

The Irish Catholic

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Parishes ready and willing to integrate refugees

Government urged to speed up processing

Greg Daly

The Government has been urged to ensure that refugees arriving here from war-torn countries be integrated into local communities as soon as possible to aid their recovery.

This comes against a backdrop of reports that fewer than a third of the 4,000 refugees Ireland has promised to accept by the end of this year have so far been admitted, with bishops claiming that Irish people and civic society are ready and willing to help if they are allowed to do so.

While the pace at which Ireland is taking in refugees must seem "painfully slow" to people waiting in camps, Elphin's Bishop Kevin Doran welcomed how some refugees are finally arriving and said that his diocese will be "very anxious" to offer any support it can when refugees arrive in communities there.

Describing it as a "wise decision" to provide refugees with

short transitional periods in reception centres such as that at Ballyhaderreen, Dr Doran told this newspaper, "this should not drag on beyond a couple of months, however, because refugee families need to be able to establish a normal family life in their own homes and to be able to seek employment and have their children educated in the local schools".

Dromore's Bishop John McArcahey told *The Irish Catholic* he has heard from groups in civic society that official Government agencies are not involving them sufficiently in plans for bringing refugees to Ireland, despite groups like the St Vincent de Paul Society and other Church agencies having much to offer.

"I think if they were drawn into the whole issue of the reception of migrants, we'll have an important contribution to make," he said, adding, "I think a lot of people want the opportunity to help and to reach out and be generous."

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Flying the flag for protection of life



Sorcha Ní Scolaí (11) from Dublin was among the tens of thousands who took to Dublin's streets on Saturday for the annual Rally for Life. See pages 8 & 9. Photo: John McElroy

MARY KENNY

Italy cannot handle migrant crisis alone

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FR RON ROLHEISER

Revealing our deep inchoate desires

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DAVID QUINN

The tragic case of baby Charlie Gard

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

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Failure to reform NI Executive a 'scandal'

Greg Daly

Baroness Nuala O'Loan has described the failure of Sinn Féin and the DUP to work together as "a scandal" that has prevented funds being allocated across the North.

"Our schools, hospitals and infrastructure are being starved of resources which should be available. £42m remains available and unallocated from the spring budget," she said, adding that funds available to deal with inquests and legacy issues cannot be put to use without political agreement.

"This is a scandal," said the former NI police ombudsman, continuing, "it is a year since the Lord Chief Justice asked for funds to be released to enable inquests to be held. The victims and survivors have waited too long."

Expressing concern about how nationalist communities would have no voice in Westminster during the Brexit process, she said, "it seems none of our elected representatives will have a proper voice in our own Northern Ireland government since it seems to me that we are moving inexorably to direct rule, though I do hope that there will be agreement and we can move forward".

While pointing out that constitutional processes mean that both the DUP and SF must accept the outcome of the election and work with it, she said the real question concerns how the processes of the Good Friday Agreement cannot work without the cooperation of all parties when "the two major parties are at loggerheads".

Maintaining that "the Stormont Assembly has achieved

virtually nothing since 2015", she wondered what future the Assembly could have in these circumstances, asking: "So how can we make this part of the Good Friday Agreement work and get real democratic government working for the people of NI today?"

Peace campaigner Fr Gary Donegan has not given up hope, however, telling *The Irish Catholic* that while the general election campaign had derailed talks and the DUP are now "to some extent holding the Conservatives over a barrel", the main difficulty is getting the parties to sit down together.

"When that actually happens, the actual resolution of this, we're told, can happen actually quite quickly," he said, continuing, "the problem is that there is a lot of brinkmanship going on".

Parishes ready and willing to help refugees

» Continued from Page 1

A huge amount needs to be done to help victims of war who have spent time in refugee camps, Dr McAreavey said, emphasising that across all communities and religious divides in Ireland "the biggest resource is the willingness of people to help those who have come through terrible suffering".

Meanwhile, Ireland needs to take the lead in standing up for refugees in Europe, a leading priest advocate of migrants' rights has said.

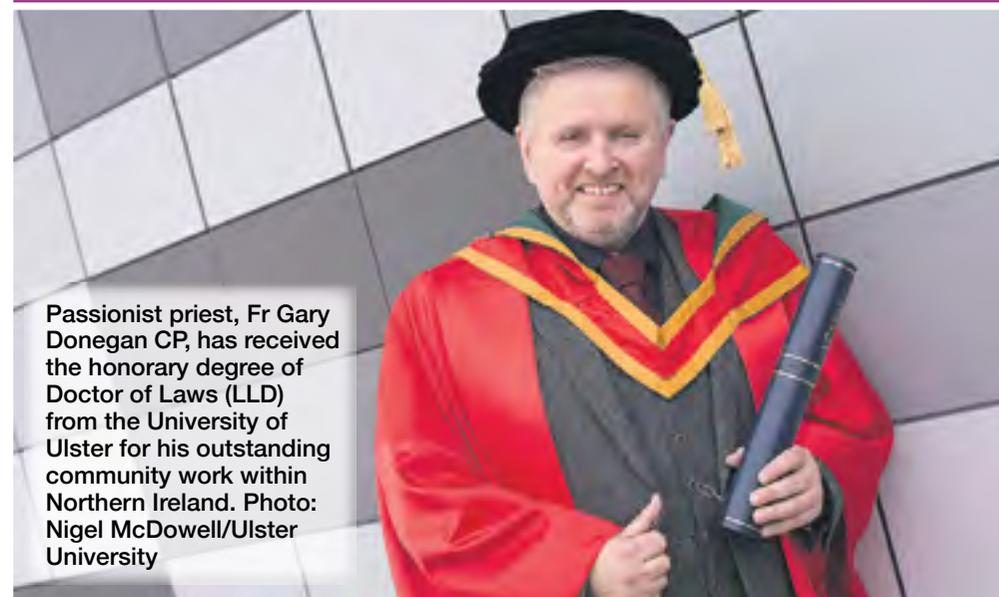
Warning against "demonising immigrants because they're weak and they have no votes and they cannot respond", Fr Bobby Gilmore, president of Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, told *The Irish Catholic* that there is a danger of treating immigrants as "scapegoats" and said Ireland's history of migration should drive us to take an assertive and positive role in Europe on this issue.

Conflict

"Given the present situation, where you have conflict in quite a number of places throughout the world, we simply have a responsibility as a nation and Europe has a responsibility more so than anybody else to make a stand on this particular issue," he said, calling on Ireland to push the European institutions to take a humanitarian stand on the issue.

"We were where these people are now," he said, criticising institutions for "flapping around and not deciding on anything, with the result that huge numbers of people suffer".

Peace-campaigner priest honoured



Passionist priest, Fr Gary Donegan CP, has received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD) from the University of Ulster for his outstanding community work within Northern Ireland. Photo: Nigel McDowell/Ulster University

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Planned restrictions on schools admissions legally untenable – expert

Greg Daly

Proposals to bar oversubscribed Catholic schools from prioritising admissions based on religious grounds are untenable and make no legal sense, a leading expert on the Irish Constitution has said.

Minister for Education Richard Bruton last week announced plans to deny Church-owned primary schools the right to include religion as a selection criterion when oversubscribed, stating that oversubscribed

schools owned by other faith communities could continue to do so. It is understood that such a move would require a change to the Equal Status Act.

However, UCC constitutional law lecturer Dr Seán Ó Conaill has questioned the constitutionality of the proposal, saying that while Minister Bruton could be arguing that this was a reasonable way to address a historical imbalance, “that doesn’t justify picking out one religion”.

Contesting the legitimacy

of discriminating against one religious group by singling it out as being forbidden from selecting pupils on religious grounds, Dr Ó Conaill said the minister’s proposal was “a very simple populist play”.

Sense

“It doesn’t make any legal sense, but it makes plenty of political sense,” he said, noting how the minister’s focus on Church-owned schools was “an untenable solution” that could not be justified. “It’s too weak, it’s too out there,” he continued. “It’s saying, well

the other schools are fine but I’m going after the Catholic schools, without any real justification.”

Dr Ó Conaill added that the supposed ‘baptism barrier’ has become a ‘boogie man’ that is spoken about as though its removal would solve the problem of there not being sufficient places in schools in a small number of areas.

“It’s a nonsense,” he said, continuing, “The notion of a ‘baptism barrier’ is one of the great frauds of our time.” “If they get rid of it, it

won’t solve anything,” he explained, “because it’s very simple supply and demand. There’s more demand than there is supply, it doesn’t matter what denomination it is, there’s just not.”

Figures compiled by the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association indicate that no children are ever denied places in Church-owned schools solely on the grounds of religion and that fewer than one child in 300 is refused a place on grounds that include religion.

Christian Brothers don’t budge as school protests land sale

Chai Brady

The Christian Brothers have continued to defend their decision to sell pitches worth €18m beside a Dublin school, as they are under legal obligation to do so.

Despite backlash from the Board of Management of Clonkeen College in Deansgrange and the local community they have made no indication they will renege on their legal commitment to the buyer – who is a housing developer. Legal proceedings look increasingly likely as the board of management threatened legal action in a letter sent on June 21 last month. The Christian Brothers had until Tuesday to reply, and it is understood that they have.

The Christian Brothers released a statement saying: “To date the congregation has been able to minimise impact for third parties by selling land at its Province Centre on Griffith Avenue as well as several residences in which brothers were living.

“As congregation resources are limited, it follows that delivery in one area can sometimes require difficult and hard decisions in another.”

The school will be given 6.6 acres in total, which includes 3.1 acres already given in 2008, with 3.5 acres more being offered for free. The school is also being offered €1.3m. It is believed €10m of the land sale will be used to pay the State Redress Scheme, to compensate victims of abuse.

The Board of Management contends that in 2006 an agreement was made that the land wouldn’t be sold as long as a school remained there, but the Christian Brothers deny this saying they have “contemporaneous notes” which “make clear there was no such agreement”.

On the pilgrims’ path



Participants from the Diocese of Elphin and the Parish of Kilnamanagh-Castlevew (Dublin) who walked the Camino from Sarria to Santiago de Compostela, Spain led by Bishop Kevin Doran and Fr Michael Murphy Adm. Kilnamanagh-Castlevew.

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Rome

Faithful warned not to be confused by sympathy cards

Mags Gargan

A bishop has warned people not to mistakenly buy sympathy cards under the impression that they are purchasing pre-signed Mass cards.

Sympathy cards, which look very similar to Mass cards and can even have a chalice on the front cover, offer to have the "repose of the soul" of someone remembered in a priest's daily prayers.

A card shop owner in Dublin has contacted *The Irish Catholic* expressing concern that no one from the company selling the sympathy cards stocked in her shop has "come back to collect the names

for prayer", saying she has "started losing my confidence in him".

She also expressed "shock" that the same cards "are on sale at wholesale prices in bulk" at the local wholesalers.

The cards are signed by a Rev. T. Dowling and the back of the cards state that "part of the proceeds from the sale of these cards are donated monthly to worldly projects".

Research

Bishop Phonsie Cullinan told this paper that in his research into sympathy cards, "if one tries to find out who the priest in question is, where he ministers, one will simply not be told".

"Whereas, if one buys a Mass card from a priest or a religious congregation one knows, you can be sure that the Mass is going to be said and that its intent is going to be prayed for," the Bishop of Waterford & Lismore said.

"This isn't the first time that the intentions haven't been collected - that's a regular occurrence," he said. "Some shops unfortunately do not check out the authenticity and credentials of the people involved in selling these sympathy cards.

"Walking into a shop with a piece of ID and photocopies of this, that and the other - I mean you could run those off any computer anywhere."

New parking restrictions at Raheen church

Parking restrictions have been recently enforced in the car park adjacent to Raheen Church in Limerick following multiple complaints from Mass-goers. Limerick City and County Council has erected signage in the area indicating it is now governed by parking bye-laws which require people to pay, with failure to do so resulting in a €40 fine.

Cllr James Collins said there has been a mixed reaction to the new bye-laws. "Some people were using it as a park and ride and they were getting the bus into town and obviously that was conflicting with the people who wanted to use the church for Mass and funerals," he said, adding that he has received a number of calls from people since the signs were erected.



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Pallottines celebrate another ordination



Fr Charles Lafferty SAC pictured with his parents, John and Joan Lafferty, and Bishop Donal McKeown following his ordination in St Mary's Church, Ardmore in Derry last week.

Neighbours advised to carpool to Mass

Staff reporter

The Bishop of Kerry has suggested that parishioners should carpool to Sunday Mass in neighbouring parishes as one way to address the shortage of priests in the diocese.

In publishing the diocesan list of changes of priests, Bishop Ray Browne acknowledged that a sixth parish, Knocknagoshel, is now without a resident priest and that means "in that pastoral area no priest is fulltime in their own parish".

He said "soon it will not be

possible to have a weekend Mass" in every one of the 111 churches in the 53 parishes in Kerry diocese.

Bishop Browne said it is a "priority" that the "church area community continue as a separate faith community", with its own identity, committees and schools, but that parishioners can attend Sunday Mass in neighbouring churches.

"Community spirit may involve sharing transport to ensure everyone has the opportunity to travel to a neighbouring church," he said.

Pro-life groups welcome NI abortion ruling

Chai Brady

A decision that Northern Ireland's abortion laws are best decided by Stormont has been described as "very welcome" by Pro-Life groups.

Three judges in the Court of Appeal ruled unanimously that the current abortion laws are not incompatible with the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR), and that legislators should be tasked with dealing with the issue and not judges.

This overturns a 2015 High Court ruling, which found that preventing abortions related to sex crimes and unborn children diagnosed with severe disabilities was against the ECHR.

A ruling on the issue was said to undermine the separation of power between courts and legislature.

Tracy Harkin of the Iona Institute in Northern Ireland said: "This is a very welcome ruling and a significant defeat for the Human Rights Com-

mission which was attempting to weaken the right to life of the unborn.

"There has been a long and concerted campaign to introduce permissive abortion legislation into Northern Ireland using very difficult and rare situations such as those tragic cases where a baby might not live long past birth."

This comes as the British parliament decided that Northern Irish women can receive NHS funded abortions, which in turn has been called an "outrageous attack on democracy".

The Director of Precious Life, Bernadette Smyth, said: "While Precious Life maintain that taxpayer's money should not be used to pay for the killing of any unborn child, we reiterate even more so that taxpayer's money should not be used to fund NHS abortions for women from Northern Ireland where abortion is a criminal offence."

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Italy cannot bear the burden of migrant crisis on its own

Freud famously said that “anatomy is destiny” – perhaps challenged, now, in our transgender era – but for nations, geography surely can be destiny.

Italy currently feels this acutely, as it bears the brunt of the great numbers of migrants brought to its shores. The number crossing the Med, mainly from Libya, is currently at 10,000 a week: Italy has taken 82,000 such refugees in the first six months of this year.

The situation is pitiful: 2,160 have died from drowning, or the effects of exposure, trafficked, as they are in unseaworthy boats.

Irish naval vessels have been rescuing Mediterranean migrants, sometimes on the brink of death, in these waters. We all admire the endeavours of the men and women who do this and the relief on the faces of those rescued is palpable.

Just last month, the LÉ Eithne saved the lives of 183 refugees – many being mothers and babies – just 40 km off the coast of Tripoli, who would



Mary Kenny



otherwise have drowned. The Commander of the LÉ Eithne, Pearse O'Donnell, told the BBC that saving life at sea was a

humanitarian imperative – he could not allow people to perish.

Magnet

And yet, Italy is now threatening to close its ports to rescue and charity ships bringing the fleeing migrants. The Italian Minister of the Interior Marco Minniti, has said that other European countries must come to Italy's support, by taking the migrants to other shores.

Yet geography has deemed that Italy is the main magnet. In

the trajectory from Libya, Italy is the obvious goal.

There is also the moral question of whether the practice of rescue actually encourages trafficking.

The traffickers, who charge the refugees thousands of Euros, know that there's a good chance migrants will be rescued – and that's an incentive to continue with their exploitative trade.

When people are drowning, they must be saved. The Irish naval rescuers are doing the right thing.

But there will be a reckoning and a backlash if Italy alone has to continue bearing the burden alone of its geographical position.



Tara.

Finding a capital for re-united Ireland

If Ireland were to be re-united once again, where should the capital be sited? For the sake of political neutrality, it should not – according to various debates – be either Dublin or Belfast. (Australia chose Canberra rather than Sydney or Melbourne for such reasons.)

Athlone has been suggested as has Castleblayney in Co. Monaghan, perhaps because Monaghan, previously a thriving hub, was the county most disadvantaged by the drawing of the border. Corkonions still bat for Cork and some wag has sarcastically nominated “Utopia in Co. Wonderland”.

Surely the answer is obvious: Tara, in Co. Meath, site of the ancient Kings of Ireland, reasonably accessible from all four provinces, and with no party political or partisan political associations. Scenic, too!

Research needed into clerical suicide

It is desperately sad to read that at least eight priests in Ireland have taken their own lives over the past decade, and it surely calls for some response. A helpline is a positive idea, but something more is needed: I'd suggest an investigation into the suicide cases to establish exactly what were the pressures on the lives of these pastors which led them to take the ultimate step in despair. Clinical depression can

affect people in any walk of life, but there must be a reason why clerical suicide has risen.

The ecclesiastical authorities should engage a couple of diligent young graduate journalists to produce a comprehensive report, under the guidance of an experienced editor. The first step to correct what is going wrong is to establish why it is going wrong.

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New CDF chief brings great personal skills



Fr Bernard Healy

On Saturday, Pope Francis appointed a man familiar to many Rome-educated Irish clergy, namely Jesuit Archbishop Luis Ladaria Ferrer [pictured], as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. From 1984 until 2008 he was on the theology faculty of the Jesuit-run Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome where most of the Irish clerical students in Rome at the time would have done their studies.

Fr Ladaria, as he was known during this period, was one of the university's most popular teachers. During my own time in Rome (the early 2000s) he taught the compulsory Trinity course to first year theology students, as well as a variety of other courses focusing on the Trinity, man's relationship with God and those early theologians known as the Fathers of the Church.

The last class of each course taught by Fr Ladaria inevitably drew a standing ovation, something he endured with great embarrassment, being a fundamentally humble man. (This is in contrast to one of his more exuberant colleagues who would do a lap of honour around the lecture hall on the last day of term!)

