

The Irish Catholic

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TD accused of 'intolerant populism' on Church attack

Bríd Smith is urged to visit Catholic charities

Greg Daly

Fianna Fáil leader Micheál Martin has described as "unacceptable" a Dáil speech by People Before Profit TD Bríd Smith where she called for the Catholic Church to be put "in the dustbin where it belongs".

Ms Smith has also been urged by Church charity activists to come and witness the good work being done by Catholic groups after she launched the stinging attack.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* this week Mr Martin said "using this sort of language is completely inappropriate, unacceptable and it should have no place in Dáil Éireann".

He accused Ms Smith of showing "total disrespect for the many hundreds of thousands of citizens who practice their Catholic faith and for whom it is a source of comfort and strength."

Calling on politicians to "show proper respect for all faiths", Mr Martin said "these comments speak to an intolerant populism that we have done well to largely avoid in Ireland and they need to be called out."

Speaking in a debate on the Tuam Mother and Baby Home, Ms Smith called for "the beginning of the separation of Church and State and putting the Church in the dustbin where it belongs but doing so by giving back dignity and financial and other supports" to what she described as "probably hundreds of thousands of survivors and victims of the legacy of the Church and its role in this country".

During the same debate, Minister Katherine Zappone said a separation of Church and State was necessary although "we do not necessarily need to put down the Church as we separate it from the State".

Meanwhile, Bro. Kevin Crowley challenged Ms Smith to visit Dublin's Capuchin Day Centre, where hundreds of homeless and vulnerable people are fed and cared for every day.

"What I would say to Bríd Smith is look at what has been done for the underprivileged – only for the Church in many ways they'd be utterly and completely ignored," he told *The Irish Catholic*, continuing, "Even what Sr

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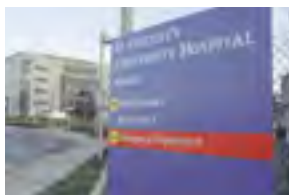
Marathon achievement for #LoveBoth supporters



Supporters of the Love Both project, which aims to protect the Eighth Amendment, Eva Conroy, Melissa Byrne, Stephanie Byrne and Robyn Conroy taking a selfie before the beginning of the VHI Women's Mini Marathon on Monday in Dublin. Photo: John McElroy

MATERNITY HOSPITAL

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Anti-Catholicism shouldn't be allowed to be the last acceptable prejudice

There has been much to criticise in the Catholic Church recently. And Catholics have not been shy about naming the serious wrongs that have been done in the name of the Church or by people within the Church.

The Church has also not been short of critics in the media and political life – often they protest with good reason.

I don't know if the Church would've faced up to the dreadful crisis of abuse if it wasn't for the media and external oversight. But, every day there is verbal abuse, distortion, innuendo.

Many Catholics tell me they've stopped reading secular newspapers. One man told me recently that he used to love reading the papers, but now he dreads turning the page because of what he might see: more contempt heaped upon the Church which he goes on loving, despite everything.

Contempt

In certain media and political circles, there is a special contempt – even hatred – reserved for all things Catholic. Some of the venom heaped upon the Religious Sister of Charity recently was, in my opinion, nothing short of incitement to hatred.

When a well-known novelist recently called upon her Twitter followers to throw a stone at a priest if they saw one, no-one batted an eyelid. Had this woman called for a national 'stone-a-Muslim' day in the same way



Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

as she called for the national 'stone-a-priest', one wonders if there would have been outrage.

Church-bashing has also become a pastime in our national parliament. Hardly a day goes by that doesn't see an ill-tempered tirade against the Church and Catholic values. The representatives of the hard left are the worst – but they're rarely alone. Just last week, Bríd Smith, the People Before Profit TD, in a particularly rabid rant called for the Church to be dumped "in the dustbin where it belongs".

“Catholics need to become better at standing up for themselves”

One wonders who Ms Smith would throw in the bin first? The elderly nuns that now make up what's left of the Religious Sisters of Charity? Bro. Kevin Crowley and the Capuchins who run the soup kitchen in Dublin? Passionate and untiring voices for the vulnerable like Fr Peter McVerry or Sr Stan Kennedy?

Ms Smith may not like some things the Church stands for (it's a

free country), but surely she wants a country where no-one is consigned to a dustbin? Where no-one is made to feel left out because they don't quite go along with whatever the consensus is on any given day?

It's baffling that some people who claim to speak up against intolerance and bigotry have no difficulty in using inflammatory language against groups in society that they find objectionable.

And here's the thing: many people are either unwilling or unable to call out anti-Catholicism for what it is. If Ms Smith stood up in the Dáil to call for the binning of Muslims, Jews, people with disabilities, or any other group in society there's rightly be outrage. But, Catholics? They're fair game.

It isn't right. And it isn't on. Catholics need to become better at standing up for themselves. We need to be unafraid and unapologetic in calling out bias, unfairness, characterisation and downright bigotry. Sensible politicians on all sides also need to start standing up for a bit of fair play. Anti-Catholicism shouldn't be allowed to be the last acceptable prejudice.

TD accused of 'intolerant populism'

» Continued from Page 1

Stan has done for housing, and the cheek of them to speak out like that. I would love to meet her and tell her to come down here and see what's happening here every day.”

Social campaigner and Religious Sister of Charity Sr Stan Kennedy, meanwhile,

who founded Focus Ireland, the State-designated charity for helping families out of homelessness, dismissed Ms Smith's comments as an angry and misinformed expression of general anti-Church attitudes.

“There is so much anti-Church feeling, that everything is picked up now and opposed,” she told *The Irish*

Catholic. “To say something like that is to be totally misinformed,” she said of Ms Smith's comments, continuing “fantastic work has been done and fantastic work is being done”.

Kieran Stafford, Saint Vincent de Paul national president, said “I think sometimes people don't look at the full picture”, noting that Catholic

identity and Church connections are key to SVP's work. Describing SVP as Ireland's largest charity, he observed how “the support we get from the Church in terms of having collections outside churches once a month is fundamental to us being able to raise funds and continue to support people who are struggling in our communities”.

Key role

The Irish Church also plays a key role in combatting extreme poverty in some of the poorest countries in the world, according to Trócaire's executive director Eamonn Meehan.

“Last year, Trócaire supported 2.4 million people in 25 countries around the world,” Mr Meehan told *The Irish Catholic*, with this being possible, he said, “only because of the commitment of parishes around Ireland”.

Praising Irish Catholics, both lay and clerical, for their contribution to overseas projects, he noted how Church partners in countries such as Kenya and Sudan are crucial allies in helping Trócaire “deliver real and lasting change to people's lives”.



SPECIAL HONOUR FOR DERRY PRIEST: Retired Derry priest Fr Harry Coyle (77) was awarded an honorary doctorate by Ulster University in recognition of his lifetime of achievements in Irish language teaching and scholarship. Pictured with Fr Coyle are Prof. Paddy Nixon and Dr Malachy O'Neill, Ulster University. Photo: Nigel McDowell/Ulster University

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Vatican urged to block hospital plan

Greg Daly

A Rome-based moral theologian has said the Vatican has an obligation to block plans by the Sisters of Charity to facilitate the building of a new National Maternity Hospital where it is expected that abortions will take place.

Fr Kevin O'Reilly OP, who lectures in Rome's Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas, better known as the Angelicum, told *The Irish Catholic* that if the Religious Sisters of Charity do not reconsider their proposal to sell land and the St Vincent's Healthcare Group to an independent company capable of facilitating the new hospital, the proposed scheme should be vetoed.

"Inevitably at some stage what we would regard as direct abortion is going to happen, and when it happens you can't turn around and say we didn't mean that to happen," he said, explaining that to enable abortions in such a way would be completely contrary to Catholic teaching.

Property

Under canon law, Irish religious bodies cannot sell or give away property worth over €3.5 million without permission from the Vatican. The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life must vet all such disposals

of assets, typically not approving of them without at least receiving confirmation from the local bishop – in this case, Dublin's Archbishop Diarmuid Martin – that he has no objections to the religious body's plan.

Fr O'Reilly said that when the proposal reaches the Vatican, the authorities there "absolutely" should prevent it from going ahead. "The bottom line is that you're talking about abortion, and you're talking about facilitating abortion," he said, continuing, "even if it's only one abortion, you're morally obliged to do what you can to prevent that taking of innocent human life."

He compared the controversy with how a group of Belgian psychiatric centres owned by the Brothers of Charity last month announced plans to perform euthanasia, in accordance with increasingly common Belgian practice, on mentally ill patients, he said the situation was "similar, though not as bad".

Noting how the sisters had come under "an onslaught" of criticism ahead of putting forward their proposal, he warned of a "pattern of religious coming under pressure, capitulating, and cooperating with the culture of death".

The State, he added, should be able to find another site for the new hospital.

See Page 7.

'God is good' – Justin Bieber

Justin Bieber.



Mags Gargan

Pop sensation Justin Bieber wore his faith on his sleeve at the One Love Manchester benefit concert on Sunday, when he told the crowd to remember that God is good in the midst of the darkness and evil.

Numerous musicians, including Ariana Grande, performed for free at the concert in Old Trafford, which raised funds for the Red Cross' Manchester Emergency Fund to help victims and families impacted by the suicide bomber who targeted an Ariana Grande concert in the city last month.

Justin Bieber, whose Christian faith has been on display in recent months, offered a message of resilience at the event, which had already been scheduled before the latest London Bridge attack.

Love

"I'm not going to let go of hope. I'm not going to let go of love. I'm not going to let go of God," the singer told the crowd. "Put your hands up if you're not going to let go."

The 23-year-old went on to say: "God is good in the midst of the darkness. God is good in the midst of the evil. God is in the midst no matter what's happening in the world, God is in the midst, and he loves you and he's here for you."

His voice cracking, he said he wanted to "honour the people who were taken", asking the crowd to put up their hands and chant "we honour you and we love you".

Packie Lee left a gift in his Will to Trócaire. His grandniece Carrie travelled to Ethiopia to see the impact of his gift.

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Pope's visit should leave legacy of better helping the homeless

Chai Brady

The World Meeting of Families (WMOF) should leave behind a legacy of helping families caught in the "disgraceful" homeless crisis in Ireland, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin has said.

Speaking at a conference on the WMOF, Dr Martin said there should not only be a spiritual legacy from the event, but also a focus on "what we can do better in Ireland to help families".

"You've got the homeless, those who are sleeping on the streets and it's disgraceful. You've got families living in hotel rooms which is a shame on our city, and you've got young people who can't start out on a married life of their own because of the cost of initial housing," he said.

Transitional

The archbishop said that the diocese is working towards building mini-apartments that should accommodate 60 families at the site of the Mater Dei Institute in Dublin, which used to be a facility for college students.

He said they are not ideal as they are transitional, but it will offer more privacy for the occupants compared to hotel rooms. It is the third project the archdiocese has been involved with in conjunction with Dublin City Council.

"We are hoping that we

might be able to do more in the future," said Dr Martin.

"Housing and having a decent place to raise their children in a healthy environment is important. We do need to address the problem – the backlog of the lack of social housing in Ireland," he added.

The site at the Mater Dei Institute was made available by the archdiocese and will be run by Catholic charity Crosscare.

The Dublin Regional Homeless Executive is spearheading the project.

New facilities

Last month Frances Fitzgerald said that over €15m had been invested in eight new facilities that could accommodate 240 families in Dublin.

The Department of Housing's April 2017 report shows that over 1,300 families, with 2,708 children, were homeless in Ireland.

This has continued to rise this year month by month; in January there were 1,172 families that were homeless, with 300 fewer children needing homes.

The Dublin-based Inner City Helping Homeless charity said they recorded their highest ever number of people presenting as rough sleepers in one night at the beginning of June, with 141 men and 52 women on the streets.

Reds Limerick novena 'on the buses'



Rector Fr Seamus Enright pictured at the launch of the Limerick Novena outside the Mount St Alphonsus Redemptorist church in Limerick, with a special Bus Éireann bus advertising the solemn novena in honour of Our Mother of Perpetual Help from June 16-24. Photo: Brian Gavin/Press 22

'Counter-cultural' Lough Derg sees rising pilgrim numbers

Greg Daly

Record numbers of pilgrims visited St Patrick's Purgatory in Lough Derg for the opening weekend of the island shrine's 2017 Three-Day Pilgrimage season.

With numbers up 10% on last year's opening weekend, Fr Owen McEneaney, Prior of Lough Derg, told *The Irish Catholic* that it was even more heartening to compare today's numbers – which saw 656 people arriving on the island over three days – with those from a century ago, when just 89 pilgrims arrived over the same period.

"It is very encouraging when you look at the numbers 100 years on and compare the times we are now living in," he said, pointing to how the popularity of the Donegal shrine stands in sharp contrast to common narratives of declining faith and practice.

Attendance

"We continue to read in the mainstream media that numbers are falling in church attendance," he said, continuing, "but Lough Derg has never followed trends and we are continuing to witness a steady flow of people to this

sacred Island."

Describing the island, famous for its arduous devotional practices, as "counter-cultural to what else is going on around us" he highlighted as especially encouraging the conspicuous number

of younger pilgrims to the island.

"The Spirit is at work and perhaps the number of people coming on pilgrimage is a sign of a renewal at a deeper level," he said.

No more Sunday funerals in Kerry

Mags Gargan

The Bishop of Kerry has announced that from September, no funerals in the diocese will take place on a Sunday, for liturgical reasons and because of the reduction in priests.

Bishop Ray Browne acknowledged that "many will have reservations about this decision" but said it had been taken "after extensive consultation with laity and clergy throughout the diocese" and he warned there was "no exceptions to this diocesan regulation".

The bishop said the funeral ban was necessary "for many reasons", including an issue of respecting the Sunday Mass liturgy and the care of priests who have a heavy workload, working larger areas in smaller numbers.

Removals to the church can take place on either Saturday or Sunday evening and parishes can make their own decision in relation to Holy Days of Obligation outside of Christmas Day and St Patrick's Day.

The Archdiocese of Dublin is the only other Irish diocese with a Sunday funeral ban in place.

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Teach Irish values, not multi-culturalism

According to Dr Victoria Showunmi at Maynooth University, the teaching of history and other subjects in Ireland should be adjusted to reflect the cultures and experiences of new immigrants.

Schools and colleges should offer a curriculum that doesn't only reflect a 'white Irish' perspective, she says.

Well-meaning, but wrong, in my view. In Britain, educational multi-culturalism has made a regrettable contribution to the rise of home-grown UK terrorism, without in any way intending to do so.

I have direct, personal experience of the impact of educational multi-culturalism. I saw it in the education of my own children in London during the 1980s. At their local neighbourhood school, the traditional Christmas Nativity play was banned lest it should 'offend', and a multi-cultural programme ushered into the school schedules instead. This was a directive from the left-wing London educational authority, rather than the school.

“Tolerance and esteem for other cultures should be automatically part of a decent education”

The impact of this policy, on a larger scale, was that migrants, instead of integrating with the host culture, were encouraged to consider themselves separate and different. Grievances were aroused, instead of positive values shared.

Multi-culturalism also prompted competition for grievance-mongering. When Hindus were favoured – their special holiday, Diwali, was to be celebrated – Muslims were furious.

Surely Ireland can learn from the problems that have arisen in the UK,



Mary Kenny

aided and abetted by multi-cultural education? Notice that a high proportion of jihadi terrorists are home-grown: educated at British schools and universities, where, as has been the fashion over the past decades, they were taught resentment and separation by the agenda of multiculturalism (which itself was, cynically, serving the delivering of votes, on a clientele basis, to those pushing that agenda).

Sense of awe

Yes – tolerance and esteem for other cultures should be automatically part of a decent education. Those who had a classical education in the past started with an appreciation of the Medes and the Persians (Iran), and a sense of awe that human civilisation began in Mesopotamia, that is, modern Iraq, and then in Egypt. A true education should include the respect due to these ancient societies.

“An increasing proportion of young people

are unable to see what is being taught in schools and universities had any bearing on their experience or personal background,” says Dr Showunmi. Then I would suggest that they are not being taught properly.

Exposure to learning should open our minds to the universality of human experience: why are Yeats and Sean O’Casey loved and appreciated in Japan? Because Japanese education teaches about the universality of great literature (although Japanese society has never encouraged, or even accepted, non-Japanese immigrants).

Incomers into Ireland should follow in the tradition of older migrants to these shores – even those who came first as conquerors – and become ‘more Irish than the Irish themselves’. If you want future trouble in your society, teach multi-cultural differences: if you want harmony and integration, help incomers to identify with the historic host culture.



Theresa May.

Irish media hostile to Theresa May

Theresa May has not had a successful electoral campaign, and there have been quite a few gaffes. The horrors of the Manchester and London Bridge atrocities have also cast a dark shadow. Jeremy Corbyn is not wrong to point a finger at British (and French, and American) foreign policy: the Franco-British toppling of Gaddafi in Libya was insane, and created a vacuum and a failed state.

And yet I suspect that much of the personal hostility to Theresa May in the Irish mainstream media is rooted in the fact that she identifies herself as a Christian. Theresa’s Anglo-Catholic background is as a red rag to a bull among our secularist commissars.

Support for independent bookshops

Listowel, in Co. Kerry, surely deserves great honour for sustaining two independent bookshops, Woulfe’s and Flavin’s, both in Church Street (as well as an Eason’s). It’s been a tough few years for independent bookshops, and I’ve seen many vanish with the advance of Kindles and Amazon. But printed books are making a recovery,

and those who sustain them are heroes in the cause of literacy, communication and the companionship of the word. You get friendliness, advice and the interchange of human contact at a real bookshop which no internet service can match and it’s great to see a town like Listowel support their lovely bookstores.

