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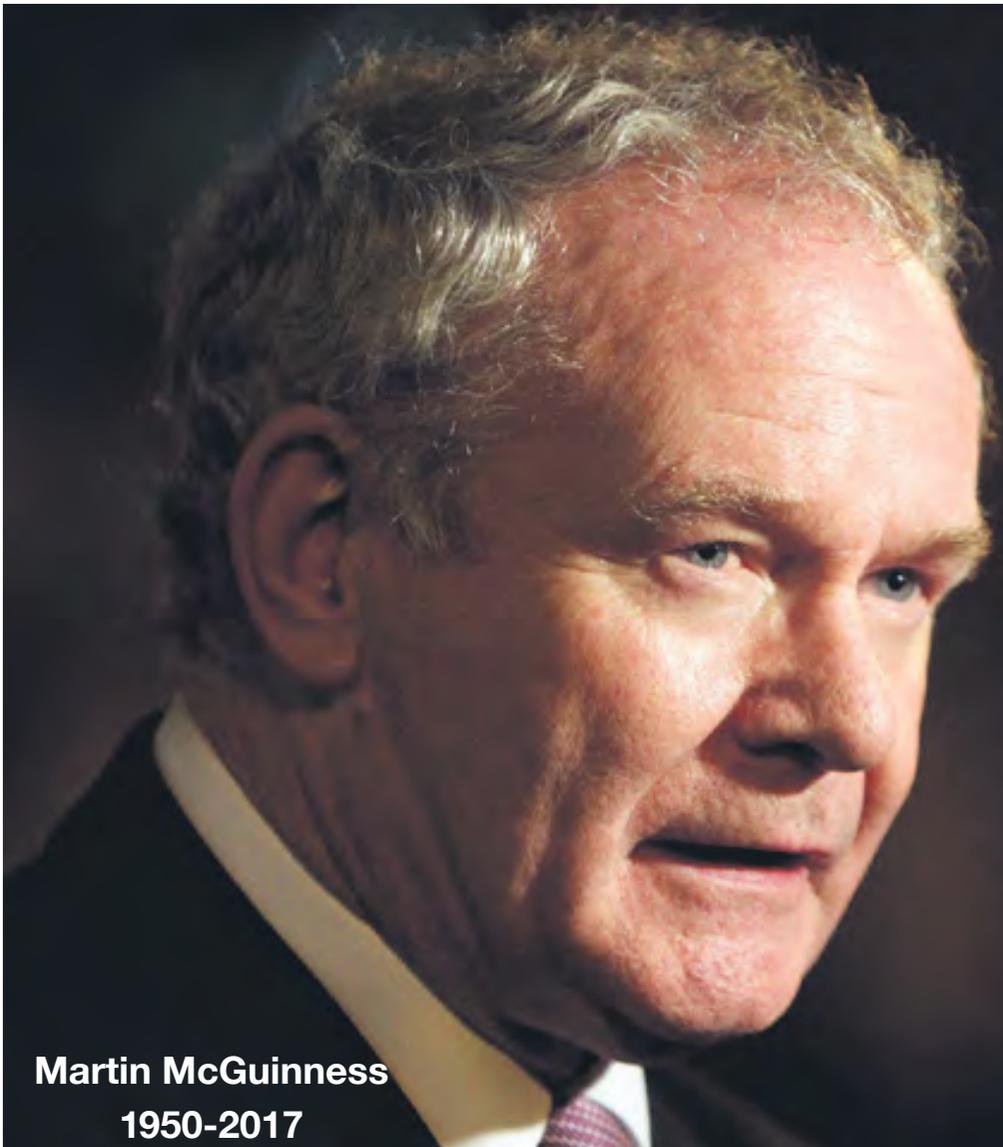
Thursday, March 23, 2017

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WHAT NOW for PEACE?

- Remarkable road from violence to peace
- McGuinness hailed as 'man of prayer'
- A complex man of contradictions
- Archbishop hopes new deal will be lasting legacy

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Martin McGuinness
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Annual Subscription Rates: Ireland €125. Airmail €145.

ISSN 1393 - 6832 - Published by The Irish Catholic, 23 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.

Printed by The Irish Times

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Martin McGuinness was a man unafraid to embrace change

The former deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness was a complex man who embarked on a complex journey. From a childhood where he witnessed first-hand the discrimination suffered by Catholics in the North to a state banquet with Britain's Queen Elizabeth in Windsor Castle, he travelled a remarkable road.

His death will rouse mixed emotions both in the North and farther afield. Some people, particularly those who suffered during the conflict, will find it hard to find forgiveness. And those who carry the scars of 30 years of violence must not be forgotten.

As Christians, one of our greatest consolations is that only the judgement of God matters. Only God will judge Martin McGuinness, and only God knows the reasons why Mr McGuinness moved from being a marcher on civil rights demonstrations to a commander of the Provisional IRA.

Reconciliation

He was never apologetic about his role in the IRA – something that stuck in the throats of many. But, he undoubtedly embraced reconciliation and regretted the violence that marred the North for decades – whatever his role in it.

It's arguable that only someone like Mr McGuinness – hugely-respected by the men of violence in the republican



Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

movement – could move that organisation from violence to peace.

It's been a faltering road – there's a reason why we call it the 'peace process' rather than peace. And as the current negotiations show, the road is still not easy.

Few people could remain unmoved by the depth of relationship that clearly emerged between Mr McGuinness and Dr Ian Paisley when the DUP and Sinn Féin agreed to share power. But, that was also a moment tinged with regret: how many lives were lost because these men were unable to agree for decades? How many missed opportunities to cut a deal?