“Commentators have tended to describe Ladaria as a theological conservative”

Some students asked him to autograph copies of his books, something I now regret not having done myself. Informed opinion describes him as the finest theologian of his generation on the Gregorian faculty.

Why was he such a popular teacher? He wasn't an easy examiner, but he was always scrupulously fair and friendly in oral examinations. A successful answer received a warm smile, whilst a student's failure to explain some point of theology

seemed to upset him as much as it did the student. His teaching drew heavily from the writings of the Church Fathers and he always pointed to the beauty and eternal relevance of these early teachers of the Faith. A favourite passage from Scripture or from the writings of St Augustine or St Hilary of Potiers would often be used to introduce the theme of a class, and sometimes this reading would seem to bring him to the verge of tears, so strongly did the power of these texts strike him.

His insistence that theology was always born of prayer and led back to prayer was evident in the way he taught, and his passion for the great thinkers of Christianity was something he delighted in sharing with his students so that they might share that same love with the Church throughout the world.

Describing himself as 'middle of the road', commentators have tended to describe Ladaria as a theological conservative. As a student, it was clear that he preferred to bring enlightenment rather than controversy to the table. Certainly his theological approach was appreciated by both St John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI.

Dialogue

The former appointed him to the International Theological Commission (later making him Secretary General), and as a Consultor to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Pope Benedict named him to the No. 2 post in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith with the rank of archbishop 10 years ago, and gave him a leading role in the dialogue with the traditionalist Society of St Pius X.

Ladaria remained in residence in the modest Jesuit community accommodation at the Gregorian University on his appointment to that post in the CDF. There he retained the same reputation he had as a professor – gentle, humble, hard-working, prayerful, dedicated and utterly discreet about his work in the Vatican. I suspect that most of his former students are encouraged that this new appointment by Pope Francis means that Archbishop Ladaria will be bringing his great personal and theological skills to one of the most responsible and demanding offices in the Church.

Fr Bernard Healy is a priest of the Diocese of Kerry.

Government attitudes to abortion consultation a sham – committee members

Greg Daly

Government plans for a referendum on abortion next year reveal consultation exercises as charades, members of the Oireachtas committee on the rights of unborn have said.

Responding to reports that Health Minister Simon Harris has asked officials at the Department of Health to begin drafting legislation to allow for abortion on demand during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, Senator Ronan Mullen said this was pre-empting the work of the Joint Committee on the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution.

Consultation

“It kind of shows what a sham much of the politics in Ireland around consultation tends to be,” Senator Mullen told *The Irish Catholic*, continuing, “you could say something similar about the water charges committee and the way it operated. You have this pretence at consultation and this pretence of careful deliberation but what is really going on is a choreographing in the same way that the Citizens' Assembly was a choreography.”

Independent Tipperary TD Mattie McGrath agreed, saying that reports of such legislation

being drafted just “gives the whole lie to the whole Citizens' Assembly”, which he described as “a tool of convenience” and “a con job”.

Noting that the parliamentary committee hasn't yet done any substantive business and that the Oireachtas itself has yet to discuss the matter, Deputy McGrath took issue also with statements from

the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar that there will be a referendum on the subject next year.

“If he thinks he can manipulate this from the outside, which he does, it's despicable and it's just contempt for the elected members and the Oireachtas. We'd a fair idea this would come, but I didn't think it'd be as naked and as blunt as this.”

Clare Rose blooms in Lourdes



The Clare Rose, Aoife Murray with Bishop Fintan Monahan on the Killaloe Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes last week, where she was part of the carer team.

Christian persecution at 'shocking' level

Mags Gargan

The Primate of All Ireland has described the extent of Christian persecution worldwide as “shocking”, while calling on Irish Catholics not to be afraid to witness to the Faith in an “aggressively secular culture”.

Speaking at the annual festival of St Oliver Plunkett in Drogheda, Archbishop Eamon Martin said the persecution of Christians “remains widespread and often unreported in many parts of the world”.

“It is shocking to think that in 2017 thousands of Christians are still being displaced or expelled, tortured, discriminated and murdered simply because they are Christian,” he said, continuing that many Christians in Ireland “remain unaware or ignorant of the horrors and extent of persecution that our sisters and brothers in Christ have to suffer.”

Archbishop Eamon said he was thankful for the “freedom to believe and worship that we enjoy in Ireland today”, but conceded that even in this country

Christians “need the gift of courage to stay faithful to the teachings of the Gospel”.

The archbishop said we are living in an “aggressively secular culture”, where some people seek to caricature people of faith or expel them “from public discourse and debate”.

He called on Catholics not to be afraid “to witness to our Christian faith in public”, and to speak “courageously” on issues like the “dignity of all human life”.

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Church should support 'fragile' families on the margins

Colm Fitzpatrick

The Church must apply 'mercy' to families, particularly those that find themselves in difficulty, including second unions, a leading theologian has said.

Speaking ahead of a major gathering in Limerick next week that will be attended by the cardinal chosen by Pope Francis to present *Amoris Laetitia* – the papal letter on the 'family' – Prof. Eamonn Conway said Pope Francis is “challenging us all to say how can we be more supportive of families, particularly those that are vulnerable and are fragile”.

Fr Conway said it was a “great honour” to have Cardinal Christoph Schönborn at the conference and that “he knows at a personal level, in a sense, the challenges that families can face and the challenges young people can face growing up in a family that is not necessarily the ideal circumstance”.

'Let's Talk Family: Let's Be Family' will be held at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick on July 13.

Suffering in the land between black and white



Catholics can legitimately disagree over how best to handle tragic cases like that of Charlie Gard, writes **David Quinn**

By the time you read this, Charlie Gard, a baby born almost one year ago, may already be dead. Charlie was born with an extremely rare condition that causes progressive muscle weakness, including of the heart, and brain damage.

He has been on life-support for months and at the time of writing his medical team at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) in London looks set to turn off his life support and let him die. They will be doing this against the fervent wishes of his parents, Christopher and Constance.

Christopher and Constance want to be able to bring Charlie to America for a highly experimental form of treatment that they think will give him a shot at life. They raised £1.3 (€1.5) million for this purpose, an indication of public interest in the plight of little Charlie.

Doctors at GOSH disagree with the parents. They believe the treatment will be futile and may even cause the baby pain.

Worldwide interest

The case has attracted worldwide interest. It has been through the British courts and to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). The Gards wanted the ECtHR to overturn the decision of the British courts to side with Charlie's doctors and switch off his life support. But the ECtHR decided to leave the matter with the British courts and ruled the case inadmissible.

Even the Vatican and Pope Francis himself have commented on the matter. That is how big the case became.

The reason it became so big is that there are two crucial moral issues at stake. The first is when it is permissible to turn off life



Charlie Gard's parents Constance and Christopher, interviewed on ITV's *This Morning*.

support and refuse certain forms of treatment. The second is who decides, and when, what is in a child's best interests; the parents or some outside authority, in this case the doctors with the backing of the courts?

The Vatican's Pontifical Academy for Life issued a statement about the case last week, following the ruling by the ECtHR.

The statement basically sided with the doctors.

It said: "The proper question to be raised in this and in any other unfortunately similar case is this: what are the best interests of the patient? We must do what advances the health of the patient, but we must also accept the limits of medicine and, as stated in paragraph 65 of the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, avoid aggressive medical procedures that are disproportionate to any expected results or excessively burdensome to the patient or the family.

“Success’ in this case would not be a cure”

"Likewise, the wishes of parents must be heard and respected, but they too must be helped to understand the unique difficulty of their situation and not be left to face their painful decisions alone. If the relationship between doctor and patient (or parents as in Charlie's case) is interfered with, everything becomes more difficult and legal action becomes a last resort, with the accompanying risk of ideological or political manipulation, which is always to be avoided, or of media sensationalism, which

can be sadly superficial."

This takes a bit of unpacking as it brings together both of the above-mentioned considerations, namely when can treatment be deemed futile and when can you overturn the wishes of the parents?

The Vatican statement refers to "aggressive medical procedures that are disproportionate to any expected result". Catholic moral theology does not oblige anyone to undergo such treatment.

Invasive

A good example would be open heart surgery on a very elderly patient. Such an operation is extremely invasive, requires a long recovery time and is disproportionate to the likely post-operation life expectancy of the patient.

In the case of Charlie, the experiment treatment in the US does not involve an operation of any kind, but medication. However, the doctors at GOSH believe it may cause him further pain and would have very little chance of success. In addition, 'success' in this case would not be a cure, but rather an outside chance of an improvement in Charlie's condition.

The crucial issue here seems to be the prospect of causing Charlie pain for little or no effect. The Pontifical Academy for Life appears to believe the treatment on offer to him is out of proportion with the possible benefit effect it may have.

However, even if we accept this (it's not entirely clear we should), shouldn't the parents have the final decision here as they have the ultimate moral responsibility to their

child and shouldn't their judgement as to what is in Charlie's best interests be decisive?

This should almost always be the case, unless the wishes of the parents are very obviously against the child's best interests,

for example when Jehovah Witness parents do not want their child to receive a life-saving blood transfusion.

Now the Pope has intervened in the case. A statement released by the Vatican on Sunday said: "The Holy Father follows with affection and emotion the affair of little Charlie Gard and expresses his closeness to his parents. He prays for them, hoping that their desire to accompany and care for their child until the end is not disregarded."

“This case is not black or white, it is on the margins”

Another translation of the statement changed 'care' in the last sentence above to 'treat', as in 'treat their child to the end', implying maybe that the Pope wanted Charlie's parents to be allowed to take him to the

United States for treatment.

In the final analysis, this case is not black or white, it is on the margins. Viewed through the lens of the Catholic moral tradition it is possible to side either with the doctors or with the parents.

The treatment on offer to Charlie is on the border of being excessive and disproportionate but may not quite have crossed that border. If it has, then the courts are right to side with the doctors. If it has not, then they should have sided with the parents.

One thing is certain however; Charlie parent's, like the vast majority of parents, wanted to go the extra mile for their child, and more, in this case. This is why they had so much public support for their plight, including that of the Pope. They deserve every sympathy.

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Tens of thousands march in Rally for Life



Mags Gargan

Organisers estimate that about 70,000 people took part in the annual 'Rally for Life' march in Dublin on Saturday.

Marching behind a banner to 'Save the 8th' the large crowd, which included a number of bishops and politicians, walked from Parnell Street to Merrion Square where a carnival atmosphere prevailed with balloons, face-painting and live music.

Speakers included Karen Gaffney, an internationally acclaimed champion for people with Down's Syndrome, and there were also performances from acclaimed Scottish tenor Martin Alred, up and coming Longford rapper Evans Junior. Niamh Uí Bhriain of the Life Institute described the Save the 8th Rally as the "real Citizen's Assembly" and

said that grassroots activists right across the country had been mobilised by the Government's plan to hold a referendum to repeal the Eighth Amendment.

"The Rally for Life is always a huge, colourful, exciting, life-affirming event but this year it has a special focus: to tell the Government and the nation that the pro-life majority are activated and motivated, and that if we want to best protect the lives of both mother and baby we should 'Save the 8th,'" she said.

Ms Uí Bhriain said that the rally was a springboard for a series of 'Save the 8th' events planned for the summer. The Rally for Life, which met a small pro-choice protest on O'Connell Street, is organised by Life Institute, Youth Defence and Precious Life and is the biggest pro-life event held in the country every year, alternately in Belfast and Dublin.

A group taking part in the Rally for Life in Dublin on Saturday. Photo: John McElroy

Tyrone football manager Mickey Harte with Kathleen Hennessy and Evelyn Meaney from Co. Tipperary.



Karl Quinn, Fiona Whelan and Carl Quinn (5 months) from Dublin.



The Thomas family – Christeena, Susanna, Thomas, Joanna and Lisa – at the Rally for Life.



Danele Michalauskaite, Evelyn Siaulytex, Karolina Siaulytex and Gabriele Michalauskaite.



Aoife Rattigan and Jennifer Toney.



The Rally for Life at Merrion Square in Dublin.

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The Rally for Life making its way through Dublin on Saturday.



Joseph Manning, Stephen Dwan, Mary Manning and Fr Michael Fitzgerald from Cork.



Rachel Tierney (5) from Galway at the Rally for Life in Dublin.



Tony Barry from Dublin.



Left: A group of young people at the Rally for Life.



Reji C.Jacob, Georgeo Hillary and Joel Jose from the Indian community in Dublin.



The Rally for Life making its way through Dublin's streets.

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A shining star in a Dutch



Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675), *Woman with a Balance*, c.1664, oil on canvas, 40.3 x 35.6 cm, Widener Collection. Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington, and, on right, *Woman Writing a Letter with her Maid*, c.1670-71, oil on canvas, 72.2 x 59.7 cm, photos © National Gallery of Ireland.



Ireland is home to few pictures more iconic than Vermeer's *Woman Writing a Letter, with her Maid* [pictured]. A masterpiece of composition, colour, and light, this jewel of the National Gallery

is easily passed over as a simple scene of a woman focusing calmly on the letter she's writing, while her maid gazes out the window, her attentions clearly elsewhere.

The painting draws our eyes to both women: the neutrally-dressed maid stands in the very centre of the painting, while the painting is designed so parallel lines appear to converge in her mistress's shaded eye. Beyond these figures, though, there are hints of what preceded the scene, and what the future may hold.

Three objects lie on the tiled floor, as though knocked from the writer's table: a bright red wax seal, a stick of sealing wax and a crumpled piece of paper that may have been the letter the lady's answering, a rejected first draft, or even a letter-writing manual.

One thing is clear: the paper's crumpled state suggests that the lady began writing her letter in a state of agitation otherwise concealed by her expression of introverted concentration.

Johannes Vermeer may have been the greatest Dutch artist of his time, but he did not paint in a vacuum, writes **Greg Daly**



Behind her, however, is a large painting easily ignored as a decorative backdrop, but offering valuable clues as to Vermeer's theme. It depicts the finding of Moses, a Biblical tale the 17th-Century Dutch were inclined to see as a story of divine providence and of God's ability to join together opposing factions or those who had been separated.

The painting, then, appears to show a woman responding in suppressed distress to a letter which may have indicated the end of a love relationship, but suggests that all will be well, that God is in everything, guiding things to the best ending.

Born to Calvinist parents in Delft in 1632, Johannes Vermeer is thought to have converted to Catholicism when he married Catherina Bolnes in 1653, moving within a few years to live with Catherina's wealthy mother in Delft's so-called 'Papists' Corner'; Catholicism

was not illegal in the 17th-Century Netherlands, but it was looked down upon and its public practice curtailed.

The couple lived together with their children – Catherina gave birth to 15, four of whom died before being baptised – in the house on Ouden Langendijk, next to a Jesuit 'hidden church', until Vermeer's sudden death in 1675, following the family's descent into poverty in the aftermath of 1672's French invasion.

The Woman Writing a Letter, with her Maid, painted just before the invasion, was still in the family's possession when Vermeer died. It was given to a baker in part-payment for bread.

It may be difficult to believe now, given the awe with which he is regarded and how his paintings form the heart of the National Gallery's current exhibition on genre painting in the third quarter of 17th Century, but Vermeer was not

especially well-known in his day. Far from being seen as the shining light in the world of Dutch art, he was just one star in a constellation of gifted artists, of whom Frans van Mieris was the best paid while Gerard ter Borch was the period's great innovator.

Paintings of women writing letters first appeared in the 1630s, but it was Ter Borch who developed and popularised the theme in the 1650s, with his *Woman Writing A Letter* [pictured], modelled as so often in his paintings by his half-sister Gesina, being a classic example.

This was the seed, via Gabriël Metsu's similarly titled painting, for Vermeer's *Lady Writing* [pictured], featuring such recognisable attributes of Vermeer paintings as the fur-lined yellow mantel that is probably the one mentioned

in the household's 1676 inventory of its moveable goods. Predictably, there are some who wonder whether this might be a portrait of Catherina.

“Vermeer was not especially well-known in his day”

Woman Writing a Letter, with her Maid likewise did not come from thin air, two of its more immediate progenitors being a pair of Metsu paintings that are normally in the keeping of the National Gallery. *Man Writing a Letter* and *Woman Reading a Letter* [both pictured] point to Vermeer in their general composition and subject matter but even in their details. Is the fur-lined yellow mantel worn by the reading woman a nod to

Vermeer, the rendering of it inspired by Vermeer's work? Is Metsu's distracted maid an early version of Vermeer's similarly-dressed maid?

If she is, her own roots lie in Ter Borch's *Woman Sealing a Letter*, part of a pair or 'pendant' of paintings intended to be displayed together – and done so to remarkable effect in Dublin. The maid in that likewise wears a grey jacket, collared in white, and carries a metal bucket like Metsu's maid; her skirt, though, is red, echoing the tablecloth in the accompanying *Officer Writing a Letter*, while her mistress's blue tablecloth recalls the blue jacket of that piece's waiting manservant.

In the foreground of the *Officer Writing a Letter* is a playing card and a broken pipe, both lying on the floor; pointers to the author's urgency and even agitation,

constellation

they are early incarnations of the dropped thimble in Metsu's *Woman Reading a Letter* and of Vermeer's scattered objects.

Testimony to over six years of work, the exhibition of 64 Dutch genre works, including 10 by Vermeer, is something unlikely ever to be matched in Ireland, and a superb achievement by the project's originator Adriaan Waiboer, the National Gallery's head of collections and research.

All told, the paintings on show – happily coinciding with the re-opening of the gallery's restored historic wings – combine into 19 groups, each an aesthetic conversation showing artists building on each other's achievements and bouncing off each other's ideas.

Vermeer is to our eyes the star of the show – and anybody who cares anything about art should make a point of seeing such paintings as his *Woman with a Pearl Necklace*, the luminescence of which no reproduction comes close to doing justice, and his *Astronomer* and *Geographer*, long displayed as a pair but nowadays split between Paris and Frankfurt.

Despite this, he should not be seen simply as the culmination of the era's trend towards genre painting, as a comparison between his *Woman with a Balance* [pictured left] and Pieter de Hooch's *Woman Weighing Coins* shows: we simply do not know which painting came first, or which influenced the other.