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A right to work would help ‘restore dignity’ to refugees

Mags Gargan

An historic ruling by the Supreme Court against the prohibition on a right to work for asylum seekers has been welcomed as an opportunity to restore the dignity of those living in direct provision.

Stephen Ng'ang'a, the coordinator of Core Group of Asylum Seekers, told *The Irish Catholic* the right to work would mean “asylum seekers would live like normal people”. “It is a human rights issue,” he said. “The current handout mentality kills peo-

ple's skills and their mental health is broken by the system because they are not treated as human.

“The McMahon working group also made this recommendation and I hope the Government will heed these two credible bodies and be pro-active in their response,” he said.

Bishop McAreavey, chair of the Bishops' Council for Justice and Peace, urged politicians to allow migrants already living in Ireland to contribute to our society and encouraged policymakers to balance the Government's duty to manage resources with the

parallel duty to treat asylum seekers humanely.

“Removing the ban on work means that people in direct provision centres are more likely to integrate and be part of a rich, diverse and yet more unified society; asylum seekers will recover their self-respect through work and we all will benefit from their skills and gifts,” he said.

Self-worth

Eugene Quinn, JRS Ireland National Director said a right to work will “enable a person seeking asylum to live

with greater dignity and affirm their sense of self-worth while awaiting a final determination of their claim”.

“Two years ago a Government appointed Working Group, of which JRS Ireland was member, recommended giving asylum seekers a right to work after nine months, in line with all other EU member states except Lithuania. In light of the Supreme Court ruling JRS Ireland is urging the Government to give immediate effect to this recommendation,” he said.

“Greater family rejection” for some Christians

Chai Brady

Christians are finding it increasingly difficult to share their faith in the workplace and even among family, according to the newly appointed Presbyterian Moderator.

Rev. Dr Noble McNeely was officially installed as the new Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland (PCI) at a general assembly on Tuesday in Belfast.

He told the congregation that being a disciple of Jesus in the modern world is becoming “more and more difficult and intimidating”.

“I speak to many of our Church members, and they freely tell of how they are finding it more difficult to share their Christian faith in their places of work, in the places they socialise, even for some they find greater family rejection,” he said.

Disciples

Addressing delegates from around the world including East Africa, Latvia and Hungary, he added: “When Jesus told his disciples to take up the cross, it was expected that there would be physical rejection.

“The persecution of Christians throughout the world is more evident than ever before.”

The Moderator mentioned Coptic Christians in Egypt, who are “suffering persecution, imprisonment and discrimination”, and called on followers to stand with the “persecuted Church”.

Two new permanent deacons for Dromore



The number of permanent deacons serving in the Diocese of Dromore has increased to five following the ordination of John McClelland (Newry) and Deacon Michael Rooney (Ballela) at the Cathedral of Ss Patrick & Colman in Newry on Sunday by Bishop John McAreavey. Also pictured: Canon Francis Brown, Adm. Newry Cathedral and Rev. Deacon Frank Rice, Director of Formation for the diaconate in Dromore.

Columbans criticise President Trump on climate u-turn

Staff reporter

The Superior General of the Missionary Society of St Columban has criticised the US withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement as “jeopardising” global efforts to prevent the destruction of the planet.

Fr Kevin O'Neill SSC said the Columbans “stand against policies that negatively affect the communities we serve, our common home, and in

particular the poor and vulnerable”.

“Columbans serve communities across the globe who daily face the devastating impacts of a dramatically changing climate,” he said.

“Withdrawal from the agreement undercuts our positive relationship with the rest of the world, jeopardising cooperation on many global efforts and weakening our response as one global family to the destruction of the

planet.”

He said failure to address climate change will “exacerbate forced migration, food insecurity, conflict, and disease” and these impacts will be primarily borne by “the most vulnerable who contribute the least to climate change”.

‘Reckless’

Trócaire Executive Director Éamonn Meehan described President Trump's decision

as a “reckless move” that would “signal a complete lack of concern for the world's poorest people by the Trump administration”.

“President Trump should travel to east Africa and see for himself the devastating impact of climate change. Trócaire sees those impacts every day,” he said. “The Paris Agreement remains our promise to future generations; a promise we must keep.”

NEWS IN BRIEF

Meath composer writes hymn for papal visit

A musician from the Diocese of Meath has been selected to write the lead hymn for the World Meeting of Families.

Entitled ‘A Joy for all the World’, the hymn was composed by Ephrem Feeley, one of Ireland's most established composers of liturgical music, with over 200 pieces of music suitable for use in Catholic worship. His wife Giovanna Feeley is also an occasional composer of liturgical music.

“We aim to write music that is Scripture-inspired, music that has dignity and beauty, accessible to choirs and assemblies, and worthy of use in liturgy,” the couple explained.

Ephrem and Giovanna Feeley conduct the choir in their local parish in Ashbourne while Ephrem is a music teacher at Mercy Secondary School in Navan.

Clogher launches new youth festival

The Clogher Diocesan Youth Ministry team ‘Clogher don Óige’ has launched a brand new summer event to take place in Lough Derg in August.

FaithFest LoughDerg is a three full-day (two overnight) festival for 14-17 year olds featuring live music, workshops and inspiring speakers.

Youth Ministry Coordinator, Helena Connolly said: “We are so blessed to have Lough Derg in our diocese so we decided to bring young people to the island to experience all it has to offer.”

The festival takes place from August 15-17. See website www.clogherdonoise.com

Trócaire wins silver at Bloom

Trócaire has won a silver medal for its show garden at this year's Bloom festival in Phoenix Park, Dublin.

Trócaire's garden, which featured a live art installation, highlighted its work with communities fighting for their land rights in Central America. It will now be installed near the Trócaire office in Maynooth, Co. Kildare.

Nuns should stand up for life and pull out of deal

There have been few people willing and able to speak up in defence of the Religious Sisters of Charity. The sisters have had to endure an onslaught on the back of their generosity in agreeing to facilitate the construction of the proposed new National Maternity Hospital (NMH) on the campus of St Vincent's Hospital.

Since the announcement that the congregation will cease involvement in the St Vincent's Healthcare Group and that it will withdraw from any involvement in the New National Maternity Hospital, the onslaught has subsided. Indeed, some have even praised the sisters for their decision and hailed its importance. Minister Simon Harris referred to it as "a very significant development".

That significance for various interests amounts to the fact that the spectre of religious influence in the NMH project has been eliminated.



When people object to Catholic influence in healthcare, effectively what they mean is they want the freedom to take human life, writes **Fr Kevin O'Reilly OP**

Perhaps those opposed to the sisters' involvement have understood Bishop Kevin Doran's assertion that Catholic hospitals have a particular responsibility to uphold Catholic teaching with regard to "the value of human life and the dignity and the ultimate destiny of the human person".

Catholic teaching with regard to the inviolability of all human life is the teaching of natural reason although natural reason is undoubtedly enhanced in its operation by the light of supernatural faith.

Knowledge

The Catholic Church is to my knowledge the only major institution that defends the inviolabil-

ity of all human life. It is indebted in particular to St John Paul II's strong advocacy in this regard. Pope Francis continues the Church's tradition of its defence of all human life – even if the media chooses to downplay this uncomfortable aspect of his teaching.

In a period of history that has come to recognise itself as post-truth, the Catholic Church is also the only institution to espouse truth. John Paul II, again, penned an important encyclical entitled *Fides et Ratio* (*Faith and Reason*). Benedict XVI pleaded for a revival of trust in the capacity of human reason to put us in touch with truth. This plea has largely

been ignored.

No doubt the banishment of reason and the welcome of post-truth go hand-in-hand with the culture of death that John Paul II saw unfolding before his eyes. In an increasingly secular society that is hostile to Catholicism above all other religions on account of its esteem for reason and its love of human life, it has become more and more difficult for Catholics to escape the pervasive influence of the culture of death.

The decision of the Sisters of Charity with regard to the New National Maternity Hospital is a case in point. As one report in *The Irish Times* stated, the congregation's decision "should allay fears that medical procedures allowed by law would not be carried out in the new NMH at St Vincent's where these may be in conflict with the teachings of the Catholic Church". In other words, the possibility of conscientious objection to the taking of life in the womb is no longer an issue.

Pressure

It is difficult not to feel sympathy for the Sisters of Charity. The sustained level of abuse that they have had to endure over recent weeks speaks very poorly of the kind of society into which Ireland has morphed in recent years – one that is seemingly very lacking in gratitude for the selfless work that has been done by the Sisters of Charity since their foundation.

“Even at this late hour I ask the sisters to reflect... act in accordance with the demands of truth by withdrawing cooperation”

One hopes that one could cite the pressure they have been under as a factor that would mitigate their culpability in facilitating the advance of a regime in which "medical procedures allowed by law" will be carried out. This decision amounts to unacceptable cooperation in those same legal proce-

dures if and when they are performed.

The only ethical route open to them from the beginning – the only option for right reason seeking the truth and demanded by respect for all human life – was to step back graciously from any form of cooperation with the State with respect to the NMH. The State would, rest assured, have found another site for its project.

Even at this late hour I ask the sisters to reflect on the serious implications of their decision for human life and to act in accordance with the demands of truth by withdrawing cooperation. Commitment to the truth will of course bring suffering in its wake.

That is a price that we Catholics are called to pay for following Truth incarnate, namely Jesus Christ.

1 Fr Kevin E. O'Reilly, OP, is a philosopher and theologian who teaches moral theology at the Angelicum University, Rome. He is the author of two books and various peer-reviewed articles.

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Breda O'Brien

The View



Christians can reach out to help Muslims stop radicalisation

In the wake of the London attacks by radical Islamists, Theresa May has said, "enough is enough". But how does one counter a movement so loosely organised that it scarcely even deserves the term? Or an ideology which relies on lone agents or small numbers of attackers and on the use of vehicles and knives as weapons?

Ms May has focused on the use of the internet for grooming potential terrorists. This is a real concern. So-called Islamic State has become expert

in the use of social media, and its success has been compared to the way that paedophiles groom children and young people for abuse.

But others, such as Peter Neumann of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) at King's College, London, have pointed out that radicalisation rarely occurs only online but is part of a process.

However, in 2014, ICSR itself identified a radical preacher, Ahmad Musa Jibril, as a major influence on foreigners fighting in Syria.

ICSR created a database of the social media profiles of 190 foreign fighters in Syria, one of the first conflicts in which fighters documented their experiences as they happened via social media.

But the report also identifies people who are highly influential even though they did not fight themselves. There are two notable clerics among them, Ahmad Jibril and Musa Cerantonio, both English-speaking, although very different in approach.

Motives

The report is very careful not to attribute motives to either cleric but instead says cautiously: "Whether consciously or not, they may be performing an important role in the radicalisation of some individuals and retain this importance among those who later decide to engage in active combat."

Mr Jibril is American, while Mr Cerantonio is Australian, of Irish and Italian heritage. The latter is a former Catholic, who grew up in a non-practising family and went to a Catholic primary school. He is now a highly influential Muslim preacher. He looks like a lad who could have played GAA for his local parish (aside from the beard).

One of those believed responsible for the London Bridge attacks was twice reported to authorities. He was first reported by a neighbour when he started repeating material he had heard from Ahmad Jibril on YouTube.

"If Mr Jibril's religious lectures are banned from YouTube, does that make him a martyr?"

The second time he was reported was by a woman, when she found him proselytising local children in a park.

Ahmad Jibril has hundreds of videos on



YouTube, and is also very active on Twitter. His sermons are also available via Android and iPhone apps. His Facebook page has a quarter of a million 'likes'.

He is a Salafist, that is, his outlook is shaped by a demand to return to a pure form of Sunni Islam, including the idea of a caliphate, a political entity ruled by Islam.

But what are authorities to do about Ahmad Jibril, and the even more radical Musa Cerantonio? If Mr Jibril's religious lectures are banned from YouTube, does that make him a martyr?

Civil liberties

There are serious civil liberties issues here, which may seem like a very wimpy, liberal approach given that at the time of writing, it appears that some of those who followed his lectures then went out and cut the throats of innocent women and men.

However, given that the perpetrators wore dummy explosive vests, presumably to increase the

chances of being killed by security forces, it is clear that martyrdom is a radical Islamist tactic. Any form of martyrdom or persecution of these influential clerics such as banning them from the internet is likely to backfire.

"A tiny minority will become radicalised in search of a stable identity"

Nor is surveillance the answer. There are simply too many people to monitor successfully. While intense research is ongoing to establish what tips someone over into violence, there are no clear answers.

Security authorities foil far more attacks than they fail to stop but that is no comfort to the families whose relatives are maimed and killed.

Only a multi-faceted, long-haul approach will work. Many British Muslims report being considered foreigners in their family's

country of origin, and not really British by their own countrymen and women.

A tiny minority will become radicalised in search of a stable identity, and a tiny percentage of that minority will kill.

Christians have a key role to play, especially in interfaith dialogue. One thinks of the unexpected success of a slow-paced, meditative film where everyone already knew the outcome – the martyrdom of Trappist monks. The film *Of Gods and Men* showed the dedication and commitment of Christians to a beleaguered, poverty stricken Algerian Muslim community.

That kind of radical solidarity is one vital aspect of a response to a far more dangerous form of radicalisation. While few will be required to embrace Christian martyrdom, that is, non-violent resistance to evil, those already engaged in interfaith dialogue are ideally placed to reach out to their Muslim neighbours.



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Church must not shrink away from the ideal

World Meeting of Families must proclaim the truth with charity and clarity, writes David Quinn

Every moral act has two main components, the objective and the subjective. Here's an example. If someone steals, what they have done is wrong. The act of stealing is wrong in itself, objectively wrong. But the person might be starving. They might have stolen some bread to stay alive. That is the subjective side of the act, the circumstances.

In this case, the person's circumstances are such that the moral guilt attaching to what they have done is hugely diminished. Mercy ought to be shown to this person if they are caught. God will certainly show mercy.

The dominant theme of the pontificate of Pope Francis is mercy. He wants us to look long and hard at the subjective circumstances facing each person. Yes, they may have done wrong. Yes, they may have fallen short of the ideal. But their circumstances are such that we should show mercy, help them to improve their circumstances, show them what is the ideal and help them to achieve it.

Mercy

St John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI did not neglect mercy by any means. One of John Paul's very first encyclical was about mercy – *Dives in Misericordia* – and he tirelessly promoted devotion to the Divine Mercy.

But both of these popes were very interested in the objective nature of a moral act, pointing out its wrongness or rightness in the interests of truth. Pope Francis is resetting the balance by asking us to emphasise the subjective nature of an act more, and the objective nature of it less.

The World Meeting of Families, to be held in Dublin in August of next year, is set to follow Pope Francis in this. It is going to look at the subjective nature of moral acts more and at the objective nature of



Cardinal Kevin Farrell, Prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life who gave the keynote address at the recent Dublin conference, speaking with World Meeting of Families 2018 volunteers Mark O'Leary and Anne Potter. Photo: John McElroy

moral acts less. It will be following the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, released after the two synods on the family in Rome.

Last week, a three-day meeting was held in Dublin to help prepare the way for next year's event. It attracted delegates from around the world. At a press conference, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, drew attention to the Pope's emphasis on mercy and people's subjective circumstances.

“To say ‘the ideal family does not exist’ is striking and attention-grabbing”

Archbishop Martin said: “The World Meeting of Families will be a moment when we will speak of confidence, but also of realism stressing both the challenges and the joys of family life. That is the reality of the life of every family: the ideal family does not exist. Great families do exist. They need the support of the Church.”

To say “the ideal family does not exist” is striking and attention-grabbing. What can it mean? I think in this context ‘ideal’ is being used as another word for ‘perfect’, as in, ‘the perfect family does not exist’. This is obviously true. Every family is made up of sinners big and small, so how can any family be perfect? Was even the holy family perfect? Joseph was a good man, a saint, but he wasn't totally free of sin and therefore he wasn't perfect. To be honest, we can take some comfort from this.

At the same time, it is absolutely clear that the ideal family does exist, in the sense that there is an ideal to aim

at, and the ideal to aim at is Christian marriage, and in this sense very many people live out the ideal. It is not unrealistic and unobtainable.

Amoris Laetitia mentions the word ‘ideal’ no fewer than 22 times. Several times, the document emphasises that the ideal cannot be used as a kind of stick with which to beat people who fail to live up to it. But even when it is using the word in this context, it is still clear an ideal exists.

At one point, *Amoris Laetitia* sets out exactly what the ideal is when it says: “Christian marriage, as a reflection of the union between Christ and his Church, is fully realised in the union between a man and a woman who give themselves to each other in a free, faithful and exclusive love, who belong to each other until death and are open to the transmission of life, and are consecrated by the sacrament, which grants them the grace to become a domestic church and a haven of new life for society.”

It says that the Church's teaching on the family is a “sign of contradiction” and that, “married couples are grateful that their pastors uphold the high ideal of a love that is strong, solid, enduring and capable of sustaining them through whatever trials they may have to face”.

This very much suggests that pastors are supposed to uphold the ideal albeit in a manner that helps “each family to discover the best way to overcome any obstacles it encounters”.