“The most fitting tribute to Martin's legacy would be to again find that courage to cut a deal”

Mr McGuinness was private about his Catholic faith – but it was clearly important to him. He was a regular Mass-goer, but many Catholics were bewildered by his claim that he could square Sinn Féin's support for abortion

with his Catholicism. Not for the first time, he was a man filled with paradox and contradictions.

In the end, Mr McGuinness will be remembered as a man who embraced the road to peace and, crucially, convinced the republican movement to give up violence. He pioneered a path to reconciliation reaching out to unionism and the British establishment, while retaining his traditional base.

Change is difficult – but Martin McGuinness eventually embraced change. A change that has made Northern Ireland an infinitely better place. He has contributed to cementing the peace process and normalising relations between Ireland and Britain. As talks continue in Belfast between the DUP and Sinn Féin, the most fitting tribute to Martin's legacy would be to again find that courage to cut a deal – even when it's difficult and there are bitter pills to swallow.

Cardinal Newman wrote that “to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often”. Martin McGuinness certainly changed immensely. May God grant him eternal rest.

Primate leads tribute to 'man of prayer' McGuinness

Ireland's most senior Churchman has expressed the hope that an end to the political impasse in the North will be the legacy of Martin McGuinness who has died aged 66.

Archbishop Eamon Martin also paid tribute to Mr McGuinness as a “man of prayer”. The archbishop said that he had “no doubt” that

Mr McGuinness' “faith and relationship with God guided him along this journey.

He was a man of prayer and I am personally grateful for his good wishes and encouragement to me, as a fellow Derry man, in my own vocation,” Archbishop Eamon said.

Bishop of Derry Donal

McKeown told *The Irish Catholic* that Mr McGuinness was first and foremost a family man.

“He was a man who showed huge courage in all stages of his life, both in his paramilitary days and in the peace process, taking huge risks and offering clear leadership”.

Dr McKeown said the people also “have to be aware that there are other people with more painful memories of how their lives were affected down through the years; a lot of people in Derry and elsewhere would have suffered terrible losses during the Troubles”.

See pages 5, 8 and 9.

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Chaplains welcome Taoiseach's White House challenge to Trump

Greg Daly

Taoiseach's Enda Kenny's St Patrick's Day comments in the White House have been welcomed by chaplains to the Irish community in the US.

Speaking alongside US President Donald Trump the day before St Patrick's Day, Mr Kenny said of the saint: "He too of course was an immigrant. And though he is, of course, the patron saint of Ireland, for many people around the globe he's also a symbol of — indeed the patron of — immigrants."

The Taoiseach recalled how Irish people became contributors to American society after coming to the US in the hope of better lives and opportunities than faced them at home.

Immigrants

"Within the Irish-American community there's always been a little bit of disconnect with the reality that their families were once immigrants as well," Michael Collins, executive director of the Chicago Irish Immigrant Support Centre, told *The Irish Catholic*, continuing, "but they always align themselves with Ireland and being Irish, so the

Taoiseach's speech was a good eye-opener for the Irish-American community."

While Mr Collins expects the speech to have a "minimal impact" on Mr Trump's hardline approach to immigration, he said "it has started a conversation particularly among the Irish here which I think is important".

Limerick-born Fr Michael Madigan, chaplain to Chicago's immigrant Irish, agreed, saying several people had told him they felt "very positive" about the speech.

"Given the fact of the huge anxiety and uncertainty around immigration in America, it is a timely way of using the image of Patrick as an immigrant who came to our shores and found a home there," he said.

Reiterating that "the reality on the ground is that there's still a deep level of anxiety and fear," he said: "The tendency here is to see the immigration issue as one that affects only those from Mexico and Central America, but there are undocumented people amongst all nationalities."

Tragic footballer's family supported by faith

Ryan McBride was captain of Derry City.

Mags Gargan

The "heartbroken" family of Derry footballer Ryan McBride is being supported in their grief by the community's "spirituality of presence", according to their parish priest.

The hugely respected Derry City captain died suddenly on Sunday when he went for a nap after training. He leaves his father Lexie, sisters Colleen, Siunin and Caitlain, his grandfather Edward and

partner Mairead.

"They are a very close family," said Fr Aidan Mullan of Longtower parish. "His father Lexie is devastated. You can see the pain in his face but he has a lovely composure that is amazing amidst all the chaos he must feel in his heart.

"Faith is very important to Ryan's grandparents and his father. His grandparents received Holy Communion this morning and offered it up for Ryan."

Tributes have poured in

for the 27-year-old, including from President Michael D. Higgins and Archbishop Eamon Martin who is praying for Ryan's family and friends.

"The outpouring of comments shows that he was well thought of in the community at large," said Fr Mullan. "He was a warrior on the football field — fearless, skilful and he gave his heart to Derry City. He was a shy boy away from the football field and a very modest young man. The family was very

important to him. Ryan was a lovely role model for young boys and girls as well as all the Derry City supporters."

Fr Mullan said the community is supporting Ryan's family through "a spirituality of presence". "There is a spirituality in a just handshake, a touch, a presence, of being there. Ryan's father feels the strength of that even today. You can't quantify that spirituality of presence and that is what the community is giving."

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Church scandals call for 'deeper conversion'

Staff Reporter

The Pope's representative in Ireland has said that revelations about scandals in the Church should trigger a "deeper conversion" within Irish Catholicism.

Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Charles Brown said that "the life of the Church on this Earth is not the story of perfection, it is always a mixed story of triumph and failure; of saints and sinners; of debilitating scandals and radiant witnesses". He was speaking at Mass to mark St Patrick's Day in Newman's University Church in Dublin.

However, he warned that "the fact that there is always a mixture of good and bad in the Church is not an excuse for complacency or resignation in the face of what is wrong. It rather should be for each of us a call to a deeper conversion – to embrace the fullness of the truth that [St] Patrick brought".