At the same time, it is hard, when looking at these, not to be drawn to Vermeer's painting as the work of a more gifted – and more thoughtful – artist. Offering a commentary on his subject through another painting-within-a-painting, Vermeer's woman stands below Christ against a backdrop of the Last Judgment, occupying the space normally reserved for St Michael, weighing souls and judging them.

To judge is to weigh, the painting reminds us, and we will surely never again have such a chance to weigh up and judge so many astonishing painters, or to immerse ourselves in such a fertile artistic conversation. One trip to the National Gallery may not be nearly enough.

i *'Vermeer and the Masters of Genre Painting: Inspiration and Rivalry' runs at the National Gallery until September 17.*



Gabriel Metsu (1629-1667), *Man Writing a Letter*, 1664-6, oil on panel, 52 x 40.5 cm, photo © National Gallery of Ireland.



Gerard ter Borch (1617-1681), *Woman Writing a Letter*, c.1655-6, oil on panel, 39 x 29.5 cm, Royal Picture Gallery, Mauritshuis, The Hague, photography by Margareta Svensson.



Johannes Vermeer, *Lady Writing*, c.1665-7, oil on panel, 45 x 39.9 cm, gift of Harry Waldron Havemeyer and Horace Havemeyer, Jr, in memory of their father, Horace Havemeyer, courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington.



Gabriel Metsu, *Woman Reading a Letter*, 1664-6, oil on panel, 52.5 x 40.2 cm, photo © National Gallery of Ireland.



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The plight of migrants is key to Pope Francis' mission, Greg Daly is told



If there was criticism of Pope Francis' decision to bring a dozen Syrian refugees to Rome in April 2016 – followed by a further nine that September – it took the form of claims that this was a token move, a mere drop in the ocean that is the migrant crisis on Europe's doorstep.

For Msgr Tony Figueiredo, a priest of the Neocatechumenal Way and 16-year curial veteran, who was born in Kenya of Goan family and grew up in England, such criticisms miss the point. "I think this Holy Father is a man of prophetic gestures and signs," he says. Pointing to Jesus' ministry and the story of how he healed a man born blind by rubbing his eyes with dirt into which he had spat, he observes that "He was just one man and there were perhaps hundreds of thousands of blind men, so

he didn't heal all of them, but the prophetic gesture carried a lot of weight."

Pope Francis' first trip outside of Rome was such a prophetic gesture, he says, maintaining that the Pontiff's actions at Lampedusa in July 2013 matter less than what he said. "It wasn't the fact of what one man does at Lampedusa," he says, "but it's quite fascinating what that stirs up in all of us. The questions he asked at Lampedusa are haunting us."

Indifference

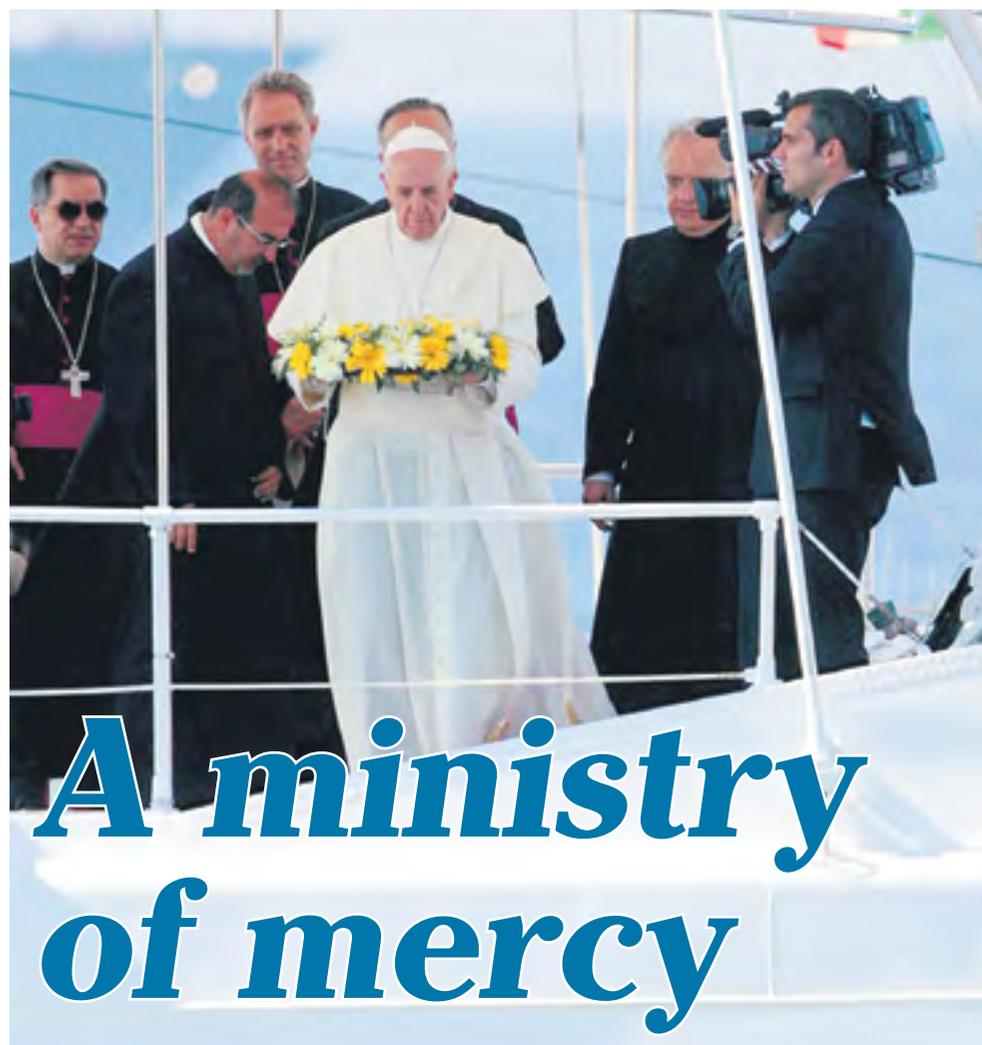
Recalling how the Pope spoke of God's question to the first murderer: "Cain, where is your brother?" he says, "this haunts us and it cannot leave us – it calls us to come out of our indifference."

Such questions, Msgr Figueiredo says, are searching ones, forcing us to ask what we're doing.

"I think that's a question for all of us, and I think the Pope wants to instill in our hearts where we need to be, so we know how to do it," Msgr Figueiredo continues. "As Christians we need to be with these people. We may not all be called to be in Lampedusa, but we need to do something."

Describing how St Teresa of Calcutta had said of the first person she helped, "If I hadn't begun with that one person, I wouldn't have picked up the other 50,000," he concludes of Pope Francis' actions, "I think these prophetic gestures are meant to plant in our own hearts and our own lives the summons to mission."

Not, of course, that the Holy Father's actions have been limited to gestures. Going into the 2013 conclave, the cardinals were determined to find a Pope who could reform the



A ministry of mercy

Church's central bureaucracy so as to make it more suited to mission, and curial reform has been a key part of Pope Francis' programme.

As part of this, last August saw the announcement of the creation of a new Vatican department in which Msgr Figueiredo was one of the first staff.

The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, headed by Ghana's Cardinal Peter Turkson, draws together the existing justice and peace, charity, healthcare and migration departments. "What is really interesting about this new dicastery, which began officially on January 1," says Msgr Figueiredo, "is that it has a specific section for migrants, refugees, and victims of human trafficking – obviously, victims of human trafficking in many ways are migrants. And that section, quite unusually – totally unusually, actually – is directly under the Holy Father Pope Francis, so it reports directly to him."

The decision by the Pope to place the migration section, at least for now, under his direct supervision is a powerful marker of how important the subject is to him, according to Msgr Figueiredo. "What the Pope said is

Pope Francis throws a wreath of flowers into the sea at Lampedusa in July 2013 in commemoration of the many refugees who had died trying to cross the Mediterranean from Africa to Europe. Photos: CNS

that at this time, I will take this under my care, this particular section," he says, continuing, "eventually we expect that we'd come under the whole dicastery, but because of the pressing situation – the urgent situation – of migrants, refugees and victims of human trafficking, the Holy Father obviously believes that we need to work on this immediately to answer the need and respond to what's going on without any waiting. People are involved, and that's what's key."

“There are more migrants, more refugees, and more human migration than any time in the history of the world”

Admitting that the Vatican can be famous for organisational inertia, Msgr Figueiredo says the Pope deliberately heading the new dicastery's migration section signals how it should be prioritised.

"When the head of an organisation says I'm going to look after something, it also gives a certain importance to that section," he says, "and I think he said this is completely the top of the list of his priorities at this point."

More migration

The Church has talked about migrants, refugees and victims of human trafficking through most of its history, Msgr Figueiredo says, but things are different now.

"Obviously in the world today there are more migrants, more refugees, and more human migration than any time in the history of the world," he says, adding that according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, there are 78 million refugees and 245 million migrants around the world, with these numbers only destined to rise.

"The Holy Father is certainly saying individual people are suffering – they need to be helped, they need to be supported along the way – but I think he has an even greater prophetic vision," Msgr Figueiredo continues.

"He sees what the response is of so many governments – we see it in the United States and in Britain today – a closing xenophobia and fear. It's dangerous, because from this very issue of migrants and refugees, a nationalism is rising – a populism – which will not help because the

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Msgr Tony Figueiredo.



Pope Francis meeting with refugees at the Moria refugee camp in Lesbos, Greece.

more isolated we are, the more we turn in on ourselves," he says, adding, "we build barriers, and barriers always lead to fears and greater separation, and that's never good for world peace, for example – it's never good for the communion of people."

For Pope Francis, these movements of people aren't merely challenges, Msgr Figueiredo says, noting that this should be obvious to Irish people. "There are great opportunities that come from migrants and refugees: I think of St Patrick, who obviously was a victim of slave trafficking," he says, explaining that when Patrick returned to Ireland he did so with the gift of the Gospel.

"He really brought something back, which I think migrants and refugees can do, because they've suffered and been through so much, when you listen to their stories – and that's a key part of our work," he says, continuing, "one of the things the Holy Father has asked of us is that we need to put out stories, and we need to listen to stories, and we need to tell people that this is actually a moment of opportunity, it's a great blessing – we're talking about people from different cultures of great richness, they've been through so much, that tells they are fighters."

* * * * *

Msgr Figueiredo grew up in England – his mother still lives in Watford – and says in Britain, "Most of the hospitals and care homes and so many different areas wouldn't be able to run were it not for migrants."

He continues: "They've really had to work, they've had to leave a lot – it's not easy to leave your country for whatever reason, and when these people come to Europe they want to make it, they want to be successful, they don't just want to lounge around. So they have an enormous amount to contribute."

It's not merely the most

obviously skilled workers who have things to offer, he says. "If you look at doctors and such professionals, many of them are Indians for example, but also those doing very menial tasks – migrants are willing to do them," he observes, adding that migrants' children are often impressively industrious. "I've taught in schools in Britain, and you do see these children who are smart – they don't tend to be the lazy ones," he says.

“We build barriers, and barriers always lead to fears and greater separation”

Migrants and their families can so easily be looked down upon by people in their new homes, however, and for Pope Francis these need always to be cared for. "This is a Holy Father who is completely tied to the Gospel message," says Msgr Figueiredo, "and when we look at the ministry of Jesus or the Old Testament, God has a particular love for those who are suffering, for those who are defenceless. God defends the widow, the orphan and the stranger at your doorstep, the Old Testament tells us, and Jesus himself says 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me.'"

In Jesus' ministry, Msgr Figueiredo says, he's constantly on the move, healing and preaching, eating with tax collectors and welcoming other sinners and outcasts. In this sense it could be said that Pope Francis sees his ministry as a shepherd seeking lost sheep, and Msgr Figueiredo notes, "to continue that metaphor, as one priest said to me: Jesus went out and looked for the one sheep, well, we don't even have the 99 in the Church anymore."

"The Holy Father is simply doing what Jesus did," he says, adding that part of the challenge for us is to break

out of our indifference to such people.

"In the world today there's what the Holy Father calls 'the globalisation of indifference' and he's keenly aware of that. We have the most vulnerable, poor, defenceless people, whether that's physically or spiritually or whatever, who fall through the cracks," he says, "and he says the Church is a field hospital. It's not an institution for the saved or for the perfect, it's a field hospital: it's not so much that those who are sick necessarily come to us today, so we have to go out to them."

Dramatic gestures, then, can serve to jolt us out of our indifference and stir us to help those most in need. "I think we're so used to reading on the internet and we're constantly just hearing things, but when we actually see these things done, it moves us," he says, adding that people like Pope Francis and St Teresa can impel others – and not just Catholics – to take a stand and go to those who have nothing.

Governments, he says, listen to the Pope, even if they don't necessarily agree with him, at least at first. "Obviously, the Church doesn't 'do politics' but is called to share the light of the Gospel, and that may begin with citizens individually, or it may begin with politicians and governments. So when we see certain issues that need that light of the Gospel, the Church has a duty to talk and bring that message to governments," he says.

As an example, he describes how he met in Rome with a group of British Catholic politicians. "We spoke about this very issue which is controversial in Britain at the moment, all about immigration," he says, continuing: "Initially they were a little bit up in arms about it, saying they couldn't possibly take more immigrants in and all the rest, but when I shared with them some specific stories of migrants and put some facts to them, there was

a change in them."

At the same time, he said, some said if they publicly upheld the Church's position on migration, nobody would vote for them. "This is the bottom line for many politicians, but we go back to St Thomas More – I am the king's servant but God's first – and as the Church we have a duty to bring the light of the Gospel and form consciences," he says.

Adding that this principle applies to Catholic politicians

on many issues, he says politicians are called to lead and explain their beliefs to voters, even if these should be unpopular – "otherwise we're not people of integrity". Reiterating the Church's duty to speak out, he says "perhaps the greatest damage is when we're silent".

* * * * *

Fear and xenophobia are a real phenomena, he says, so the Church has a duty to form consciences and inform people so they can become real missionaries of the Church. Pointing to how myths about refugees are rife, "I say to people saying this, go to where people are living in direct provision hotel rooms and see whole families receiving whatever, €19 a week, and your hearts will be changed in those instances."

While he hadn't yet visited any of Ireland's direct provision centres, he notes that those sounded like the kind of places Pope Francis had in mind when he spoke of refugees corralled in concentration camps. "The Holy Father wasn't talking about the Nazi extermination camps, he was talking about the concentration of people – from what I've heard, I haven't been out to see where people are, but I

think that's what he's talking about," he says.

Praising the Irish Church for the work it's doing on these issues, Irish bishops and clergy should not fear speaking out on migration, he says, as the Pope had sent he and others out with messages of support.

“When people see bishops and cardinals who take a stand, it makes people think”

"We do need bishops who will give prophetic gestures that will back up their words and inspire us to do the same," he continues. "I think that when people see bishops and cardinals who take a stand, it makes people think and want to follow. People want to follow leaders who are authentic today. We see it all around us today – we're no longer willing to follow the political elite or those who take the traditional way of doing things."

"We want authenticity and we want to deal with issues that are pressing," he says, continuing, "the challenge is to raise up leaders who will do that but are on the side of Christ."

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Out&About

Shannon celebrates Golden Jubilee



◀ **CLARE:** Priests and altar servers with Bishop Fintan Monahan at the Golden Jubilee Mass of Shannon Parish. Photo: Sheamus O'Donoghue

▼ **DUBLIN:** Fr Frank Reburn and altar servers at the Church of the Sacred Heart, Yellow Walls Parish, Malahide at the last Mass with the Family Mass group before the summer holidays. Photo: Harry Reynolds



DERRY: Bishop Donal McKeown, Bishop of Derry; Archdeacon Robert Miller, Church of Ireland; Minister Simon Coveney, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade; Fr Paul Farren, Adm. St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry; Tony Macaulay, author and presenter, Bishop Ken Good, CofI Bishop of Derry & Raphoe at the launch of *Forgiveness Remembers: A Journey into the Heart of God* by Paul Farren and Robert Miller. Photo: Stephen Latimer



WATERFORD: Seen here are members of the Rise and Shine Youth Group on their annual retreat day to Mount Mellera.



LAOIS: Bishop Michael Burrows, Church of Ireland; John Comer, ICMSA President; Mairead McGuinness MEP; Commandant Kieran Carey, ADC to an Taoiseach and James Healy, Macra President at the annual Ecumenical Embrace Farm Remembrance Service in the Church of the Most Holy Rosary, Abbeyleix. Photo: Roger Jones

Edited by Mags Gargan
mags@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



CORK: Bishop William Crean with some of the Parish Ambassador Families at the launch of the preparations in the Cloyne diocese for the World Meeting of Families which was celebrated in the Holy Family Church in Youghal.



◀ **CORK:** Columban Sister Philomena O'Sullivan, originally from North Cork, received a Cork Person of the Month award to mark her 50 years nursing and humanitarian work in Korea. Pictured at the award presentation front: Dan O'Sullivan; Sr Phil O'Sullivan, Cork Person of the Month; Niamh Lehane, Lexus Cork. Back: Pat Lemasney, Southern; Tina Quinn, AMO'Sullivan PR; Manus O'Callaghan, Awards Organiser. Photo: Tony O'Connell



◀ **KILDARE:** Jacinta Prunty with Dr Philip Nolan, President of Maynooth University at the launch last week of her book, *The Monasteries, Magdalen Asylums and Reformatory Schools of Our Lady of Charity in Ireland 1853-1973*, in the Rhetoric House in Maynooth University. Photo: Rachel Beatty



MAYO: VAKS youth volunteers gather for a training day at Knock Shrine. The VAKS will be helping at the weekends throughout the summer.

