chile, there was nothing about crimes against humanity, but they were added to the ruling, making them void.

Prieto also gave several reasons to support those who say Fujimori was the best president the country

had, including defeating the terrorist organisation *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path), ending inflation that had devalued the Sol – Peru's currency – so much that it was exchanged with the New Sol at a rate of a million to one, and resolving a long-lasting border conflict with Ecuador. On the other side of the street is Archbishop Héctor Miguel Cabrejos, of Trujillo, who defined the pardon as a “political compromise” that's putting the country's institutions at risk.

**“Peruvians have the right for our authorities to behave themselves with the truth”**

The archbishop said that social peace can't be built in Peru from a proposal of reconciliation that, “far from uniting, generates a bigger clash”.

Cabrejos's words came through a statement released in late December. In it, he said he was “very worried” by the events, urging authorities to protect the trust that citizens have deposited in them.

“Peruvians have the right for our authorities to behave themselves with the truth, without hidden agendas or relativisms, and who in the exercise of their office, work based on the pillars of ethics, morality and the primacy of common good,” he wrote.

Bishop Ángel Francisco Simón Piorno, of Chimbote, was a bit more cautious, criticising the timing of the pardon, if not the pardon itself.

“This wasn't the right time to forgive Fujimori: Peru is destabilised and clashing, and Pope Francis will

arrive in this scenario. For this reason, I worry his welcome will not be the same, amidst a national crisis,” Simón said.

He acknowledged that he wasn't “surprised” by the pardon, but about the timing, echoing the sentiments that it was given as a political favour in exchange for allowing Kuczynski to stay in power.

Simón also referred to the apology Fujimori issued from his hospital bed after leaving prison, which was released through social media.

“I am aware that the results during my government, on one side, were well received,” he said in the video. “On the other hand, I recognise that I have also disappointed other fellow Peruvians. I ask them to forgive me with all my heart.”

“Asking for forgiveness for the things that weren't done right is not enough, but I believe he should have made explicit references to the deaths in La Cantuta, in Barrios Altos, which are the two most emblematic cases of his government and for which he was sentenced,” Simón said.

In 1991, 15 people, including an eight-year-old, were killed by a military death squad in the Barrios Altos neighbourhood in Lima. They were suspected members of the Shining Path.

In 1992, ten other suspected members of the Shining Path – a professor and ten students at Lima's La Cantuta University – were kidnapped and murdered in the capital.

However, those who are in favour of Fujimori's pardon are quick to note that the order he'd given to crack down on the terrorist organisation Sendero Luminoso specifically urged the military to put them in prison,

calling for an end to the killings that were the preferred action of the previous president, Alan García, who killed many more and “walks freely”, said Prieto, the journalist.

Despite his open defence of Fujimori, Prieto also acknowledged that he wasn't completely without fault: The man Fujimori put in charge of the intelligence forces, he said, was “an evil genius”.

The president was “probably informed after the fact of the killings”, but never replaced that man, Vladimiro Montesinos.

**“I recognise that I have also disappointed other fellow Peruvians. I ask them to forgive me with all my heart”**

Videos showing Montesinos bribing congressmen forced him to flee the country and prompted Fujimori's resignation.

Bishop Ricardo García, of Yauyos, president of the Church's commission of Dialogue with Society of the local bishops' conference, said that he sees a “clash” between the factions in favour and against the pardon, and that it's hard to determine who's working for whom.

He hopes Francis will be able to “calm things down,” urging dialogue and unity in a country that's heavily divided.

“My perception, I live in a coastal and hill region, is that the people, beyond being in favour or against Fujimori, want peace,” he said.

**i** Inés San Martín is a reporter with *Crux.com*



# 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

### Renewed Rosary devotion is welcome

**Dear Editor,** The news that Fr Patrick Peyton, the famous 'Rosary Priest', is now firmly on the path to sainthood is one that will have gladdened many hearts, but perhaps a greater blessing is the prospect of this renewing Rosary devotion in Ireland.

Fr Peyton was, of course, a product of a different time, a man who grew up when family Rosaries were the norm, and it seems unlikely that the kind of mass Rosary rally he organised and promoted in the 1950s and 1960s, for instance, will be seen in Ireland on a regular basis again.

At the same time, however, there seems no reason why – especially in this year when Ireland will host the Church's World Meeting of Families – Catholic parents might not lead their children in this most simple but instructive of devotions.

Perhaps, rather than leading their children through a set of five decades – the Glorious Mysteries, say – parents could simply focus on a decade a night, using that as a gentle way of teaching their children the realities of the Faith. It's hard to beat the Rosary as a catechetical tool, after all, with the

classic words of the prayers offering us a road from which the lives of Jesus and Mary can be contemplated in a steady and methodical way.

A famous theologian once described the Rosary as being like looking on the life of Jesus "through Our Lady's spectacles". He had a point!

If Fr Peyton helps – from Heaven – to draw the Irish back to their beads, he may yet do a greater service in death than in life.

*Yours etc.,  
Clare McMahon,  
Tallaght, Dublin 24.*

### Abortion: we know the battle we are facing

**Dear Editor,** It's clear now to all but the most naïve that our country is now the prime target of the international pro-abortion drive to destroy our protective Eighth Amendment.

Our near neighbour Britain now aborts 200,000 of its unborn young yearly, this figure climbing inexorably since the UK legalised abortion in 1967. The massive Soros

foreign funding of local pro-abortion, anti-eighth groups illustrates the viciousness of the attack on unborn children in the womb.

The constant "drip-drip" attacks on the Eighth and on those who defend it by our pro-abortion media campaigners, seek to frame the debate against the backdrop of the twin choreographed shams of the ludicrously unrepresentative

Citizen's Assembly and Catherine's Noone's Eighth Amendment Committee recommendation that unborn children should be allowed to be aborted "without restriction, up to 12 weeks".

If you don't want any part of the legalisation of abortion of our unborn in Ireland, then vote out of office and government, all those politicians who

do want it, every chance you get. Support pro-life, anti-abortion politicians and groups with your voice, vote, money and pen. Remove your advertising and business sponsorship from pro-abortion media enablers who pave the public way for the anti-life, pro-abortion lobby.

*Yours, etc.,  
Oliver Maher,  
Harold's Cross, Dublin 6.*

### Build it and they will come!

**Dear Editor,** With your paper reporting that Pope Francis is surprisingly popular among Irish politicians (IC 28/12/2017), and with surveys suggesting that he is Ireland's favourite world leader, the bishops' decision to request the use of Dublin's Phoenix Park for the closing Mass of the World Meeting of Families may prove far-sighted. We may need that much space!

*Yours etc.,  
Barbara Madden,  
Swords, Co. Dublin.*



### No morality where arbitrary is presented as absolute

**Dear Editor,** Many of us have delightful memories of the wonderful occasion that was The Special Olympics hosted in Croke Park in 2003.

The Games celebrated excellence in many areas of human sporting endeavour. They warmed the hearts of our nation and clearly showed that each person, irrespective of level of ability/disability, can pursue the goal of human fulfilment. The trembling frame of that sporting icon and moral

paragon, Muhammed Ali, added definition and beauty to an already wonderful celebration of life and living.

On a smaller but no less significant scale the annual Kerry Stars black-tie Ball allows the wider community to acknowledge and celebrate the lives and achievements of Kerry's Special athletes. It is an occasion that clearly shows that we are all equal whether in sport or on the dance floor.

Those great occasions may soon be no more if the recommendation of the Oireachtas Committee on the Eighth Amendment become reality. Ireland may well be the new Iceland where the child in the womb that is adjudged less than perfect or unwanted is summarily aborted. The 12-week Deadline could well become precisely that.

Those people who sat on that Committee must as legislators surely

know that proposing the totally arbitrary 12-week time frame for abortion is meaningless and ultimately time-less. They must know that where arbitrary is presented as absolute there is no morality.

The human being is the ultimate dignity. Let us ensure that that reality is protected at all stages of life.

*Yours etc.,  
Michael Gleeson [Cllr],  
Killarney,  
Co. Kerry.*

### The meaning of Christmas is buried under consumerism

**Dear Editor,** The Pope's message to start 2018 with spiritual decluttering really struck a chord with me, and I'm sure many others (IC 04/01/18).

It seems like our culture nowadays, or at least how the media portrays it, has no interest in religion or spirituality. The meaning of Christmas, that is the birth of Jesus Christ and our Saviour, has been completely forgotten and replaced by needless consumerism. However true contentment doesn't come about through accumulating the next best gadget, but is a result of a life rooted in prayer and love of Christ. Francis says that through our devotion to Mary we are asked "to leave behind all sorts of useless baggage and to rediscover what really matters". What really matters is our neighbour: the fragile, the marginalised and the oppressed.

Like Christ who provided help and healing for those in need we too should be doing the same thing by praying, visiting the sick and doing volunteer work.

By setting aside the false comforts of consumerism and focusing on the 'other', we can all make a difference and make the world more like the one Christ envisioned.