Reflecting on the 1,500-year history of Christianity in Ireland, Dr Brown said that the message of Patrick remains central: that Christ is the path to God.

The Mass – which was televised by RTÉ – is expected to be one of the Nuncio's last public engagements before leaving Ireland to take up his appointment as Papal Nuncio in Albania next month – a fact he referred to during the Mass in heartfelt words of gratitude.

Enthusiasm

"Sadly, for me, it's my last St Patrick's Day," he said, saying that he looked forward to his posting in Albania with enthusiasm "because to be a nuncio is to be a missionary – sent by the Holy Father.

"I am sad to leave Ireland where I've made so many wonderful friends, and met so many fantastic people in every part of this beautiful island. So, to everyone in Ireland today, I want to say – without exception – a massive 'thank you'.

"Thank you for the way you received and welcomed me in these years – you made me feel that I was at home, and I will never forget that. God bless you – and please pray for me," the Nuncio concluded to sustained applause from the congregation.

Intense fundraising saves Cistercian College Roscrea

A rescue package has saved Cistercian College Roscrea just one month after it was announced that it was to close due to a dramatic fall off in student numbers.

Dure to intense fundraising undertaken by the CCR Action Group, formed by parents and past pupils, in excess of €1.5million has been raised to save the well-known boys' boarding school at Mount St Joseph Abbey.

"We have witnessed a small miracle over the past four weeks," said Dom Richard Purcell, Abbot of Mount St Joseph Abbey. "The decision to close was an extremely difficult one for the monastic community to make and so we are understandably overjoyed to now be in a position to announce that the college will remain open."



Archbishop Charles Brown pictured after Mass to celebrate St Patrick's Day in Newman's University Church in Dublin with (left) Msgr Piotr Tarnawski, Deputy Head of Mission of the Apostolic Nunciature to Ireland and (right) Fr William Dailey CSC Director of the Notre Dame–Newman Centre for Faith and Reason which is based at the iconic church on St Stephen's Green.

Jumping for joy



Fr Robert McGivney celebrating at Mullingar Cathedral after a parish bake-off on Sunday raised over €5,000 for the Capuchin Day Centre. Photo: Mullingar parish

Irish embassy to the Holy See officially reopened

Mags Gargan

Ireland and the Holy See "have some different perspectives" but share a belief in working for a just world, said the Minister for Foreign Affairs as he officially reopened the Irish chancery to the Holy See.

Following a meeting with Archbishop Paul Gallagher, Holy See Secretary for Relations with States in the Vatican, Charlie Flanagan said the two states have "much to talk about and much in common".

"Like all old friends, Ireland and the Holy See have some different perspectives. That is normal in a bilateral relationship. At times, we will have difficult conversations. But we will also have many fruitful conversations about our shared values," he said.

Sustainable

"Fundamentally we each believe we have a responsibility to work towards a world that is just, fair, safe and sustainable."

He said Ireland's "deep historic faith" means that the Church "of course has a place in Irish life well beyond the realm of formal diplomatic relations" and the intention of Pope Francis to visit Ireland next year for the World Meeting of Families would be "of huge importance to so many Irish people".

The Government's decision to downgrade relations with the Vatican with the closure of the Irish Embassy in 2011 was reversed with the appointment of Ambassador Emma Madigan in 2014.

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Dara Fitzpatrick represents "selfless kindness"

Bishop Brendan Leahy has paid tribute to Irish Coast Guard pilot Dara Fitzpatrick and members of the Defence Forces who "fearlessly" dedicate their lives to helping others.

"Let's be grateful for all those, like Dara, whose generous spirit reminds us of the measure of love: to love without measure," the Bishop of Limerick said at a Mass in Sarsfield's Barracks. "It's called being ready to lay down our lives. There's a heroism in that."

Dara Fitzpatrick (45) was the captain of a Coast Guard helicopter, Rescue 116, which came down in sea off northwest Mayo with the loss of all on board.



Dara Fitzpatrick.

Martin McGuinness: many tributes but still much divided opinion

There is little doubt that opinions about Martin McGuinness remained divided at the time of his death. Norman Tebbit, the Conservative peer, could neither forget nor forgive the Brighton bomb of 1984, which crippled his wife Margaret for life. Lord Tebbit said “the world was a sweeter place” without Martin McGuinness: he added that repentance must be the precursor of forgiveness and he had not seen signs of repentance for McGuinness’s leading role in the IRA.

Yet, who is any of us to judge? We don’t know what goes on in any man’s heart. And if the New Testament tells us “by their fruits ye shall know them”, Martin McGuinness did turn away from the path of violence towards the path of peace and reconciliation.

Pragmatic

Some political commentators saw McGuinness’ change of direction as a pragmatic move. The IRA, frankly, lost their war, and the shoot-out at Lough Gall with the SAS in 1992 showed it: the Provo network was wholly penetrated by British intelligence.

Yet I think McGuinness was

Mary Kenny



moving towards a change of heart anyway, and I wonder how much he was influenced in this not only by his childhood faith – he was christened James Martin Pacelli,

after Pius XII – but also by the ecumenical relations he built with members of all Christian Churches in Derry.

It will take a historical

State can’t dictate what women wear

Theresa May has decisively rejected following France, Germany and Switzerland in banning women from wearing the burka or the niqab in public. “What a woman wears is a woman’s choice,” she said, thus upholding both liberty and faith values.

There are certain conditions where a woman may be asked to remove a veil from her face – in court, and for security purposes. But the British Prime Minister is absolutely right: it is not the state’s job to dictate what citizens may wear. And, as she added, neither should the state ever discriminate against people on grounds of religion. Quite so.



perspective to sum up his life, but despite many positive tributes paid, Lord Tebbit is not alone in his acrimony. Some of the comments posted on British social media have been most unforgiving.