IN SHORT

Nine-day charity walk from Dublin to Knock

The charity Mary's Meals is planning a nine-day fundraising walk from Dublin to Knock next month. They have issued a call for people to join in the walk for an hour, a day or even the whole journey. The walk begins on Bank Holiday Monday, August 7 at the Spire on Dublin's O'Connell Street. Leaving at 8.30am each day the walkers will set out from Maynooth (August 8), Clonard Church (August 9), Mullingar (August 10),

Rathowen (August 11), Longford Cathedral (August 12), Roscommon (August 13), Ballymoe Village (August 14) and Ballyhaunis (August 15). Finally participants will meet up with Mary's Meals walkers from other parts of Ireland arriving together at Knock Shrine on August 15 at 11.45am. Mary's Meals has grown from its first feeding operation of 200 children in Malawi in 2002, to a world-wide campaign providing free school meals to over one million children daily. For information contact: Fr Eamonn Kelly

on steunanscathedral@eircom.net or 074-9121021, or Gerard Wade on gerardwade56@gmail.com or 085 8037479. **Large crowd attends Embrace Farm Remembrance Service** A large crowd attended the annual Ecumenical Remembrance Service in the Church of the Most Holy Rosary, Abbeyleix in Co. Laois to remember loved ones who have died or have suffered injury from accidents on Irish farms. The service was led by

Coff Bishop Michael Burrows and local Christian clergy were in attendance. The service was also attended by Minister Michael Creed, Minister Oliver Flanagan and numerous representatives from the agricultural sector. A number of families brought a handful of earth from the scene of their loved one's accident to the service, which was carried outside by the ICMSA President John Comer and Macra President James Healy to where a tree was planted as a symbol of uniting the loss of loved ones in one place.

ARMAGH

Eucharistic Adoration in St Malachy's Church, Armagh daily from 6am to midnight, and all night on Wednesdays.

Mass and delivery of first class relic of St Faustina and visitation of the St Michael the Archangel statue at St Patrick Chapel, Cullyhanna on July 28 and 29 at 8pm.

Mass and visitation of the St Michael the Archangel pilgrim statue on July 30 at 10am in the Church of St Michael, Newtownhamilton.

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

CORK

St Colman's Society for Catholic Liturgy has announced that the Fota X International Liturgy Conference, to be held in Cork from July 8-10, will be opened by Cardinal Raymond Burke. Contact colman.liturgy@yahoo.co.uk or 021 4813445.

Visit of the St Michael the Archangel statue and veneration of first class relic of St Faustina at Mass on July 27 at 7.30pm at the Church of Immaculate Conception, Mitchelstown.

DONEGAL

John Pridmore, international speaker and author of *From Gangland to Promised Land* will be leading a Healing Retreat in Ards Friary, Creeslough from Friday, August 25 to Sunday, August 27.

Mass and visitation of the St Michael the Archangel pilgrim statue on July 31 at 7pm in St Mary's Church, Creggan.

DUBLIN

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

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

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

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

GALWAY

Visit of the St Michael the Archangel statue and veneration of first class relic of St Faustina at Mass on July 25 at 7.30pm with Our Lady of Mount Carmel prayer group, Finney, Clonbur. Contact Breada Laffey: 086-3378429.

KILDARE

Carbury Parish - Adoration in

the Church of the Holy Trinity, Derrinturn takes place each Monday from 10.30am until 12 midnight. Adoration for priestly vocations takes place every Thursday at 8.45pm.

KILKENNY

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

LIMERICK

Enrolment is open for Autumn classes for children aged 3-12 for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd: A Montessori based Religious Education Programme taught by the Dominican Sisters. To enrol your child or for more information, contact limerick@op-tn.org or 085-2255796.

MAYO

Visit of the St Michael the Archangel statue and veneration of first class relic of St Faustina at Mass on July 26 at 12.30pm at Adoration Chapel in Knock.

Holy Souls Society of Ireland annual pilgrimage to Knock Shrine - August 21 for a 3pm Novena Mass.

The next Latin Mass in the Old (Tridentine) Rite will take place in the Parish Church, Knock on Sunday, July 9 at 5.30pm.

The 12th annual Charismatic Weekend Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine, hosted by the Monaghan Charismatic Prayer Group, on August 25 at 6pm, August 26 at 9am and August 27 at 8.30am. Speakers: Fr Peter Casey, Sr Anne Maria O'Shaughnessy and Philip McArdle.

SLIGO

Visit of the St Michael the Archangel statue and veneration of first class relic of St Faustina at Mass on July 26 at 7.30pm at St Anne's, Cranmore Road.

TIPPERARY

'Intercession for Priests' prayer meeting (as established by Sr Briege McKenna) at 8pm every Tuesday at 4 Nash Place, Cahir. Enquiries to 086-3002951.

WATERFORD

Charismatic Renewal Jubilee Prayer Gathering, Sunday July 16 from 2-6pm in the Edmund Rice Centre, Waterford, organised by Word of God Outreach. Contact Sile 086-8590394.

St Declan's Well, Toor, Aghish annual Mass on Thursday, July 27 at 12noon with Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan. Confessions at 11.30am.

WICKLOW

St Patrick's Prayer Meeting on Tuesday evenings at 8pm in the Scout Hall, South Quay, Wicklow. All are welcome to get together for prayer, scripture, music and a cuppa. Holy Hour of Adoration, Prayer and Music continues every Wednesday, 8pm-9pm, in St Patrick's Church, Wicklow Town. All welcome. You can also join us on the live stream: http://www.churchservices.tv/stpatrickschurchwicklow

Afterlife
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Galway: History on a Postcard
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Join in the spirit of County Galway with Paul Duffy's insightful combination of history, local folklore, and rare postcard images, drawn mostly from the work of local photographers of the period between 1890 and 1930.

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The Enchanted Lake
Sinéad de Valera



Bringing together 8 classic Irish fairy tales, this collection will transport the reader to a world of wonders, enchantments and magic. From witches and mermaids to giants and princes, these timeless tales are brimming with ancient charm and magical locales.

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Migraine
Murray Little & Craven



Migraine is a complex and debilitating neurological condition which affects over half a million people in Ireland. Written by experts, this book is for both the general public and health professionals - it advises, describes and provides crucial information about the condition.

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Faith In Politics
John Bruton



This collection of essays gathers speeches, articles and blogs on politics, economics, history and religion by the ex-Taoiseach John Bruton. A selection of book reviews is also included which gives people a further insight into the man who served us.

was €19.99 **€7.99**

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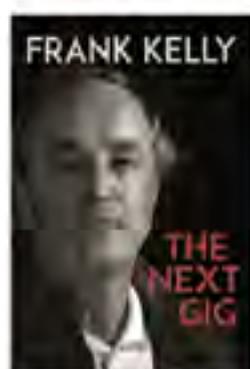
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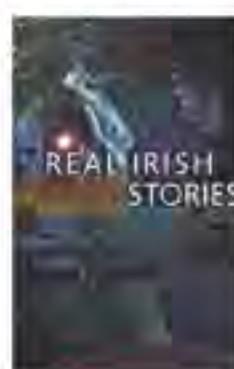
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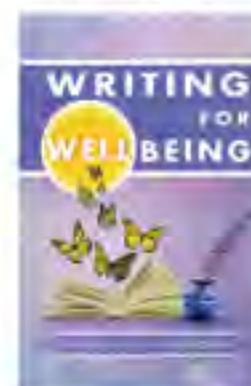
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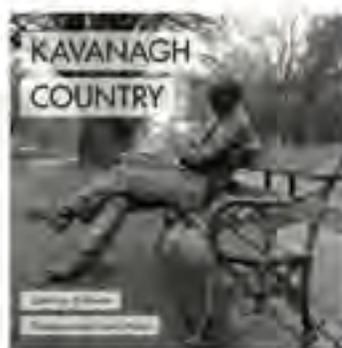
The Jolly Roger
Trevor & Noel Welch



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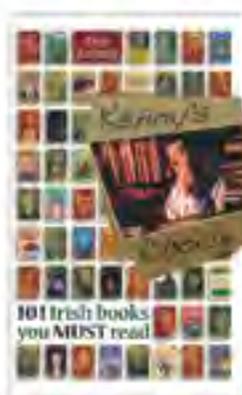
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Writer PJ Browne and photographer Dave Maher trace Patrick Kavanagh's journey in words and pictures from his formative rural years to his relocation and dislocation in Dublin. Along the way, Kavanagh left a memorable landscape, popularised in his ballads, poetry and prose.

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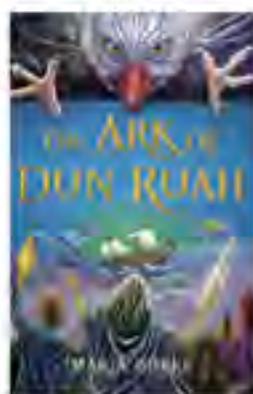
Des Kenny celebrates 20 years of Kenny's Book Club by ranking the novels, plays, poetry, memoirs and travelogues written in the past two centuries. *Kenny's Choice* will surprise, intrigue and perhaps infuriate readers as much for its inclusions as its omissions.

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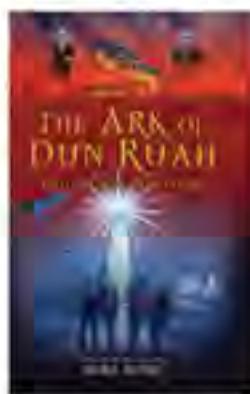
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World Report

IN BRIEF

US bishop fights against drug 'plague' in diocese

● A US bishop has urged people to take action against drugs that are killing people in his diocese.

Bishop Edward Malesic wrote of the opioid crisis in 'A Pastoral Letter on the Drug Abuse Crisis: From Death and Despair to Life and Hope'.

He addressed the epidemic that last year killed more than 300 people in the four counties that comprise the Diocese of Greensburg in Pennsylvania, and outlined the Catholic Church's local response to the crisis.

Besides efforts that focus on prayer and education, he also discussed the Church's cooperative efforts with government and social service agencies that are already engaged in the fight against addiction.

Objectors to abortion file suit in Illinois

US pro-life physicians and crisis pregnancy centres have filed suit against an Illinois law that requires conscientious objectors to give their patients information about abortion providers.

"We represent over 20 medical pregnancy centres in Illinois who basically

came to us saying, 'We cannot comply with this law,' Thomas Olp, representing the plaintiffs, said.

The Health Care Right of Conscience Act gave doctors the option of not participating in procedures to which they had a conscientious objection.

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Travel ban would be 'heartbreaking' for refugees say US organisations

Refugee organisations have expressed concern for how the US travel ban will effect refugees in transit and those who are refused entry into the country. Donald Trump's strict immigration laws have been watered down since they were first announced, but the US Supreme Court has implemented a partial ban which will come into effect today (Thursday).

Instead of a blanket ban on people from six majority-Muslim countries including Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen, anyone with a *bona fide* relationship with the US will be permitted entry. This means those who have a relationship with certain parties such as family members, employees or universities.

"The immediate priority is the safety of those refugees who are en route, ensuring they reach their destination," said Ashley Feasley, policy director for Migration and Refugee Services at the US Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington.

"We are also very concerned about the individuals who have assured cases



A man holds an umbrella during a protest in Seattle against President Donald Trump's travel ban. Photo: CNS

that are scheduled for travel after July 6 who may not be able to arrive now due to the interpretation of the Supreme Court decision and the executive order."

Administration

The US administration has said it needs time to review the refugee resettlement programme and its vetting procedures for allowing refugees into the country, adding that it is necessary to limit the number of refugees allowed in the US to 50,000 this year.

"These people have travel documents, they are ready to go," said Mr Feasley. "They have relationships with the resettlement offices in the cities they were to be resettled in. It would be heartbreaking and administratively inefficient if they are not able to complete their journey of seeking refuge."

In a statement, Jesuit Refugee Service USA said the administration was preventing the reunification of family including that of grandparents and other extended fam-

ily – which are not counted under the *bona fide* familial relationships.

Hans Van de Weerd, chairman of the Washington-based Refugee Council USA, said in a telephone briefing that targeting "vulnerable" populations, such as refugees, was "morally wrong" and it also was bad policy.

The travel ban was said to tackle terrorism, but several states and refugee organisations sued to stop it proceeding, claiming it targeted Muslims and was discriminatory.

Pope calls for peace as violence in Venezuela continues to build

Pope Francis led thousands of pilgrims in prayer as clashes in Venezuela continue due to a government decision to change the country's constitution.

"I call for an end to the violence and that a peaceful and democratic solution may be found," the Pope said during his Angelus address last Sunday.

Almost 100 people have died in violent demonstrations since April, and government authorities have been criticised for their use of force.

Pope Francis' appeal for peace comes

several days after Cardinal Jorge Urosa Savino said the new president Nicolas Maduro's actions are "a government war against the people."

"Those armed gangs and state security forces have caused deaths in a truly criminal way, such as shooting firearms directly at the head or firing shotguns at close range or launching tear gas to cause deadly damage," Cardinal Urosa said during a Mass in Caracas.

Venezuelan opposition parties have organised an unofficial referendum later

this month, and have dubbed the current socialist government a dictatorship. The next presidential election is in 2018 but protestors are calling for it to be brought forward.

Cardinal Urosa expressed support for the Attorney General of Venezuela, Luisa Ortega Díaz, who is the highest ranking government official to publicly oppose President Maduro.

She has denounced human rights violations against protestors and attempted to remove judges loyal to Maduro.

'No dialogue' says bishop as terrorists hold priest

A Catholic bishop in the southern Philippine city of Marawi dismissed as "ridiculous" proposals to negotiate for the release of a priest held captive by terrorist gunmen.

Speaking at a conference in the northern province of Pangasinan, Bishop Edwin de la Pena of Marawi said "there is no way we can dialogue" with extremists, according to reports.

The bishop said that for

the past four decades, the Catholic Church's response to war and conflicts in the southern region of Mindanao has been dialogue.

"We can only dialogue with like-minded people," he told a gathering last week at the Solidarity Congress for Persecuted Christians.

The gathering was sponsored by Aid to the Church in Need, a

pontifical foundation that supports victims of persecution.

He said people who have fallen victim to extremism, those who "experience so much pain...are all the people who are open to have a dialogue with us".

Security forces in southern Philippines continue to battle with terrorist gunmen who claim to have links with

the so-called Islamic State.

The gunmen, belonging to the local Maute terror group, attacked Marawi on May 23 and burned the city's Catholic cathedral and a Protestant school. They kidnapped Fr Teresito Soganub and several church workers.

The government said the terrorists are still holding about 100 hostages who are being used as human shields.



Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie

Smoking out Islamic militants



Smoke is seen following a Philippine Army airstrike as government troops continue their assault against Islamic militants in Marawi. The Bishop of Marawi dismissed as "ridiculous" proposals to negotiate for the release of a priest held captive by terrorist gunmen. Photo: CNS

Cardinal Pell shows 'mettle' in response to abuse charges

Cardinal Timothy Dolan has voiced his support for Cardinal George Pell who is going to Australia to face child abuse charges.

From New York, Cardinal Dolan is a long-time friend of the embattled Cardinal Pell, saying his cooperation with authorities "only shows the mettle of a great man".

"I feel terribly sad for my good friend Cardinal George Pell, sad for him and sad with him. I want to be very supportive, because I have immense admiration for him," Dolan said, "I admire him, and I want to stick with him.

"But the most basic thing victim-survivors have always asked for is justice,

and justice means getting to the truth of what happened. In this case, I'm praying, and I really believe, that the truth will vindicate Cardinal Pell," he said.

The Vatican official has denied the charges, and is returning to Australia to fight them.

It has been reported that "people assisting the cardinal" have set up a fund after the Sydney archdiocese declared they would not be paying for his defence. However they will assist by providing his accommodation as well as other supports.

The cardinal has been the subject of several allegations including sexual abuse cover-ups and child abuse since

the 1960s.

In a Vatican news conference the 76-year-old denied the charges, saying: "I am looking forward finally to having my day in court. I repeat that I am innocent of these charges. They are false. The whole idea of sexual abuse is abhorrent to me."

Cardinal Pell was interviewed by detectives in the Vatican last year after he said his poor health would not permit him to travel.

It is believed his doctors are advising him how to manage the journey back to Australia.

He will appear before Melbourne Magistrates' Court on July 18.

Pope defends parents wish to care for terminally ill child

The Pope has expressed his "closeness" with the parents of the terminally ill child Charlie Gard, whose parents have lost a legal battle to keep him on life-support.

The 10-month-old was born in England with mitochondrial DNA depletion syndrome, which causes progressive muscle weakness, brain damage and respiratory or liver failure. It is typically fatal.

The Vatican released a

statement saying: "The Holy Father follows with affection and emotion the case of little Charlie Gard and expresses his own closeness to his parents. For them he prays, hoping that their desire to accompany and care for their own child to the end is not ignored."

The Pontifical Academy for Life and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales also extended prayers for the

baby, the medical staff caring for him and the parents.

British hospital specialists believed the baby had no chance of survival, but the parents, Chris Gard and Connie Yates, crowdfunded nearly \$1.7m (€1.5m) in four months to finance having the baby treated in the United States. Only 16 children in the world are believed to have been diagnosed with the rare syndrome.

When hospital officials

wanted to stop providing life support for the baby, Gard and Yates went to a London court with their case, but the court ruled the baby should be allowed to "die with dignity".

The ruling was upheld by an appeals court and the nation's Supreme Court dismissed the parents' case. They turned to the European Court of Human Rights who decided not to intervene.

Vatican roundup

Holy See demands UN stunts growth of the arms trade

The Holy See has criticised the UN for its inaction to end the "proliferation" of weapons of mass destruction.

Following a UN resolution on the issue six months ago, Archbishop Bernardito Auza, the Holy See's Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer to the UN in New York, made the appeal during an open debate of the Security Council.

Archbishop Auza said the Holy See believes the situation in their regard "has not substantially changed".

He quoted Pope Francis saying: "It is an absurd contradiction to speak of peace, to negotiate peace, and at the same time, promote or permit the arms trade."

The Pontiff was also quoted as saying "we produce weapons and sell them to those who are at war with one another".

Archbishop Auza said the Pope renews his "strong support for the rapid adoption of steps that would lead to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and to the reduction of the world's reliance on armed force in the conduct of international affairs".

"The proliferation of weapons, both conventional and of mass destruction, aggravates situations of conflict and results in huge human and material costs that profoundly undermine development and the search for lasting peace," said the archbishop.

UN told food insecurity is "caused by selfishness"

Hunger and malnutrition is often caused by indifference and selfishness, the Pope told a UN conference.

In a message to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) conference held on July 3, the Pope said wars, terrorism and forced displacements are not "inevitable but rather the consequence of concrete decisions" that have led to the lack of food and adequate nutrition to the helpless.