*Yours, etc.,  
Mary Cadwell,  
Leopardstown, Dublin 18.*

### WMOF18 is affordable

**Dear Editor,** I think it's great news that the World Meeting of Families this August is going to be affordable for everyone (IC 28/12/17). The Church in recent decades has garnered among its critics, quite wrongly I think, a reputation for being extremely wealthy in the face of poverty rampant throughout the world.

But the fact that, as Archbishop Diarmuid Martin said, the organisers are trying to make the events accessible to everyone and not charge for children's admission, indicates that the Pope's visit isn't going to be used as a quick way to make some money. The affordability of the events is a symbolic gesture to show the importance of the family and the vital role that they play in society today.

*Yours, etc.,  
John Taylor,  
Dundalk, Co. Louth.*

### Plus ça change...

**Dear Editor,** Dr Alison Forrestal makes a fascinating point in your interview about her new book on St Vincent de Paul (IC 21/12/2017). St Vincent's opposition to direct attempts to convert Protestants indeed seems to have foreshadowed Pope Francis own approach, with its central insight that we must attract people with our goodness before we convince them with our arguments. Sadly, her observation that St Vincent's approach wasn't universally supported within the Church is as true now as 400 years ago.

*Yours etc.,  
Louise Clarke,  
Clonsilla, Dublin 15.*

### 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



**INDIA:** A man prepares tea for customers on a cold morning in New Delhi. Winter takes a heavy toll each year across northern India, as poverty forces many homeless people to live outdoors.



**USA:** Doris Williams, a parishioner at St Matthew Church in Baltimore, helps prepare hot meals at Our Daily Bread which is operated by Catholic Charities of Baltimore, as the city endures bitterly cold temperatures.



**EGYPT:** A clergyman reacts at the site of an attack on the Coptic Orthodox Church of Mar Mina in Helwan, near Cairo. At least nine people were killed in attacks on the church and a Christian-owned shop, authorities said.



**ITALY:** Pope Francis greets a patient during an unannounced visit to children at the Palidoro Bambino Gesù Hospital, in Fiumicino, outside Rome. Photos: CNS



**PERU:** People walk near a banner with an image of Pope Francis on the facade of the cathedral in Lima, Peru. On January 15, Pope Francis will begin a six-day visit to Chile and Peru.



**ITALY:** Choir members from US parishes sing in an Epiphany Festival concert at the Church of St Ignatius in Rome. Choirs from the parishes of St Matthew and Mother Teresa of Calcutta in Topeka, Kansas, and the children's choir from the Diocese of Orange, California performed at the concert.



# How can it all have a happy ending?



There's a line in the writings of Julian of Norwich, the famous 14th-Century mystic and perhaps the first theologian to write in English, which is endlessly quoted by preachers, poets and writers: "but all shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well". It's her signature teaching.

We all have an intuitive grasp of what that means. It's our basis for hope. In the end, the good will triumph. But the phrase takes on added meaning when it's seen in its original context. What was Julian trying to say when she coined that phrase?

She was struggling with the problem of evil, sin and suffering: Why does God allow them? If God is both all-loving and all-powerful what possible explanation can there be for the fact that God lets us suffer, lets us sin, and lets evil be present all over the world? Why didn't God create a world without sin, where we would all be perfectly happy from birth onwards?

## Sermons

Julian had heard enough sermons in church to know the standard apologetic answer for that, namely, that God allows it because God gave us the great gift of freedom. With that comes the inevitability of sin and all its sad consequences. That's a valid answer, though one that's often seen as too abstract to offer much consolation to us when we are



**Fr Rolheiser**

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

suffering.

But Julian, despite being a loyal daughter of the church and having been schooled in that answer, doesn't go there. She offers something different.

For her, God allows evil, sin and suffering because God will use them in the end to create for everyone a deeper mode of happiness than they would have experienced if sin, evil and suffering hadn't been there. In the end, these negatives will work towards creating some deeper positives.

Let me quote Julian in the original (the Middle English within which she wrote): Jesus, in this vision informed me of all that I needed answered by this word and said: "Sinne is behovely, but alle shalle be wele, and alle shalle be wele and all manner of thing shalle be wele."

She shares that Jesus says that sin is "behovely". In Middle English, behovely has these connotations: "useful", "advantageous", "necessary". In her vision, sin, evil and suffering are ultimately advantageous and even necessary in bringing us to deeper meaning and greater happiness. (Not unlike what we sing in our great Easter hymn: "O happy fault, O necessary sin of Adam.")

What Julian wants us to draw

out from this is not the idea that sin and evil are of little consequence but rather that God, being so unimaginable in love and power, is able to draw good out of evil, happiness out of suffering, and redemption out of sin in ways that we cannot yet grasp. This is Julian's answer to the question: Why does God allow evil? She answers by not answering because, in essence, no adequate answer can ever be imagined.

**“It's unimaginable in our present human condition to picture anyone, God or human, who cannot be offended”**

Rather, she sets the question into a theology of God within which, beyond what we can imagine at present and beyond what theology can really account for, God's power and love will eventually make all things well, dry every tear, redeem every evil, erase every bad memory, unfreeze every cold heart, and turn every manner of suffering into happiness.

There's even a hint in this that the final triumph of God will be to empty hell itself so that, indeed,



A stained glass window featuring Julian of Norwich, the famous 14th-Century mystic and perhaps the first theologian to write in English.

absolutely every manner of being will be well.

In a subsequent vision, Julian received a five-fold assurance from God that God may, can, will, and shall make all things well and we ourselves will see it.

All of this is predicated of course on a particular concept of God. The God that Julian of Norwich invites us to believe in is a God who is precisely beyond our imagination both in power and in love. Any God we can imagine is incapable of making all manner of being well (as many atheistic critics have already pointed out). This not just true in terms of trying to imagine God's power, it's particularly true in terms of trying to imagine God's love.

It's unimaginable in our present human condition to picture anyone, God or human, who cannot be

offended, is incapable of anger, holds nothing against anyone no matter what evil he or she may have perpetrated, and who (as Julian describes God) is completely relaxed and has a face like a marvellous symphony.

## Interpretations

The God of our imagination, re-enforced by certain false interpretations of scripture, does get offended, does get angry, does take vengeance and does meet sin with wrath. Such a God is incapable of making all manner of things well. But such a God is also not the God whom Jesus revealed.

Were we to look into the eyes of God, says Julian, what we would see there would "melt our hearts with love and break them in two with ecstasy".



# Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, January 11, 2018

## Personal Profile

Empowering  
people  
globally

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## White Christmas, blue aftermath...



**T**he Christmas holidays are a highlight in almost everybody's calendars, but the season can be tinged with unexpected feelings of unhappiness and loneliness, with these spilling over or bubbling up in January.

The 'Christmas blues' or 'post-holiday depression' is a phenomenon that can affect anyone, and the prospect of it can create a mixture of negative feelings during the festive period. There are numerous triggers for this problem such as high expectations at Christmas time, fear of the future, and a confrontation of inner emotions that have been ignored throughout the year.

In many cases the Christmas



### Colm Fitzpatrick explores ways to combat seasonal sadness

blues cannot simply be reduced to a phase of fleeting emotions as these intense feelings can have a serious impact on mental health and well-being, even leading to suicide. One Australian study in Queensland which examined the frequency of suicides on holidays and special days of the year revealed that there was a significant increase in suicides on Christmas Eve and New Year's Day.

Explaining the cause of these experiences, Martina McNamara, accredited member of the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP), said: "There are lots of expectations at Christmas; people build it up in their heads. They imagine it to be the best Christmas and it doesn't live up to that expectation."

Martine added that these feelings of sadness can also be exacerbated by credit-card debt,

alcohol addiction and loneliness.

Some people are affected for more subtle reasons such as guilt for Christmas over-indulgence or having to return to work, whereas others are triggered by holiday stress in general. The busyness of Christmas from buying presents to organising parties and cooking dinner is enough to lead to frustration and hopelessness.

#### Feelings

These types of feelings may also be more prevalent around January, according to Martine, because the days are darker and colder. Seasonal affective disorder (SAD), also known as winter or seasonal depression, is a mood disorder which causes individuals

to exhibit depressive symptoms at the same time each year, usually in the winter months. The condition is recognised as a common disorder affecting people worldwide.

The symptoms may appear suddenly or develop gradually over time. Some indications of it may be lethargy, a disconnection from family and friends, and feelings of intense irritability. In serious circumstances it can lead to insomnia, nausea, emotional worthlessness and suicidal thoughts.

These types of effects are all warning signs that rest or intervention may be needed, such as a medical consultation or counselling.

» Continued on Page 25



## Family News

### AND EVENTS

#### Family-friendly museum events

Though the holidays are over, the National Gallery of Ireland is offering more occasions for the whole family to have fun and be inventive together. The drop-in session 'Tearing through nature' on January 14 from 11.30-3.30 is a creative workshop inspired by Turner's landscapes, where you can create your own dramatic landscapes by tearing and sticking collage materials.