I suspect that Prince Philip is of the Tebbit tendency. When Queen Elizabeth smiled and shook hands with Martin McGuinness in Belfast in 2012, Philip (Mountbatten’s nephew) looked thunder and refrained from offering his hand.

Hostility

Martin met the Queen on several other occasions, and she could be wryly witty in response to his informal affability. “How are you keeping?” he chatted to her not long since. “Still alive!” she quipped – as though to say she had survived long years of republican hostility.

The BBC veteran war reporter John Simpson recalled being in Derry at the time of Margaret Thatcher’s death, where there was much jubilation expressed at her passing. Mr McGuinness reproached those celebrating saying that every death should be mourned. Indeed so.

An open mind on ecology

Ecology politics are often associated with anti-population movements – many green parties supported China’s cruel one-child policies. But still, we should keep an open mind, and I was much impressed by a French ecology-movement documentary called *Demain* (Tomorrow), made by Melanie Laurent [pictured].

It’s so positive, so constructive about how we can support the planet.

Organic farming can be much more efficient than industrial farming, for example. Rust-belt Detroit is being rescued by the cultivation of allotment agriculture. Locations are inventing their own currencies to support local trade – Bristol has its own pound, and it works.

There are some hippy moments in *Demain*, but it’s well worth seeing – especially for anyone interested in rural regeneration.



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Rising racism driven by 'me first' outlook

Staff Reporter

A 'me first' mentality lies behind the range of social ills, including a reported rise in racist incidents, a leading priest-campaigner on immigration has said.

Describing racism as a side-effect of an 'every man for himself' approach to society, Fr Alan Hilliard told *The Irish Catholic*: "Whether we like it or not, our society is becoming a sum of individuals, where people are less prepared to incorporate others into their vision of life, and that is signified by things like racism."

Fr Hilliard pointed to Pope Francis' description of modern society as "an impersonal economy lacking a truly human purpose", and said "We're moving into a society where we're thought to look out for ourselves."

"The way our society is going people are forced to think of themselves – it's not providing the networks for people like in the past, so that's the way people have to become to survive for themselves and the people they love," he continued.

Fr Hilliard's comments came as ENAR (European Network Against Racism) Ireland published a report to coincide with the International Day Against Racism which revealed that the monitoring group had received 245 reports of racist incidents in the second half of last year, an increase of a third on the previous six months.

Guarded response to school locals-first plan

Greg Daly

The Church has given a qualified welcome to speculation that the Government is likely to push schools to prioritise locally-based children in their admissions.

This proposal, which would bar Church-owned schools from favouring children of their own faith from outside school catchment areas ahead of non-religious or minority faith children who live nearby, has been described as the "least problematic" of the options considered by education minister Richard Bruton to tackle problems supposedly caused by the so-called 'baptism barrier'.

According to the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association (CPSMA), fewer than 0.4% of all applications received by Dublin schools are refused on religious grounds.

"Our own submission favoured the catchment area proposal, and most Catholic schools would use some variety of catchment area," CPSMA general secretary Seamus Mulconry told *The Irish Catholic*, continuing, "We would see a lot of difficulties with any of the other schemes both in terms of complexity and their impact on the rights of minority faith schools."

Complicated

Predicting that a catchment area rule might prove more complicated to legislate for than people realise, he said in practical terms such a system is commonly applied.

"A lot of our schools – most of them, I believe – are already operating a catchment rule,

but in areas of high oversubscription it tends to be a question of resources rather than religion," he said.

Pointing to Greystones, Co. Wicklow and areas in north and west Dublin as examples, he said. "Those are the clearest areas where it's driven

by resources, and then if you look at more settled middle-class areas, there seems to be other stuff going on.

"There are a number of areas in South County Dublin where you're looking at schools that are oversubscribed, but in the locality you

have DEIS schools that don't seem to be – I think somebody needs to take a look at that," he said.

"In all but one of the areas that we looked at oversubscription, where the lack of a baptism cert was an issue, there was a plurality of

patronage," he noted, continuing: "What we found is that in some cases other patron bodies are taking children from outside the catchment area, and that in turn is putting increased pressure on some of our schools."

Shining a light for Christian heritage

Archbishop Richard Clarke (St Patrick's Cofl Cathedral) and Archbishop Eamon Martin (St Patrick's Catholic Cathedral) at the joint St Patrick's Vigil during the Home of St Patrick Festival in Armagh. Photo: Philip Magowan



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Pioneers' fundraiser prepares for Jesuit withdrawal

Mags Gargan

The Pioneer Association has launched a fundraising appeal to raise €100,000 in advance of the withdrawal of the Irish Jesuits at the end of this year.

The Pioneers Total Abstinence Association of the Sacred Heart was founded in 1898 by a Dublin Jesuit, Fr James Cullen, to address the damage being caused by

excess alcohol. In 2015 the Provincial, Fr Tom Layden SJ, took the decision to make a phased withdrawal due to falling numbers and the aging profile of their priests.

As the group prepares to become a Private Lay Association of the Faithful in January, it has launched a nationwide appeal "to essentially keep the Pioneers going" according to Raymond O'Connor, Project

Co-ordinator.

"We rely on the generosity of our members as we are not Government-funded and we have started to run into deficit," he said.

"We had a big public appeal in 2011 which raised €130,000 and this is our second public appeal to ensure the financial viability of our institution."

National Mass for organ donors

The Family Centre at Knock Shrine is organising a special Mass to mark Organ Donor Awareness Week 2017.