In a message read by

the Vatican Secretary of State the Pope continued: "We are dealing with a complex mechanism that mainly burdens the most vulnerable, who are not only excluded from the processes of production, but frequently obliged to leave their lands in search of refuge and hope."

It was said that the Pontiff would visit the FAO headquarters in Rome in October to attend a conference on World Food Day on the theme 'Changing the Future of Migration'.

Pope Francis tells five new cardinals to act as servants

Cardinals are not called to be "princes" of the Church, but to serve the people of God and tackle the sins of the world, Pope Francis told his five new cardinals last week.

Jesus "calls you to serve like him and with him, to serve the father and your brothers and sisters", the Pope said as he created five new cardinals from five nations.

After reciting the Creed and taking an oath of fidelity to Pope Francis and his successors, each cardinal – in his new red robes – went up to Pope Francis and knelt before him. The Pope gave them each a cardinal's ring, a red skullcap and a red three-cornered red hat.

They also received a scroll attesting to their appointment as cardinals and containing the name of their "titular church" in Rome.

After the consistory, Pope Francis and the new cardinals visited retired Pope Benedict XVI in the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery, his residence in the Vatican gardens.

The new cardinals are: Jean Zerbato of Mali, 73; Juan Jose Omella of Spain, 71; Anders Arborelius of Sweden, 67; Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhankhoun, apostolic vicar of Pakse, Laos, 73; and Gregorio Rosa Chavez, 74, auxiliary bishop of San Salvador, El Salvador.

Letter from Rome



Spanish Archbishop Luis Ladaria Ferrer SJ, the new head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The replacement of the Church's doctrinal watchdog shouldn't be seen as an ideological purge, writes **John L. Allen Jr**



Given the way German Cardinal Gerhard Müller has become identified as the Vatican's leading in-house sceptic about Pope Francis' cautious opening to Communion for the divorced and civilly remarried in *Amoris Laetitia*, it was written in the stars that when and if Müller was ever replaced as head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, it would be seen as a papal smackdown.

In some quarters, that's precisely how news has been received that Francis has appointed Spanish Archbishop Luis Ladaria Ferrer, a fellow Jesuit, to take Müller's place.

Before we get too carried away in the 'night of the long knives' way of seeing things, however, there are a few points worth taking into account.

Discretion

First, as of July 2, Müller reached the end of the five-year term to which he was appointed by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012. Granted, such terms can be extended at a Pope's discretion, but the point is that it's not really as if Müller has been 'fired'. His service was up, and the Pope decided to name someone else.

Second, while Müller undeniably has a more restrictive take on the implications of *Amoris* than many others, it's hardly as if he's an implacable foe of the Pontiff. Recall, for instance, that the German-speaking bishops at the

second Synod on the Family made a commitment in their language group to achieve unanimity on their recommendations, and Müller was part of that consensus.

Recall, too, that Müller is very close to the Latin American Church, including a longtime personal friendship with Gustavo Gutierrez, considered one of the fathers of liberation theology. In 2014, he and Gutierrez appeared together in Rome at a Vatican event, along with Cardinal Oscar Rodríguez Maradiaga, in what was widely seen as a historic healing of old wounds between the Vatican and the progressive wing of the Latin American Church. Müller also supported the sainthood of El Salvador's famed martyr Oscar Romero, a cause near and dear to the Pope's heart.

In other words, even if Francis truly were dividing the blues from the greys, it's not clear on which side Müller would fall.

Third, it's not as if Ladaria is anybody's idea of a flaming liberal.

He was appointed to the number two post at the CDF by Benedict XVI in 2008, and obviously the former prefect of the congregation wasn't going to name anyone he regarded as doctrinally suspect to such a key post. Like Benedict, Ladaria is a man of *ressourcement*, meaning a return to the sources, as the key to genuine Church reform. Along with his fellow Jesuit Karl Becker, who was a key



Cardinal Gerhard Müller, with other prelates celebrating the feast of Corpus Christi outside the Basilica of St John Lateran. Photos: CNS

No one expected the Spanish inquisition

adviser to the CDF under Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger and later made a cardinal by him as Pope Benedict, Ladaria has always been seen as representing the Jesuits' conservative wing.

“There were no differences between me and Pope Francis”

Even on the contested issue of Communion for the divorced and remarried, it's not clear that Ladaria represents a dramatic departure from the Müller line. In 2014, just before the second synod on the family, Ladaria answered a letter from a French priest asking whether the divorced and civilly remarried could be absolved. Here's the key line from his reply:

“A remarried divorcee cannot be validly absolved if he does not take the firm resolution of not ‘sinning for the future’ and therefore of abstaining from the acts proper to spouses, by doing in this sense all that is within his power.”

If full-throated adherence to the most expansive

interpretation of *Amoris* were Francis' only test for promotion, it's thus not clear Ladaria would have passed.

Fourth, even if Francis were moving aside someone perceived as a problem to replace him with someone more *simpatico*, there's hardly anything novel about that. Popes have done it since time immemorial, including all of Francis' recent predecessors.

Müller is playing down any perceived breach between himself and Francis.

“There were no differences between me and Pope Francis,” Müller told a German newspaper, insisting there was no quarrel about *Amoris Laetitia*.

“It doesn't bother me,” said the 69-year-old, smiling, about moving on. “Everyone has to retire at some point,” he said, adding that he will remain in Rome.

“I will do scholarly work, continue to exercise my function as cardinal, and do what I can in the care of souls. I have enough to do,” he said.

On the other hand, there's a lingering suspicion among some observers that if the move isn't ideological, especially in light of the

Ladaria appointment, it is nevertheless still personal – a form of payback for Müller's affiliation with critics of the Pontiff, including contributing to a book with what turned out to be three of the four ‘*dubia*’ cardinals’ on the eve of the second Synod of Bishops on the family.

According to this view, Francis actually made it clear that not renewing Müller's contract was purely personal by naming someone who basically shares most of his views.

“I will do scholarly work, continue to exercise my function as cardinal, and do what I can”

Müller told the German newspaper, however, that Francis told him that from now on all Vatican heads of departments won't be renewed after five years, and his was simply the first case to come up.

No doubt the guessing game about what Francis is up to will continue. One

factor that may shift the analysis in one direction or the other will be if other personnel moves follow in short order – and if those on their way out are perceived, one way or another, as not quite fully ‘Francis men’.

As a footnote, I have a generally dismal track record as a futurologist – I'm the guy, after all, who published a biography of Ratzinger in 1999 that ended with four reasons he'd never be Pope, and we all know how that turned out.

However, in this case, I channelled my inner Nostradamus well. On Monday, June 5, on our weekly radio show on the Catholic Channel, Austen Ivereigh, Charles Collins and I did a just-for-fun segment trying to guess what would be the Pope's ‘Summer Surprise’. I actually predicted that he would replace Müller at the end of his mandate.

That was, by the way, a sheer guess because I had no insider information whatsoever at the time. However, a broken clock and all that...

John Allen Jr is editor of CruXNow.com



The Convocation of Catholic Leaders was an exercise in how to implement Pope Francis' vision, writes **Fr Jeffrey Kirby**

Last weekend and at the start of this week, the Catholic community swarmed the city of Orlando. The US Bishops' Conference called together approximately 3,000 leaders from every sector of the Church's life in order to listen and talk about the surprising topic of evangelisation.

It might catch some folks off guard to hear that the Catholic Church called together this unprecedented convocation to discuss evangelisation. For many people in the US, 'evangelisation' isn't really a Catholic word. It's not one that's usually associated with the Catholic way of life. And so, what was going on in Orlando?

Well, some history might help. Evangelisation is actually a very Catholic concept. Much of the Church's history is filled with lively moments of sharing the Gospel with others.

“The cheerful Pontiff was calling for an end to the hiatus on evangelisation”

Regrettably, over more modern times, the Church went on lockdown mode. Times were changing and Church leadership, for many reasons, chose not to dialogue, engage, or appropriately change with them.

The Church created silos, stayed in its ghettos, in its trenches, and was viewed as an irrelevant museum. Perhaps nice to have around for ceremonies and nostalgia but not seen as a real contributor or help to humanity, its ills, or its contemporary questions.

Groups

In this state of affairs, an esoteric approach was the Catholic rule of the day. The generous, vulnerable, and dirty work of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ fell by the wayside. It wasn't completely gone as some areas in the world and some groups within the Church singled themselves out for their efforts to evangelise. But in general the work of evangelisation appeared to go on hiatus in the Catholic Church.

The Great Commission of the

Taking Vatican II to America's peripheries



Prelates process during the opening Mass of the July 1-4 convocation of Catholic leaders.

Lord Jesus, "Go, teach all nations..." seemed to be overshadowed by a reactionary precept, "Stay here, and don't talk to anyone that's not like us..."

This was the popular landscape in the Catholic world until the Solemnity of the Conversion of St Paul, January 25, 1959. On that day, Pope St John XXIII concluded the Octave of the Chair of Christian Unity with Evening Prayer at the Basilica of St Paul's Outside-the-Walls in Rome. In the Pope's remarks on that day, and to the shock of almost everyone, it was announced that an ecumenical council was going to be convened.

No one would have anticipated such a thing since such universal councils were only called when the Church was in severe theological conflict. In the Church's entire history up to that point, there had only been 20 such councils. The last one had been about 400 years before and was brought together

because of the Reformation.

And so, "good Pope John" explained that the "prophets of doom" needed to go away and it was time for some *aggiornamento*, that is, some internal renewal both in how the Church saw itself and in how it understood and presented the Gospel to the world. The cheerful Pontiff was calling for an end to the hiatus on evangelisation. He saw the world hurting and in need of accompaniment and so he summoned the entire Church back to the Great Commission.

“Pope Francis introduced a new effort popularly called 'evangelisation through the peripheries'”

In its work, the Second Vatican Council reinvigorated the leaven of the Gospel in the life of the

Church and extensive outreaches and overtures of friendship were initiated. The Catholic Church rejoined humanity's conversation and proposed the Gospel message as a solace, support and inspiration to the sufferings and sorrows of life.

It sought to listen, learn and to speak 'the truth in love'. The Catholic Church was creatively retrieving its witness in the world and evangelisation, expressed in so many diverse ways, was reborn and unleashed in the life of the Catholic Church and its members.

But then came the navel gazing. Although evangelisation documents were still being released and papal visits were being made, the enthusiasm for evangelisation waned. In its place came intense introspection, bickering, presumption of malign intentions over endeavours by various Church leadership, and general confusion. Evangelisation was stuck in a paralysis by analysis.

But then came March 13, 2013. On that day, once again the world was surprised as the Catholic Church received its first Latin American Pope. Taking the name Francis, the new Pontiff immediately sought to reignite the momentum for evangelisation. Unlike previous efforts to exclusively evangelise through culture (which oftentimes led to 'culture wars'), Pope Francis introduced a new effort popularly called 'evangelisation through the peripheries'.

Rather than engage the academy, debate politicians, fight with entertainment leaders, and such things, the new Pope chose to circumvent it all and go directly to

those who are suffering, rejected, and ostracised. The Pope is calling the Church back to a poverty of spirit and to its vocation as a 'field hospital' in the world today.

It's not that the other work in culture doesn't have a place. It must be done by some. But this Pope isn't as interested in that method of evangelisation as he is intensely focused on the poor and forgotten. As he has said repeatedly in different ways: "Let this service be our message."

Exhortation

The Pope's first exhortation to the Church and the world was rightly entitled *The Joy of the Gospel*, and in the pages of *Evangelii Gaudium* are disclosed the spirit and heartfelt directions of Pope Francis to all believers to go to the peripheries and share the Good News.

In many respects, therefore, Pope St John XXIII's actions were prophetic in convening the Second Vatican Council and opening up some windows and calling the Church out of its bastions and back into the world.

Pope Francis is continuing this work and in Orlando this week, Catholic leaders were praying, listening and sharing, studying *The Joy of the Gospel*, and asking how we can all go to the peripheries and fulfil in today's world the Great Commission given to us by Jesus Christ.

Fr Jeffrey Kirby is a member of the Bishop of Charleston's delegation to the Convocation of Catholic Leaders in Orlando.



Julianne Stanz, director of new evangelisation for the Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin, speaks before the convocation's opening Mass.

Letters

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

Bríd Smith TD merely compounded her insult

Dear Editor, The effort of Ms Bríd Smith TD to retrieve her situation following her remarks about the Catholic Church, merely compounded her insults. Moreover, the Catholic Church is one living body, all of its members belonging to the Mystical Body of Christ, so to insult "The Catholic Church" is to do so to all Catholics. Many questions could be raised about Ms Smith's comments but to deal with one issue – the nuns who provided homes for mothers and babies. Did the girls not have parents or any family willing to take care of them in their need? Did the State at the time make any effort to provide ample help to the sisters?

What Ms Smith calls "the privileged position of the Church in our society" overlooks the reality that nobody else offered refuge to those who were unwanted and were shunned by society. Religious orders were left with the task of trying to manage with what little they had. It bears out the adage that no good deed goes unpunished.

*Yours etc.,
Aoibheann Ni Ruairdhrí
Drumcondra, Dublin 9.*

Dear Editor, With the fall of the Berlin Wall, socialism was put in the dustbin of history. But no one told our Marxist TDs. What about the legacy of Socialist states? National Socialism of the 1940s incinerated millions because they would not bow to the state. The Soviet Union had its gulags. Mao's socialism in the People's Republic is responsible for the mass murder of 60 million Chinese men, women and children. By all means put us members of the Church in the recycle bin. After all, we are children of the Resurrection. Socialism was dumped nearly 30 years ago.

*Yours etc.,
Declan Cooney,
Birr, Co. Offaly.*

Dear Editor, Having announced in the Dáil that the Catholic Church, or at least its "privileged position" in Ireland, belongs to "the dustbin of history", Bríd Smith TD has now taken her arguments (IC 22/06/2017) to the pages of *The Irish Catholic*.

With the active support of the media, politicians like Ms Smith demonise Ireland's Catholic past, placing all their emphasis on the scandals that have indeed been extensively documented but failing to acknowledge the great good done over centuries by the Church and its members.

The socialist record on religious freedom is by no means unblemished. In Eastern Europe in the post-war period, to give just one example, Catholics and other Christians were subjected to very harsh persecution by the Communist Governments of that time. Ms Smith may argue that her brand of socialism was not involved but the persecution of believers certainly took place in the name of 'socialism'.

At the last election, Ms Smith's party won around 4% of the vote. This gives her a limited mandate to speak for the rest of us on fundamental questions of faith and politics. She is fully entitled to her opinions but other citizens are also entitled to offer an alternative vision for the future in which the social contribution of Catholics, as well as of other citizens, is encouraged and supported instead of being binned.

*Yours etc.,
Tim O'Sullivan,
Rathfarnham, Dublin 14.*

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.

Letter of the week

Religion should be taught outside schools

Dear Editor, Here in Ireland, up to relatively recently, children absorbed the faith of their parents in the home, where religion, in all its forms, was part of living. What happened in school was simply a reinforcement of that same religious ethos. In such a climate, it was only natural that the schools should prepare the children for First Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Confirmation. At that time, home, school and parish were truly agents of the Church – the Holy Triangle.

Unfortunately, the only time most children now hear about God is during the religion class, and generally from a teacher who is

'going through the motions'. So! Do our Church leaders not get the picture? I suspect that they do, but don't want to admit it, and so are in need of a large dose of reality therapy. 'Is there a problem? What is the problem? Who has the problem? How can we solve the problem? Who can help us solve the problem?' (Glasser, W. 1975).

Yes! There is a problem: the Church in Ireland is dying fast. This is a problem for each diocese and each parish.

So, take sacramental preparation out of the schools, and let the parishes devise a programme for their young neophytes, like they have in

every other country outside of ours. Finally, the Department of Education could help by removing religion from the schools.

If this were to happen, and a parish programme were to be established in each parish, I'm convinced, without being too optimistic, that up to 10% of our young people and their parents would rise to the challenge and make a real commitment to follow Jesus as members of their local parish community.

*Yours etc.,
Rev. Patrick Seaver CC,
Farranshone,
Limerick.*

James Joyce and Irish Nationalism

Dear Editor, Peter Costello writes on June 15 in his review of my *James Joyce Unplugged*, that books about Joyce should be based on original research. He is entitled to his opinion. I find that Joyceans are so enamoured with 'reading' and interpreting Joyce's fiction that they have lost sight of much of the reality of his life.

There is little doubt that

as I wrote in my book that at one stage Joyce was an Irish nationalist and a republican, though the reviewer demurs. My source is his letters, especially those to his brother Stanislaus.

James wrote: "One thing alone seems obvious to me. It is way past time for Ireland to have done once and for all with failure. If she is truly capable of revitalising, let her rouse, or let her cover

her head forever and lie down graciously in her grave forever... But though the Irish are articulate, an insurrection is not made of human breath and negotiations... If she wants to put on the show for which we have delayed so long, this time let it be comprehensive and conclusive. But telling these Irish actors to hurry up, as our forefathers before us told them not so long ago,

is hopeless. I, for one, am certain not to see that curtain rise as I shall have already taken the last tram home".

Joyce like so many others never foresaw the Easter Rising and when it came he was engaged in 'taking the King's shilling' and like Yeats before him, was taking no chances.

*Yours etc.,
Anthony J. Jordan,
Sandymount, Dublin 4.*

Theology of the Body

Dear Editor, Delighted to see the article on St John Paul II's Theology of the Body in *The Irish Catholic* – please do more in the future.

Congratulations to Pure in Heart Ireland for promoting Christopher West's Irish tour – by the way, his book *Theology of the Body Explained* is an important book to read.

*Yours etc.,
Patrick Gibney,
Oldcastle,
Co. Meath.*



Thank God for short sermons

Dear Editor, I heartily agree with the view as expressed by Fr Paddy O'Kane on short sermons (IC 22/06/2017). His sabbatical in the US has encouraged the Derry priest to keep his sermons to five minutes – and so say all of us!

While the Church is not short of brilliant orators who deliver worthy sermons (some of lengthy durations) at Masses around the country weekly, there are also those who have the charisma of a cardboard box with poor oratory skills; sadly, some of these deliver

homilies which are a mixture of boring, incoherent or, frankly, ignorant of the lives Catholics lead in Ireland today.

Perhaps the Vatican could address the problem and issue an edict that all sermons must not exceed five minutes, except by licences granted to priests who have something to say that is actually worth listening to?