Families can stay for as long or as little as they like and admission is free with no booking required.

Alongside this the gallery is also offering a free tour from 12.30-1.15pm, specially designed for children and their guardians, parents, and carers.

The aim is to make the works on display fun and engaging for kids, and to welcome families and visitors of all ages and encourage them to feel comfortable in the gallery rooms. No booking is necessary and to attend simply meet at the Merrion Square information desk on the day.

Joseph Mallord William Turner, *Storm at the Mouth of the Grand Canal, Venice, c.1840*, National Gallery of Ireland.



#### FOOD GALORE IN FAMILY DAY OUT:

A very different family day out could be had at Limerick's Saturday Food Market in Limerick city centre, a great way to enjoy the very best of fresh natural produce, ranging from great farmhouse cheeses and chutneys, just-caught fish and artisan meats, organic fruit & vegetables, to delicious healthy breads and fresh pressed juices.

Visitors to the market can snack on gourmet sandwiches, wraps, pastries, chocolates, delicious crepes, soups and freshly brewed teas & coffees or even buy fresh flowers and vibrant plants.

Open every Saturday from 8.00-15.00, the market's now weather-proofed, housed under the cover of Ireland's largest single column support canopy, and making sure your family can stay nicely dry, no matter how wet the streets are!

#### A bottle you just can't put down

After filling up over the Christmas with everything from mince pies and chocolate to mulled wine and whiskey, it might be time for the family to get back into shape, and there are plenty of apps and gadgets to help you do so.

The Ozmo smart bottle is one especially clever accessory for exercising, keeping you hydrated and allowing you to track what is going into your body.

The bottle connects with an app to record both water and coffee consumption and track hydration over the day, synching with Fitbit, Apple Watch, and other fitness trackers to re-evaluate your hydration needs post-workout.

With small LED lights to track progress and vibration alerts to remind you to stay hydrated, the Ozmo bottle is convenient to carry, extremely durable, and potentially a good investment for anyone with post-sales vouchers to spare.

# Addiction to drugs

## Does it destroy free will?

**D**oes addiction to drugs destroy the capacity for free will in the addicts, rendering them incapable of saying 'no' to drugs? This question is currently before the High Court of the State of Massachusetts, US, and will be adjudicated on shortly.

The specific case in question is that of Julie Eldred, a 29-year-old woman who was arrested for stealing jewellery last year to support her opioid habit. The court sentenced her to one year's probation, allowing her to avoid prison on condition that she refrained from using drugs and submitted to random drug testing. Eldred agreed to these terms but 11 days later she tested positive for the powerful opioid fentanyl.

She was sent to prison where she spent 10 days before her lawyer found a bed for her in a drug treatment clinic. Eldred is now suing the Massachusetts state government. She alleges that the court violated her constitutional rights by ordering her to remain drug-free as a condition of probation, arguing that her substance-use disorder makes it virtually impossible for her to control her drug use by exercising her own will power.

**“All experience changes the brain... brain change alone is not a valid or sufficient indicator of loss of self-control”**

Most addiction specialist bodies such as the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) look on substance use disorder as a brain disorder and to quote NIDA Director Nora Volkow – “the brain is no longer able to produce something that is needed for our functioning – free will”.

General medical opinion



Science  
of life

Prof.  
William  
Reville

is divided on this matter but if NIDA's interpretation is true, it means that an addict is not personally responsible for sourcing and using drugs despite knowing the negative consequences, in this case losing probation.

#### Notion

The notion that addiction is a brain disease that renders the addict helpless and unable to resist drugs is vigorously contested in a submission lodged before the Massachusetts court in Eldred's case by a group of three psychologists and one psychiatrist.

Drugs, they argue, may well change the brain, but it doesn't necessarily follow that this change means that drug use is no longer voluntary. All experience changes the brain, even reading this article, and brain change alone is not a valid or sufficient indicator of loss of self-control. The submission was summarised in an op-ed published in the *Washington Post* on October 2, 2017.

On the contrary, this submission quotes much research demonstrating that many drug addicts can not only learn to say 'no' to drugs but addicts recover from addiction at high rates.

Furthermore, the addicts typically recover by themselves with no medical intervention. However, intervention programmes based on the idea that addicts retain the ability to regulate their drug use are very successful also.

And the courts have also found they can help addicts quit drugs by attaching explicit penalty costs to drug use and explicit benefits to sobriety.

The authors cite the 1966 case of Leroy Powell, Austin, Texas, to illustrate that drug addicts are not helpless victims. Powell was a diagnosed alcoholic who was arrested for public drunkenness.

He had over 100 previous convictions on the same charge. He maintained that once he started drinking he couldn't stop and that therefore his public drunkenness was involuntary.

**“I am convinced by the evidence that drug addicts retain some control over their behaviour”**

On the day of the trial his lawyer gave him a drink to control his morning tremors and to steady him up. But Powell was sober in court and he explained on cross-examination that the reason he did not keep on drinking that day was that he knew he had to appear in court. He demonstrated behaviour that much research on addiction confirms: addicts are capable of changing their behaviour and incentives help them to do so.

US drug courts can prescribe mandatory treatment for drug addicts and enforce sanctions for continued drug use.

Compared to those cases adjudicated without mandatory treatment/sanctions, addicts processed through drug courts have significantly lower rates of recidivism.

If the court decides in favour of Eldred, serious problems will ensue. Such a decision would bolster the erroneous idea the drug addicts are involuntary drug users who cannot be held responsible for their use of

drugs. Much doubt would also fall on the future of treatment programs already known to be successful but based on the principle that addicts can and often do say 'no' to drugs.

A decision in favour of Eldred would also hinder judicial interventions known to help addicts to stay out of jail by making probation and parole contingent on staying off drugs. And finally, accepting that addicts can't help themselves would have huge consequences for criminal responsibility.

#### Evidence

I am convinced by the evidence that drug addicts retain some control over their behaviour.

Controlling the addiction is obviously difficult but many succeed in doing so. Many of us personally know alcoholics who either quit drinking altogether or else returned to moderate drinking habits, often with the help of Alcoholics Anonymous but often also under their own steam.

Many alcoholics recover, acting under incentives such as doing it for their families or to avoid destitution and an early death, and so on.

One reformed alcoholic told me that he quit drinking because it was just such “bloody hard work” drinking eight hours or so every day and he got sick of it.

I also think that the fact that you are not necessarily a hopeless case if you are a drug addict offers you hope – a light at the end of the tunnel. Admittedly the light will be difficult to reach but it is possible – you can still help yourself.

**i** William Reville is an Emeritus Professor of Biochemistry at UCC.



» Continued from Page 23



Although Christmas depression is ubiquitous, those who are marginalised or vulnerable, such as the elderly, are more susceptible to it. Isolation is a causative factor for feelings of loneliness or agitation which can be difficult to fix without personal interaction with others.

Moreover, experiencing feelings of nostalgia from Christmases long past, those feeling the loss of a partner can find it difficult to cope with holidays that may look radically different from their usual fond memories.

Despite the pervasive effects it can have, the Christmas blues can be prevented or at least managed.

One simple way to avoid these negatives feelings requires a re-examination of dietary habits. During Christmas and the New Year holidays social drinking is commonplace with even those who don't often drink making time for a glass of mulled wine or hot whiskey. Moderate alcohol consumption can add to the seasonal festivities, but it is important to remember that alcohol is a depressant, which in excessive amounts can cause low mood or aggressive behaviour, so whatever your Christmas was like, it's a good idea to scale back now.

**“Some creativity can be needed in maintaining the links rekindled in the festive season”**

A correct balance of nutrition is also vital in ameliorating feelings of lethargy or sluggishness. If excessive consumption of mince pies and gingerbread over Christmas is replaced with healthy alternatives such as fruit and foods containing Omega-3 like fish, alongside keeping a watchful eye on portion sizes which tend to radically increase during Christmas, your mood will be boosted.

Being active through exercise can also combat gloom because physical activity releases endorphins which make us feel good. This may sound strenuous and demanding, evoking images of intense gyms work-outs, but exercises like walking in the park, cycling or jogging to work, and swimming are all beneficial ways to decrease anxiety and awaken your inner-self.

Also, if weight loss is one of your New Year's resolutions, exercise is the most efficient way to lose a few pounds and garner some confidence and self-esteem.

Depressive episodes and negative feelings are also induced by isolation, but the Christmas period is the perfect opportunity to reconnect with family and companions, and it is worth trying to keep up renewed links in the New Year.

Spending time with others is an effective mood booster, especially face-to-face communication where conversation can flow, with stress absent from the forefront of the mind. As Christmas is a busy time of year, personal interaction may require pro-active engagement so picking up the phone to arrange a catch-up is a good idea. Alternatively, there are various social clubs and befriending services which provide a way to tackle Christmas isolation.