"The Mass is a celebration for all who have been saved, and indeed for those whose loved one were organ donors and wish them and their wonderful legacy to be remembered," said Monica Morley,

director of the Family Centre. "It is also to give families a chance to be a part of a special and prayerful day, whether it's to give thanks or to pray for someone."

The celebration is on Sunday, April 2 at 12 noon. For more information contact (094) 93 88100 or log on to www.knockshrine.ie

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Weighing up our common response to immigration



Immigration policies must recognise the needs of both immigrants and their host countries, writes **David Quinn**

Last Sunday, hundreds of churches rang out their bells in solidarity with refugees and migrants and in protest against racism and xenophobia. The initiative was the brainchild of Church of Ireland Dean of Waterford Reverend Maria Jansson. It was supported by former president, Mary McAleese.

The West is currently witness to a rising tide of anti-immigration populism that is especially directed at Muslims. A recent opinion poll from the British think tank, Chatham House, found that a majority of people in 10 European countries want a complete halt to all Muslim immigration, and not simply a temporary ban from six Muslim countries as recently ordered by Donald Trump.

On average, 55% of people in the 10 countries polled want a complete ban with only 20% opposed. The rest are undecided. In countries like France and Belgium, more than 60% want a complete ban. Both of these countries have been subjected to terrorist attacks by ISIS-inspired extremists.

Borders

In 2015, when German Chancellor Angela Merkel opened Germany's borders to anyone arriving from war-torn countries like Syria, other European countries, notably Hungary, built fences to control the flow of refugees.

What is the proper Christian response to this situation? Well, to begin with we must carefully distinguish between refugees and immigrants. Refugees are fleeing places of war, famine and persecution. Immigrants are generally seeking better economic opportunities, as millions of Irish people have over the last two centuries. Refugees are obviously



a higher priority than immigrants because for refugees, gaining a safe haven can be literally a matter of life and death. International law requires countries to give refugee status to those fleeing war etc., so long as they are genuine refugees of course.

Pope Francis has been a consistent advocate on behalf of refugees. Very early in his pontificate, he visited the island of Lampedusa, off the coast of Italy, where many asylum-seekers crossing the Mediterranean Sea from Africa first arrive.

In response to Donald Trump's call to build a wall along the Mexican border, he said Christians build bridges, not walls.

“The aim must always be to help them eventually resettle in the country they have fled so they can help rebuild it”

So, we have a clear moral and legal duty to refugees. We can help them in various ways. One is to grant them haven in our own countries, and another is to send them help where they are, for example, to the refugee camps in places like Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan to which many Syrians have fled, or else to the places in Syria where they are internally displaced.

The aim must always be to help them eventually resettle in the country they have fled so they can help rebuild it. After World War II the vast majority of refugees returned to their home countries. What about immigrants?

As mentioned, they are in a different category because they are not fleeing for their lives, but are simply moving in search of a better life.

In this regard, two goods need to be held in balance. One is the good of the would-be immigrant, and the second is the good of the receiving community. Not even countries built on immigration, like America, Canada or Australia, have open border policies that allow in anyone who wants to come. This would be unfair on their own citizens. This is why every country that can, regulates immigration. One year they will allow in more, and another year they will allow in less.

This makes perfect sense. Imagine if the whole population of Cork was to move to Dublin in the space of one year. It would be extremely strange, irresponsible actually, not to raise concerns about the effect this might have on school places, hospital places, jobs and wages, the price and availability of housing, and so on.

Every debate about immigration (as distinct from refugees) should have as its starting point striking the right balance between the good of the immigrant and the good of the host country.

Australia

I lived in Australia for a number of years after I left university. I went there for a bit of adventure, but also because the economy here was so bad at the time. But I never thought for a second that I had any right to emigrate to Australia or that Australia had any obligation to take me in. In order to gain

dependent on the Australian state from day one.

We don't ask these things of refugees because they are in a different category altogether and because the assumption is that they will eventually return home. Many don't, of course, but that is a story for another day.

“The UN defines an immigrant as someone who was born overseas”

Ireland does not have many refugees. This is because we are hard to get to and also because many refugees don't want to come here. They often want to go to places where there are already large communities of their own. That makes sense. People like the familiar.

But we have very many immigrants, more as a percentage of our population than Britain, where there

is an ongoing debate about immigration.

The UN defines an immigrant as someone who was born overseas. Based on this definition, 13% of people in Britain are immigrants versus 17% here.

Of the 17%, 10% are from the EU, and 7% from outside the EU. The non-EU percentage has nearly doubled in the last few years.

What effect, for good or ill, is this having on our own communities? For example, is it putting any strain on hospital and school places? We don't really know because these questions are not being asked – in fact they are barely permitted.

But it is perfectly legitimate to ask them. To repeat, a prudent, just and moral immigration policy balances two goods; the good of the immigrant, and the good of the host community. What is the right balance for Ireland? It's a good question. It should be asked.

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Martin McGuinness: 1950-2017

Martin McGuinness – a leader and peacemaker

Martin McGuinness will be forever remembered for his key role in building the peace after almost 30 years of violent conflict, when many had almost despaired of ever finding a peaceful way forward.

He will also be remembered for his close friendship with Dr Ian Paisley in the power-sharing Executive established under the terms of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.

As a politician, his policy was always to show respect for those who were his political opponents. He remained firm in his republican belief in a reunified Ireland – but he always showed respect to

He did more than most to take the gun out of Irish politics, writes **Fr Joe McVeigh**

those who differed.

He epitomised this in his attitude to Dr Paisley and to Britain's Queen Elizabeth II. In this regard, he was, I believe, inspired by the example of African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela in South Africa.

Martin was very critical of those who, after the ceasefire and the Good Friday Agreement, continued to use violence. This brought him into conflict with those, some of them former members of Sinn

Féin, who never accepted the 1998 Agreement.