*Yours etc.,
Mary O'Brien, Mullingar, Co Westmeath.*

Truth behind Magdalen 'myths'

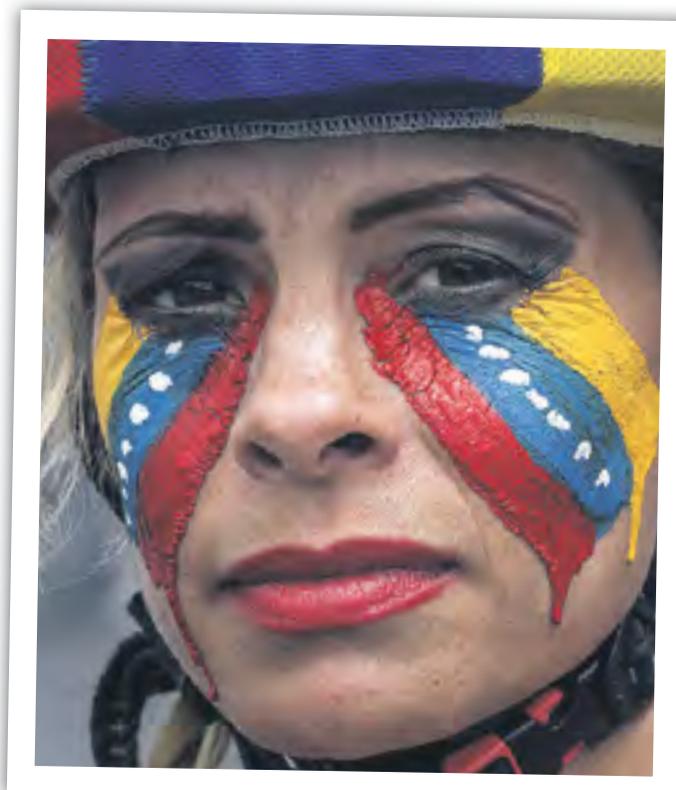
Dear Editor, Your front page last week 'Magdalen laundry 'myths' debunked in new history' once again reveals the truth behind the hype. Will it be picked up by any other media I wonder?

*Yours etc.,
Colm Maguire,
Limerick City.*

📷 Around the world



USA: People hold signs during the launch of a 23-hour prayer vigil on Capitol Hill in Washington. The vigil focused on preserving Medicaid and was organised after the Senate delayed a vote on the Better Care Reconciliation Act, its health care reform bill. Photos: CNS



VENEZUELA: A woman with colours of the Venezuelan flag painted with tears joins demonstrators during a march in Caracas, Venezuela. The Pope has prayed for peace in the country as violence continues to build.



THE VATICAN: New Cardinal Anders Arborelius of Stockholm, right, greets other cardinals during a consistory led by Pope Francis in St Peter's Basilica. The Pope created five new cardinals at the service.



MEXICO: Relatives separated by deportation and immigration policies hug at the US-Mexico border as they take part in a brief reunification meeting at the banks of the Rio Bravo called 'Hugs, No Walls' in Ciudad Juarez.



◀ **CONGO:** Civilians gather around the body of a man killed during fighting between the army and militia fighters in Beni. Catholic bishops accused their government of suppressing civil liberties and demanded free elections envisaged under a church-brokered New Year accord.



▶ **USA:** A nun prays during Mass at the Convocation of Catholic Leaders: The Joy of the Gospel in America in Orlando. Leaders from dioceses and various Catholic organisations gathered for the convocation.

Bridging poverty gap



Victoria Holthaus
speaks to the
new SVP National
President



Kieran
Stafford.

visitation is the core work of SVP including financial and non-financial support, advisory assistance, befriending and supporting access to social services.

"I have seen the issues that have helped to shape this organisation and the struggles people are facing," he says.

In keeping with the tradition of his predecessors, Kieran will remain active in his local SVP Conference of the Holy Rosary Conference in Clonmel.

"It is important to work in the community to have a solid understanding of the issues that impact on the people helped by SVP," he says.

Objectives

During his time as president, his main objectives are "to continue to focus SVP as a strong and vibrant voice at a national level and within local communities for those who struggle in so many ways and to help people over both the financial and emotional hurdles and back to self-sufficiency".

"Despite the welcome economic improvements of recent times, we remain an unequal nation. SVP continues to receive an unacceptable level of calls for support from families struggling to find affordable secure accommodation, employment opportunities that provide an adequate income, along with support for meeting education, health, energy and childcare costs," Kieran says.

The SVP is Ireland's largest and best-known voluntary charitable organisation. It operates through a network of over 1,200 local Conferences (units) throughout the country. In 2016, the SVP received 130,000 calls for assistance and its 11,000 members made approximately 8,000 home visitations per week. "We consistently require new volunteers to ensure we can respond to these requests for help," Kieran says.

SVP provides services for vulnerable people, some of which is State-funded, through 10 emergency homeless services (300 beds in hostels); over 1,000 social housing units; seven resource centres; six holiday homes; prisoner visitation centres; children/young adult services and day care centres for the elderly. SVP also operates 220 community charity shops, which are not only a valuable source of income but act as a focal point for information on access to SVP help and services.

Advice Kieran would give to those thinking about getting into social justice or advocacy work is to "step up if you think that it is something that needs to be done. Don't wait for someone else to do it and get involved in your community".

"The current challenges in relation to homelessness, child poverty and educational disadvantage, mean working for social justice is as important today as it was when the Society was established in 1844," he says.

Swimming



Family &
Lifestyle



It's never too early to learn to swim, writes Mags Gargan

If there is one thing we're not short of in Ireland, it's water. As well as having over 4,600 miles of coastline, Ireland boasts of numerous lakes and rivers.

Over the past few decades watersports have taken off in Ireland. The invention of the wetsuit made much of this possible in our cold climate. It is now possible to spend summer holidays in Ireland swimming, diving, splashing about in kayaks, on surfboards or learning to sail.

However, watersports carry risks and last year 123 people drowned in Ireland, with the majority happening in lakes and rivers. Drownings can happen quickly and silently, and people often overestimate their own abilities.

Most children are enticed by water and this can be a source of endless worry for parents. In a recent consumer research study commissioned by the Council of Irish Water Safety, only 35% of parents felt confident about the level of their children's water safety knowledge. Most parents (47%) are unaware if Primary Aquatics Water Safety (PAWS) is part of their child's primary school curriculum. PAWS is a course developed by Irish Water Safety specially tailored for primary school pupils, where teachers have the ability to certify their pupils with nationally recognised awards.

Teachers can take their class through the first three awards without going near water – Land PAWS 1, 2 and 3. These awards consist of theory of water safety – safe swimming, safety

on the farm, safety on open water etc. The awards become more detailed as the pupils progress (Land PAWS 2 and 3) – simulated rescues on land, e.g. throwing a rescue rope into a designated area. (www.iws.ie)

Only 35% of parents felt confident about the level of their children's water safety knowledge"

Learning to swim is an essential skill for children and can be started from an early age. Babies have a real affinity with water, and because they've spent nine months floating in the womb, being in warm water feels much more familiar to them than being on dry land.

However, this early confidence usually diminishes with time, and can even turn to fear.

In their first few weeks, babies naturally make rhythmical, co-ordinated swimming movements, and also inhibit their own breathing underwater. After about six months, that reflex lessens as they start to take control of their own breathing when going underwater.

Until they're aged about three, babies and toddlers lack the strength, co-ordination and motor skills to swim on the surface; the way their body-mass is distributed also makes it difficult.

However, with careful supervision and encouragement they can naturally swim short

"Despite the welcome economic improvements of recent times, we remain an unequal nation," says the new National President of the Society of St Vincent de Paul.

Along with overseeing the largest charity in Ireland, Kieran Stafford is a local businessman in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary where he resides with his wife, Mary, and two daughters. One of his daughters, Áine Stafford, was a core founding member and is President of the Mary I St Vincent de Paul society at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. Kieran is a partner alongside his brother in a small family business, Panda Carpets. He has been at this job since 1989, after his return from Britain.

Kieran was born in the UK, although his mother was from Clonmel and his father was from Wexford. When the family moved back to Ireland while he was still at a young age, he attended St Mary's in Clonmel and went on to attain an apprenticeship in the Air Corps as an aircraft electrician.

Along with being a father, businessman and national president, he is also an avid follower of Tipperary hurling, Arsenal football club and a fan of Marc Almond's music. He also enjoys walking and golf during his free time.

He became involved with the Society of St Vincent de Paul through a friend, Eamon Griffin, because he wanted to help people in his community. Kieran has been a member for 16 years, beginning at the St Peter & Paul's Conference in Clonmel, and then working as a trustee for 10 of those years. "I have always been very proud of my membership and to be involved in all of the work we are doing," he says.

SVP receives an unacceptable level of calls for support from families struggling to find affordable secure accommodation"

During his time with the Society, he was the South East regional twinning officer before becoming Regional President in 2007. In May 2013, he was appointed National Vice President which he has maintained until now. He will be succeeding Geoff Meagher from Kilkenny, who also appointed Kieran to become VP, and who has been in this position for five years.

His new role includes being responsible for social justice, youth, training, twinning and home visitation. He will serve for three years with the possibility of doing an additional two years. These tasks are similar to the ones he had during his time as VP.

Kieran was recently involved in making the SVP's pre-budget submission and has called on the Government to ensure "we are heading towards a positive and equitable future".

Even as National President, Kieran will be involved in the face-to-face work with those who are in need of service. The experience that home visits have given him is a "valuable education" for what's to come with his presidency. Home

is a vital life-saving skill



distances underwater from very early on.

Benefits

Here are 10 benefits for teaching babies to swim (from www.waterbabies.ie):

1. Teaches water safety

Learning to get to the side, hold on, get out and/or swim could save your child's life one day, and these vital safety techniques can be taught from birth.

2. Improves health

Swimming from birth is fantastic for your baby's health and development, and could spark a lifetime's interest in sport. Swimming lessons provide a complete physical work-out, strengthening your baby's heart and lungs and in turn aiding development of the brain.

3. Promotes bonding

Skin-to-skin contact strengthens the bond between you and your child. For parents with more than one child, this may be your one chance in the week to focus purely on your infant (and will probably be the only time when your mobile phone will be out of earshot!).

“According to the HSE it is perfectly safe for babies to start swimming from birth before having their immunisations”

4. Boosts confidence

Introducing children to water at a very young age helps prevent a fear of water developing later. Exercises that involve moving independently in water and holding on to the side are wonderful

for your baby's confidence.

Many parents also find that handling their baby in water is great for them, too – especially if they're anxious about water or can't swim.

5. Develops co-ordination

Being in the water helps improve co-ordination and balance. For example, a 2009 study by the Norwegian University of Science & Technology found that babies who swim have better balance and can grasp objects more easily.

6. Builds strength

Buoyancy and water-resistance mean that babies exercise more muscles, more effectively, in water than on land. Finnish research showed that swimming babies crawled later but walked earlier, thanks to their excellent muscle control.

7. Develops learning skills

Responding to repetitive voice commands can sharpen your baby's mental skills and increase their levels of understanding. A German study found that swimming babies had advanced motor development, social skills and intelligence.

8. Enhances wellbeing

Warm water relaxes your baby and swimming stimulates their appetite; for you, the good news is improved sleeping and eating patterns!

9. Provides structure

Weekly swimming classes contribute to structuring your week and your day, providing a regular fun and social activity.

10. Safe from birth

According to the HSE it is perfectly safe for babies to start swimming from birth before having their immunisations. The diseases babies are vaccinated against are not carried in water. Babies can be taken swimming at any time regardless of where they are with their immunisation schedule. (www.hse.ie)

I grew up in a Catholic home with my parents, my two younger brothers and my younger sister. For most of my teenage years, my faith didn't mean anything to me. I thought Mass was very boring and I didn't see the point in going. I went every Sunday but only to please my parents.

As a teenager, I always felt that God was very distant. I did believe in God but this was not a decision I made for myself. It was something I believed because of my parents. I didn't believe that God loved me. I thought he didn't really care about me.

This feeling was made worse when I was bullied at school. At first I tried to ignore it. I thought if those involved couldn't see they were upsetting me they would soon get bored and stop. But this did not happen. More and more people got involved and the bullying, which gradually became aggressive and violent, continued for many months.

Over time I began suffering from depression and always wanted to be alone. My self-confidence, wellbeing and personality were affected and I was full of anger, shame, hurt and insecurity. I didn't enjoy life and I started to wonder if my life was worth living.

Announcement

I was 17 when I went to my first Youth 2000 retreat after a teacher made an announcement about it in religion class. I had no idea how it would impact my life. During one of the Masses God allowed me, in a very simple and gentle way, to feel his presence and his love for me and I was consoled by the fact that Jesus also suffered unjustly at the hands of others.

I left that retreat with a desire to get to know God. I began to treat God like a friend. I made an effort to spend time with him and I began to talk to him about things that were happening in my life.

I started to pray for the first time in my life. I went to more retreats and I also began to attend a Youth 2000 prayer meeting in a local parish. Youth 2000 has almost 50 prayer groups in different parishes around Ireland. This helped me get to know my Catholic faith and develop a personal relationship with Jesus.

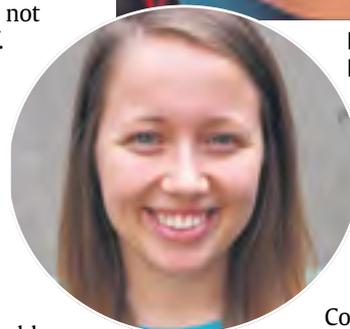
“I immediately felt at ease when I saw so many other people my age”

We met once a week for an hour. It also helped me heal from the hurt I had endured while in school. We prayed the Rosary together and spent time with Jesus in adoration. I made many friends and met people who prayed and went on retreats but also lived a normal life.

Seeing people live their faith really inspired me



People enjoying the Youth 2000 Festival and, left, Emma Sisk.



and soon I was going to Mass not only to keep my parents happy. I wanted to go to be with God. Youth 2000 really help me grow in my faith and gave me the confidence to live my faith out in everyday life. Everyone is trying to help each other on the way to Heaven. That's what I love so much about Youth 2000.

Our summer festival takes place at the Cistercian College in Roscrea, Co. Tipperary from August 17 to 20. It's going to be amazing! Over 1,200 young people from all over Ireland will be attending. Free buses will be bringing young people between the ages of 16 and 35 together from all four provinces for four days of prayer, worship, talks and craic.

A lot of people come to Summer Youth Festival after

hearing about it from their friends who previously attended. When people come for the first time they are always struck by the amount of people who have turned up for a Catholic event. They are not expecting to see so many young people at something religious.

They begin to ask questions about the Faith and open their hearts to God. This was something that really helped me at my first Youth 2000 retreat. I immediately felt at ease when I saw so many other people my age.

Schedule

The retreats are also really fun. We have a packed schedule including talks, workshops, small group discussions, social time, testimonies, Mass, music and adoration. There is

plenty of social time and free time to catch up with people.

The talks over the weekend typically focus on aspects of the Faith that are relevant to young people such as the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, Our Lady, God's mercy and forgiveness in the Sacrament of Confession and what it's like as a young person trying to live the Christian life in today's world.

My advice to anyone thinking of coming to this year's festival is to give it a try. It is something you have to see and experience for yourself. If you don't have a relationship with God, Youth 2000 is a good place to start.

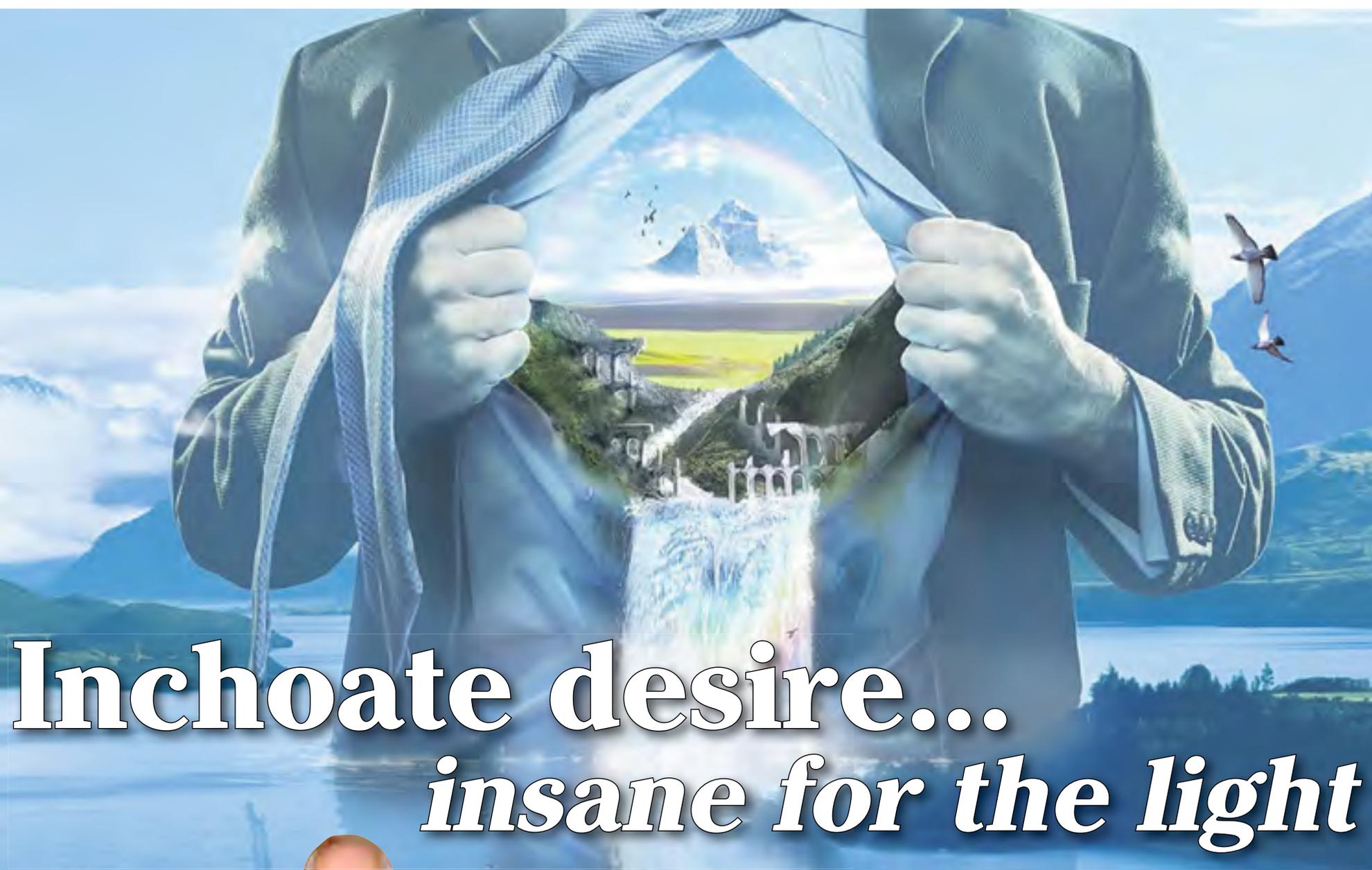
For more information about the festival and free buses is available from youth2000.ie

YOUTH SPACE Finding a friend in God

Emma Sisk describes how she became involved in Youth 2000



Youth 2000 Summer Festival.