### Frugal month

January can, of course, be a frugal month after the expense of Christmas, so some creativity can be needed in maintaining the links rekindled in the festive season, but having friends around for an evening or even weekend trips to galleries or walks in parks – the latter complete with mood-boosting exercise – can keep the fires burning.

The Christmas and post-Christmas blues can also arise from fear or worry about the absence of anything important in the future. By organising an event to look forward to such as a family day-out or a new project, the prospects of bleak future will be immediately reduced.

Another way to alleviate the seasonal stress, which requires little effort, is sorting out your financial situation. Christmas can be an expensive time of year, with costs building up from buying presents, food and outfits, all of which can cause worry. Facing your financial anxiety head on by setting a budget for the coming months should alleviate financial fears which will only increase if ignored.

Mental health and well-being during and after the festive season can be improved by selflessness: sharing what you can give. Taking some time to do volunteer work,

for example, helping out in a soup kitchen, or committing to some small act of kindness everyday such as donating money to your favourite charity or checking in on an elderly neighbour can create a sense of purpose. It is a time where otherwise dull daily routines can be transformed into moments of meaning and connection.

**“If you breathe in for three seconds and exhale for six, it will calm you down”**

For Martine, who is also a Lay Associate Member of the Spiritan Fathers, self-compassion and meditation are key to beating the Christmas blues.

“Self-compassion is a good thing. It is always good wishes going out rather than in. You should be alleviating suffering in yourself.

“If you breathe in for three seconds and exhale for six, it will calm you down and bring you back to reality,” explained Martine.

She added that low moods are created when people view the Christmas holidays as over, and so get worried about the humdrum of what is going to happen next in their life.

By practicing mindfulness through yoga and breathing techniques, the symptoms of your stress may reduce leaving you feeling physically and mentally content.

For the Christian at Christmas, prayer is a wonderful way to connect with yourself and God, allowing one to place their worries or fears into perspective.

Pope John Paul II once said, “Prayer gives us strength for great ideals... Prayer gives us light by which we see and judge from God's perspective and from eternity. That is why you must not give up on praying!”

A strong spiritual life and steadfast trust in God may not mean the Christmas blues will disappear, but it can be a big help in overcoming them.

**❶** For more information about mental health and well-being, see <https://www.irish-counselling.ie/>

## Faith — IN THE — family

Bairbre Cahill



**M**y children say that I have a ‘brass neck’. They are right in so far as I do believe it pays to take a chance, to ask that vital question, to push the boundaries. However, I would prefer if they would describe me as audacious rather than as having a brass neck! I looked up the meaning of audacious and interestingly there are two. One is that a person has a willingness to take bold risks. The other is less positive and describes a person as showing impudence, nerve, gall, defiance – the list goes on!

In these months approaching the World Meeting of Families I believe that we all need to develop an audacious streak. We need to believe that God really is present and active in our lives. We need to have a confidence that Scripture has something to say to us. We need to trust that when Pope Francis talks about the Gospel of the Family he really means it – family with all its challenges and complexities is a place of encounter with God.

If we only see the World Meeting of Families as being about what happens in Dublin in August, then we are missing something vital. The whole process of preparation has the potential to transform us individually, as families and as Church – if we have the audacity to believe that the Holy Spirit wants to use this time to open our hearts and minds.

I know there will be events and liturgies in parishes throughout the country in preparation but as families we also have a role. We can take responsibility for preparation within our own homes and families. One way to do that is to spend time with Scripture. For example, we could reflect on the Sunday readings so that when we go to Mass on Sunday the Scripture is already resonating within us.

### Trap

Do we fall into the trap of feeling it is a bit impudent to think God has something to say to me through Scripture? Perhaps we are inclined to think that God speaks to and through the priest and our job is to listen. In reality, God's desire is to speak to each one of us, in our lives, through the action of the Holy Spirit.

We have just celebrated the wonder of the Incarnation, but that wonder doesn't end with the Christmas season. The Incarnation is the reality of the ongoing presence of God at the heart of our lives.

### Challenges

So how to begin? As you read the Gospel for this coming Sunday just think – asking the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind – what word or image draws me in? What challenges me? How does this connect to my life?

The Gospel for January 14, John 1:35-42, is about John the Baptist pointing out Jesus to



St John showing Jesus to St Andrew, Ottavio Vannini.

two of his own followers. When I sat with this Gospel I found myself drawn in by Jesus' question: “What do you want?”.

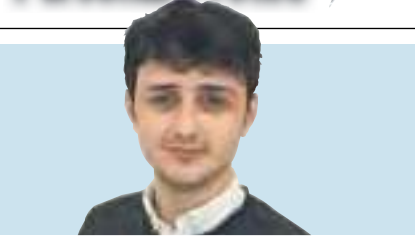
How does my heart respond to that question? When I come to prayer is it just to tick a box and know I have prayed or am I in touch with what I desire? It is a very straight question which invites an honest answer. Do I come to prayer as I am, honestly, capable of answering Jesus' question? Jesus' words of invitation “come and see” also challenge me. The two followers give up any other plans and go off with Jesus, spending the rest of the day with him. How often am I invited to spend time but feel myself to be too busy, too many important things to do? And there is the connection with my own life – an invitation that echoes within me. What echoes for you?

My prayer for us all is that we have the audacity to believe that Scripture is something “alive and active” (Hebrews 4:12-13), that daily life is an encounter with God and that we too can be transformed day by day through the Word of God.



# Empowering people from the bottom-up

## Personal Profile



**Paul Ginnell tells Colm Fitzpatrick about his new role in fighting poverty**

**W**ith thousands of people affected by consistent poverty in Ireland, a new director of an Irish-based

anti-poverty network is stepping up to the mark to let his voice be heard.

European Anti-Poverty Network Ireland (EAPN), established in 1990, is a national Irish network which has been working for over two decades in lobbying for progressive social change across Europe.

Following his role as Policy Officer since 2005, Paul Ginnell has recently been appointed Director at EAPN, taking over from Robin Hanan who retires this January.

Speaking about his new position, Paul said "I'm excited. It's going to be difficult as levels of poverty are high. It's a big challenge", adding that the extra challenges require extra responsibility.

### Experience

Paul, who is a qualified Community Worker with a Masters in Applied Social Studies, was Coordinator of Westmeath EQUAL and worked with the Association for People with Disabilities in Kenya and Concern Worldwide in Sudan, before coming to EAPN.

With over a decade of experience on the team, he is now well-



Paul Ginnell.

known to members for his policy and training work, as well as playing an important part in policy development and advocacy in the EAPN's European network, as one of the co-chairs of the 31-country policy group, and speaking at a wide range of official and NGO seminars and conferences.

**“Over the last 10 years things have gotten really bad, and there’s quite a number of people who have been impacted”**

In Ireland, as well as his work in research and policy development, Paul has built strong alliances as convener of the Community Platform, the main alliance of national organisations working for equality and social inclusion, and the Better Europe Alliance which unites the social and environmental NGOs and trade unions working to impact on European policy.

Although his work can be difficult, Paul is resolute that it is his

supportive team which make EAPN's goals achievable.

"It's a team effort though we all have different titles – we do as much as we can," he said, adding that the team are "well aware of the challenges".

This belief of working together is epitomised in the structure of EAPN Ireland which is made up of more than 200 local, regional and national anti-poverty organisations and individuals.

It lobbies at local, national and European level in an effort to ensure that policy development is progressive and 'poverty proofed', focusing on a range of issues such as the Irish budget, national action plan for social inclusion and the developmental welfare state.

Although there are various organisations and networks which attempt to alleviate poverty in Ireland, Paul believes that EAPN is unique because of its grass-roots outlook, which empowers people in disparate economic situations.

"We're very much committed to core values," he explained. "People in communities have value and play

a part. We go out and engage with people in communities and we have members on the ground to hear others."

EAPN Ireland also works to empower local and regional organisations committed to tackling poverty and social exclusion through training, information dissemination, advocacy and alliance building.

**“Poverty and social exclusion has many causes such as a lack of access to adequate income, quality service or a fulfilling job”**

This is vitally important given the fact that there over 400,000 people in consistent poverty in Ireland, which has a negative impact on society and the personal lives of those experiencing this dearth.

"Before the crisis in 2008, the government was managing to make an impact. There were improvements in services and in communities – so it was beginning to get

there," explained Paul.

"Over the last 10 years things have gotten really bad, and there's quite a number of people who have been impacted."

He also added that material deprivation is a serious issue, which describes the situation of not being able to afford at least two of the 11 goods or services considered essential for a basic standard of living, such as two pairs of strong shoes or the ability to maintain an adequately warm house.

"People should be able to afford the essentials. It's going to take some time to repair the damages that have been done," he says, pointing out that 24.4% of the population experienced material deprivation in 2015.