Martin became aware of his Irish identity from an early age and was conscious of the disastrous effects of partition and one-party unionist rule in his home city of Derry.

He was born in the Bogside where there was very high unemployment and deprivation. When the British reacted militarily to the civil rights campaign, Martin, like many others of his generation, joined the Provisional IRA to defend his people in the Bogside.

The event which had the biggest impact on him as a youth was Bloody Sunday in January 1972 when 13 unarmed civilians were shot dead by members of the British Parachute regiment. After that, he emerged as the leading republican in Derry and in 1973, along with Gerry Adams and others he was brought to London to engage in talks with the British government that might lead to a cessation of violence. Sadly, those talks came to nothing.

“Martin McGuinness was one of the people mainly responsible for taking the gun out of Irish politics”

Martin McGuinness was a proud Derry man with strong Donegal connections. His mother hailed from near Buncrana and he loved going there in his youth.

He enjoyed fishing and walking. Martin always dressed impeccably.

He had a striking resemblance to one Art Garfunkel. He was six foot plus tall and of slim build, athletic-looking and walked with a swagger. People were attracted to him – young working-class people especially.

Wherever he went there was a buzz as when he went around the country canvassing in the presidential election campaign in 2011.

The Martin McGuinness I knew was humble, personable and courageous.



Martin McGuinness being welcomed by Fr Joe McVeigh.

I remember seeing him in Milltown Cemetery the day that the loyalist fanatic Michael Stone threw hand grenades into the mourners killing a number of people. Martin took charge and restored calm to a panicked crowd that day.

I was often amazed at his skill and composure in answering difficult questions on radio and television. He was both intelligent and articulate.

Martin McGuinness was one of the people mainly responsible for taking the gun out of Irish politics. He was a born leader. People looked up to him and trusted him. He was the man who pointed to a political way forward for republicanism.

Healing

He was the Sinn Féin leader who reached out to the unionists in order to begin a process of reconciliation. As deputy First Minister in the North's Executive, Martin was always gracious, dignified and fair.

His symbolic gestures in reaching out to those who were once his enemies were

made to promote the process of healing and reconciliation that is so badly needed.

On a personal note last November when the windows in my house were broken in a sectarian attack he was one of the first to phone up to express his outrage and horror. I have many fond memories of this wonderful man.

“I was pleasantly surprised at the amount of positive response from DUP quarters to Ian Jnr's comments”

When he resigned as deputy First Minister last Christmas, I heard the kind words spoken by Ian Paisley Jnr about Martin McGuinness and his good wishes and expression of gratitude to him. I was not surprised since Martin had told me how well received he was at Dr Paisley's wake by Eileen Paisley and the whole family.

I was pleasantly surprised at the amount of positive

response from DUP quarters to Ian Jnr's comments and pleasantly surprised at the genuine compliments paid to Martin McGuinness by many on the radio programme.

There is now hope for peace in a new Ireland, thanks to Martin and others who worked hard to achieve an end to militarism. Someone has compared Martin to Michael Collins. He certainly had that charisma they say that Collins had. He also had his great stamina.

He was bright and intelligent. He was a great family man, always close to his mother, father and siblings.

His wife, Bernie and their daughters and son and grandchildren were the most important people in his life.

They will miss him the most. May they get the strength to cope with their great loss. Suaimhneas Siorraí.

Ar dhéis Dé go raibh a anam uasal.

📌 Fermanagh-based priest Fr Joe McVeigh is a justice campaigner and a close friend of Martin McGuinness.

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Martin Mansergh

Martin McGuinness – the man I navigated the road to the peace process with

Martin McGuinness was a tough paramilitary leader who became a statesman. It required a lot of intelligence, courage, skill and tenacity to recognise around 1990 that armed struggle, and even the twin armalite and ballot box strategy, had reached a dead end, where it could go no further, except backwards, and to seek help in finding a way out of the impasse, not just for his movement, but for his community and his country. The personal risks for him were very high.

Politics

He was the one chosen to do most of the private talking behind the scenes in what is now called back-channel diplomacy, exploring the potential for ending conflict and participating fully in politics, where in the 1980s a party platform had been built. First, with the help of a couple of Derry intermediaries, a secret channel to the British was re-opened.

Sometime later, a separate channel was also re-opened with the Irish Government

Let's hope his achievements will influence those who come after him

through the Department of the Taoiseach. The dialogue was both at the level of principle, allowing pursuit of the legitimate objective of a united Ireland, in keeping with both consent and the right of self-determination concurrently exercised, and also more immediate practicalities, which would allow confidence to be built and normalisation to take place.

Martin McGuinness' discussions with the Taoiseach's representative (myself) all took place, using the good offices of Fr Alex Reid, in the Redemptorist Monastery in Dundalk, and once or twice in Orwell Road in Dublin. There were also regular meetings between John Hume and Gerry Adams in Clonard Monastery.

When ceasefires were achieved, they needed to be underpinned by a peace agreement. Adams and McGuinness and some of their colleagues were in

constant touch with British, Irish and American officials, and, when negotiations finally got under way, had many meetings with Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern.

The task was not only to find a path forward that would satisfy the basic needs of the different parties, but also to keep in constant touch with the movement so as to be able to bring it with them.

“He was the one chosen to do most of the private talking behind the scenes”

The Good Friday Agreement was an outstanding negotiating achievement. Not many leaders of similar type movements abroad were able to achieve as much. It took the best part of 10 years to work through thorny issues of decommissioning and policing reform, and

Martin McGuinness with Adams was at the centre of those discussions, which experienced many upsets along the way.