Elsewhere Pope Francis warns against shrinking away from proclaiming the ideal. He states in his Exhortation: “In order to avoid all misunderstanding, I would point out that in no way must

the Church desist from proposing the full ideal of marriage, God's plan in all its grandeur...a lukewarm attitude, any kind of relativism, or an undue reticence in proposing that ideal, would be a lack of fidelity to the Gospel

and also of love on the part of the Church for young people themselves.”

Will the World Meeting of Families be guilty of this “undue reticence”, of “a lukewarm attitude”, of “relativism”? If so, this would be a

“lack of fidelity to the Gospel and also of love on the part of the Church for young people themselves”.

“The World Meeting of Families cannot over-concentrate on the subjective at the expense of the objective”

In other words, the World Meeting of Families cannot over-concentrate on the subjective at the expense of the objective. It has to hold both in a proper balance. Above all, the World Meeting of Families must clearly and unambiguously proclaim what the ideal is, namely Christian marriage.

To do otherwise would not only be a failure to proclaim the truth, but a pastoral failure also, because good pastoral care leads people into the truth.

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World Meeting of Families to open new dialogue about marriage: Irish Cardinal

Chai Brady

An Irish cardinal has said the World Meeting of Families (WMOF) will “prepare couples for the reality of marriage”.

There are also hopes it will rejuvenate the Church in Ireland.

Cardinal Kevin Farrell returned to Dublin, his home city, for a keynote address at the beginning of a three-day conference attended by delegates from all over the world on June 1.

The Pope’s Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*, is intended to be central to discussions during the five-day WMOF, beginning on August 21 next year.

Literally translating to

‘the joy of love’ Cardinal Farrell said the document is a “changing point”.

“It’s the beginning of a new process, and I see the World Meeting of Families as the beginning of a process not as an end of an event.

“It would be my hope that we would spend more attention to dealing with preparing couples for married life, and for family, rather than fixating on the difficulties and fixating on the challenges.”

Criticism

There has been criticism that *Amoris Laetitia* could pave the way to relativism in the Church, and that it may not give a firm direction, particularly regarding divorcees. Cardinal Farrell said he doesn’t

believe it changes any teachings, but that “not all marriages work out”.

“It’s more a question of accompanying people in difficulties and not putting them out of Church because they may not be able to participate fully at this particular moment,” he said.

Rejuvenation

In relation to rejuvenating the Church in Ireland he said it is his hope that the WMOF would do that, but “there is no miracle pill”, and it would be a long term project.

“God is love and this is all about love, and that’s what we hope to get across,” he added.

Cardinal Farrell is cur-



Cardinal Kevin Farrell says *Amoris Laetitia* will be future guide on marriage at Dublin conference on World Meeting of Families 2018. Photo: Chai Brady

rently the most senior Irish person in the Vatican. He was ordained in 1978 and after

a colourful service, including being auxiliary bishop of Washington and Bishop of

Dallas, he was created Cardinal last November by Pope Francis.

Archbishop Martin defends Sisters of Charity and calls for ‘voluntary element’ in NMH



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin.

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin has defended the Sisters of Charity and believes there should be a voluntary component to the new National Maternity Hospital.

This comes as the Sisters of Charity released a statement last month saying they intend to end their involvement in St Vincent’s Healthcare Group.

There was criticism over the nuns’ involvement in the hospital, with many saying a religious ethos would affect the future procedures that would be offered in the upgraded facility.

Archbishop Martin said that the nuns have helped many people in poverty access education and healthcare.

Tradition

“What sprung from those extraordinary women in the 18th Century was a great tradition of caring for the poor. St Vincent’s hospital was the first hospital in Ireland that was run by women,” he said.

“I think we shouldn’t take that tradition, and we shouldn’t be making comments that simply the nuns brought a negative contri-

bution, but we have to move on to a new situation.”

He added that a hospital with a voluntary element helps to provide a positive ethos, not a religious ethos in particular, which ensures the best happens in a hospital.

“I think it’s better than the one that tends to be bureaucratic and distant, and I think the important thing is there’s a board in the NMH that carries out that tradition,” he said.

He admitted that currently the National Maternity Hospital is not a Catholic hospital, and that he sees nobody asking that it should be.

However he said that the sisters would certainly want the broad tradition of their foundress to be maintained, which would be quality healthcare for the poor, and a tradition of “enriching and protecting” the dignity of people in hospital.

He added there are areas in the Church’s teachings that are quite clear, and that “the protection of unborn, and need for protection of the mother, is a good policy and guide” for the new hospital.



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Possible abortion referendum won’t influence Pope’s visit

The Church is “concerned” about a potential referendum on abortion in Ireland, but it will not influence the nature of the Pope’s planned visit next year.

With a referendum on the issue becoming more likely Cardinal Kevin Farrell said that it is Pope Francis’ intention to come, and if it is not Pope Francis it will be his successor.

However he made it clear that his visit would be in relation to the World Meeting of Families.

“I’m sure that Pope Francis is coming for what he said he was going to come for which is the World Meeting of Families to promote marriage and to promote family life,” he said.

“Whether or not there’s something else going on in

the country, that’s important in the life of the world, in the life of the community and society in general.

No effect

“Yes there would be a concern about that, but it’s not a concern that will have an effect – Pope Francis will say and will uphold the teaching of the Church,” he added.

However he said that he

was not concerned about the referendum coinciding with the Pope’s visit.

Leo Varadkar, the newly-elected leader of Fine Gael, has said previously that he would be in favour of a referendum on the issue, which would make it highly likely that it will be put to the people of Ireland – possibly as early as next year.

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Out&About

Memorial for Manchester



◀ TIPPERARY:

Fr Michael Toomey pictured with local children at a memorial for those killed in the Manchester bombing, which was held at Ss Peter and Paul's in Clonmel.

▼ DUBLIN:

Fr Michael Fitzgerald celebrated 60 years of priestly ministry on Friday, May 26 in Highfield Healthcare. He is pictured with Msgr James McMahon and William Locke, chaplain, Highfield Healthcare.



MAYO: Archbishop Eamon Martin (centre) with Fr Cathal Geraghty, Galway (right) and Monsignor Gerard Dolan, Chaplain to the Knights of Columbanus in Sligo (left) with a group of seminarians from Armagh diocese after celebrating Mass on Ascension Sunday at Knock Shrine.



IN SHORT

Ferns youth receive certs of achievements

Members of the Spirit Youth Group, made up of Transition Years from schools in Co. Wexford, were presented with Certificates of Achievement last week by Fr Aodhan Marken, ADM Wexford Parish for the valuable work they have achieved throughout the year.

The TY students joined the Diocesan Youth Group last October and commenced a year of personal and spiritual development which saw them not only grow in confidence and friendship, but also provide them with the opportunity to get involved with various community projects such as weekly visits to Wygram Nursing Home and Abbeygale Nursing Home, and volunteering at South East Radio and the National Opera House.

"Parents see this as a positive space for their sons and daughters to be themselves outside of the pressures of life," said Colette Garvey O'Doherty; Safeguarding

Co-Ordinator for the Diocese of Ferns. "Spirit aims to provide each young person with the skills that will allow them to stop every now and then and evaluate where they are at."

Annual Eucharistic Procession in Cork

Our faith is not something to only be celebrated behind closed doors, but publicly in the streets, according to the Bishop of Cork & Ross.

Speaking in advance of the annual Eucharistic Procession in Cork on Sunday, June 18, Bishop John Buckley said we should "seek opportunities to celebrate our faith in public and give witness to the faith that has been given to us".

"The Eucharistic Procession is an ideal way of doing that," he said.

This year the guest preacher will be Bishop William Crean of Cloyne and an invitation has been offered to the various Catholic groups to walk in the

procession. Participants start assembling in the grounds of the North Cathedral at 2.30pm and it concludes in Daunt's Square.

L'Arche Belfast to host international festival

Belfast will be host to a historic global meeting, as 500 people with and without learning disabilities from 37 countries, come together as equal partners and celebrate their differences.

The event is organised by L'Arche, an international network of communities which aims to develop mutual relationships between people with and without learning disabilities.

"This event shows us that a new world free of discrimination is within reach. That makes it a very powerful symbol of hope," said Mairead Boland-Brabazon, CEO at L'Arche Ireland and Northern Ireland.

L'Arche's Federation Assembly Belfast 2017

will take place at Queen's University from June 20-27.

Eucharistic assemblies in Meath diocese

The Apostolate of Eucharistic Adoration is hosting three Eucharistic Assemblies this year, offering inspiring talks, powerful testimonies and presentations by bishops, priests and lay people.

Organised by the Meath Diocesan Adoration Committee, the assemblies will take place in Tullamore Court Hotel on Saturday, June 10; Newgrange Hotel Navan on Saturday, October 7; and Bloomfield House Hotel Mullingar on Saturday, October 14 from 9.50am to 4.30pm.

The assemblies aim to give ideas for adoration in parishes, address problems and concerns, encourage adorers and help participants grow in Eucharistic love.

Edited by Mags Gargan
mags@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



WATERFORD: Eddie Cunningham receiving the Bene Merenti from Fr Gerard McNamara PP for his services through the years as sacristan in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Tallow. Photo: David O' Flynn
MEATH: Members of Kells parish, Fr John Byrne, Margie O'Neill, Kathleen Conaty, Margaret Bergin, Marie Gibney, Anne Smyth, Liz Smyth and Fr Liam Malone with the recently installed artwork in St Colmcille's Church which depicts the biblical account of Creation.

TIPPERARY:

One the Confirmation classes (left) confirmed by Bishop Phonsie Cullinan at St Mary's, Irishtown, Clonmel. Photo: John Kelly



WEXFORD: Members of the Spirit Youth Group, made up of Transition Years from schools in Co. Wexford, were presented with their Certificates of Achievement last week by Fr Aodhan Marken in the National Opera House. Also pictured: Colette Garvey O'Doherty; Safeguarding Co-Ordinator for the Diocese of Ferns.



KERRY: The Confirmation class in Tarbert Primary School has donated generously from their Confirmation money to Children Helping Children.

CLARE

Ennis parish walk on Sunday, June 18 at 2:30pm commencing at the Old Jail Road- outside Madden's Furniture shop.

CORK

Annual novena in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Sacred Heart Church, Mogeely from June 15- 23 with Rosary, novena prayer and benediction at 8pm. Mass on final night.

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

Family & Life will host a pro-life talk and training event on Tuesday, June 13 at 7.30pm in The Maldron Hotel, John Redmond Street, Cork, including an overview of the recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly and a workshop on how to win the pro-life argument.

DUBLIN

Mass celebrating the 36th anniversary of the apparitions in Medjugorje, in the Church of Our Lady help of Christians, Navan Rd, D7 on Friday, June 23 at 7.30pm. Rosary, Mass and Adoration, Celebrant: Fr. Michael Duffy OFM. Choir: Glas Mira. Buses: 37, 38, 39, 70 and 122.

The parish of St John Vianney, 95 Ardlea Road, Artane, will be celebrating a Novena to the Sacred Heart from June 15-23. Mass with invited celebrant and preacher each day at 10am, except Sunday, as well as a Holy Hour on Thursdays at 7.30pm. Confessions after each service. Blessed Sacrament Procession on Wednesday, June 21 after the 10am Mass.

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.

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

The Encounter Dublin City: Join other young adults (20s & 30s) for a night of live acoustic music by The Goretti Girls, reflective prayer in adoration, with guest speaker Meabh Carlin on Friday, June 16 at 8pm in St Paul's Church, Arran Quay, (Smithfield). st.pauls@dublindiocese.ie

Join other young adults (20s & 30s) for a reflective hike on Saturday, June 17 from Bray to Greystones, followed by food in the Happy Pear. Meeting at 11am at Bray Dart Station. Contact: siobhan.tighe@dublindiocese.ie

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

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. www.CarburyParish.ie

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.

Novena in honour of St Anthony in St John's Cathedral, Limerick until June 13 conducted by Fr Brian Allen OFM. Masses each day at 10am & 5.45pm (Saturday 10am & 6pm, Sunday 10.30am & 7pm). With novena prayers, homily and blessing with relic.

LOUTH

St Anthony's annual novena will take place in St Peter's Church, West Street, Drogheda, starting Monday, June 5 and concluding Tuesday, June 13. Two sessions daily at 10.30am and 7.30pm except Saturday evening. Mass at 6.15pm. Preacher: Fr David Collins OFM, Killarney Friary.

A Holy Hour with music and reflections to be held in St Mary's Church, James Street, Drogheda on Wednesday, June 14 at 8pm.

MAYO

The next Latin Mass in the Old (Tridentine) Rite will take place on Sunday, June 11, in the Old Church, Knock at 5.30pm.

MEATH

Trim Prayer Group meeting every Thursday evening, 8-9pm, in Trim Parish Centre.

Christ the King Prayer Group, Enfield, meeting every Monday evening, 7.30-8.30pm, Enfield Parish Centre.

SLIGO

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

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.

WICKLOW

The Carmelite Nuns, Delgany invite you to join them for their Corpus Christi procession, after 9.30am Mass on Sunday, June 18. First Communicants specially welcome to lead the procession. Refreshments afterwards.

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.

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

Courage, for former New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger, is crucial if people of faith want to bring their distinct outlooks and gifts to politics.

Currently Chancellor of the University of Waikato just outside Auckland on New Zealand's North Island, the 82-year-old son of Irish immigrants, in Dublin with his wife Joan who he married in 1963 and with whom he has nine children, says he recently shared similar advice with students when conferring them with their degrees.

"I gave broadly a simple message to the students: that when they go out into the world, they should be prepared to speak out and stand up for that which is right, and equally be prepared to stand up and speak out against that which is wrong, and say 'no' – to be prepared to say 'no' as well as to say 'yes,'" he says, continuing, "and that requires taking a personal responsibility."

This, he says, can be hard to do. "The temptation of most people is to leave it for someone else to stand up and say 'no' or say 'yes' as the case may be, and I was encouraging these young graduates to be prepared to have the courage to say no to what's wrong and yes to what's right."

Admitting that "that sounds terribly, terribly simple", he continues, "In my experience, very few people like to take leadership on controversial issues. One of the challenges for Christians, and for people of faith and good will, whatever religious persuasion they may be part of, is to do that. It really gets down to something as simple as that.

Policies

"Of course," he adds, "you need detailed policies, but the basic requirements are to support the right approach with the right philosophical approach and be prepared to say no to the reverse."

In particular he says that nowadays the big challenge can be to "be prepared to say no to xenophobic populism, which is very common around the world, which is based on 'I am superior and those aren't'".

Twenty years after finishing his third term as the country's head of government, onetime cattle- and sheep-farmer Mr Bolger tells *The Irish Catholic* he's been in Dublin for a meeting of former world leaders who hope to be able to inform today's discussions.

"The InterAction Council was set up about 30 years ago by – at that stage – three or four very senior retired presidents and prime ministers, like Helmut Schmidt of Germany and Takeo Fukuda of Japan," he says, "and the idea was to draw on the experience of former leaders and to see what conclusions they might reach and produce what document they might deem appropriate on a given topic."

Explaining how the document is circulated to current governments, he says: "It's designed to both analyse and discuss the issues of the moment, reach some conclusions, and feed those decisions into the decision-making process," but wryly adds, "how much attention is paid is, I'd imagine, an open question."

Two issues predictably loomed large in this year's discussion.

"These last two days in Dublin were dominated by the implications of the Trump election in the United States and the Brexit

US President Donald Trump.

vote in Britain, and everything sort of came back to that but in a much more positive way than might be presumed," he says. "We spent a lot of time looking at the circumstances in society that created the backlash that created

the Brexit vote and the Trump election – and there were others who weren't elected, Le Pen in France and so forth, where there were similar movements but what I might describe as the mainstream were successful in being elected."

Keeping faith in politics

Nostalgia is a false path to the future, former New Zealand PM Jim Bolger tells **Greg Daly**



participation in elections, so people don't feel that their views matter anymore," he continues, "I think one of the great challenges for today's politicians is to establish the new paradigm where the average voter believes that their views matter, and therefore is going to vote. It's very hard to talk about democracy if most don't participate."

On the other hand, he says, current developments could broaden and improve politics: "The good news, if the world is smart enough, is that by going to the extremes in political decisions, you open up a very fertile ground in the middle – for leaders with the capacity to seize it – to produce a better result."

During the conference, then, he thought the former leaders could be of most help to their successors by concentrating less on President Trump and the minutiae of Brexit and more on the issues that gave rise to them.

"What we have we have: Brexit will happen and Trump is elected," he says, "so what produced this sort of aberration from the normal?"

At heart, he says, both issues come down to nostalgia for a real or imagined past.

"We've got aberrations, we've got minority groups holding sway in some countries, and most of that's due to frustration and anger that politics as usual has not produced an outcome for an average voter that they were seeking. And that goes across what I call the left/right/centre pendulum," he says.

Believing it crucial to understand what underpinned these and other large votes against accepted political structures, he says that over the last 30 to 40 years what might somewhat simplistically be termed neoliberal economic policies have thrived throughout the world.

"And what those policies have done on analysis – wherever in the world – is produce slow economic growth, and what increase in wealth there has been has overwhelmingly gone to a small percentage at the top," he observes, adding, "so that has enabled a big catchment of frustrated, disappointed, angry voters who intuitively and understandably vote against the status quo."

“He thought the former leaders could be of most help to their successors by concentrating less on President Trump and the minutiae of Brexit”

Even Emmanuel Macron's triumph in France, perhaps most naturally read as a rejection of far right Marine Le Pen, fits this model, Mr Bolger says, pointing to how Macron is a young man who has been elected president without having an established political party behind him.