### Setbacks

Despite these setbacks, Paul believes that there have been some positive changes and is looking forward to the government's consultation on a new National Action Plan for Social Exclusion. This new anti-poverty strategy aims to ensure that everyone has access to a guaranteed income, a quality work place with correct wages paid, and sufficient housing for everyone, all of which is affordable and based on human rights, dignity and equality.

Poverty and social exclusion has many causes such as a lack of access to adequate income, quality service or a fulfilling job. The impact of these absences can create a feeling of disempowerment, and in the long term, have detrimental consequences on the social and emotional wellbeing of people.

EAPN believes that poverty and social exclusion are not inevitable, but can be effectively addressed, ameliorated and removed by tackling their structural causes.

"We really need to see the policies in place", said Paul, adding that there is still a lot to be done.

**i** For more information about EAPN, see: <http://www.eapn.ie/>

## Sweet Treats

**Emma-Louise Murphy**



## Perfect solution to the winter blues... scones!

**A**s we finally digest the large quantities of rich food from December, we can roll our way into January. With empty presses as far as the eye can see, every household needs something easy and delicious to fill the selection box sized hole in tummies. No one can resist a smile as the kitchen fills with the sweet scent of baked goods.

I personally love a warm, soft, crumbly scone with jam and cream as a Saturday morning treat. In less than an hour, you can whip up these gorgeous scones that are bound to impress. With a few simple ingredients found in the back of your cupboard, and a bit of elbow grease, these blueberry scones are a perfect start to any morning.

### Ingredients

- 500g of sifted plain flour
- 3 level teaspoons of sifted baking powder
- 125g of firm, cold butter

- 125g of caster sugar
- 8 tablespoons of full fat milk
- 2 large eggs
- 200-400g of blueberries, depending on fruity preference.

### Method

Preheat your oven to 220°C fan/ 240°C electric/ gas mark 9. In a large mixing bowl, stir to combine flour and baking powder. Chop butter into coin sized pieces and add to your flour mixture. Using the very tips of your fingers, rub the butter and flour mixture together to form texture similar to breadcrumb crumbs. Stir in caster sugar with a spoon until combined.

In a separate bowl, whisk your eggs and milk together until combined. Pour this wet mixture into dry ingredients, a little at a time and mix through using a knife, or spoon. As you add more, cut through the mixture until it begins to resemble a soft dough. Add in your blueberries, or fruit of choice and knead gently to form a dough ball. The fruit will create a sticky dough, so

add a sprinkling of flour to make it easier to handle.

Roll your dough onto a floured surface and flatten slightly. Using a circle cookie cutter, cut out 12 round scones. They should be about one inch in thickness. If you don't have a circle cutter, don't worry, a plastic cup will also cut out perfect scones.

Place six at a time on a floured baking sheet. Leave a good amount of space between each one as they will expand slightly. Brush lightly with milk and sprinkle a pinch of caster sugar over each one for a fantastic crumbly crunch. Cook for 12-15 minutes, or until golden brown.

### Preferences

Remove from oven and place on wire tray to cool slightly before serving.

You can enjoy these scones warm or cold with butter or jam and cream. This recipe can also be adapted to suit your fruit or nut preferences. Raisin, apple and cinnamon would be a warming alternative to the sweet flavours used here. Play around with flavours to enjoy this recipe throughout the year!





# TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



## So much for the BAI's 'objectivity' guidelines

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) has a 'Code of Fairness, Objectivity and Impartiality in News and Current Affairs'. One quote is of particular interest – “a presenter and/or a reporter on a current affairs programme shall not express his or her own views on matters that are either of public controversy or the subject of current public debate such that a partisan position is advocated”.

This came to mind as I listened to presenter Sarah McInerney on **Newstalk Breakfast** Wednesday of last week. On the topic of religious patronage in education and the so-called 'Baptism barrier', McInerney left us in no doubt about her own views on this matter of public controversy and current public debate.

In relation to Government plans to remove the 'barrier', she said it was 'absolutely ridiculous that the Catholic schools are objecting...what they are doing on a daily basis is discrimination'.

She offered no suggestion as to what other grounds of 'discrimination' could be used if schools were over-subscribed though implied it should be geographical.

She suggested the Church could run a “much smaller amount of schools”, but three times she urged the Catholic Church to “get out of the schools”. Co-presenter Shane



George Hook returns to the airwaves with Newstalk on Saturday mornings.

Coleman, when he could get a word in, sought to put a counter view, pointing out for example the anomaly whereby only the Catholic schools are to be restricted in this way.

Interestingly, she returned to the topic the next day, interviewing the Iona Institute's Maria Steen, who was well able for the robust questioning.

McInerney no longer has her Saturday morning show on Newstalk and that time slot has been taken over by the return of George Hook for a two-hour show **Saturday Sit-In**. With last Saturday's first episode we were

on familiar territory – Hook spoke to Gwythian Prins, Emeritus Professor at the London School of Economics, about Brexit, and while Prins was critical of how EU fans looked down on pro-Brexit voters as racist and uneducated, he wasn't above some denigrating comments himself, referring to “remoaners” and “remainiacs”.

Another Hook regular, American comedian Michael Graham, was back with his comic conservative shtick, and he had his own denigrating references to “Euroweenies”, highlighting improvements in the US economy since Trump took

over, though he declared he wasn't much of a Trump fan himself. The format was different – it was just a monologue, and I missed the usual live banter between himself and Hook.

The whole show was pre-recorded (is Newstalk afraid he might say something controversial?) which is a pity, as there is none of the usual interaction with the listeners.

### Diverse

Also back on the airwaves was Nicky Campbell with a new run of **The Big Questions** (BBC 1, Sunday mornings). It got off to a good start with three diverse topics – threats to free speech in UK universities, whether meat should be taxed on environmental grounds, and whether we in the West misunderstood Buddhism – especially in the light of atrocities committed by Buddhists against the Muslim



Shane Coleman.

### PICK OF THE WEEK

#### A WORLD WITHOUT DOWN'S SYNDROME?

RTÉ 1, Monday January 15, 12.05 am

Sally Phillips' personal documentary on pre-screening for Down's Syndrome and its consequences.

#### MARCH FOR LIFE

EWTN, Friday, January 19, 2 pm

Live and complete coverage of the annual March For Life in Washington DC.

#### THE LEAP OF FAITH

RTÉ Radio 1, Friday, January 19, 10.02 pm

Topical religious issue with Michael Comyn.

Rohingya people in Myanmar.

The first debate featured Claire Fox (author of *I Find That Offensive*) who was not a fan of 'safe spaces', 'trigger warnings', 'no-platforming' and what she called “a toxic sense of victimhood”.

She thought universities were places where you should be faced with challenging opinions rather than be saved from them. She thought current panics were likely to chip away at the resilience of young people.

Taking a different view was Dawn Foster of the *Guardian*, who saw 'safe spaces' as places where people could express their views without fear, and she seemed approving of the 'stringent' no-platforming policy in place when she was in university, though she claimed it applied only to a small number of speakers.

Both agreed that proposed Government regulation to ensure free speech in colleges

wasn't the way to go. Campbell stressed that the show featured diverse views, and that they have had 'ghostly people' whose views were challenged and even undermined.

Finally, there was Archbishop Eamon Martin's interview on the **This Week** programme last Sunday, where he called on people to be respectfully active in relation to the protection of unborn children, and the threat posed by moves to repeal the Eighth Amendment.

It was a well-timed intervention as the political establishment gears up to propose the removal of a human right from the Constitution, a move which Archbishop Martin thought was unprecedented.

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



Pat O'Kelly

# Music

## Busy Collins finds time to direct two important festivals

As well as his very active performing career at home and abroad, the Dublin-born pianist Finghin Collins is also artistic director of two important events occurring outside the capital.

The first is the New Ross Piano Festival, which since its foundation in 2006 takes place in late September and is centred on the acoustically vibrant St Mary's Church of Ireland in the Co. Wexford town.

The other is Music for Galway, a more extended series of concerts spread throughout the year and which has locally based Áine Ó Maille as its chairperson and Anna Lardi Fogarty as its executive director. Finghin Collins is



Finghin Collins.

currently artistic director.

This year's 'Let's dance' theme celebrates many of the links joining music and dance together but Music for Galway also incorporates a short Midwinter Festival in its varied programme.

Under the banner of 'Beloved', and running at the Town Hall Theatre from Friday January 19 to Sunday January 21, it focuses on works written by composers in love. These include the great Romantics Johannes Brahms and Richard Wagner as well as husband and wife Robert and Clara Schumann.

The festival also touches on the classical figures of Beethoven and Schubert and wanders into the last century with pieces by Leoš Janáček through his disturbing 'Intimate Letters' Quartet, Benjamin Britten and his marvellous setting of seven Michelangelo Sonnets and Arnold Schönberg's magical string sextet 'Trans-

figured Night'. Fear not, the piece dates from 1899 before Schönberg ventured into atonality and virtually turned compositional technique on its head.