Inchoate desire... *insane for the light*



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com



Karl Rahner (on left).

Sometimes while praying the Psalms, I'm caught looking quite uncomfortably into a mirror reflecting back to me my own seeming dishonesty. For example, we pray these words in the Psalms: "My soul longs for you in the night. ...like a deer that yearns for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you my God. ...for you alone do I long! For you alone do I thirst!"

If I'm honest, I have to admit that a lot of times, perhaps most times, my soul longs for a lot of things that do not seem of God. How often can I honestly pray: for you, God, alone do I long. For you alone do I thirst! In my restlessness, my earthly desires, and natural instincts, I long for many things that don't appear very God-focused or heavenly at all.

I suspect that's true for most of us for good parts of our lives. Rare is the mystic who can say those prayers and mean them with her full heart on any given day.

Human desire

But human desire is a complex thing. There's a surface and there's a depth, and in every one of our longings and motivations we can ask ourselves this: what am I really looking for here? I know what I want on the surface, here and now, but what am I ultimately longing for in this? This discrepancy, between what we're aware of on the

surface and what's sensed only in some dark, inchoate way at a deeper level, is what's captured in a distinction philosophers make between what's explicit in our awareness and what's implicit within it. The explicit refers to what we are aware of consciously ("I want this particular thing!"); whereas the implicit refers to the unconscious factors that are also in play but of which we are unaware. These we only sense, vaguely, in some unconscious part of our soul. For instance, Karl Rahner, who

was fond of this distinction and who puts it to good use in his spirituality, offers us this (crass though clear) example of the distinction between the explicit and the implicit within our motivation and desires. Imagine this, he says: A man, lonely and restless and depressed on a Saturday night, goes to a singles' bar, picks up a prostitute and goes to bed with her. On the surface his motivation and desire are as undisguised as they are crass. He's not longing for God in his bed on this particular night.

Or is he?

On the surface, of course he's not, his desire seems purely self-centered and the antithesis of holy longing. But, parsed out to its deepest root, his desire is ultimately a longing for divine intimacy, for the bread of life, for Heaven.

He's longing for God at the very depth of his soul and at the very depth of his motivation, except he isn't aware of this.

Raw desire for immediate gratification is all that he's consciously aware of at this time, but this doesn't change his ultimate motivation, of which this is a symptom.

"I think of my life as a love story with its ups and downs like any love story, but always going in the direction of God"

At a deeper level, of which he is not consciously aware, he's still longing for the bread of life, for God alone. His soul is still that of a deer, longing for clear flowing streams, except that on this given night another stream is promising him a more immediate tonic that he can have right now.

Recently, I taught a course on the spirituality of aging and dying. Stealing a line from Goethe's poem, *Holy Longing*, I entitled the course poetically: 'Insane for the Light'.

In a term paper, one of the students, a woman, reflecting on her own journey towards aging and

dying, wrote these words: "And then last night I began to think that dying is making love with God, the consummation after a lifetime of flirtations, encounters, meetings in the dark, and constant yearning, longing, and sense of loneliness that does make one insane for the light. I reflected on the Song of Songs and thought that it could be an analogy of how I see dying, not necessarily as the body's disintegration and demise, but rather as the entire transition that I was born destined to make. I think of my life as a love story with its ups and downs like any love story, but always going in the direction of God with the finality of death being the wedding of the love between God and myself after a lifetime betrothal."

More direct

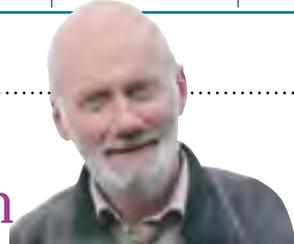
She puts it as well as Rahner and the philosophers, though her words are more direct. She too, in analysing her desire, points out there are levels, explicit and implicit, conscious and unconscious.

Yes, our lives, with all their tensions, restlessness, youthful immaturities, adult depressions, cold lonely seasons, times of doubt, times of desperation, breakdowns, and occasional irresponsible exuberance will surely be marked by flirtations and encounters that seem to exhibit desires that are not for the bread of life.

But, they are, ultimately, and one day they will find and know their full consummation.

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Some programmes more than a bit off

A few items last week were more than a bit off. On Tuesday of last week on **Today with Sean O'Rourke**, Cormac Ó hEadhra spoke to former US Navy Seal Robert O'Neill, the man who claims to have killed Osama Bin Laden.

Needless to say I'm no Bin Laden fan, but the clinical description of this killing was disturbing. O'Neill described how he shot Bin Laden (whose wife and three-year-old son were present) in the face and then again when he was on the ground. There was a self-defence justification as he thought Bin Laden had a suicide vest and wasn't making any effort to surrender.

One could argue that, but to be writing a book about it and visiting chat shows on the back of it was going too far in my opinion. Ó hEadhra seemed put off by it too and asked some challenging questions.

On Wednesday's **Pat Kenny Show** (Newstalk) Jonathan Healy interviewed Fr Roy Donovan of the Association of Catholic Priests about the incidence of suicide among priests. Significant points were made about increased stress, loneliness, isolation, the lack of community living and even the decline in priests' housekeepers. Inevitably the issue of married priests came up (though suicides among the married are



The Rally for Life at Dublin's Merrion Square on Saturday. Photo: John McElroy

common enough too) and one texter suggested a "simple solution", including married priests, women priests and gay priests allowed to marry same-sex partners! Astonishingly Fr Donovan said he'd be very open to what the texter suggested.

Themes

Related themes are handled thoughtfully in the BBC's drama series **Broken** (BBC 1, Tuesdays). Last week's episode introduced a gay character out of the blue (Carl, played by our own Ned Dennehy), a sort of gay *deus ex machina*. The person that had most problems with him was Daniel (Danny Sapani) the rather unpleasant Catholic brother of a bereaved woman neighbour – so homophobic he wouldn't even shake hands with Carl when he offered his sympathies.

After a physical altercation following use of the 'n' word and the 'q' word, Daniel even turned up in Confession to profess his innocence! Fr Michael toed the Catholic line in public, showing kindness, tolerance and a desire for reconciliation, but in a private moment with his priest-councillor launched a foul mouthed rant against Catholic teaching on sexuality.

Worse, he claimed every priest he knew felt the same, and Fr Peter didn't disagree. There was an awkward exchange among various characters where each got to mouth an angle on the topic and sadly the 'sin to be gay' myth was perpetuated yet again.

I have no problem *per se* with gay characters or issues in TV dramas, but visibility can become browbeating and it seems like that rather selec-

tive diversity box has to be ticked in every single drama.

Vote

Recently we've had the gay couple prominent in the complex thriller *Unforgotten*, concluded on RTÉ Monday of last week, while in **The Loch**, an atmospheric serial killer thriller currently running on UTV Sunday nights and



Angela Merkel.

TV3 Mondays, the lovely gay piano teacher fell foul of the unpleasant Christian doctor. Funny enough there's no visibility for gay characters that choose to remain celibate for faith or other reasons.

During the week the German parliament voted for same-sex marriage, though significantly Angela Merkel voted against, because she believes marriage is something between a man and a woman (controversial?).

This was discussed on the evening radio shows last Friday, when Newstalk's **Drive** presenter Chris Donoghue continued to use the ideologically driven term 'marriage equality', while on **The Last Word** (Today FM) guest Kate Brennan Harding varied it to 'equal marriage'. Presenter Matt Cooper compared Merkel to Arlene Foster and guest Eoin McDermott laughed at the old days as he got impressed with how 'forward' we were now.

Finally, the coverage of Saturday's Rally for Life was patchy, compared to the Pride march of the weekend before. RTÉ's **Six-One News** and **Nine News** that evening did lead with it and the coverage was quite comprehensive and positive, but it quickly disappeared from prominence and I couldn't find anything about it on the Sunday morning chats shows, or on This Week, or on The Week in Politics.

PICK OF THE WEEK

VOX NOSTRA WITH VLAD SMISHKEWYCH
RTE Lyric FM, Sunday, July 9, 7am

A flock of early music artists give us consort music, Masses and more on viols, voices and keyboards.

SONGS OF PRAISE
BBC 1, Sunday, July 9, 5.10pm

Modern Pilgrims. Sean Fletcher visits Mont Saint-Michel in France to meet some modern-day pilgrims and Josie D'Arby reveals its link to St Michael's Mount in Cornwall.

THE RENAISSANCE UNCHAINED
BBC 4, Wednesday, July 12, midnight

Waldemar Januszczak takes a look at the importance of religious narrative in Italian art.

Again, ongoing visibility, it seems, is not for all.

Maybe coverage would have been better if we had just got a new Taoiseach with strong pro-life credentials. Ah but I dream.

boregan@hotmail.com



Aubrey Malone

Film

Youthful web-spinner shines in riotous actioner

Spider-man: Homecoming (12A)

School can be boring when you'd prefer to save the world than read books, right? So Peter Parker (Tom Holland) aka Spider-man, tends to be somewhat distracted in class, knowing just what he could do if the occasion called for it.

Billionaire playboy Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr) – his mentor – tries to persuade him to be just a 'friendly neighbourhood' hero. But when arch-villain Adrian Toomes (Michael Keaton) comes out of the woodwork it's time to don the famous red and blue suit and commence incognito webbing duties.



Jacob Batalon as Ned, Peter Parker's best friend, with Tom Holland's Peter in *Spider-Man: Homecoming*.

Very good
★★★★

Holland plays Spidey as a mere 15-year-old in this sequel-style re-boot of the series that emanated from a Marvel comic creation all those years ago, taking over from where his predecessors Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield left off and giving the

'dual identity' theme an extra resonance even in the casting department. (Who's the 'real' Parker, you may ask, just like characters in the films want to know who the 'real' Spider-man is.)

In *Homecoming* he's living with his Aunt May (a much-

too-young Marisa Tomei). One of his classmates is Toomes' daughter Michelle (Zendaya), which connects the two worlds he inhabits in a different way. Laura Harrier is the love interest.

Gifts

Parker received his acrobatic gifts after being bitten by a genetically-modified spider. His demonstration of them is as electrifying as ever here. And yet in another sense Spider-man isn't as showy as many screen superheroes these days

Neither is Vulture (Toomes Senior) as demonic as many screen super-villains. He's more a businessman than a Bond-style creation who

wants to blow up the planet. This makes everything look very realistic but I still found it hard to get my head around the fact that a man who once played Batman (remember the Tim Burton movie?) has now turned to the 'dark side' of the comic cosmos.

Parker morphing into Spider-man never had quite the same magic for me as Clark Kent becoming Superman. He's 'one of us'. We empathise with him more than idolise him. His transmogrification from high school nerd into nonchalant skyscraper-hugger is less the stuff of fantasy than science fiction. Or even science fact?

That doesn't stop him packing a punch, though, in

the action scenes. And when you have the kind of budget Jon Watts, the film's director, has at his disposal it makes them hum with an even more resonant energy, whether he's in the air, at sea or 'merely' climbing up tall buildings.

Fasten your seatbelts, load up on the popcorn and expect the unexpected in a unique instalment of a franchise that looks set to run for a long time to come, no matter how often they change the main star.

Many people thought Holland was going to fall on his face after he landed the much-coveted role but his previous experience (in *Wolf Hall* and *The Impossible*) stands him in good stead for this thrill-a-minute rollercoaster ride.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



Recent books in brief

Exploring Amoris Laetia: Opening the Pope's Love Letter to Families

Edited by Breda O'Brien
(Veritas, €12.99)

With preparations well under way in Dublin for The World Meeting of Families in August, this collection of essays edited by *Irish Catholic* columnist Breda O'Brien is very timely. Some nine established Catholic communicators share their insights into the influential encyclical of Pope Francis. It may be that they will provide

just that amount of stimulation to readers, not just to read about the matters raised, but to take action on them. Here, of course, the contributors make clear we are not dealing with instant solutions, but generational changes.

We are becoming more and more aware that the challenges facing the family – from those who have to crowd themselves into hotel accommodation because there is so little housing to those whose family life has been corrupted by too much wealth – the spectrum for reflection is very wide.

Their emphasis of all is on the role of spirituality in its widest sense in the nature and role of the family in the modern world. An excellent book which presages a successful outcome to the August assembly.

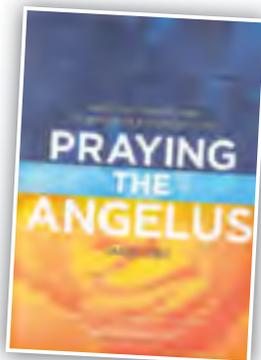


Praying the Angelus

by Jared Dees
(Ave Maria Press, £11.99)

The pause for the Angelus on RTÉ remains a matter of occasional controversy. In his small but lively book, American author Jared Dees presents a justification of both the prayer, the custom of a pause, and the need to maintain it. He reminds his readers of the origin of the prayer in the first announcement of "the good news" to Mary; and so he says it has a role in re-evangelisation.

The greater part of the book is devoted to meditations and reflections arising out of both the Angelus and the Regina Caeli. For many what he writes will arouse memories of their early days in the last century. But Jared Dees has his focus, not on the past, but the creation of the future. An excellent and approachable book, filled with anecdotes which make for easy reading.



Praying with Matthew: Meditations on Matthew in the Lectionary for Ordinary Times

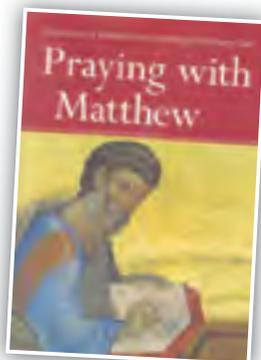
by Raymond Moloney SJ
(Veritas, €16.99)

For many people the readings at Mass are their most frequent, perhaps only contact with the what the Gospels have to say. But hearing the readings is little help without some preparation before and some reflections afterwards.

Well known theologian Raymond Moloney writes of the connections between the readings and the liturgy, but it would also be of value if his readers familiarised themselves with the full Gospels. The idea of the lectionary, selected readings for daily use, goes back into the depths of Hebrew culture.

It is a sobering thought that though the Gospels are the foundation of the Christian faith, reading from the Old Testament has sustained the faithful for perhaps six millennia.

Praying with Matthew concentrates on what the Gospel message is, or ought to be for today. Fr Moloney will aid his readers in deepening their understanding of the liturgy.



Happy memories of Rathfarnham Abbey



Abbey Girls

by Valerie and Mary Behan
(Laurence Gate Press, US\$14.68, from amazon.com; Kindle eBook, €5.26, also available from Kennys Bookshop, Galway, kennys.ie)

Conor Donnelly

In this memoir two sisters give an hilarious and poignant account of boarding school life in Ireland in the 1960s – echoes of the ever popular Mallory Towers perhaps, but this is a true tale of Irish education; and for once a happy enough education too.

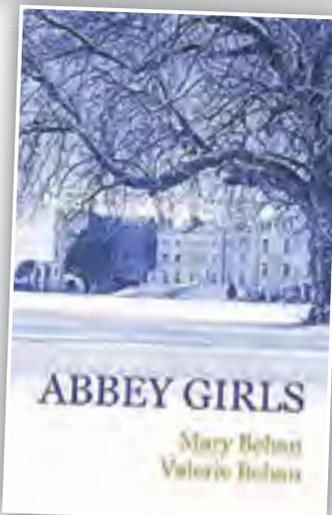
The authors are both scientists. Valerie has a PhD from McGill, and spent most of her career as a research scientist with Agriculture Canada. Mary has a PhD from University College Dublin, and spent her career as a Professor of Neuroscience at the University of Wisconsin.

They spent their lives with students and now in retirement, look back on their own education at a Dublin boarding school run by the Loreto Nuns, The Abbey in Rathfarnham, Dublin, in the years 1959-65.

Treasures

Like a million or so fellow pupils attending similar institutions throughout Ireland at the time there were many things they did not like at school but now when they look back they discover the treasures and understand the wisdom.

"We owe the teachers and students we met not just for an excellent education but



for many other qualities that have served us well: discipline, efficiency, collegiality, responsibility, competitiveness".

Their memoir is an interesting account and tribute to Irish education from a student perspective. It may not have been perfect but perhaps was the best available on the planet.

The things they hated are probably hated by anyone who plays for Manchester United today. They were made to run around the hockey pitch after breakfast each morning even in the snow (but not barefoot).

The diet was not exactly five star but they realise now there was someone behind the scenes cooking for 300 mouths. Some nuns were angels; others had different gifts; but all had their role to play. "Our teachers were cultured women," they recall.

These secular, reasonably liberated ladies were constantly taught that after school they could do

anything, the world was at their feet, and they did. They were prepared for it. They had a principled, backbone education.

This "no material frills" education was made available by Irish women to Irish parents at an affordable cost. This happened long before governments got their act together in Ireland and in other countries.

Like so many other congregations, Loreto had 23 schools throughout the country, making quality education available to all and sundry. Through inter-schools sports the students came into contact with others girls from all parts of the country.

An international dimension was added, on the side, by news of similar networks of other Loreto schools in Calcutta, Mauritius, and Kenya. Irish women were leading the diaspora and having an impact.