"The other thing that's happening in the western democracies is a steep decline in





Jim Bolger and his wife, Joan.

“It’s termed a move to the right, but I think that really what we’re seeing is the politics of nostalgia,” he continues, musing, “I think very strongly about the Brexit vote that it’s a terrible irony that the British, who had the largest empire and ruled the world from London, found it extraordinarily difficult to have some decisions made in Brussels, just across the water, a few minutes away.

“So in many ways there’s a substantial Christian message...of extending the hand of welcome to those who are hurt”

“So, this turning inwards, picking up on nostalgic – even if totally inaccurate – history and basing political decisions on it, is what’s driven a lot of this turmoil in world politics at the moment.”

Agreeing that the Brexit vote was a bad answer to understandable questions, but says: “I think it is a bad answer, just as I think Trump’s a bad answer to whatever problems America has, but we must concentrate on why people chose the bad answer. And that is going to require a much more honest assessment of what the policies of the last number of years have created.”

The roots of these bad answers lie, he thinks, in two key areas. “One of them is of inequality,

that the few have got vast wealth and the rest are getting damn all, and the other this nostalgic view that we are a special group in the world, and foreigners, who are normally called ‘immigrants’, somehow diminish that specialness,” he says, adding, “yet in the same breath we will talk about the glories of technology which totally integrate the world. So there’s a contradiction there, but it only has the ability to capture people when they feel unhappy.”

The challenge, then, is to address the question of nostalgia and accept the reality of the movement of people, he says, stressing that “that it is going to happen both in terms of migration in the normal sense of the word and also migration in the tragic sense of refugees looking for a home”.

Social dilemma

Describing the refugee crisis as “the great social dilemma for the world”, he says of the world’s over 60 million refugees, “there have been some brave decisions – Angela Merkel said they were welcome, and Canada’s got a very bold and outward-looking refugee policy – but many countries are very inward-looking.”

These refugees are fleeing all manner of wars with different causes – he notes the argument that a serious drought in Syria provoked the early stages of the civil war that’s ravaged the country since 2011 – and says: “But whatever caused the turmoil, the turmoil has produced a large number of lonely, lost citizens of

the world, and many countries in Biblical terms are putting up a sign and saying there’s no room at the inn.

“So in many ways there’s a substantial Christian message – I can’t speak of the other main religions – of extending the hand of welcome to those who are hurt.”

A lifelong Catholic, it’s clear that Mr Bolger’s Faith provides an invaluable optic for considering such dilemmas. “And going back to the Gospel story of the Good Samaritan,” he continues, “you can put it in Christian terms: which leaders are the Good Samaritans, which countries are offering refuge to those who need our help? Who are putting up ‘there’s no room in the inn’ and who are saying ‘welcome’? That, I think, is going to be one of the defining issues of the next five years, just looking at the world.”

While such social issues were addressed at greater length by the council than were economic ones, he says the former leaders did consider how economic policy could be changed to produce more equitable results.

“One of the common denominators identified by many now – and this is by senior economists – is that after the Great Depression of the 1930s, a new economic model was introduced, but after the Great Crash, which some would say was bigger, of 2007-8 and onwards, there’s been virtually no change in the economic model. So we’re saying it all crashed, but nothing needs

to be changed – that of course is totally illogical,” he says, predicting that “quite significant” changes are likely to emerge in the coming years.

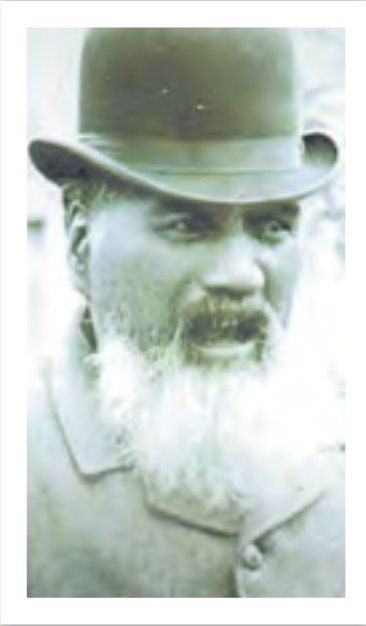
The coming years will also see further challenges through technological advances, he says, observing that artificial intelligence is something that’s creating a lot of uncertainty as people wonder how they fit into a world where machines have the capacity to do extraordinary things.

“The obvious example is something like driverless cars, and things like that that are very simple to describe, but there are factories in the world now that have no humans in them – they work 24 hours in the dark,” he says.

Commenting on the possibilities and challenges of the latest and coming technologies, he says “We are now coming out of an unsettled period of xenophobic populism and various other feelings as people feel loss, but that’s going to run snap bang into big transitions with technology and changings of jobs – and eliminating jobs.”

As replacement of people on factory production lines are followed by other jobs also being replaced, robotisation and other technological developments mean that classic economic and employment models where employees trade their labour for payments from the owners of capital cease to apply.

“So that brings up the number one question, that is: how do people have an income – what will be the method by which you have income to look after yourself and your family? And Canada and Finland – Finland’s slightly more advanced – are exploring



Te Whiti o Rongomai.

an old concept that’s been on the backburner of a universal basic income that everyone gets and that gets adjusted down if you’ve got a job and so on,” he says, continuing: “This is starting to gain traction in a number of countries, at least in academic discussions, because the machines will create the wealth, but how do you and your family share in that wealth?”

Observing that we are in the

first steps of what will be a “huge transition”, he says, “and that’s the challenge of the early part of the 21st Century.”

The advantages of these developments are obvious, he says, commenting on how he phones people all over the world at the touch of a button and how his 25-hour flight to Dublin via Dubai covered a distance that took his parents six weeks by boat when they left Wexford in 1930, he says: “That’s the world people are having to come to terms with, and it causes unease for many. That’s where you then get into the politics of nostalgia.”

While sceptical of nostalgia, Mr Bolger clearly thinks there are lessons to be taken from engaging honestly with the past, noting how in dealing with the consequences of how New Zealand was settled 200 years ago, he says “the first thing is to acknowledge the wrongs of the past, and then to in some way assist that community to adjust to today’s world, whatever might be necessary”.

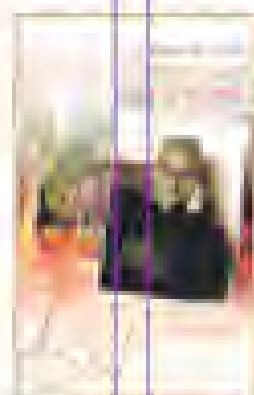
It’s not simply about assuming we have all the answers either, he notes, pointing out how at the village of Parihaka in the late 19th Century, a Maori leader called Te Whiti o Rongomai met British aggression with what was “arguably, in modern terms, the first non-violent resistance movement in the world, long before the great Mahatma Gandhi, long before Martin Luther King”.

Aside from the inspirational example of the Maori, he notes, the imperial power’s actions tell a tale too. “I think the thing to take out of that is that greed and ideologies of superiority did not just arrive on the scene with Mr Trump or any other Mr Trump,” he says, continuing, “It’s been around a long time – and Irish history will tell you that without me telling you so!”

Nostalgic politics may be fashionable, but the modern world offers much to those who want to seize it, he notes. “The reality is that in any analysis, today’s world is much better than that nostalgic past. I mean people have a much healthier lifestyle, they live much longer, they have much greater opportunity to explore and do things, they have far more knowledge and far more engagement,” he says, “so there are many issues that have to be dealt with but they shouldn’t come from the perspective that this is a disaster. It’s really how do we handle the new knowledge and create a different paradigm for the world to put it in as go forward.”

“It sounds rather straightforward when you put it like that,” he laughs, adding, “It’s a classic where the devil is in the detail. I came out of the meeting thinking there’s enough people of goodwill out there who are looking at how do we fill the vacuum that creates Brexit and President Trump with something that’s much more positive, and we’ve got three or four years to do it!”

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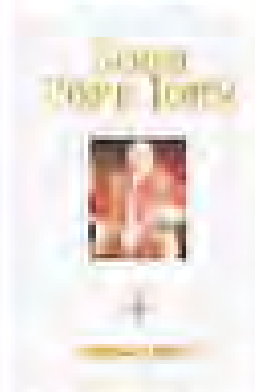
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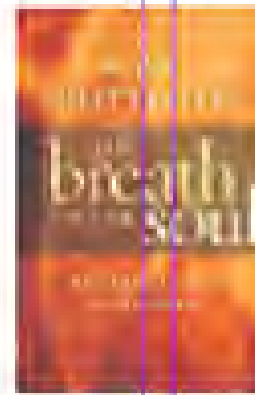
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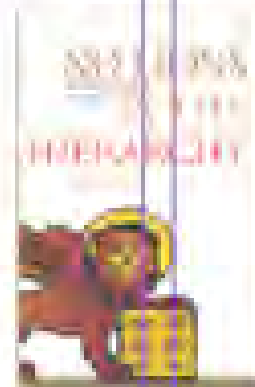
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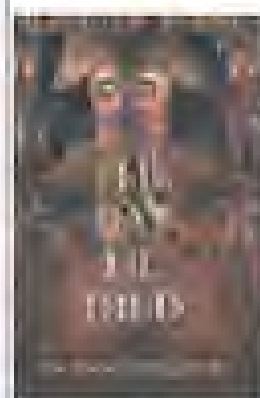
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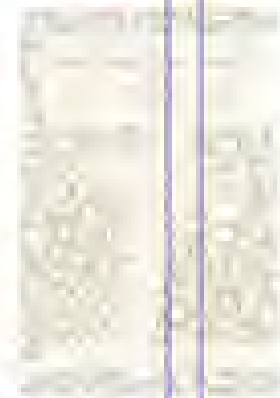
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World Report

IN BRIEF

Bishops face violence and death threats in Mexico

● Bishops in Mexico have received death threats and violence from organised criminals in poverty stricken areas in the south of the country.

The State of Guerrero is known for being rife with drug cartel activity, with many communities making a living growing poppies.

Bishop Maximino Miranda Martinez of Ciudad Altamirano had his vehicle robbed after encountering a roadblock manned by an armed group in the violent Tierra Caliente region.

Another bishop, Dagoberto Sosa Arriaga of Tlapa, was asked to pay extortion, but managed to escape making payment.

At a press conference last week Bishop Salvador Rangel Mendoza of Chilpancingo-Chilapa said three priests have received death threats, and that bishops and priests have intervened in conflicts among small criminal groups.

The rivalries are related to the growing and smuggling of heroin from Guerrero to the US.

Dr Rangel expressed interest in establishing communications with cartel bosses in an attempt to pacify one of Mexico's most violent states.

Buddhist monk wanted in Sri Lanka for inciting violence

A hard-line Buddhist monk is wanted by police after being accused of sparking violence against other religious groups in Sri Lanka.

Several complaints were lodged against Venerable Galagoda Aththe Gnanasara Thero, the general secretary of a Buddhist Nationalist organisation. He is thought to be behind attacks on the minority Christian and Muslim communities in the country.

The National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka, an umbrella movement for evangelical churches, said there have been over 20 incidents of violence against Christians

this year so far.

"Since the current government took office in 2015, over 190 incidents of religious violence against churches, clergy, and Christians have been recorded," said the alliance in a statement.

A protest was held late last month at a Christian place of worship in the Matura district involving 30 Buddhist monks and 2,000 people. The alliance have accused local authorities of misusing a 2008 government circular, requiring new places of worship to be registered, to close down churches and threaten Christian clergy.

Much-loved Ukrainian cardinal dies

● A well-known Ukrainian cardinal who lived in "exemplary simplicity" died at the age of 84 last week.

Cardinal Lubomyr Husar was known for his "velvety baritone" when chanting the Divine Liturgy, and for his regular appearances on television and radio.

Cardinal Husar knew what it meant to be a refugee, and spent time in a displaced persons' camp in Austria during World War II when he was a child.

But the experience also helped him become fluent in five languages, "and he could joke in all of them", said Ukrainian Bishop Borys Gudziak of Paris.

"He was the wise man of the country, a real father whose embrace, word, warm smile and sense of humour – often self-deprecating – gave people a sense of joy and peace," he added.

He was also known for blogging, with his last piece being about politicians who show loyalty to the Church just to gain votes.

Body of African bishop found in river

The body of an African bishop was found in a river three days after his disappearance on May 31. Cameroonian Bishop Jean Marie Benoit Balla of the Bafia diocese was found in the Sanaga river.

A note was left in the backseat of his jeep which was discovered by a priest

who stopped when they saw his vehicle.

A fisherman found his body at the banks of the river. His personal effects were reportedly found inside the jeep.

He was appointed head of his diocese in 2003, and was ordained a priest in 1987.

Missionaries must build bridges with others and bring hope

Missionaries are entrusted with building bridges with Muslims and protecting human rights, Pope Francis told a group of missionaries this week in the Vatican.

In a meeting with the Consolata Missionaries, he said they are also charged with bringing hope to poor Christian communities.

Pope Francis encouraged them to push beyond the boundaries of their missionary activity by defending the dignity of women and family values.

Founded by Blessed Giuseppe Allamano, both the men's and women's congregations aim to evangelise in remote areas of the world and form Christian communities.

They carry out their mission by being with marginalised and abandoned people, comforting the suffering and the afflicted, caring for the sick, defending human rights and promoting justice and peace.

"An increasing awareness of God's mercy, he said, can



Pope Francis listens to Sr Simona Brambilla, superior general of the Consolata Missionary Sisters, during an audience with the men's and women's branches of the religious missionary congregation. Photo: CNS

help them carry out their mission.

"It is much more important to be aware of how much we are loved by God, than of how we love him ourselves".

A journey of the "progressive rediscovery of divine mercy," the Pope said, can help consecrated men and women imitate Christ's virtues in their missionary work.

"This will enable you to

be actively present in the new arenas of evangelisation, favouring – even if this may lead to sacrifices – openness toward situations that, with their particular needs, reveal themselves to be emblematic for our time.

Pope Francis encouraged them to continue along the path of Blessed Allamano, who served those in need with generosity and hope.

"May your missionary consecration always be a source for the life-giving and sanctifying encounter with Jesus and with his love, wellspring of consolation, peace and salvation for all humanity," he said.

Consolata missionaries want to bring the world true consolation, which is found in Jesus and his Gospel, according to the order's website.

US archbishop criticised for compassion towards immigrants

An archbishop in New Mexico has received several unhappy responses after he made a statement denouncing US immigration policy.

Archbishop John Wester said that since then people have wrote to him saying they were "dismayed" at his lack of respect for immigration laws.

He added that sometimes people say, "what don't you understand about illegal?" and has heard others talk about "those illegals".

The archbishop said that "laws are meant to protect human beings, not

break them", adding that "it is important to establish that no human being is 'illegal'".

On May 25 he issued a memo to employees telling them what to do if federal immigration officials attempt to carry a raid on Church property.

He urged others "not to be taken in by political sound bites or rhetoric that instils fear".

Overall Church leaders have been trying to comfort immigrant Catholic communities, while at the same time responding to criticism from other Cath-

olics about their outreach to immigrants.

A statement from the Maryland Catholic Conference issued last week read: "The issue of immigration continues to raise controversy at both the national and state level, often spurring passionate debate that offers little hope for reconciliation and resolution."

It urged Catholics and "all people of faith and goodwill" to show "compassion, prudence, and cooperation to address the challenges faced by immigrants, elected officials, law enforcement and our communities as a whole".



Cardinal Reinhard Marx.

Trump's decision to exit Paris climate deal "will harm people"

Bishops around the world have labelled President Donald Trump's decision to leave the Paris Climate Agreement last week "a major challenge" and "deeply troubling".

German Cardinal Reinhard Marx said that the decision "erodes the global trust" achieved after the agreement was made.

He added it was regrettable the Pope's advice did not seem to influence

his decision, but that the global community should not be discouraged.

Bishop Oscar Cantu of Las Cruces of New Mexico, who is the chairman of the US Bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, said the effects of global warming are already being felt.

"President Trump's decision will harm the people of the United States and the World, especially

the poorest, most vulnerable communities," he said.

"The impacts of climate change are already being experienced in sea level rise, glacial melts, intensified storms, and more frequent droughts."

Bishop Cantu said that he hopes the US president will propose "concrete ways" to address global climate change.



Edited by Chai Brady
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Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury, left, attends a vigil with Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis for the victims of the London Bridge terror attacks. Seven people were killed and dozens injured in the attack. Photo:CNS

Grief across world at London Bridge attack

Catholics across the world have expressed their grief in the wake of the London Bridge terror attack which saw the death of seven people.

US Catholics joined the Pope in expressing sorrow for those killed and severely injured in the latest terrorist attacks in London the night of June 3.

"The vigil of Pentecost had barely begun when the world was burdened yet again, this time by the sinister attacks on innocent men and women in the heart of London," Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, presi-

dent of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, said.

In England, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, the Archbishop of Westminster said the attacks were "disturbing" adding that they "have shocked us all".

Peace

The Pope, after celebrating Mass on Pentecost with about 60,000 people in attendance at St Peter's Square, offered a prayer for the victims.

"May the Holy Spirit grant peace to the whole world," he said. "May he heal

the wounds of war and of terrorism, which even last night in London struck innocent civilians. Let us pray for the victims and their families."

Vigils were held for the victims, with people of all faiths showing their support. This follows the vandalism of a mosque two days after the London Bridge attack.