### Impressive sextet

Opening with Collins playing Beethoven's 'Moonlight' Sonata, the artistic line-up is quite impressive with the Galway-based ConTempo Quartet playing Janáček and being joined by Simon Aspell, viola and Christopher Marwood, cello for the Schönberg and Brahms's impressive second String Sextet.

South African soprano Sarah-Jane Brandon, second prizewinner in the 2010 Veronica Dunne International

Singing Competition, returns to Ireland for a selection of songs by Richard Strauss as well as Lieder by the Schumanns. English tenor James Gilchrist will be heard in Beethoven's song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* ('To the distant beloved') as well as the Britten Sonnets. He will also join Sarah-Jane Brandon for an evening of operatic love songs and duets accompanied by Dearbhla Collins.

Besides, the weekend presents a showing of the 1983 film 'Spring Symphony' by the late Berlin-born director Peter Schamoni. The movie brings to life the passionate relationship between Robert Schumann and Clara Wieck and her father's attempts to

thwart it. The couple married in 1840 when the Appeal Courts overruled Wieck's opposition.

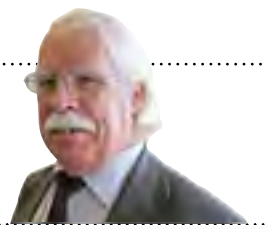
The remarkable Clara was Robert's muse and devoted wife through many matrimonial tribulations until his death in the asylum at Endenich near Bonn in 1856. They had seven children and Clara also managed to continue her performing career even playing in Dublin's Antient Concert Rooms some months before Robert died. Her platonic relationship with Brahms lasted until her own death in 1896.

✉ [Booking for the Midwinter Festival may be done on line at www.musicforgalway.ie or by phoning Town Hall Theatre, Galway, 091 569777.](http://www.musicforgalway.ie)



# BookReviews

Peter Costello



## The Brexit disaster: the Irish perspective

**Brexit & Ireland: The Dangers, the Opportunities, and the Inside Story of the Irish Response,**  
by Tony Connelly  
(Penguin Ireland, €20)

Joe Carroll

**T**ony Connelly is RTÉ's European Correspondent based in Brussels. He reports on EU affairs with clarity and precision and he analyses developments as they affect Ireland with insight and detachment.

In other words he does not feel obliged to 'wear the green jersey'. He is thus ideally placed to write this full-length study of what Brexit means for Ireland.

He does not say it in as many words, but it is clear from his reporting here that it could be an economic disaster in a way that it would not be for the other EU members.

This is especially in agriculture and the processed food industry which has grown exponentially since Ireland joined the EEC in 1973. But the dairy and beef sectors which make up the bulk of our agri-food exports depend to an alarming degree on the free movement of cattle, milk and poultry across the border



Border communities protest about Brexit developments.

with Northern Ireland in both directions and the lack of controls and regulations in the transit of products through the United Kingdom to the continental EU destinations.

### Supply chain

Bailey's Irish Cream is just one example. Its Mallusk, Co. Antrim, plant set up in 2003, produces 70% of all Baileys consumed worldwide. But

this is the result of thousands of litres of milk from north and south of the Border flowing daily into a Glanbia processing plant in Virginia, Co. Cavan, where the cream is separated. Most of the cream goes north and the rest to the 1974 factory in Dublin.

The Diageo supply chain accounts for 5,000 Border crossings a year for its Baileys, whiskey and packaging.

With Brexit there could be tariffs of up to 50% hitting milk coming from the north and on the cream heading to the north.

### Statistics

The author does not just cite statistics. He goes to farms and agrifood plants north and south to hear first-hand the fears of farmers and exporters about the consequences of

even a "soft" border replacing total free movement.

As for a 'hard' border, the fall-out is better not imagined. Even our small fishing industry is under threat of decimation from exclusion from British waters. Our booming bloodstock industry is also dependent on Ireland and Britain enjoying common EU regulations.

The title also mentions



"opportunities" from Brexit as London loses EU status and the author shows how Irish officials are working flat out to negotiate the most favourable scenario for post-Brexit.

**“Our booming bloodstock industry is also dependent on Ireland and Britain enjoying common EU regulations”**

Their hands are somewhat tied by not being able to negotiate directly with Britain, but as part of the EU bloc. He shows from inside knowledge how skilfully the Irish officials are getting the Dublin viewpoint across to the EU Commission team charged with the negotiations.

Yes, there will be opportunities for Irish exporters to seek new markets to replace British outlets and for financial and other services to transfer to Dublin, but if you read this book you will see Brexit more as a nightmare for exporters and transporters than a vision for the future.

## A comic turn in Provence

**Quality Time at St Chinian**  
by Patrick Masterson  
(Liberties Press, €14.99)

J. Anthony Gaughan

Many people have enjoyed Ronald Searle's *The Terror of St Trinians* and its sequel of comedy films. With an unmistakable reference to it in the title, Masterson provides a foretaste of this debut novel. Just as Searle described the eccentricities and idiocies of the staff and girls in St Trinian's he highlights the cynicism and sense of self-importance of many senior academics.

He is well-qualified for this task. A former member of the philosophy department in University College Dublin, he served as president of the college from 1986 to 1993 and as principal of the European University Institute in Florence from 1994 to 2002.

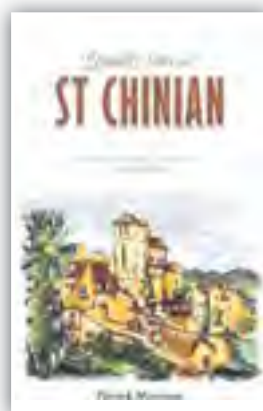
Masterson creates his own university, names it St Chinian and locates it in the Languedoc in south-west France. It is a happy

place, where some teaching is required but research is entirely optional. Even the students are happy.

For a moderate amount of study, which does not greatly encroach upon their leisure time, they are assured of a fairly decent degree.

There is, however, some consternation at the prospect of an up-coming external quality appraisal of St Chinian by a committee of international experts.

This was set in train by an ambitious secretary-general of the Ministry of Universities and Research in Paris. From the outset the aim of this initiative is clear. It is to steer the university away from its emphasis on liberal arts courses and programmes to pursuits which would be more useful to the business, industrial and tourist interests of the region.



Masterson's record of the investigation conducted by the international committee sheds light on less-publicised aspects of university life.

There are the bitter disagreements between departments and sometimes a lack of civility between professors and other

members of staff. The exceptional length of holidays enjoyed by academics is adverted to.

Then there are the over-generous perks, such as travel expenses for those engaged in research.

The author particularly enjoys poking fun at the *patois* in the schools of business studies and sociology. There is more than a glimpse at the rarefied world inhabited by senior academics and

administrators where rich food and fine wines reign supreme. And during their week at St Chinian two members of the visiting inspection committee find time for romantic interludes!

**“The author particularly enjoys poking fun at the *patois* in the schools of business studies and sociology”**

In due course the report on St Chinian is presented and not surprisingly it is in line with the aims of the bureaucrats in Paris. However, it is dismissed by Guy Boulanger, president of St Chinian, in a rhetorical flourish and he is also able to ensure that once filed it would not see the light of day again.

Contemporaries of Patrick Masterson will have little difficulty in seeing him in the guise of Guy

Boulanger. The former is well-known for his commitment to the concept of university education as outlined by John Henry Newman. Thus, in his rejection of the report of the international experts, Guy Boulanger, while acknowledging the role of the university in preparing students for the world of work, insists that a university's priority is teaching students to think for themselves and to engage with concepts such as truth, goodness and beauty and the values they enshrine.

Throughout the author's exhaustive knowledge of every aspect of life in to-day's universities is clear.

His account of the foibles and pomposity of some senior academics and administrators takes the reader on a delightful romp.

The humour and irony is gentle without a hint of malice. And beneath all the fun there is a serious message.



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.

## Trump's friends in the Kremlin

**Collusion: How Russia Helped Trump Win the White House**

by Luke Harding  
(Guardian / Faber, £14.99)

**Peter Hegarty**

It's no secret that Vladimir Putin supported Donald Trump in the recent presidential election. The two men are kindred spirits, white nationalists who dream of returning their countries to past greatness. They have cooperated, and more closely than is commonly realised, according to *The Guardian's* former Moscow bureau chief Luke Harding.

It is not a relationship of equals. Harding describes Trump as being 'weirdly deferential' towards a vicious autocrat. Trump was reluctant to reinforce sanctions on Russia this year, as he had been reluctant earlier to condemn a massive Russian hacking operation which lead to the release of thousands of emails sent and received by Democratic officials. He surrounds himself with people who have Russian connections.

### Dossier

What explains Trump's 'strange fealty' to Putin? Harding draws extensively on a dossier compiled by Christopher Steele, a former MI6 operative who is now a

highly-respected corporate consultant. Steele's sources in Russian intelligence have told him that Trump's activities during visits to Moscow have included 'perverted sexual acts' which the Russian secret service helped arrange and was of course careful to record.