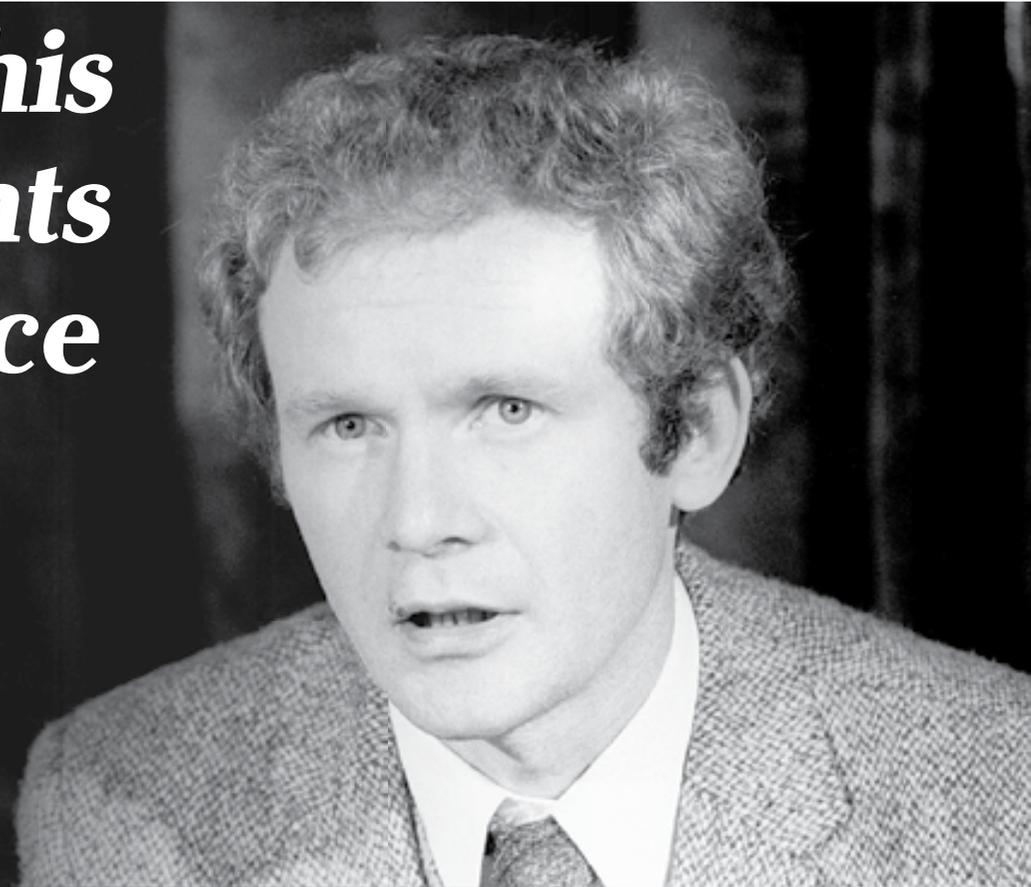
Finally, in 2007 Martin McGuinness took on board as deputy First Minister the formidable task of making the agreement work at an institutional level with Dr Ian Paisley and his successors, and it was a tremendous achievement to sustain this without major interruption for almost 10 years.

The recent success of Sinn Féin at the polls in Northern Ireland was an endorsement of his efforts.

He also earned much credit for his conciliatory gestures, in relation to meeting Britain's Queen Elizabeth II, and his attitude to First World War commemorations, and his party eventually adopted his more positive attitude to the European Union by opposing Brexit. His experience will be

sorely missed, but it is to be hoped that his achievements will influence those who come after him.

i Martin Mansergh is a former Minister of State and a long-time negotiator in the peace process.



Redoubling efforts for peace a 'fitting legacy' – Archbishop Eamon Martin

A fitting legacy for Martin McGuinness would be a redoubling of efforts on all sides to find solutions to “our current problems” according to the Primate of All Ireland. Archbishop Eamon Martin paid tribute to Mr McGuinness as “someone who chose personally to leave behind the path of violence and to walk instead along the more challenging path of peace and reconciliation”.

“As a leader he was courageous and took risks in order to bring others with him, convincing them that goals could be achieved by politics and persuasion,” the Archbishop of Armagh said. “He channelled his many gifts into creating and sustaining the peace process of

which he was one of the key architects. I have no doubt that Martin's faith and relationship with God guided him along this journey.”

The archbishop said Mr McGuinness was “a man of prayer” and he was personally grateful “for his good wishes and encouragement to me, as a fellow Derry man, in my own vocation”.

“The story of conflict in Ireland has brought much pain and trauma and I thank God that in recent years we have preferred peace to the horror of violence and war,” he said. “People like Martin McGuinness have made an immense contribution to sustaining peace by reaching out a hand of

friendship and reconciliation and being prepared to model alternatives to dispute and division.”

The primate spoke of Mr McGuinness' personal warmth and open, friendly personality which was able to “melt away suspicion and help build trust with those coming from very different perspectives”.

“Being grounded in love for his family, community and native city of Derry, he understood the importance of a peaceful, just and prosperous future for all. Martin was ambitious for peace. He knew that peace was worth striving for and was within reach in his life time,” Archbishop Eamon said.




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Greg Daly explores the historical roots of the mentality that created Tuam's Mother and Baby Home

History and commemoration are, as President Higgins observed in a speech in Dublin's Mansion House almost exactly a year ago, different things.

Commemoration, he noted, is typically mediated through present-day concerns, and stands always in danger of being exploited for partisan

purposes, at risk of the backward imputation of motives, the uncritical transfer of contemporary emotions onto the past, and forms of public history intended to secure the present "by invoking an 'appropriate' past, or, in des-

peration, by calling for such an amnesia as might allow a bland transition to the future".