Three male terrorists were killed after a horrific attack which began when a white van knocked down pedestrians, and ended with vicious stabbings at the nearby Borough Market.

Pope Francis calls for end to the arms trade

Pope Francis' prayer intention for June is for the elimination of the arms trade.

His intentions were made in a video message released on the Vatican's Youtube channel at the beginning of this month.

"It is an absurd

contradiction to speak of peace, to negotiate peace, and at the same time, promote or permit the arms trade," he said.

"Is this war, or that war, really a war to solve problems or is it a commercial war for selling weapons in illegal trade and

so that the merchants of death get rich?

Leaders

"Let us put an end to this situation. Let us pray all together that national leaders may firmly commit themselves to ending the arms trade

which victimises so many innocent people."

The video depicts what appears to be officials signing papers and shaking hands interposed with bullets and missiles being fired.

There are also real-world images of war-torn areas.

Vatican roundup

Safeguard the world God created, Vatican asks Muslims

The Vatican's annual message to Muslims at the end of Ramadan called on both Christians and Muslims to protect God's creation.

"Our vocation to be guardians of God's handiwork is not optional, nor is it tangential to our religious commitment as Christians and Muslims: it is an essential part of it," said Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran and Bishop Miguel Angel Ayuso Guixot, president and secretary of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

Each year, the council for interreligious dialogue publishes a message to the world's Muslims in preparation for the celebration of the end of Ramadan, a month of fasting. This year Ramadan ends on June 24.

The pontifical council chooses a theme annually to promote dialogue by "offering insights on current and pressing issues".

The theme chosen for 2017 was Caring for Our Common Home, which echoes Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si'*.

The statement was released soon after President Donald Trump announced the US would withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement.

Parents are first educators

The Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the UN held a side event this month which focused on the role parents have in their children's development. Archbishop Bernardito Auza said that parents are their children's first educators, and help to form their values, responsibilities and ethical development.

The archbishop said: "Those interested in the good of children, mothers, fathers and society must work to strengthen parents, as individuals and as a loving unit," he said, calling the family the "grammar school of human existence".

He added that parenthood is in crisis as there is an increase in fatherless families, saying that: "Fatherhood in some places has been reduced to a biological act rather than a crucial relationship not only in the optimal development of children..."

The Director of the Marriage and Religion Research Initiative of the Catholic University of America, Dr Patrick Fagan, said that many times single-parent families are due to unavoidable injustices.

Dr Fagan said that the relationship between a mother and father is crucial to a child's development.

Pope advises schoolchildren on growing up as term ends

As the school year came to an end, Pope Francis gave advice to young pupils to prepare them for the future.

"Life is a long series of hellos and goodbyes, so don't be afraid to let go of the past; remember old friends, but keep moving and be open to the new," Pope Francis told students. The schoolchildren were part of Communion and Liberation's The Knights of the Grail educational initiative.

One pupil told the Pope she was scared to be leaving middle school, along with most of her best friends, as they head on to secondary school next year. "Why do I have to change everything? Why does growing up make me so afraid?" she asked him.

"Life is a constant 'good morning' and 'farewell,'" the Pope said, with the goodbyes sometimes being for forever. "You grow by encountering and by taking your leave," he said.

"If you don't learn to say goodbye well, you will never learn how to encounter new people."

This moment of change in life is "a challenge", he said, but "in life we have to get used to this journey of leaving something behind and encountering something new".

Letter from Vienna

In Catholic terms, anyway, US Europe ties seem in good shape

Right now, it doesn't seem much like hyperbole to say the political relationship between the United States and Europe appears to be on the brink of unravelling. At the very least, ties across the Atlantic are facing serious new strains.

Last week, US President Donald Trump announced a pull-out from the Paris climate change agreement, drawing a stern (and unusually unified) reaction from Germany, France, and Italy. That came on the heels of a difficult collision at the G7 with Chancellor Angela Merkel, prompting the German leader to say that since Europe can no longer count on the US and Great Britain, it's time for Europeans to take their destiny into their own hands – for all intents and purposes, a declaration of independence.

Already, the Brexit victory in the UK, coupled with the election of a new US commander-in-chief whose mantra is 'America first', didn't seem to bode well for international cooperation, and now it's steadily more difficult to imagine an "era of good feelings" between the United States and Europe anytime soon.

Speaking to an international conference on Friday, however, I laid out a counter-intuitive thesis: While political ties may be fraying, ecclesiastical bonds between the US and the old continent are strong and getting stronger all the time.

The occasion was the Whitsun Dialogue, a biennial event in the Austrian province of Styria bringing together secular and ecclesiastical figures to reflect on some big-picture themes. It's set at the picturesque Seggau Castle, originally built to house the Archbishops of Salzburg and later Seckau, and which now functions as a large retreat and conference centre. It overlooks the town of Leibnitz, not far from the border with Slovenia.

Relationship

This year the subject was the relationship between the United States and Europe, and my job was to discuss the religious, and specifically Catholic, dimension to things. I made the case that while politicians on either side are drifting apart, Catholic bishops are coming together on at least three key fronts.

The first is anti-Christian persecution, especially in the Middle East. It's been flagged by the bishops of both Europe and the US as a priority, reflecting the historical and spiritual value Christian leaders attach to the region, as well as the brutal



John L. Allen Jr

realities Christians there face.

In the past, when talk among bishops turned to the Middle East, a fundamental gap between Europeans and Americans would often surface. As a rule, many American bishops tend to be pro-Israeli and many Europeans pro-Palestinian, so cooperation could get bogged down by differing instincts. (Should we condemn Israeli security policies that make life difficult for Arab Christians, or the Palestinians for fostering Hamas?)

Now that the primary focus has shifted to Iraq and Syria, however, that's no longer the case. Moreover, the simple urgency of the situation has made such squabbling seem irresponsible.

“Migration and requests for refugee status in Europe are bringing a steadily larger share of Christians onto the continent”

European and American Catholic leaders also essentially share the same political diagnosis of the Syrian conflict, which is a 'yes' to international peace-keeping efforts but a 'no' to regime change by military force. That's based, of course, on what they hear from the bishops of Syria, who routinely warn that however bad Assad may be, what would follow a forcible decapitation would likely be worse.

A second area of growing convergence across the Atlantic is immigration.

For 30 years, especially the more conservative Catholic bishops in Europe were sceptical, if not outright hostile, on immigration, worrying that a rising tide of mostly Muslim migrants would further erode the Christian roots of the continent. Some European prelates supported limits or bans



A creche titled 'Jesus the Global Refugee' is seen outside Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church in Wyandanch, New York.

on Muslim migrants, or preferential treatment for migrants from traditionally Catholic nations.

In the US, however, even 30 years ago, the centre of gravity within the bishops' conference was solidly pro-immigrant, in part because most of those immigrants were Catholic, and they were bringing a highly dynamic faith into the country.

Today, migration and requests for refugee status in Europe are bringing a steadily larger share of Christians onto the continent, including large communities from Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

It's a rare European bishop now who doesn't have first-hand experience of the hardships those immigrants face, and also the gifts they have to offer.

When I and my colleague Inés San Martín asked Cardinal Christoph Schönborn of Vienna this week where he sees signs of hope for the faith in Europe, his

very first, instinctive reply was "Christian immigration".

"We have a variety of immigrant communities coming from all over the world, from China to Latin America," he said. "They are bringing in much new fervour, new ferment, new life into the life of the local Church."

“The bishops of the United States increasingly find themselves in the same boat with their colleagues in Europe vis-à-vis the wars of culture”

Clearly, the strong leadership of Pope Francis in defence of migrants and refugees augments this trend.

Third, the bishops of the United States increasingly find themselves in the same boat with their colleagues in Europe vis-à-vis the wars of culture.

At the level of stereotypes, the

US Church has long been seen as more strongly pro-life than its European counterpart. However, that's to some extent due to the fact that for the last 30 years or so, issues such as abortion, gay marriage and euthanasia have been open questions in American political life, whereas they've been basically settled in most Western European societies.

“If one wanted to add a final force bringing American and European Catholicism together, it would be Francis”

Increasingly, that difference is narrowing. While America will continue to debate restrictions on abortion and questions such as public funding, most observers agree it's unlikely that abortion in all phases of a pregnancy will be re-criminalised. The Obergefell decision legalised gay marriage, and the trend at the state level is in favour of laws permitting some form of euthanasia.

As a result, the American bishops will be focusing more on conscientious objection – not fighting the substance of these decisions, but creating and defending spaces for people of faith to dissent while still playing vital roles in public life. That's a challenge European bishops have faced for some time, and Americans may find themselves drawing on those reflections.

If one wanted to add a final force bringing American and European Catholicism together, it would be Francis.

As history's first Pope from the developing world, Francis doesn't really have separate visions for Europe and the United States, at least at any level of detail. What he has is a vision for the developed nations of the world, embracing both Europe and the US calling them to a greater sense of responsibility for the peripheries.

In other words, for Francis, Europe and the States have a common vocation.

Whether this Catholic convergence will be enough to hold Europe and America together in a time when political leaders seem determined to drive them apart remains to be seen. It's nevertheless striking that at least in Catholic terms, the Atlantic alliance seems healthier than ever.

John L. Allen is editor of Crux.com



Angela Merkel.



Austen Ivereigh

Pentecost Pope affirms charismatic renewal as 'current of grace'

Addressing one of his favourite topics, Pope Francis spoke energetically over Pentecost weekend to huge crowds at the Circus Maximus and at St Peter's Square of the creative power of the Holy Spirit to unify through diversity, while bringing peace, joy and courage.

Following three hours of high-octane praise and testimonies in many languages under a hot sky, Francis arrived at the Circus Maximus to the strains of the Latin-American charismatic classic *Vive Jesús El Señor*.

He was there to mark the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR), which held four days of meetings in Rome last week.

The start of the 'renewal,' as it is known, is usually considered to be a weekend at Duquesnes University in Pittsburgh in 1967 when staff and students were 'baptised in the Spirit' following prayers with Pentecostals.

Francis, who has long been close to the renewal, stood on stage to celebrate the vigil of Pentecost with many of its leaders and pioneers and a smattering of cardinals and evangelical pastors, before an ebullient crowd of over 50,000 from more than 120 countries.

Under a huge banner declaring 'Jesus Is Lord', Francis was flanked on stage throughout by two laywomen: Michelle Moran, president of the renewal's Rome-based office, the ICCRS, and Patti Gallagher Mansfield, a speaker and theologian who was one of the original group in 1967 to receive the baptism of the spirit.

Praise sessions

During one of the praise sessions, while the band sang 'How Great is Our God', the Pope stood with his hands outstretched and eyes closed, mouthing words if not exactly singing, while next to him the two women fell on their knees and prayed in tongues.

“Even a few years ago, we could never have imagined that this was possible”

Francis had told the CCR that he had wanted the celebrations to be ecumenical and to focus on the Holy Spirit's call to the Churches to come together as one. But rather than delegates from the other Churches, the non-Catholics on stage with him were mostly evangelicals and Pentecostals who have long been involved with CCR movements.

Among those speaking were Norberto Saracco from Buenos Aires and Giovanni Traettino, the pastor whom he visited in Caserta



Pope Francis prays during a Pentecost vigil marking the 50th anniversary of the Catholic charismatic renewal at the Circus Maximus in Rome.

in 2014, who returned time and again to the theme of a new unity in the power of the Holy Spirit.

"The movement of the Holy Spirit, also known as the Pentecostal movement, has in its DNA – its life in the Holy Spirit – the vocation to build Christian unity," Traettino said, adding that "the election of Pope Francis clearly opened a new season, especially in relations with us."

Saracco, too, alluded to the "new times" Francis had brought. "Even a few years ago, we could never have imagined that this was possible," he said.

The CCR's best-known figure, the preacher to the papal household, Capuchin Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, likened the divisions in the Christian Church to the construction of the Tower of Babel in the Book of Genesis – using God's name to justify different churches claiming superiority over the others.

At Pentecost, he said, the Holy Spirit overturned the sin of Babel by re-focusing the apostles on Jesus Christ, renewing their hearts and minds through a baptism in the Spirit, and causing them to move on from their "small unity" to "the great unity which is the whole body of Christ, namely, humanity." After Pentecost the disciples came to realise that if God had poured out the same Spirit on both pagans and Jews, they could not oppose His action.

The same realisation, said Fr Cantalamessa, had come to Christians today through the

charismatic renewal, when it was clear that "God has poured out His Spirit on millions of faithful belonging to almost all Christian denominations, and, in case there remained any doubt about His intentions, poured them out with identical expressions, including the strangest of all – speaking in tongues."

“Francis said Christian unity was more urgent than ever as the Spirit called Christians to walk together”

In his 23-minute address, Francis hit many of his favourite themes when speaking of Christian unity: the call to a "reconciled diversity" by proclaiming together the Lordship of Christ despite inter-confessional differences; the way that the charismatic renewal was "born ecumenical"; and the witness to an "ecumenism of blood" being given across the world, as Christians of all denominations were murdered by killers who made no distinction between Catholics and Lutherans, Orthodox and Protestant.

Witness

Impelled by this witness, Francis said Christian unity was more urgent than ever as the Spirit called Christians to walk together, in prayer and acting in favour of the weakest. "Walking together,

working together, loving each other, and together seeking to explain our differences and seeking agreement, but on the way! If we stay put, without walking together, we will never, ever, reach agreement, because the Spirit wants us walking," the Pope said, adding that the CCR was "a privileged place for moving along the road towards unity."

The Pope's address gently located the renewal at the heart of the Church while highlighting its temptations. Describing it as a "current of grace" meant for the whole Church, he warned that no one could claim to own it, while all in the Church were called to serve it.

Referring to the renewal's distinctive evangelical-style worship, the Pope described 'praise' as "the prayer of recognition and action of grace for the gratuitous love of God". It may not be to everyone's liking, he added, but "it is true that it fully belongs in the Biblical tradition," and warned against Michal's disapproval of King David dancing before the Ark of the Covenant in the second Book of Samuel.

While affirming the renewal, Francis was also nudging it to recover more of its social dimension. In defining the renewal in three-fold terms as baptism in the Spirit, praise and service of humanity, he said all three aspects were indissolubly linked.

The coming of the Spirit meant that no one among the apostles went without, he noted, and urged

people to read the the third of the theological reflections on the CCR known as the Malines documents, which was in part written by Brazilian Bishop Helder Câmara.

On Sunday morning Francis brought to a close the five-day CCR Jubilee by celebrating Pentecost Mass in St Peter's Square, focusing in his homily on the way the Holy Spirit creates a new people and puts in them a new heart.

He warned against the twin temptations of seeking diversity without unity or unity without diversity. The first temptation was of those who "become Christians of the 'left' or of the 'right', before being on the side of Jesus, unbending guardians of the past or the avant-garde of the future before being humble and grateful children of the Church." The opposite temptation was confusing unity with uniformity, in which "unity ends up being homogeneity and no longer freedom."

The second 'new thing' brought by the Holy Spirit was a forgiving heart, Francis said. "The Spirit is the first gift of the risen Lord, and is given above all for the forgiveness of sins," he said, adding that forgiveness was the cement or glue binding the bricks of the Church. Forgiveness, he said, "sets our hearts free and enables us to start afresh," he said. "Without forgiveness, the Church is not built up."

1 Austen Ivereigh is author of *The Great Reformer: Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope*.

Letters

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

Letter of the week

Papal visit could give Dublin's north inner city a boost

Dear Editor, Regarding the expected visit of Pope Francis next year, Finola Kenny in your issue of May 18 makes a very valid point. She recalls the deep disappointment felt by the locals of the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Sean McDermott Street, where the papal motorcade passed by without the expected stop. No fault of Pope St John Paul II, the delay, it is said, was due somewhat to his having met VIPs in Drogheda whom had already greeted him at the airport.

The parish had prepared for weeks for the expected visit to the tomb of Venerable Matt Talbot. I paid a visit to the church and the preparations were certainly a credit to the parishioners.

As Finola suggests, a visit by Pope Francis may provide an opportunity to redress the omission of 1979. I would like to add, if I may, would it not be an opportunity also to include a call to the shrine of Blessed John Sullivan SJ in Gardiner Street? Another visit, and close to the heart of Pope Francis,

would be to renew his acquaintance with Bro. Kevin at the Capuchin Day Centre.

August 2018 is still in the future, but preparations have to be made in advance, but please God, the papal presence will be most welcome in Dublin's north inner city.

*Yours etc.,
Patrick Fleming,
Glasnevin,
Dublin 9.*

'Uprooting' of Palestinians by order of Arab League

Dear Editor, I would like to draw your attention to the caption on the photo at the bottom right of page 27 of the issue of May 18, 2017. It refers to a "protest in the West Bank marking the 69th anniversary of their uprooting". The protest is by Palestinians who we see fleeing Israeli tear gas. The obvious implication is that it was the Israelis who uprooted the Palestinians.

I suggest that an opportunity to strike a blow for justice and peace

was sadly lost here. A little investigation reveals that the Israeli leader of the day, David Ben Gurion expressly requested the Palestinian Arabs to stay and help build up the new state. (His speech can be accessed on air – albeit in Hebrew).

The 'uprooting' was by order of the Arab League. Prime Minister of Syria, Khaled Al-Azm, wrote in his memoirs (1972); "...it was we who made the leave...We brought disaster upon...Arab refugees, by inviting and

bringing pressure to bear upon them to leave..."

The reason for this sad order which now seems unthinkable, was actually to protect the Palestinian Arabs from the planned Arab attack on the new state.