Steele's sources also say that Trump's team co-operated with Russia on the hacking operation against Hillary Clinton, and that the American side secretly co-funded it.

As Harding notes, Steele is a methodical, cautious analyst who offers a wealth of detail in support of his claims. The author's independent research bears them out.

### Loans

He has established for instance that loans arranged by Russia helped Trump through the recession, tiding him over at a time when banks would not lend him money, for the good reason that he tended not to repay loans. His receipt of large amounts of Russian money may in fact go further towards explaining that 'strange fealty' than claims of perverted sexual acts in a Moscow hotel.

The author has also made the fascinating discovery that Trump's plane has often been on the same tarmac, at the

same time, as that of Russian oligarch Dmitry Rybolovlev, a cats-paw of the Kremlin.

Trump's association with Moscow goes back years. Since at least 2011 Russian intelligence has been secretly cultivating him as part of a wider strategy of sowing discord in the West.

More recently Putin has come out in support of Brexit and Catalan independence. He has also bankrolled the anti-Semitic far-right Front National in France.

Russia's relationship with Trump serves another goal of the country's foreign policy, which is the lifting or relaxation of the sanctions applied after Moscow's intervention in Ukraine.

The Russian economy is struggling under the weight of these sanctions. The day of widespread hunger and discontent has not come yet, but it may not be far off. Putin fears it and wishes to avert it with the help of his ally in the White House.

Harding is convincing. He presents solid evidence that President Trump is at best compromised, at worst a tool of Russian foreign policy. His story makes Watergate and Iran/Contra look like very minor affairs indeed.

## The inspirational genius of Turner

**'Good morning, Mr Turner: Niall Naessens and J. M. W. Turner'**  
Exhibition in Print Gallery, National Gallery of Ireland, free admission to January 31, 2018

**Peter Costello**

Every January the NGI mounts an exhibition of its collection of Turner water colours. For conservation reasons these can only be exhibited in the season of low winter light. The rare chance to see these gems of water colour brings many people back to the gallery every year, as a sort of pilgrimage. The genius of Turner needs little introduction, but a couple of items have been added this year from other bequests to refresh the show.

In addition, mounted alongside the Turners, is a show by Irish print maker Niall Naessens, which is also well worth seeing, not just for its reimagining of some of Turner's images, but for the unique talent of the artist himself in a different art genre.

Water colour demands speed and confidence. Prints such as those Naessens makes, need care and patience; the results are not so much counterparts, as polar opposites. The interplay between the two imaginations is most interesting.

In the prints there are echoes to Hiroshige, and humorous allusion to other forms such as amateur films. But Naessens



**“Naessens is not creating pastiches”**

is not creating parodies or pastiches. He is very much his own man. Several of the prints echo the Turners directly such as one of the Grand Canal in Venice. But some are striking in their own right. There are allusions to Blake, to Burke on the Sublime, and to the new theories of light in the late 19th Century which excited both scientists and artists at the time.

One is struck by Naessens' relationship with the Kerry landscape in which he works. One especially effective image is that of two figures contemplating a scene; it reminds one of early images of the Grand Canyon, or William Dyce's great painting of Pegwell Bay. The contemplation of geology, time, and the transitory nature of man suffuses them all.

Niall Naessens (b.1961). 'Artists Discussing Burke's Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful.' Etching 20 x 20cm. © Niall Naessens

## WebWatch

Greg Daly

## The perils of symbolism



Interpreting art – including religious art – can be a tricky and contentious business.

Take, for instance, a photograph [above] posted by *Crisis* magazine columnist Austin Ruse of Cardinal Raymond Burke following Christmas Midnight Mass in Florence.

"A stunning photo!" proclaims [lifesitenews.com](#) from her [@dianemontagna](#) Twitter account, thanking [@austinruse](#) for posting it in the first place.

Papal biographer and Catholic Voices co-founder Austen Iveigh was less impressed, responding from his [@austeni](#) account: "A perfect montage: Burke trailing a vast cappa magna in front of one of Florence's most expensive hotels, while some flunky bows in an extravagant courtly pose. The challenge is to link this with the Incarnation."

Montagna and Iveigh both have a point: it is a stunning photo, and one that recalls the paintings of Caravaggio and other Italian artists of his time, but the challenge is how we can link such opulence to the story of how God became man and was born among us in a stable, dependent for warmth on straw and the surrounding animals.

The long, silk *cappa magna* – the 'great cape' – is intended to represent worldly finery, power and prestige, with the prelate wearing it being publicly stripped of the cloak before the altar, symbolically humbled before being dressed in his liturgical

wear proper so as to enter the Church afresh as a 'new man'. The point of the cloak, then, is that it is something to be removed, reminding us how worldly power and prestige have no place before God.

Wielded and read rightly, such symbolism can be powerful, but nowadays, as Iveigh realises, such understanding is rare, and it may be that today the *cappa magna* has become a counterproductive anachronism, conjuring up suggestions of a Church keen to flaunt its wealth and prestige.

Symbols, unfortunately, are only useful insofar as people read them rightly, as jokes about the red shoes worn by Pope Benedict's early in his papacy (and never made by Prada) showed – how often did those criticising them ponder how in the Church red is the colour associated with martyrdom, with the shoes recalling those in whose footsteps today's Christians follow?

**“The Nativity display was a spectacular demonstration of the Incarnation at the heart of a world in need of mercy”**

Scepticism about the Caravaggio-esque photo of Cardinal Burke is one thing, but criticism of the Nativity scene in St Peter's Square has been another matter altogether, with the scene's

secondary theme getting unprecedented attention this year, but too often for all the wrong reasons.

The scenes around the crib depict the seven corporal works of mercy to which Christians are called, but too often, sadly, discussion focused on just one vignette – that depicting our duty to 'clothe the naked'.

"An Asian child looks out at this year's Vatican Nativity scene featuring a homoerotic figure," wrote journalist [@EdwardPentin](#). "The *crèche*, meant to portray the seven corporal acts of mercy, was made in Montevergine, a town famous for its close links with Italy's LGBT community. The scene has outraged many Catholics."

"To see this as homoerotic requires the kind of spectacles you can't get at an optician's," responded [@austeni](#), while South Africa's Cardinal Wilfrid Napier felt obliged to weigh in from his [@CardinalNapier](#) account about how the whole display was solidly in the tradition of Italian art, wondering whether Michelangelo's 'Last Judgment' scene in the Sistine Chapel, with its famously muscular male figures, might be similarly viewed.

The tragedy is that a wonderful opportunity is being squandered: the Nativity display was a spectacular demonstration of the Incarnation at the heart of a world in need of mercy; who would have thought this would have "outraged many Catholics"?



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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.

J.D.



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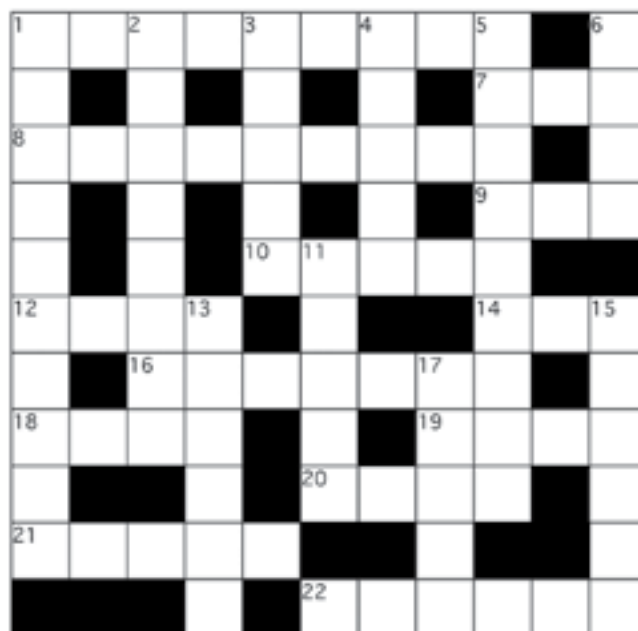
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## Crossword Junior

Gordius 214



### ACROSS

- 1 You may wheel around a very young child in this (4,5)
- 7 Have some food (3)
- 8 Not safe (9)
- 9 Turn it on to get water (3)
- 10 Work out the answer to a crossword clue (5)
- 12 Boy's name that means 'Christmas' (4)
- 14 Not cooked (3)
- 16 Hung loosely (7)
- 18 Not difficult (4)
- 19 Mentioned (4)
- 20 Interfering and inquisitive (4)
- 21 A piece of very bad weather (5)
- 22 Repairing (6)

### DOWN

- 1 Rudeness (3,7)
- 2 A pair of places to sleep set up one above the other (4,4)
- 3 Make something holy (5)
- 4 Snarl (5)
- 5 24 hours ago (9)
- 6 Pace (4)
- 11 Church music is often played on it (5)
- 13 Rows or tiers (6)
- 15 Walking through water (6)
- 17 English county near London (5)

## LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

GORDIUS No.332

**Across** – 1 Hat 3 Submersible 8 Larger 9 Pinotage 10 Costa Blanca 11 Paced 13 Lotus 15 The Holy Family 16 Flat cap 20 Clubs 21 Shack 23 Basra 24 Olive oil 25 Little owl 26 Loyalty card 27 Ely

**Down** – 1 Helicopters 2 Tiresome 3 Sheba 4 Muppets 5 Scoop 7 Eve 12 Desperately 13 Lilac 14 Silks 17 Cassette 18 Bucolic 22 Kneel 23 Build

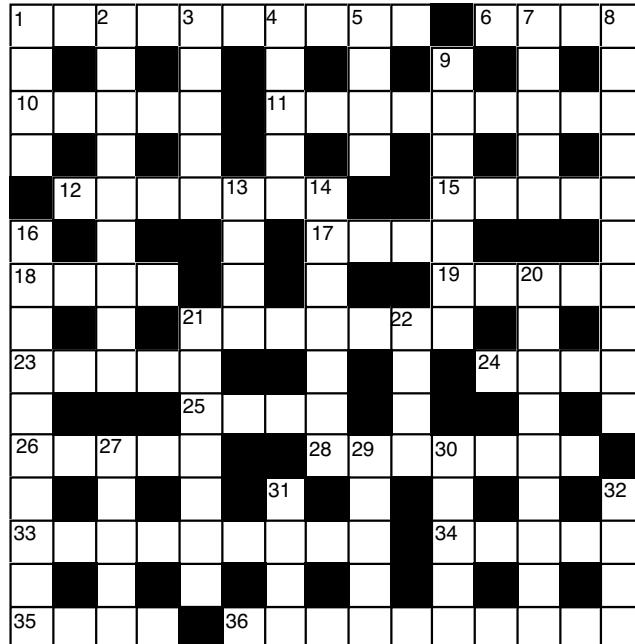
CHILDREN'S No.213

**Across** – 1 Coffee 4 Chop 6 Ice-skates 8 Ladder 9 Acorns 11 Wrong 13 Zoo 15 Vegetable 17 Eye 18 Returns

**Down** – 1 Chimpanzees 2 Faster 3 E-mails 4 Cheddar 5 Pup 7 Rein 10 Nought 11 Water 12 Grey 14 Over 15 Bus

## Crossword

Gordius 333



### ACROSS

- 1 You'll often find the pontiff moving when he's in this! (10)
- 6 Watered-down rum (4)
- 10 How cloth is made, using a Western kiln (5)
- 11 This bird is game to make a communist complain (3,6)
- 12 Width (7)
- 15 Water vapour (5)
- 17 Hank might make one cross in Egypt (4)
- 18 Social insects (4)
- 19 Out of condition (5)
- 21 Gliding dance (3-4)
- 23 County, especially in England (5)
- 24 Fever identified within an Alabama guesthouse (4)
- 25 Maple used in palace rafters (4)
- 26 Cruel kind of ailment (5)
- 28 The plains of Russia (7)
- 33 & 34 Infernal creature from Hobart or Launceston? (9,5)
- 35 Hasty, lacking forethought (4)
- 36 Can a hero caress such bloodstock? (10)

### DOWN

- 1 Church benches (4)
- 2 Luciano was one of the finest tenors of the Twentieth Century (9)
- 3 Give a chap thanks for a ray (5)
- 4 Erupt (5)

- 5 Some chaps can make many commercials (4)
- 7 It makes one red to see a rogue so confused (5)
- 8 Brainpower useful when the dilemma is not a simple matter of black and white (4,6)
- 9 Revise about the elevated state of a fox's tail (5,2)
- 13 Ship used in the Red Sea (4)
- 14 Heavy cables (7)
- 16 To comply with requirements, one must be embraced by the passer (4,6)
- 20 Naturally, they were involved in the original biblical cover-up! (3,6)
- 21 Great as this may be for dispelling crowds... (4,3)
- 22 ...chopped eels can be presented alternatively (4)
- 27 Items of outlay (5)
- 29 Somehow get in a hint of colour (5)
- 30 Perhaps a Spaniard pored over this name (5)
- 31 The capital city of Peru (4)
- 32 Addition sign (4)

## Sudoku Corner

214

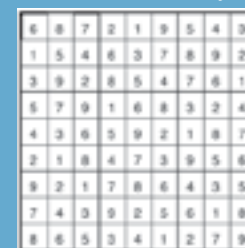
Easy



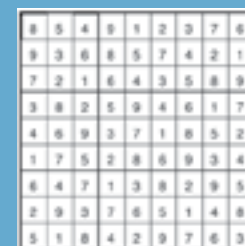
Hard



Last week's Easy 213



Last week's Hard 213





# Notebook

Fr Conor McDonough



## Leading 'twilight Catholics' from darkness into light

**IN THE EARLY** 1990s, Lu Nan, a Chinese photographer, shot a series of black and white photographs documenting the life of a tiny community of Catholic villagers in Shaanxi. They are all stunning images, and easily found online, but what really stands out for me are the images showing the Mass being celebrated with great solemnity even on tiny altars in ramshackle homes. The Eucharistic reverence of these poor, oppressed people is palpable.

I think of these images sometimes during liturgical celebrations in Ireland. The situation of the Church in Ireland is perhaps unique, in that a substantial proportion of the population is neither thoroughly secular, nor believing, nor even definitively lapsed. Many of our contemporaries exist in a sort of 'twilight of Faith': they are familiar with, and even favourable towards, the various rites and rituals, but are, for many reasons, unable to commit themselves entirely to Christ and his Church.

At weddings and funerals and baptisms, these 'twilight Catholics' are usually present in large numbers, often outnumbering believers who participate



Han Ying Fan, a 71-year-old Shaanxi woman and fifth-generation Catholic, with a lamb and a crucifix her husband had hidden during the 'Cultural Revolution' from 1966 to 1976. Photo: Lu Nan

wholeheartedly in the liturgy. There results a certain kind of half-guilty awkwardness that is usually broken, in typical Irish fashion, by laughter, so that moments of silence and solemnity are rarely sustained.

At the after-parties of events like these I'm usually met with a string of *Father Ted* references, and by jocular but wildly

inappropriate comments on the Mass and the priesthood.

As a priest, the temptation is great simply to join in the fun, and to try to raise a laugh at every available opportunity during the liturgy. Of course, there's no reason to be po-faced – a humourless community is highly unattractive, and a good homily will often contain a few jokes –

**THOSE WHO** have walked the Camino to Santiago will know that not all pilgrims on that route are convinced Christians, and that there are relatively few opportunities for engagement with the Church along the way. Many churches are permanently locked. But the cathedral in Santiago has its doors wide open, and fills up several times a day with arriving pilgrims, exhausted and overjoyed. A dozen or so confessionals are in continuous operation, and the Eucharist is celebrated with a deeply serious joy. Everybody comes to see the majestic *botafumeiro*, an enormous thurible that swings above the heads of the congregation, but I was more impressed by what I saw at Communion: hundreds of pilgrims, many of whom I recognised from the road, approaching the Lord with tears in their eyes.

but I still feel we ought to resist allowing the liturgy to become a flippant affair.

Silence and solemn prayers and gestures are not instant crowd-pleasers. Indeed, they make many of our contemporaries uncomfortable. But if we want our friends to depart their twilight and step into the light of faith, then dignified celebration is the way to go: nobody will be converted by weak jokes, but they may be touched by a biblical word echoing in silence.

### Entertainment

If the Mass is thought of as entertainment, it will inevitably be seen as second-rate: social media and showbusiness will always do a better job. But the Eucharist is not entertainment. It is something else entirely: life for a dying world, strength for the weary, consolation for the sorrowful, and our way home.

The believers of Shaanxi understand this: this is why they gather even in the face of danger, this is why they kneel and gaze and weep at Mass. We understood this once. Let's do everything we can – priests and people – to remember what we have forgotten.

### Our valley of tears

I'm blessed to live close to a chapel of perpetual adoration. There I find the Lord in the Eucharist, but also all sorts of people who come before him day and night in desperate need. Last Sunday a woman came into the chapel with her husband. He seemed to have dementia, and wandered around the chapel quite distractedly as she knelt in silence for a few minutes.

She then genuflected profoundly and took her husband's arm again with a gentle smile. Christ gave his flesh for the life of the world, for the consolation and nourishment of men and women like this; the bread of angels for exiles in the valley of tears.



## Please help the poor with a New Year's gift

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"Jesus wills that we give alms to Him as to one poor and needy. He puts Himself as it were at our mercy; He will take nothing but what we give Him from our heart, and the very least trifle is precious in His sight."

- St Therese

**We wish all our friends and benefactors a very happy and peaceful New Year.**

May St Therese reward you in a special way for the sacrifices you make to support our work, and may she obtain many graces for all our benefactors during 2018.

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