“One of the Irish pioneers was there, at 95, to receive the award with her Kenyan protégé”

The previous President of Sri Lanka, for instance, was educated by Irish Nuns. Orphanages in Burma during World War II were run by a Limerick lady.

Many prominent ladies in Kenya today were schooled at Loreto, including 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner and patriot, Wangari Maathai.

In 2013 on the 50th anniversary of Kenya's

independence four awards were given to educational institutions, the Loreto sisters received one for their network of schools which includes the first school for African Girls in East Africa (started by an ex-Cumann na mBan activist).

One of the Irish pioneers was there, at 95, to receive it with her Kenyan protégé. It is an incredible story, but as yet unsung. Similar examples can be found all round the world.

Realities

You can detect these historic realities in the background of the memoir. There was an all-round education through music, drama, debating, and an encouragement to read.

Probably every Irish student at the time could tell similar stories, so this work has interesting historical significance. It is tribute to those other Irish women who made it possible, they are largely silent and unnamed.

One of the things the authors seem to be saying is that you cannot argue with quality and there was plenty of it. It is said that the "teacher is the curriculum", and here there were committed women bursting with professionalism and centuries of experience giving their best to the next generation.

They have set the bar high for future educationalists and families and Ireland should always be in their debt. The authors imply that this is how cultures are preserved and civilisations are built.

1 Fr Conor Donnelly is an Irish priest working in Nairobi.

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.

Across the cultures in Palestine



Beat: The true story of a suicide bomb and a heart and the nature of human identity
by Rowan Somerville
(Lilliput Press, €14.99)

Geoff Day

Here is a true book full of surprises. It starts as an examination of the suicide bombing of the Dolphinarium nightclub in Tel Aviv in June 2001 and ends with highlighting some real moral dilemmas related to issues around heart transplants and apartheid.

Somerville neatly begins by juxtaposing his recall of the facts of that night, when many young Israelis were killed and injured by a suicide bomber, with his journey to interview relatives of both the killed/injured and those of the suicide bomber. Understandably this is a difficult task some 15 years on.

Education

The son of pioneering cardiologists, Londoner Rowan Somerville was educated by Jesuits and took an honours degree in Literature from the University of Edinburgh, before travelling widely in the Levant.

In the early chapters he recalls his journey to Israel, which started before he boards the plane in London. I too remember this experience having returned only recently from three months in occupied

Palestine

His experience at Ben Gurion airport was also not dissimilar to mine, where airport immigration officials ask banal questions to gather intelligence or to trip you up. Somerville gets to the heart of the current Israel-Palestine conflict quickly and it is hard to put the book down as the various strands begin to weave through the text.

My own experience of spending time in the places referred to in *Beat* brings the book to life – Qalqiliya, the home town of the suicide bomber is virtually surrounded by the separation barrier erected by the Israeli government in 2002 at the height of the second intifada to protect Israel from the very suicide bombers discussed in the text and as Somerville observes “access (by Palestinians) is blocked by the wall and the ocean is 11 kilometres away”.

Jerusalem is described by Somerville as “an indecipherable mush” of religion and culture and is “a brittle place shivering with tension”, which in many ways degrades its rich religious history. I too found a palpable tension in the old city.

The real moral issues of the book develop after an innocent Palestinian is murdered in a reprisal attack the day after the Dolphinarium bombing.

The family of this man, pharmacist Mazan Al-Joulani, who is declared

brain dead, even though his heart is functioning, were requested to donate his organs so that others may survive. The potential heart recipient was Israeli but the family of the Palestinian donor had no difficulty in donating so that he could survive.

Somerville sees this as symbolic of the potential for peace and suggests that this Palestinian – Israeli heart will see a romantic and positive end. But fear and hatred run deep as he found out when he spoke with Israeli friends, the recipient and with the suicide bomber's family. These are hard messages to hear as I know from my own experience.

“Even at the edges people are people... fundamentally decent, crucially flawed”

More surprises follow as the reader is taken to a discussion of ethical issues around transplantation in South Africa and then finally to the question of whether the two countries in their time, Israel and South Africa, were and are, practicing apartheid.

Many of us are advised that to use the term apartheid is ‘unhelpful’ in the Israel-Palestine conflict as the phrase itself engenders a tension and



incites an unnecessary reaction. Somerville maintains that it is valid to discuss this, but recognises that there is a toxic and terrible danger of it becoming a vehicle for easy moral outrage.

He concludes the book with a note of optimism by writing “that even at the edges people are people. Fundamentally decent, crucially flawed, all of us wanting happiness for our loved ones, our people, ourselves, all of us wishing to avoid suffering, all of us loving our children. All of our hearts beating”.

Many books are being published at this time, 50 years on from the Israeli military occupation of Palestine. However, this book is a worthy read as it locates the present situation in a much wider context, raising as it does many related and important moral and ethical questions.

1 Geoff Day has just returned from three months in the West Bank of occupied Palestine with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme Palestine Israel www.eappi.org

The World of Books

By the books editor

The lost literature of early medieval Dublin

Dublin prides itself of being “a city of literature” – there are UNESCO signs all over the place promoting the fact. But when we look back over the centuries we can see that the city's true life in literature only begins with Jonathan Swift, the 350th anniversary of whose birth we are celebrating this year.

But this is strange. Historians claim Dublin was ‘founded’ by the Vikings in 841. Of course, there is a minority who say this is only because it was then that a walled city was created.

But before then the religious houses, churches, and settlements such as the Hurdleford and The Blackpool, were so to speak a city *en blé*, though one very different from the Roman idea of an *urbs* or the *oppida* of the Continental Celts. The Irish Gaels did not do cities, but the extensive townland of pre-Viking Dublin might easily be mistaken for one.

But where, it might well be asked, is the literature of this early city and its medieval successor? – literature that is in the shape of works that might be still readable. Leaving aside annals and sagas there is really nothing.

Later it is said that there was an Gaelic speaking community inside the medieval and Georgian city of Dublin, but where are the poems and tales of that urban life? Nowhere.

This being the case it very strange that Irish writers and scholars ignore almost completely the fact that from at least the 6th Century Dublin had a celebrated place in the imaginative literature of Europe.

I am referring to the Romance of Tristan and Isolde, from which one of Wagner's most important operas was derived in 1865. It is regarded as one of the great tragic tales of world of literature.

It will be recalled that though Tristan himself was born in Lyonnese, that lost land that once lay between Land's End and the Scilly islands. He kills the knight sent by King Gormund of

Ireland – or rather Leinster alone – to claim a tribute from Cornwall. But he sustains a wound and goes to Ireland to have it cured. He meets the king's beautiful daughter Isolde. Later he returns to ask for her hand in marriage, not for himself, but for his uncle King Mark.

However, as the opera relates, by way of a magic potion Isolde and Tristan fall deeply in love. The tale may untimely be a retelling of the ancient legend of Diarmuid and Grainne, but with different historical figures, for there is little doubt that the characters of the romance are indeed historical.

Interaction

King Mark certainly is. A memorial stone to Tristan naming them both can be seen today near the entrance to Menabilly, once the home of the Daphne Du Maurier. Mark, from his interaction with St Sampson and St Pól Aurelian, a missionary in Brittany, can be dated to the first decades of the 6th Century AD (say 500-525).

So was the beautiful Isolde also a real person in the Dublin region of that time? She reputedly gave her name to the little village of Chapelizod; but the actual church connected with her name was not there, but at the top of Mill Lane behind Stewart's Hospital, on the other side of the Liffey (though still in the historical parish of Chapelizod). This edifice is recorded (in *The Book of Howth*) as dating from 519.

This congruence of dates – and there are others – suggest that there is an historical reality behind the story.

Originally the tale would have been orally transmitted to poets in Wales and Cornwall. The name of King Gormund comes from Geoffrey of Monmouth's strange work *The History of the Kings of Britain*. With the additions, the romance as whole was elaborated by Norman-French poets on the basis of an early version by a Cornish or Breton poet familiar with Cornwall.

Not all these poems survive in complete form. But in Gottfried von Strassburg's version (c. 1200) the Dublin region is continually evoked in connection with Isolde. This was one of the most popular and widespread literary works of the middle ages. And yet Dublin seems blind to the fact.

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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.

N.H.

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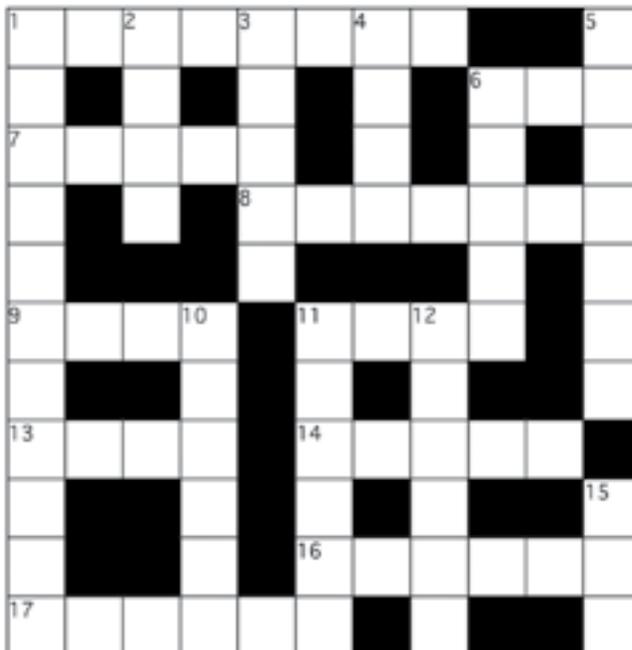
If you would like further information please contact Trocaire, Maynooth, Co. Kildare



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Crossword Junior

Gordius 189



ACROSS

- 1 In this board game, people buy streets (8)
- 6 Peaked hat (3)
- 7 A bird you might see in a farmyard (5)
- 8 Go here to take a flight (7)
- 9 Rooster (5)
- 11 Meat we get from a pig (4)
- 13 The part of a plant that is under the ground (4)
- 14 Bird with a red breast (5)
- 16 Newspaper boss (6)
- 17 Cars can drive through this to go under a river (6)

DOWN

- 1 In stories, you can fly on this

rug (5,6)

- 2 Midday (4)
- 3 Beg earnestly (6)
- 4 Someone who is not telling the truth (4)
- 5 Noticed (7)
- 6 It tells you the time (5)
- 10 Baby cat (6)
- 11 Package (6)
- 12 Bunny (6)
- 15 Cook something in a pan

(3)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

GORDIUS No.305

Across – 1 Tea 3 Father-in-law 8 Equals 9 Ruminant 10 Index 11 Dream 13 Pluck 15 Rations 16 Clapped 20 Probe 21 Swamp 23 Degas 24 Workshop 25 Bolero 26 Rubber stamp 27 Sin

Down – 1 The Pilgrim's progress 2 Aqueduct 3 Felix Mendelssohn 4 Harbour 5 Iliad 6 Leader 7 Wit 13 Pinup 14 Kylie 18 Cockpit 19 Zagreb 22 Paste 23 Droop 24 War

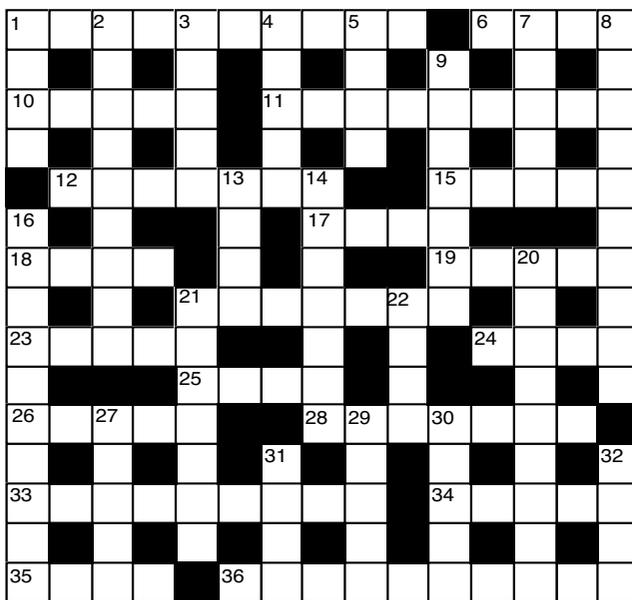
CHILDREN'S No.188

Across – 1 Seat belt 6 Car 7 Orbit 8 Second 10 Lilac 12 Unlucky 14 Bends 15 Tasting 17 Opera 18 Referee 19 Dived

Down – 1 Stool 2 Ambulance 3 Bat 4 Lime 5 Friday 6 Coo 9 Crust 11 Custard 13 Kennel 14 Blood 16 Safe

Crossword

Gordius 306



ACROSS

- 1 So, a laconic mixture can be made every now and then (10)
- 6 Many get the chap dressed (4)
- 10 The Ship of the Desert (5)
- 11 & 36a How mighty Kent feeds Hook out of what were given to St Peter! (3,4,2,3,7)
- 12 Open disagreement? The detective inspector's dispatched (7)
- 15 Ravine (5)
- 17 Operatic song (4)
- 18 Detest (4)
- 19 As euphoric as some street preachers? (5)
- 21 Condition characterised by dizziness (7)
- 23 Line of people waiting (5)
- 24 Get the young dog an article - a chrysalis (4)
- 25 Not the imaginary soccer team from Madrid (4)
- 26 & 3d This purgative stops males wandering (5,5)
- 28 Sir Jacob confused? Pete's in form! (7)
- 33 Music-makers scattered by a carthorse (9)
- 34 & 2d Perhaps the coach omitted me from this single-purpose group (2,3,9)
- 35 Sign of affection featuring in the titles of works by Klimt

and Rodin (4)
36 See 11 across

DOWN

- 1 A single time to the English (eleven to the Spanish) (4)
- 2 See 34 across
- 3 See 26 across
- 4 Frequently (5)
- 5 Religiously speaking, it's the last word! (4)
- 7 One doesn't succeed when roles are reassigned (5)
- 8 Toggled garment named for a town in Belgium (6,4)
- 9 One may rob game from this Italian city (7)
- 13 Bird found in Never Never Land (4)
- 14 Touchy cattle I redirect (7)
- 16 Might one hear the citizen of Prague reserve this at the bank? (6-4)
- 20 Having been fed, how I rushed on! (9)
- 21 Dutch painter best known for his 'Girl with a Pearl Earring' (7)
- 22 Travels (4)
- 27 Clothing for the feet (5)
- 29 Hoax, practical joke (5)
- 30 Locomotive (5)
- 31 Engrave part of a stretcher (4)
- 32 Swindle a lawyer before morning (4)

Sudoku Corner

189

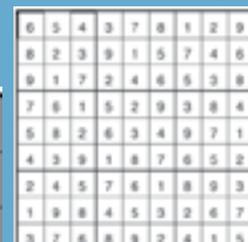
Easy



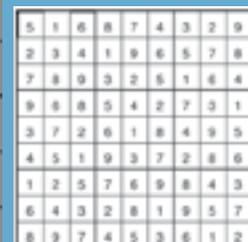
Hard



Last week's Easy 188



Last week's Hard 188





Fr Bernard Cotter

Notebook

Priests never thanked for professionalism

WHY IS IT THAT undertakers are nearly always thanked for their 'professionalism' while clergy are never praised in this way? I'm referring to those acknowledgement notices placed in newspapers some time after a funeral, which contain a kind of general 'thank you' to everyone who helped, but which usually name people whose contribution was especially significant at funeral time.

Undertakers (or 'funeral directors') are invariably commended for their professionalism, which is probably a way of saying that they do their job well (which most of them do). I suppose the compliment was first given to them when they took on some of the American ways of death, and their comprehensive and inclusive approach came across as a bit of surprise.

But now, as a general rule, undertakers are the only ones acclaimed for their professionalism. Occasionally, this accolade is extended to gravediggers (for their digging skill?) but that seems not quite the most appropriate compliment.

Priests are never commended for their professionalism, however,



even though they are the most professional of funeral ministers. The priest in a parish puts his all into every funeral that comes his way, whether it's of someone he

liked or disliked, whether a regular communicant or someone who never darkened the door of the church. Equal treatment is given, a homily and a personal funeral liturgy prepared, people's needs accommodated (and in times of grief, this can be quite a challenge) and all accomplished in a calm, serene and definitely professional manner.

Attention

Even though not described as professional, some priests do receive star billing in acknowledgment notices. It does my heart good when I see a priest mentioned by name and attention drawn to either his visits to the dying person or for the work he put into preparing the liturgy. It's wonderful to see a colleague

honoured, and I try to pass on the word, in case they do not share my taste in newspapers. Other times, just a list of clergy is given – which makes me a bit sad. This is because I know that just one of these has put hours of work into the liturgy, yet now he is commended no more than others who either turned up to sympathise or who sat in vestments during the Mass, adding to the numbers, but not actually putting in any real work.

Yet, disappointing as this is, it is still better than those deflating notices, when the only mention of the priests' contribution is one word: "clergy". Here, all individuality is crushed out, and no one is recognised for the work done, whether professional or not. There may be numerous references to the professional undertaker (who presumably is paid for his work) and the singer (likewise) and the sacristan and altar servers, but 'clergy' are all thanked in one anonymous word.

My suggestion: acknowledge by name those who made a difference at the time of a funeral. And don't forget your priest. Your kind word will be his best reward here on Earth.

Stories from parish life

The bride and groom are photographed outside the door of the church on their wedding day, and numerous other photos are taken. When the pictures are developed, the parish notice-board is observed in the background, featuring the words of Jesus on the Cross (which appear above the guests' heads in each photo): "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

I heard this at a parishioner's wedding in Ballitubber Abbey recently, so am sharing it here for priests stuck for a nice line to begin a homily with.

No royalties needed, just sharing what I heard...

THE LOCAL EYE My chief source for acknowledgement notices (and planning permissions, court cases and other parish dramas) is my local paper, the *Southern Star*, published weekly in Skibbereen. On its masthead is the reminder that it incorporates the *Skibbereen Eagle*, an earlier West Cork newspaper. A scary-looking bird of prey illustrates this incorporation, as well as serving as a reminder of the 1898 edition in which the Editor stated the intention of the *Skibbereen Eagle* to "keep its eye on the Emperor of Russia".

And no harm either – Messrs Medvedev and Putin (and Trump), please take note: West Cork continues to observe!



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