An announcement was made to the whole world by Azzam Pasha, Secretary General of the Arab League on May 15, 1948 and reported in the *New York Times* of the 16th. It said: "This will be a war of extermination and a

momentous massacre...like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades."

The Arabs made no secret of what they wanted then and in fairness to them they don't make any secret about it now either. For some inexplicable reason, we in the Ireland seem simply incapable of accepting the facts.

*Yours etc.,
Ena Gray,
Enniscorthy,
Co. Wexford.*

No need to dedicate May to Mary

Dear Editor, I think that dedicating May to special devotion to Our Lady is a distraction from the fact that one is in Eastertide. The Church already dedicates every Saturday to Our Lady and the physical months of the year have nothing to do with the Church calendar.

*Yours etc.,
Colm O'Connor,
Goatstown, Dublin 14.*



Ingratitude for all the good the Church has done

Dear Editor, In a recent Editor's Comments (11/05/2017) you refer to the changing face of journalism in Ireland from "truth and facts" to the present initiative which sees "the Catholic Church as the root of every problem in Ireland".

I can't help but wonder how our countless men and women who left home, homeland and family to bring health, education, the word of God and freedom from poverty to many corners of the world, often risking their own health and safety, must now feel.

Ingratitude is one of the deepest hurts of all. Even Jesus himself referred to this when he healed the lepers and only one out of 10 returned to give thanks.

Something really serious has happened to our sense of justice and fair play in Ireland. Yes, we are now a very open and pluralistic society and are known for our sense of friendliness and welcome worldwide, and that's the good side of us but to 'bite the hand that fed us' is the darker side. Perhaps

the Church is 'turning the other cheek' in not speaking up for these very good people and yes, very many were good people. But what about us, today's laity, have we forgotten our roots and are we like the nine lepers of old? Is there any solution or cure for ingratitude or personal hurts caused to others, particularly by the media? Does "silence give consent"?

*Yours etc.,
Maureen Bowen,
Innishannon, Co. Cork.*

Pope Francis should highlight injustices in Ireland

Dear Editor, I commend your paper for the coverage (IC 01/06/2017) you gave to the issue of asylum seekers living in direct provision, and Fr Paddy Byrne for his strong words in condemning this unjust system. He called for Pope Francis to visit a direct provision centre here when he visits for the World Meeting of Families in 2018. I think the Pope would definitely do this, but only if the bishops suggest it. Would they have the foresight to allow his visit to make a statement about how Ireland treats its most vulnerable? A visit with the homeless being fed at the Capuchin Day Centre would be another opportunity for the Pope to highlight an issue important to him.

Congratulations to the Burmese national who after eight years in direct provision was successful last week in his challenge to the legal ban which prevented him seeking work as an asylum seeker. Perhaps this will be the first step to improve the lives of those stuck in limbo thanks to our refugee system.

*Yours etc.,
David Freeman,
Galway City.*

Life's difficulties mean talking about hell very important

Dear Editor, I write in relation to Fr Joe McVeigh's letter (IC 25/05/2017) in which he dismisses as "a silly suggestion," David Quinn's wish for priests to preach more often about hell. He thinks preaching about hell is "a fear tactic" and that the Gospel is about love, "not fear and not hell".

Instinctively I disagreed and have since read an online blog by Msgr Charles Pope (<http://blog.adw.org/2017/05/jesus-loves-warned-frequently-hell/>) denouncing such an opinion of the unimportance of hell itself or at least the need to warn people about it, as seriously misguided. He states that although no one loves us more than Jesus, no one spoke more about hell than he, no one.

The very fact that people often experience some kind of hell in their lives makes it a reality for them, so avoiding talking about the eternal hell which we are free to choose or reject is all the more important, not less so.

*Yours etc.,
Liz McDermott,
Donnybrook, Dublin 4.*

Preaching about hell in new ways

Dear Editor, At Mass in Cape Town in 2014, before a general election, the priest (not a South African) asked a multi-racial, multi-cultural congregation to think very carefully about their vote. "There are places on earth, that are hell today," was his comment.

It is possible to talk about hell in a contemporary way.

The Road Safety Authority frequently shows graphic video clips of horrific accidents, to warn about the results of carelessness on the roads. I have never heard them being accused of scare-mongering.

*Yours etc.,
Judith Leonard,
Raheny, Dublin 9.*

Letters to the Editor

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

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

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

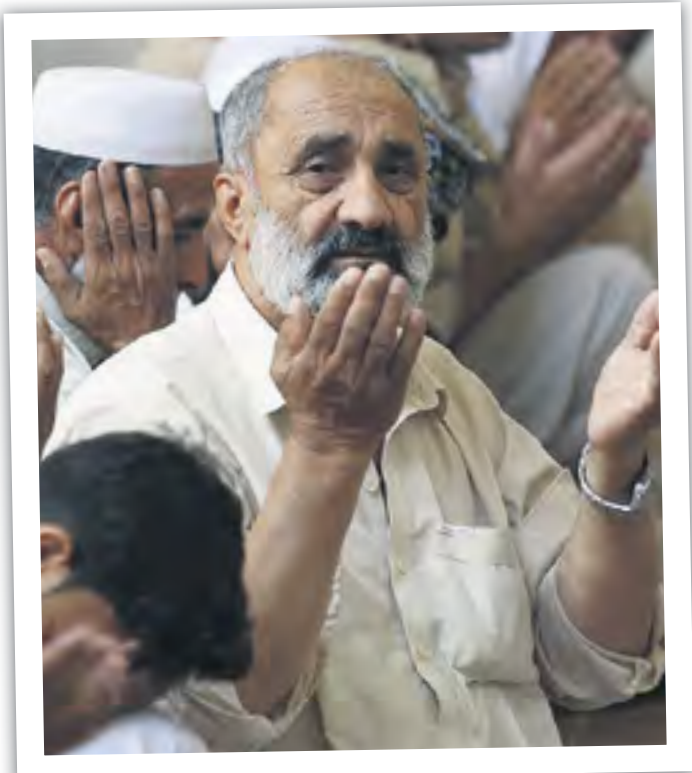
Around the world



MEXICO: Green lights are projected at the Angel of Independence monument in Mexico City in support of the Paris climate agreement after US President Donald Trump announced that he would be withdrawing the United States from the accord.



PHILIPPINES: A priest celebrates Mass at the entrance of the Resorts World, Manila, where a gunman had stormed the luxury resort's casino, torching gambling tables and causing the deaths of at least 36 people. After fleeing with a backpack of casino chips, the man was later found dead in an adjacent hotel, apparently having taken his own life. Photos: CNS



PAKISTAN: Muslims in Peshawar attend the first Friday prayer of the Islamic holy fasting month of Ramadan, which Vatican officials greeted with their annual Ramadan message with a calling for creation to be safeguarded as a religious obligation.



UKRAINE: People wait in line near the casket of Ukrainian Cardinal Lubomyr Husar during his memorial service at St Yura Cathedral in Lviv. Cardinal Husar, known for his 'velvety baritone' when chanting the Divine Liturgy or making one of his regular appearances on television or radio programmes, died on May 31 near Kiev at the age of 84.



ROME: Women at the conclusion of a Pentecost Mass in St Peter's Square mark the 50th anniversary of the Catholic charismatic renewal.



VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis greets Latvia's President Raimonds Vejonis during a private audience.



Mags Gargan offers some inexpensive options for keeping children entertained during the summer

The long summer school holidays are nearly upon us and it is time to start thinking of activities to keep children occupied. Summer camps and holidays away can only keep them busy for so long, and it's far too easy to let children zone out in front of the TV or an electronic device. It is better for their health and creativity to fill their time with fun activities, especially if mum and dad are involved too. There are plenty of activities you can do as a family that don't have to put pressure on the piggy banks, and very importantly, don't have to be weather dependent.

1. Painting

Keep it simple and enjoy painting with your child. Children's paint and plain paper are inexpensive and easily found in any bargain shop. You can start from when they are a baby by painting their hands and feet to make prints. Your baby will love the tickle of the paintbrush! Or put a blob of paint of different colours on a piece of card and let baby use her hands to mess them around (make sure to put a plastic apron on baby first).

For older children give them a selection of brushes or sponges to choose from. Get creative and add potato prints, old toothbrushes, rollers, string, straws, glitter or even shaving foam. Again put plenty of newspaper down and make sure both of you don aprons so that you don't get splashed.

Drawing with crayons, markers, coloured pencils or chalk is also great fun and good for developing fine motor skills. Young children love the squidgy texture of play dough and moulding it in to different shapes. If you use the proper modelling clay, you can paint and glaze them, and they can make lovely gifts for grandparents.

2. Beach day

Nothing beats a day at the beach in the summer heat to while away a few hours. As well as the beach towels, sun screen and, of course, traditional bucket and spade, maybe take a picnic. A beach tent or sun shelter is a good idea for protection from the hot sun and wind, especially for babies, and can also offer privacy for changing in and out of swimwear.

Even if you don't have sunny weather, children are happy to get their feet dirty in the sand, watch the waves crash, collect shells and investigate rock pools.

For added amusement bring a kite and watch it fly high.

You can bring the fun of the beach to your own garden with a sandpit. There's nothing quite like the feel of sand running through tiny fingers and toes. In a similar way, water can also stimulate children's imagination. An outdoor paddling pool will provide hours of entertainment as children love to pour water from one container into another, splash and play in the water.

3. Treasure hunt

This one takes more preparation and creativity, but it's worth the effort. Create a treasure hunt around your home (inside and out) and leave clues for your little ones to unravel.

You could have a different theme each time – pirates, detectives, dinosaurs, princesses. You don't

have to buy anything for a treasure hunt – you really only need some slips of paper and a final prize. Or you could reward them with a treat for every clue solved, make the last prize an extra special one. Make sure your riddles are difficult enough so it provides a challenge but not so hard they give up and look for other diversions.

4. Swimming

Swimming at the local public pool can be an inexpensive day out for the family. There are loads of family games you can play in the pool and all you need is a light ball.

Even babies can enjoy a little splash about in the water. Just make sure to bring a suitable swimming nappy to prevent any unpleasant accidents. Also some public pools

are not warm enough for babies, so a little wetsuit may be necessary. Don't forget to bring a snack or packed lunch for afterwards, because swimming always makes children hungry.

5. Family hike

Most children love being in nature and a hike up a mountain can really set their imaginations free. That fresh air and exercise will be sure to tire them out, but make sure everyone is wrapped up warm.

“A simple walk in the park can be enough to keep the little ones occupied, especially if there is a good playground”

A number of walking trails around Ireland are suitable for families with buggies (www.buggywalksireland.com). Of course a simple walk in the park can be enough to keep the little

ones occupied, especially if there is a good playground or a pond for feeding the ducks and swans.

6. Reading

Use this free time away from school to visit the local library. Most libraries have a set 'Story Time' where children can go to listen and participate. But even if you go by yourselves, this can be a good opportunity to teach children the joy of reading. Make storytelling a part of your everyday routine. Whether it is for sending your little ones off into dreamland at bedtime or an adventure brought alive while cuddling in your lap, children love to hear you tell a story.

7. Baking

Children love to bake. It's messy and they get to eat whatever delicious treat you create. Make some super tasty banana muffins or simple chocolate rice crispy cakes.

You could even serve your creations at a princes tea party or a teddy bear's picnic.





8. Camping at home

You could go away camping as a family, but children will have just as much fun, and parents much less hassle, by pitching a tent in the garden. Light the barbecue and spend the day sitting and eating outside. Older kids could stay out a little after dark and exchange scary stories by torchlight.

You could always bring the camping indoors. Build a fort from old blankets and chairs or even set up a tent in the living room. Pack the tent full of sleeping bags and treats.

Maybe make some popcorn and combine your camping with a movie night watched from the tent!

9. Music

Let your child experience and celebrate sound, rhythm and melody by playing music often, whether on the radio or with your own instruments. There are many inexpensive child-friendly instruments available or you could simply bang along on an upside-

down mixing bowl. Play along to some of your child's favourite songs or make up your own songs.

Dancing and jumping around to a good tune is always a winner and babies will enjoy being in their parents arms while they dance a rhythm.

10. Dressing up

Let your imagination run riot with this one. Never throw away cardboard boxes – instead build a house, a car or an aeroplane. Playing pretend games are vital to get your child thinking creatively, as well as challenging them to play along with you and their friends.

Try acting out some of your child's favourite stories or films. There is no limit to the amount of adventure you can have around the house when you let loose your imagination. Spending some quality time being creative or a little goofy with your child will show them that adults also have a fun side.

Have fun trying some of these ideas out together!

Last month 60 fourth year students from Laurel Hill Secondary School in Limerick, ventured over to Mayo to undertake one of Ireland's highest mountain, Croagh Patrick. Tensions were high when we first spotted our initial glimpse of our hike to come, especially when the peak of the mountain was out of view.

I had no clue what to expect as neither I, nor any of the other girls, had any previous experience of walking uphill on a steep slope. Croagh Patrick is said to be one of the most inspiring places of prayer in Ireland, and we had the chance to experience this for ourselves.

Every year up to 22,000 pilgrims climb Croagh Patrick on Reek Sunday in July. It is an ancient place and a place that gives you the opportunity to meet other people, from near and far, along the way. It is a sacred mountain of great significance to Christians, with a connection to St Patrick, but it was also a place of tremendous importance in the pre-Christian era, as indicated by the discovery of a Celtic hill fort encircling the summit of the mountain.

I made sure that I bought a walking stick for support before I began the forbidding trek. Although I had never done Croagh Patrick before, from what I had heard it was pretty rocky towards the top.

Although the walk may look long and sinister from the bottom, I can assure you that it is not anything of the sort. It was a great bonding experience that required each girl in my year to encourage one another to continue, and to never give up. It was a great way to help one realise that if you are in the correct mindset anything is possible. A lot of support from friends is needed as you venture off towards the latter part of the mountain. Saying all that, however, it is very possible to accomplish the climb on your own too. It really depends on whatever you're more comfortable doing yourself.

“I was in absolute awe of the 365 degree view of the scenery that surrounded us on the peak”

I thoroughly enjoyed every second of the hike, because to me it felt very personal. At the end of the day it was a big achievement for all of the girls who reached the top. I was in absolute awe of the 365 degree view of the scenery that surrounded us on the peak.

Magnificent views of Clew Bay and the surrounding south Mayo countryside are spectacular from all stages of the ascent of the mountain. It was breathtaking,



something that no words can describe. You really have to see the views for yourself in person to be able to comprehend the spectacular landscape. Pictures really do not do it justice.

YOUTH SPACE

Scaling new heights

Grace Fitzgerald describes a school pilgrimage up Croagh Patrick

We all were encouraged to make it to the top, no matter how much time we needed to do so. We walked at a pace that was comfortable for us, which resulted in many groups being formed along the way. After about an hour and twenty minutes the first group finally reached the summit.

Located on the peak of the mountain is a small, white chapel that opens on special occasions throughout the Catholic calendar. It was gorgeous, and apparently people even get married there. We were grateful for our quick pitstop on the summit. We embraced the Irish heritage that surrounded us.

Everything we had in view at that moment reminded us of what a phenomenal world God has created. We all sang

together, prayed together and laughed together. It was very memorable.

Distractions

The journey back down was long, but really worthwhile because of the beautiful views. The walk back down had me, and many others, thinking about how we have many distractions in our lives, but this gave us peace and quiet to step back from our hectic lives, and gain an insight into what really matters. It was such a scenic route and it made for perfect

picturesque photos, and some very good memories too.

I'm so glad I chose to climb Croagh Patrick as it was realistically something that I, and many other girls, may not get the chance to do again in the future. It is definitely something that I can now check off my bucket list. It was a fantastic achievement for all the girls who got involved, and it was so much fun too.

For me it will be forever an incredible experience that I will not forget.

Below and top: Students from Laurel Hill Secondary School in Limerick on the Croagh Patrick climb; inset above, Grace Fitzgerald.



The seamless garment

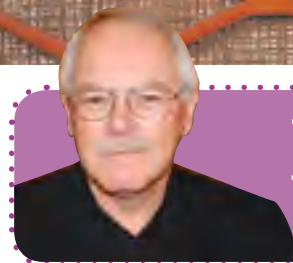
John of the Cross teaches that within spirituality and morality there are no exempt areas. Simply put, you cannot be a saint or a highly moral person if you allow yourself a moral exemption or two. Thus, I may not allow myself to split off one moral flaw or sinful habit and see it as unimportant in the light of my positive qualities and the overall good that I do.

For John of the Cross, you cannot be a saint and have a moral blind-spot, even if it's a minor one. A bird tethered to a rock, he says, cannot fly irrespective of whether the cord holding it is a cable or a string.

The same is true for our efforts to protect life and foster justice in our world. The protection of life and the promotion of justice are all of one piece. We cannot be an authentic prophet and have a few moral blind-spots.

A huge consequence flows from this, namely, we cannot treat issues like abortion, nuclear war, lack of ecological sensitivity, the plight of refugees, racism, sexism, poverty and inequality, poor access to health care, unequal access to education, sexual irresponsibility and discrimination against the LGBT community in isolation from each other, as if these were wholly discrete issues. Whether we admit it or not, these areas are all inextricably interconnected.

To quote Cardinal Bernardin: "The success of any one of the issues concerning life requires a



Fr Rolheiser

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concern for the broader attitude in society about the respect for human life."

That's a strong challenge for all of us, on all sides of the ideological spectrum.

Thus, those of us who are concerned about abortion need to accept that the problem of abortion cannot be effectively addressed without at the same time addressing issues of poverty, access to health care, sexual morality, and even capital punishment. The interconnection here is not wholly mystical. It's real. Abortion is driven more by poverty and lack of adequate support than by any liberal ideology. Hence, the struggle against abortion must also focus on the issues of poverty and support for pregnant women. As well, to morally accept killing in one area (capital punishment) helps sanction its acceptance in another area (abortion).

“It's all of one piece. There can be no exempt areas...”

Sexual morality must also be addressed since abortion is the inevitable by-product of a society within which two people who are not married to each other have sex

with each other.

It's all one piece, and any opposition to abortion that fails to adequately recognise the wider perspective that more fully defines pro-life leaves many sincere people unable to support anti-abortion groups.

Conversely, those of us who are concerned with the issues of poverty, health-care, capital punishment, ecology, war, racism, sexism and LGBT rights need to accept that these issues cannot be effectively addressed without also addressing the issue of abortion.

Interconnection

Again, the interconnection isn't just mystical, it's empirical: failure to be sensitive to who is weak and vulnerable in one area deeply compromises one's moral standing on other issues that deal with the weak and the vulnerable. We must advocate for and strive to protect everyone who falls victim within our present way of living, and that includes the unborn.

It's all of one piece. There can be no exempt areas, thus opposition to the protection of the unborn is not just antithetical to what's central within a social justice agenda, but it, perhaps more than anything else, leaves liberal ideology and its political allies compromised in



The seamless robe of Jesus on display in the Cathedral of Trier, Germany.

a way that allows many sincere people to withhold their support.

Clearly, of course, nobody is asked to give equal energy to every justice issue in the world. Accepting that none of these issues can be effectively dealt with in isolation shouldn't stop us from passionately working on one issue or another.

“Nobody is asked to give equal energy to every justice issue in the world”

But knowing that these issues are all of one piece does demand that we always recognise that, however important our particular issue, we may not see it in simple black and white, without nuance, as an issue that can be dealt with within one ideological, political or religious silo. We must always be sensitive to the whole, to the big picture, to the intricate

interconnections among all these social issues.

And, not least, we must be humble before and sensitive to our own moral inconsistencies.

We will, this side of eternity, always have them and we must forgive ourselves for them and not let perfection, that fact we can't be fully consistent, be the enemy of the good, that fact that we can do some good work that is effective. But acknowledging both our own inconsistencies and the complexities of the issues should make us more open to listening to the views of others and make us less doctrinaire and fundamentalist in our own attitudes.

All the issues that deal with justice and peace, are of one piece, one whole, one moral corpus, one seamless garment; and, like the soldiers casting dice for Jesus' clothing, we should hesitate to tear this garment into different pieces.

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Touching portrayal of an inner city priest

I thought I'd be writing this a week ago, but the start of the much anticipated drama **Broken** (BBC One, Tuesday nights) was postponed by a week out of sensitivity over the Manchester bombing, though I'm not quite sure as to why.

Seán Bean stars as Fr Michael Kerrigan, an inner city priest struggling with his own demons and the problems of his varied parishioners, and I think it's one of the best things Bean has ever done. He manages a quiet but strong empathy, portraying Fr Michael as a gentle soul, confident in his work but bothered in private by flashbacks from what seems a difficult childhood.

The show, written by Jimmy McGovern (*Brookside*, *Cracker*) is reminiscent of the work of director Ken Loach, sharing some of his concerns about poverty, social welfare, bureaucracy and more. I was reminded of *Kes* (the hawk in the flashbacks) and *Raining Stones* (parents splashing out more than they can afford for first Communion outfits), and there were similarities to a US show from the mid 90s *Nothing Sacred*.

I was most impressed by the touching prayer scenes. In one, after saying he wasn't Our Lady's greatest fan, he says a heartfelt Hail Mary with a woman who has just found out she can't have children, while in another



Sean Bean as Fr Michael Kerrigan in the much anticipated BBC drama *Broken*.

he prays the Our Father with a woman, Christina, whose mother has died. Christina is the other main character so far, a vulnerable single mother not coping very well with the demands of family life. She is so well played by Anna Friel, a versatile actress who can do everything from whimsy (*Pushing Daisies*) to psychosis (*Marcella*).

Adrian Dunbar (*Line of Duty*) appears as Fr Peter, but his role is as yet undefined - in his only scene the role seems

to be that of counsellor, for now.

It's an adult drama, with a modest amount of bad language and some dirty jokes at a comedy club but overall it has huge heart and sensitivity.

The cinematography and music are excellent, though the flashback scenes feature a poetry-quoting priest who cruelly slaps the young Michael because he reckons he got help writing a poem for class. It's not all nasty Church

imagery though, and the young Michael seems imbued with a sense of wonder in the church, and inspired by the poetry of Hopkins. In an early scene, Fr Michael seems dismissive of the idea that first Confession children would have any sins at that age and is strong on the idea of general absolution for all at the ceremony, but apart from that he is neither trendy liberal or cranky conservative.

Documentary

On a lighter note, I really enjoyed the documentary **50 Years with Peter, Paul and Mary** (Sky Arts, last Sunday night). I remember once a young person I knew thinking these three were Biblical characters (I suppose they are in a way!) instead of the influential US folk group.

Their repertoire often included traditional gospel songs and in this retrospective we heard them singing

Go Tell It on the Mountain among others. They also sang contemporary religious songs, mainly thanks to Paul (Noel Paul Stookey) who has a few Gospel albums to his credit.

At the end of this show, after seeing moving footage from Mary Travers' memorial service, we learned that Paul now, along with his wife, presents multi denominational music and faith oriented events, while Peter Yarrow continues to perform with his daughter.

There was much emphasis on their social activism - we saw them singing *Blowin' in the Wind* at Martin Luther King's March on Washington and involved in campaigns against the Vietnam War and US interference in El Salvador.

BBC Radio 4's **Sunday Worship** programme last weekend focussed on the Big Church Day Out, a contemporary multi-denominational Christian festival. Among those featured was US Catholic singer-songwriter Matt Maher (performing at St Paul's in Dublin this Saturday). He had provided music for that morning's Mass of Pentecost and made some sensible points, e.g. suggesting that as Christians we fussed too much about the small stuff.

Also, he found that as a society we were not good at getting on with people we disagreed with, and



Matt Maher.

PICK OF THE WEEK

THE BIG QUESTIONS
BBC 1, Sunday, June 11, 11.15am

Last episode in the series, asking if interfering with genes is ethical.

INSIDE GOD'S OBSERVATORY: A SKY AT NIGHT SPECIAL
BBC 4, Sunday, June 11, 10pm

Featuring the Vatican Observatory and the priest scientists who study a range of contemporary astronomical problems.

CHURCH AND THE POOR - THE GOSPEL COME ALIVE
EWTN, Thursday, June 15, 2.30pm

The Missionaries of the Poor profess that there is a great need for selfless love in a self-centred society.

thought that Christians coming together and loving each other despite differences showed good example that was badly needed. The awful London attack that dominated the media from last Saturday night was unwelcome evidence of that.

1 boregan@hotmail.com



Aubrey Malone

Film

Finding God in the crucible of bereavement

The Shack (12A)

In *Paradise Lost* John Milton tried to "justify the ways of God to man". Stephen Fry did the opposite in more recent times on *The Meaning of Life with Gay Byrne*, castigating him for what he saw as his cruelty to, among others, children.

The latter is a theme that's apposite to this tale of a *Waltons*-like family trying to come to grips with the Madeleine McCann-style abduction of their daughter Missy during a camping trip in Oregon.

The faith of her father, Mack (Sam Worthington), is severely tested after Missy



Octavia Spencer and Sam Worthington in *The Shack*

is snatched before he reaches regeneration in the most unlikely of ways, being summoned by God ('Papa') to the shack where Missy has supposedly been murdered.

The manner in which Mack finally accepts God's grace (and his daughter's celestial

bliss) is the main business of this generally uplifting but occasionally simplistic - and indeed scripturally unorthodox - film.

Call me old-fashioned but I didn't think it was a good idea to make 'Papa' into a jolly Black woman (Octavia Spen-

cer). Nor was I impressed by the casual depiction of Jesus (Avraham Alush), especially in the scenes where he walks on water with Mack. This is performed in a frivolous manner and will, I feel, play into the kind of prejudice Richard Dawkins tends to pounce on when he demeans Biblical tracts as 'children's stories'.

Catharsis

The film should have telegraphed Mack's catharsis through more nuanced (and less pat?) means. As things stand what we're presented with is more 'Hollywood' religion (at times almost soppy) than a more deeply-felt variety of it. This conduces to a kind of blandness that flies

in the face of Mack's befuddlement. All too often he appears content to play a dim contestant in a game in which his interlocutors toy playfully with him.

Neither was it advisable, in my view, to personify the Holy Spirit and 'wisdom' as two beautiful women who dispense advice that, while well intentioned, sometimes comes across as more smug than spiritual.

But the film grows on you. If you accept the rigorous manner in which Mack is used as a conduit for emotional alchemy it will reward you with its genial charm.

In the central scenes he goes to the eponymous snow-clad shack to vent his wrath

on her abductor. After his rendezvous with 'Papa' the snow disappears, becoming transmuted into a 'garden of Eden' environment. Here, after some gentle proddings from the Blessed Trinity he comes to an awareness that God has a plan for all of us. And a central part of that plan is not to judge - even murderers.

Cynics, I fear, will scoff at the perceived Sunday School approach of the film with its 'bumper sticker' didacticism but its overall message about the overweening power of love is well taken, as is Mack's embracing of forgiveness instead of a more tempting thirst for retribution in the face of almost unbearable grief.

Good
★★★

BookReviews

Peter Costello



Recent books in brief

Shouldering the Lamb: Reflections on an Icon

by Richard Clarke
(Dominican Publications, €12.00)

This is the second book of Dr Richard Clarke, the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh. It has already won praise from his episcopal neighbour, Archbishop Eamon Martin. Taking the almost universal image of Christ as a shepherd carrying a lamb to safety around his shoulders, originally derived from ancient art, he reflects on aspects of a common Christian faith. It consists of 12 chapters, which are really a set of reflective essays.

Dr Clarke brings to the essays not only feelings informed by his own long years of pastoral work, but also (which is less common) an intense interest in poetry and literature. He draws on both poems and novels, for examples of insight beyond the ordinary, to aid both himself and his readers.

He quotes in the preface from that stern Welsh Anglican R. S. Thomas, a priest of the small Church of Wales, admired as a granite-like fixture of modern English poetry. The first two essays, going further, deal with the image of the pastor in Catholic novelist Georges Bernanos and Anglican poet George Herbert.

This makes for a multi-faceted book, filled with striking passages. While the service of a pastor is the theme of the book, it is intended for the lambs. In its gently expressed way it is a call to a deepening sense of prayer, to enter into what he alludes to as "the silence of God". He admits to the difficulties of life and faith, but provides in those moments of bleakness common to all, a sense of peace.

So You Can't Forgive: Moving Towards Freedom

by Brian Lennon SJ
(Messenger Publications, €8.95)

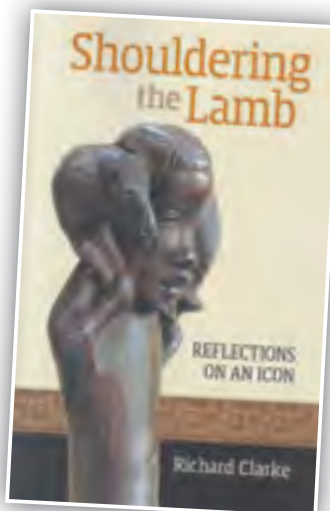
In writing his new book, which deals with what is for very many people, a very difficult matter, Fr Lennon draws on his experiences over three decades of life in Northern Ireland. He was greatly involved in the search for peace – a peace

of hope to many, but has left others, especially the families of victims, burdened. They feel that they can simply never forgive what was inflicted on them, that some things are unforgivable.

This is a book, as he explains, that is focussed not on forgiveness, but on forgiving. The person he has in mind is not the person who has inflicted the pain and harm, but those persons who have been hurt and harmed. In Ireland we are often called upon to "forget the past".

This is not possible, but we can move beyond it to seek a future. Brooding harms ourselves, harms our relations with those we love, and harms our relations with others in general.

This is indeed a difficult area, but Brian Lennon's chapters will be intensely valuable, not only in a political context of civil violence, but also in those other more social, more domestic areas of life, where there is present an urgent a need to forgive so as to live again, for ourselves and for society as a whole.



The modern view of Martin Luther

Martin Luther: Catholic Dissident
by Peter Stanford
(Hodder & Stoughton, £20.00)

Declan Marmion

When Martin Luther allegedly pinned his 95 theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517 he had little idea of the theological and political tumult he was about to unleash in Germany and elsewhere in Europe. Luther intended them as an invitation to a theological discussion, not to divide the Church.

In Peter Stanford's compelling and highly readable biography of Luther, we catch a glimpse of Luther's struggles – both within himself (e.g. his self-doubt), and with those around him including political and religious figures.

That he was driven by the call of God, or conscience, as he sometimes put it, is clear, but he wasn't one for compromise or diplomacy.

He saw himself as God's prophet on earth in the last days spreading God's good news (his movement thus came to be called 'evangelical'), as an interpreter of Scripture and a preacher. Lectern and pulpit would be the hallmarks of his public life. Though starting out as an exegete, he soon moved from a small academic audience to the broader public of the Church.

“Rather than treating Luther as an equal, he was treated as an irritant”

“The Church is in need of a reformation” was Luther's rallying call. His critique of various Church teachings and practices were based on his interpretation of Scripture. Authority in matters of faith lay in the Bible alone.

His critique of indulgences was that they had become a crass exchange of money and lulled people into a false sense of security, what he termed a “works holiness”. Repentance, he maintained, cannot be bought or sold but is a life-long activity expected of every Christian.

Luther advocated the thorough decentralisation of the Church, the abolition of the



Portrait of Martin Luther as an Augustinian monk.

Roman Curia and a greater independence for the German Church. With the development of publishing, Luther could bring his arguments to the people directly with whom they struck a chord because he was addressing issues of real concern. In effect, he was calling on the laity to reform the Church.

Arrest

Unfortunately, as Stanford puts it, rather than treating Luther as an equal, he was treated as an irritant. Cardinal Cajetan, who was given the mandate to interrogate Luther, expected him to recant and, in the event of his refusal, intended to arrest him and bring him to Rome.

The atmosphere of the time was oppositional and polemical and ultimately led to Luther's excommunication in 1521.

Catholic excommunication of Luther persisted into the 20th Century. Luther was depicted as a monster, a child of the Devil, a drunkard, a violator of nuns, a sinner and victim of his own egoism, pride and sensuality.

It was at the Second Vatican Council that many of the 'Reformation principles' were officially appropriated into Catholicism. These included: an esteem for the place of Scripture in the life of the Church, the fundamental equality of all believers, and a vision of the Church as *ecclesia semper*

reformanda.

In its *Decree on Ecumenism*, the Council stated that the restoration of unity was one of its “principal concerns” and that Church division is “clearly contrary to Christ's will”. It spoke “with respect and love” for our “separated fellow Christians” who, despite the obstacles between the churches, “are in some kind of communion with the Catholic Church”. (*Decree on Ecumenism*, 3)

Many of the new orientations of Vatican II had antecededents in Luther: the dignity of the laity and their vocation in the Church, the universal call to holiness; the importance of Scripture (including new methods of biblical interpretation), the full participation of the whole assembly in the liturgy – now in the vernacular; and, finally, collegiality and the relation of the Pope and the Curia to the local church.

“Pope John XXIII intended the Council as an invitation to spiritual renewal”

Vatican II has been described as “the end of the Counter-Reformation”. It marked the transition to a new epoch. From the beginning the Council was to be ecumenical rather than polemical and representatives of other Churches were invited to attend. Not unlike Pope Francis today, Pope John XXIII intended the Council as an invitation to spiritual renewal for the Church and the world.

Without mentioning Luther by name, the ecumenical imperative of Vatican II paved the way for subsequent projects that resulted in consensus on many of the core issues that hitherto had been divisive.

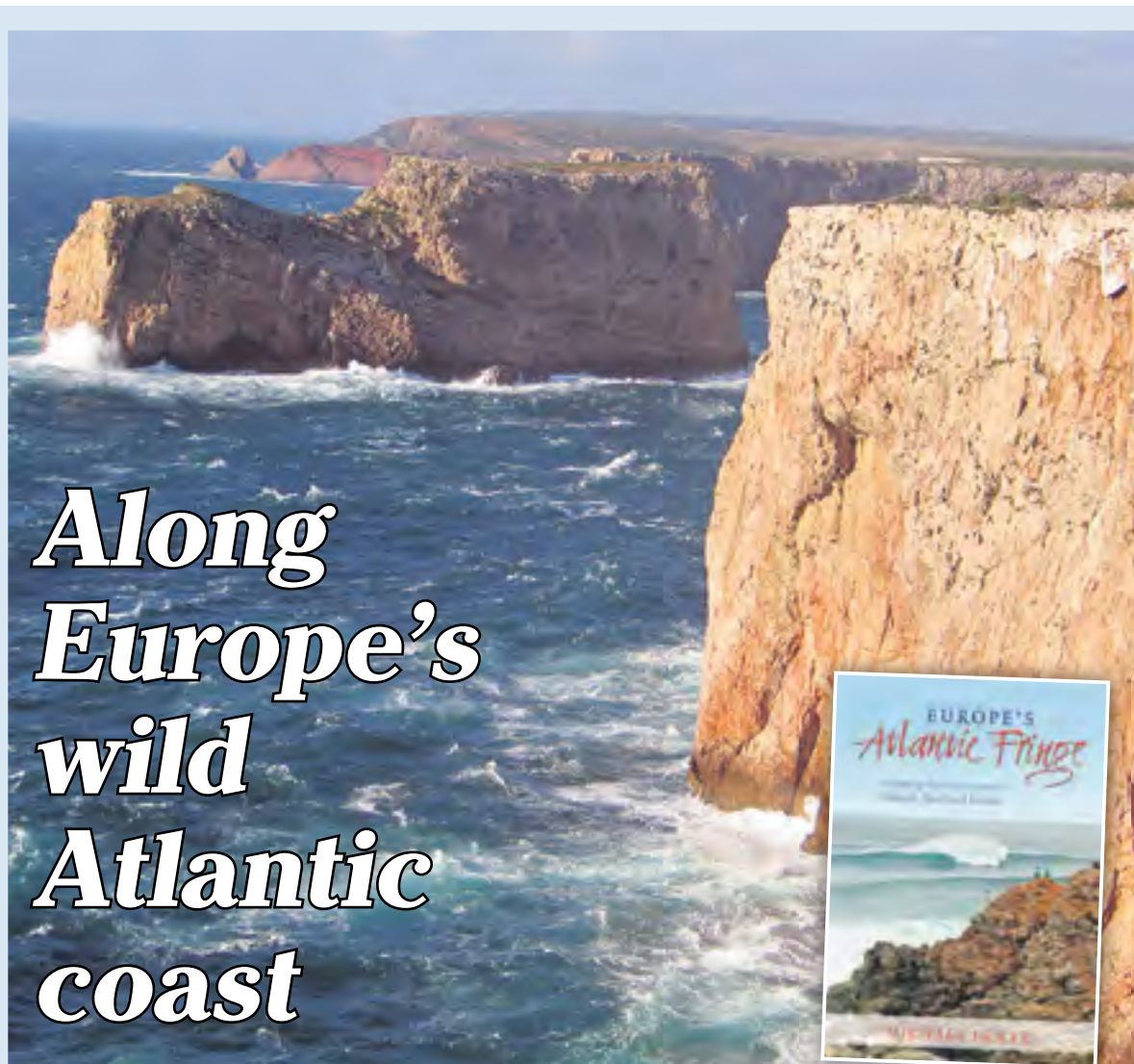
The image of Luther would become less polemically coloured and he would come to be honoured “as a witness to the Gospel, a teacher in the Faith and a herald of spiritual renewal”.

Peter Stanford's book helps show how the positive aims of the Reformation can now be a shared concern of all Christians.

Rev. Declan Marmion SM is Professor of Systematic Theology at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.



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.



Along Europe's wild Atlantic coast

Europe's Atlantic Fringe: Exploring the west coasts of Portugal, Spain and Ireland by Michael Fewer (Ashfield Press, €25)

Christopher Moriarty

Michael Fewer combines scholarship with readability in an impressive number of books about Ireland, Irish people and Irish architecture. In his latest work he widens the range by the addition of two countries, Portugal and Spain. Between the covers is a delightful book describing a journey by the author, with his wife, from Cape St Vincent to Horn Head.

By choosing the longitude of 8 degrees west as a boundary, he neatly omits such very substantial parts of the Atlantic fringe as the coasts of France, England and Scotland.

“Power struggles between the monarchs of England and Spain subsequently led to less peaceful encounters”

His selection of places and people to describe, being very personal, is faintly exasperating to readers who would regard some of the other omissions hard to accept. It seems a bit unreasonable to describe Ireland's west coast with no more reference to the Burren

of Clare than an allusion to its appearance when viewed across Galway Bay.

That said, the reader can sit, enjoy some excellent writing, learn all sorts of facts, geographical and historical and re-visit, with the author, familiar and loved places.

The journey begins at the south-western extremity of Europe where, we are told, the gods engaged in nocturnal pursuits and resented the intrusion of mortals. The author survived their displeasure, beginning his book with an evocative description of the sunset and the fact that, unlike the second century observer Artemidorus Ephesius, he failed to hear the sizzling sound made by the sun as it meets the waves.

He goes on to enlarge on the exploits of Henry the Navigator who shared with generations of later explorers the distinction of making the world known to Europeans and initiating the exploitation of the inhabitants of the countries they visited.

Portugal and the Portuguese had little enough impact on Ireland – in contrast with our relationship with Spain. The wine trade in particular in the centuries of the Gaelic Resurgence led to the wealth of merchants in the city of Galway and to some degree of peaceful settlement and inter-marriage with Irish people. Power struggles between the monarchs of England and Spain subsequently led to less peaceful encounters.

In the course of his journey the author made a diversion to Compostella – some distance from the Atlantic Fringe, but connected with it by the fact that great numbers of pilgrims from Ireland made most of their way there by sea.

Compostella claims the body of the Apostle James and compares in a curious manner with the burial place of W. B. Yeats in Drumcliffe Churchyard. The author, in separate parts of the book, gives the remarkably parallel tales of two interments.

“History, rather than tradition, tells that the poet died and was buried in France”

St James, according to tradition, was martyred in Rome but ultimately buried at Compostella. History, rather than tradition, tells that the poet died and was buried in France. However, it now seems that his mortal remains may not have been transferred to lie ‘under bare Ben Bulbin's head’ – although a coffin bearing his name certainly made the journey.

Whatever the facts, devotees still visit both shrines. Michael Fewer's definition of Europe's Atlantic fringe may be mythical – but his account of the reality of his journey remains a great pleasure to read.

The World of Books

By the books editor

Popes and anti-Popes: The great schism

There are many people who see the Church of the Middle Ages as being an institution not only at the peak of its sanctity, but also as a model from which modern society can learn. I suspect that this view, especially in Ireland, owes much to the views of Chesterton and Belloc, gained at second-hand from American sources.

However, a visit to Avignon in Provence would quickly set these ideas into the context of medieval reality. For it was here, in an enclave of the Papal States that the Popes ruled, that the papacy was established for over a century during what is sometimes call the Great Western Schism.

What the visitor sees today is the great Palais des Papes. I first saw this in the early 1960s as a boy, on a baking hot August afternoon. All I can recall was the blazing white of the square and the sheer walls of the palace. But a more recent visit enables my older self to see it again in the gentler, but still (by Irish standards) very warm spring of Provenance.

But how it was that the Popes came to be there in the first place that provides the real lesson of history.

In 1305 the then Bishop of Bordeaux, Bertrand de Got, was elected Pope under the name of Clement V. Due to the difficulties reigning in Rome at the time, where dissension backed by military force was much in vogue, Clement was induced by King Philippe of France to move to Avignon, which though outside Italy had nevertheless been a possession of the papacy, as the Comtat Venaissan, since 1274. Clement did not stay much in Avignon, preferring a monastery in Malaucene.

Successor

When he died in 1314, it took two years to select his successor. So from 1309 to 1377, seven French Popes succeeded each other. Then the cardinals, who were mostly French and had mansions of their own across the Rhone in Villeneuve d'Avignon, disliked the reforms of Urban VI, and elected a rival Pope, Clement VII (1378-94).

With a Pope in Rome and now an anti-Pope in Avignon, Christendom was sundered. The

residence of the Popes in Avignon had been called “a Babylonian captivity”. But the prelates in Rome called what occurred “the Great Schism”, forgetting the far more serious breach with the Eastern Church. The rival popes denounced and excommunicated each other. At last Benedict XIII fled Avignon having lost the support of the French king.

In 1417 the Schism came to an end with election of Martin V. Avignon was now ruled (down to the time of the French Revolution) by a papal legate. Under papal rule Avignon was a very tolerant city.

“Political exiles found refuge there”

There was a free press beyond the reach of the royal censors in Paris. There was a thriving Jewish community – political exiles found refuge there as well. But so too did the sort of shady financiers and criminals that swarm everywhere there is wealth.

When finally the revolution came the constitutional assembly voted to break with Rome and attach the Comtat to the French state, under the various monarchical, imperial and republican guises that followed over the centuries since. (The rest of the Papal States were seized by the new united kingdom of Italy after the Risorgimento in 1870.)

The events at Avignon can be seen, in a sense, as a prelude to the more lasting divisions of the Reformation that followed a century later. Contemplating this story many will perhaps think that affairs in Rome today, though not always what many of the laity would want, are in far better state than they were at the time of the Western Schism.

For every admirer of the Middle Ages, the city of Avignon, over which was laid the benign hand of the great restorer Viollet-le-Duc in the 19th century, is well worth a visit. But try the cooler less crowded months rather than August. It may not be a papal paradise today, but visitors do not have to suffer a Roman inferno to enjoy its heritage of art and architecture.



Avignon, Palais des Papes.

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The Miracle Prayer

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

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

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

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

Say this prayer for three days.

R.D.

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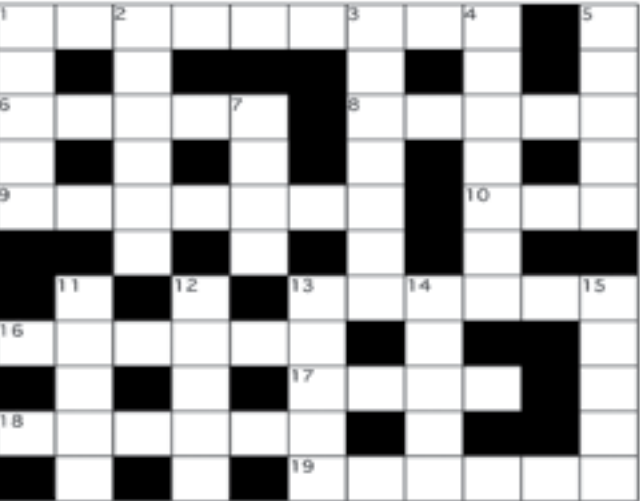


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Leisure time

Crossword Junior

Gordius 185



- ACROSS**

1 Cartoon character with square pants (9)

6 Terrible (5)

8 Wear it in the kitchen to protect your clothes (5)

9 A pain in the part of the body you use for listening (7)

10 It's usually the best card (3)

13 Young swan (6)

16 This bird comes out of some clocks to call the hour (6)

17 What can be seen from a particular place (4)

18 Wild and dangerous (6)

19 A plane lands on it (6)
- DOWN**

1 A cobra or adder, perhaps (5)

2 English city famous for its university colleges. (6)

3 Heroism, courage (7)

4 Something you buy at a really low price (7)

5 You use a paddle in this kind of boat (5)

7 You need a key to open it. (4)

11 Type of flower that makes us think of Holland (5)

12 Girls' garment (5)

13 Lid (5)

14 The colour of grass (5)

15 Full of flavour (5)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

GORDIUS No.301

Across – 1 Par 3 Ferris wheel 8 Osprey 9 Poignant 10 Ebbed 11 Speed 13 Fried 15 Recover 16 Jericho 20 Hands 21 Track 23 Cabin 24 Scabbard 25 Parrot 26 Boatbuilder 27 Sir

Down – 1 Proletariat 3 Fiend 4 Roped in 5 Wages 6 Enamel 7 Let 12 Denominator 13 Flesh 14 Duels 17 Cerberus 18 Infidel 19 Banana republic 22 Kebab 23 Chair 24 Sub

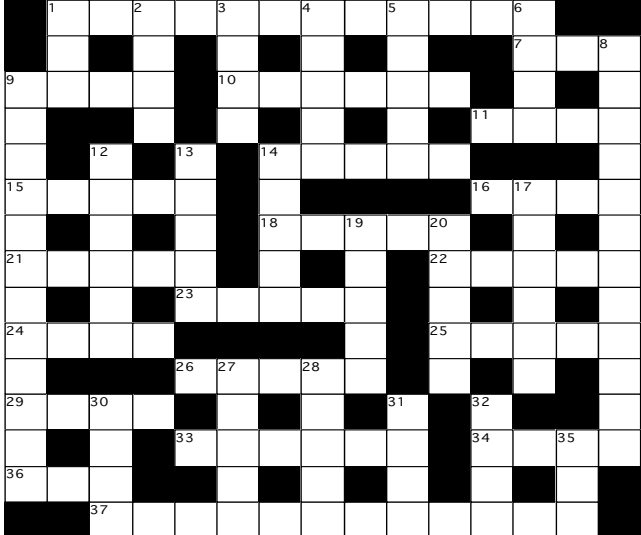
CHILDREN'S No.184

Across – 1. Cottage 4. Jar 7. Numbers 8. Twig 10. Experiment 14. Smoke 15. Untidy 16. Hey presto

Down – 1. Cart 2. Tongue 3. Gemini 5. Absent 6. Peppermint 9. Wax 10. Enough 11. Poetry 12. Rudder 13. Begin

Crossword

Gordius 302



- ACROSS**

1 Make it as a parental role-model, Reverend? Take a number! (6,6)

7 Trophy (3)

9 Vegetable symbolic of Wales (4)

10 Haphazard arrangement with Mad Ron (6)

11 Sounds like not many'd get involved in a vendetta (4)

14 & 3d He fought at the OK Corral, disrupting a petty war (5,4)

15 Adjust slightly (5)

16 Final testament (4)

18 Unearth (3,2)

21 Call to mind that 'The First Lady' is all about Oklahoma (5)

22 Historic part of France seen during an equestrian journey (5)

23 Recalibrated (5)

24 Nocturnal birds of prey (4)

25 Rock with a hot part of the Bible (5)

26 Band of leather (5)

29 It is formed by the weathering of iron (4)

33 Laser I transport to a Middle-Eastern country (6)

34 That's some work, stirring the soup! (4)

36 & 37 Being out of this world, does he live on a diet of green cheese? (3,3,2,3,4)
- DOWN**

1 Enemy (3)

2 & 28d Assume a role in order to dismantle (4,5)

3 See 14 across

4 Ornate (5)

5 Boast that the big kid took in a novice (5)

6 & 32d The title of several classical pieces of religious art, this phrase means "behold the man" (4,4)

8 Cropped trousers redesigned in purple shades (5,7)

9 Somewhat torrid little Dickens novel (6,6)

12 The 'kick' from a firearm (6)

13 Erik's about to become a winter sports enthusiast (5)

14 Walks through water (5)

17 Harm someone physically (6)

19 Outfit for what you do after waking (3,2)

20 Would Father pen something so anaemic? (5)

27 I stir up a mixture for the first Jewish month (5)

28 See 2 down

30 Appear (4)

31 Behold - in the south-east, there's hedgerow fruit (4)


32 See 6 down

35 Run around to get a vase (3)


Sudoku Corner

185


Easy



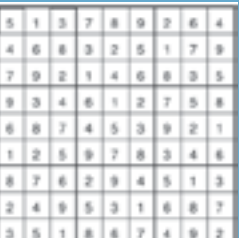
Hard



Last week's Easy 184



Last week's Hard 184





Notebook

Fr Vincent Sherlock

Are children that much in need of stress relief?

If you can

If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,
If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles,
If you can eat the same food everyday and be grateful for it,
If you can overlook it when those you love take it out on you when through no fault of yours something goes wrong,
If you can conquer tension without medical help,
If you can relax without alcohol,
If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,
If you can say honestly that deep in your heart you have no prejudice;
Then, my friend you are most likely the family dog!

"IT CLEARS YOUR MIND and eases stress", she told me. She wasn't alone!

Nearly every child in the class had some variant of the stress reliever and mind-clearer in hand as well. They were in a variety of colours and one even glowed in the dark.

Thankfully I was in touch enough to know what they were holding and I was able to identify this wonder tool by its correct name 'fidget spinner'. One child had her doubts – "some say", she told me "that they are a distraction". The split has begun...

Anyway, I wonder does it do what it says on the tin? Does this fidget spinner clear the mind and ease stress? Are children that much in need of having stress eased and minds cleared?

Caring

If the need is that real and present, it's likely we need more than a fidget spinner. Time comes to mind! So too does reassurance, sharing, caring and togetherness. "They're for children with autism", another child told me as she spun away to her heart's delight.

"Like me", said another as he



placed the gadget on his finger and smiled at me. I smiled back and thought maybe the smile has a part to play in helping him along the road too.

I took a pair of rosary beads from my pocket and said "How many of you have one of these in

your pockets? They help to clear the mind too and maybe even ease stress." I told them that you can even get some that glow in the dark!

One girl, with fidget spinner in full and frantic motion, produced her beads. She *was* alone.

Words of freedom at a funeral...

There's a lovely story told of a priest of our diocese. There was a funeral in his parish and a number of priests came to concelebrate the requiem Mass. An altar-server, knowing there was more happening here than usual, moved through the packed sacristy, tugged at the priest's arm and asked: "Father, when do I ring the bell?"

The priest bent low and gave the clearest and most stress-free of liturgical direction (not found in red print in any Missal in the world): "Anytime you feel like it!"



PLEASE SUPPORT THE CHURCH IN FAMINE-STRICKEN AFRICA

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The Little Way Association remains in touch with the dioceses and congregations that are bringing relief to these afflicted people. Your donations (for which we wholeheartedly thank you) are going direct to the Church's workers without deduction.

Please continue to be generous.

Your donations to The Little Way Association are **sent intact** to clergy and sisters in Africa, so they can feed the starving people.



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