The President's speech at the 'Remembering 1916' symposium was remarkable both for the wisdom of such observations and for its

failure to abide by the warnings it sounded. Deafening by its silence in the speech was an acknowledgement of the extent to which the Easter Rising had been, in many ways, a religious rebellion by a religious people.

Religion is alluded to in the speech only in the context of the recruitment campaigns of what President Higgins called "a supremacist and militarist imperialism", an unexplored reference to the Easter Proclamation's guarantee of religious liberty, and a lengthy criticism of what the President described as a "conservative reaction" to the ideals of 1916. Independent Ireland was in its early decades increasingly subjected to hierarchical and patriarchal values, he said, observing that a property-driven conservatism became Ireland's dominant ideology.

Private property

"The fetishing of land and private property, a restrictive religiosity, and a repressive pursuit of respectability, affecting in particular women, became the defining social and cultural ideals of the newly independent Ireland," he said.

In fairness to the President, his analysis of how Ireland's economy and society had been transformed in the decades ahead of the Rising, though simplistic, had merit: the Famine and subsequent emigration had annihilated Ireland's landless labourers, while the Land Acts had turned tens of thousands of rural tenants into peasant proprietors.

"Beyond any notion of sufficiency or security of tenure, a new grazier class emerged, often in alliance with professionals and with those who controlled rural commerce and credit," he said, continuing, "These were the classes who would be set to rise in the new State."

For the President, this native class of conservative landowners, whose ideology merged notions of class, property, and respectability, would smother the radicalism of the

Easter Proclamation and the Democratic Programme of the First Dáil.

There's something to this thesis, of course, and any number of anecdotes can be drawn on to support it but numbers alone should make us reject that what happened after independence was in any sense a betrayal of or reaction to the cause of independence.

The very first meeting of the First Dáil was attended by just 27 of the 105 MPs elected in the 1918 general election, with 42 of Sinn Féin's 69 MPs being absent, the bulk of the absentees being detained at the pleasure of His Majesty. Subject only to the briefest of the debates, the Democratic Programme had been in its first draft, according to historian Joe Lee, "an attempt to foist on the Dáil a programme that had never been presented to the electorate".

“The Church dominated the State, Irish politicians fawned before the Church...”

Even its hastily redrafted final form, Brian Farrell wrote in *The Creation of the Dáil*, did not represent the social and economic ideas of the First Dáil, and, Lee notes, incorporated more of the social doctrine of the Easter Proclamation than the electorate could realistically be deemed to have sanctioned.

If it is difficult to make a case that the social intentions of the First Dáil had popular legitimacy, being suppressed only by an elitist conservative counter-revolution, an investigation of subsequent elections should quash such claims.

With men and women

having equal voting rights from 1922 on, elections through the 1920s and 1930s saw parties that most would deem socially conservative – leaving aside how for much of that period the Labour Party was hardly a radical group – getting 68%, 77%, 72%, 80%, 82%, 89%, 80%, and 85% of the vote.

Inconvenient truth

If Ireland was a socially conservative country, it was because Ireland's voters – women as much as men – voted for it to be so.

That the vast majority of these voters were Catholic is a truism; although the Catholicity of the bulk of the rebels of 1916 and the War of Independence is at best an inconvenient truth for many nowadays who would laud those who took part in our independence struggle, so the "restrictive religiosity" of the new State is a convenient stick with which to beat the Catholic dog.

For too many, the story of the first decades of Irish independence can easily be told: the Church dominated the State, Irish politicians fawned before the Church, and if Catholic ideology dominated in Irish society, well, this was only because long years of clerical control had conditioned Irish people to toe a Catholic line.

It would, of course, be nonsense to claim that the Church was not a key influence on the mind of Irish society during the decades on either side of our independence struggle, but it would just as nonsensical, however, to claim that it was the only such influence or to deny that Irish society was a key influence on the mind of the Church.

Indeed, there's a strong case for asking, as Fr Vincent Twomey did in his 2003 book *The End of Irish Catholicism?*,

Children of the Famine



Peasants at a workhouse gate during the Famine.

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just how Catholic 'Catholic Ireland' was through the 19th and 20th Centuries.

A clue that something was amiss can be seen most obviously in the attitudes of newly independent Ireland to poverty and destitution. "In truth there was often a tendency to see poverty as representing a flaw in the national character: a lack of thrift, independence, or of 'manly desire' to want to earn a living," observes Diarmaid Ferriter in *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000*, in an analysis of the 'moral panic' that was rife in 1920s Ireland and that the Church had played no small part in stirring up.

Treasury in Heaven

That such an interpretation of poverty was alien to Catholicism and traditional Christianity should not need saying. The Book of Daniel, after all, had assumed that money given to the poor could pay down a debt built up in Heaven, with Tobit deploying the image of a treasury in Heaven funded directly by almsgiving and Sirach identifying the poor as a class of people through whom one could demonstrate reverence

for God.

Almsgiving for the purposes of reconciliation was central to the thinking of the early and medieval Church, aware as it was of these Old Testament teachings and Our Lord's words in Matthew 25 about how love shown to the poor was, in practice, love shown to God himself.

This understanding unravelled during the 16th-Century Reformation, when Protestants banished Tobit from the Bible and rejected the notion that good works were necessary for salvation, casting them instead as important signs of salvation, for which all that was needed was faith in Christ alone.

The workhouse system in England arose as a solution to the growth in visible poverty following the dissolution of the monasteries that had cared for the poor, regardless of whether poor people were deemed to deserve help or not. In time distinctions were drawn between those poor who were 'deserving' and those who were not.

By the time of the Acts of Union in 1800, over two million people in Ireland lived in destitution, and the first

decades of Catholic 'respectability' since the Reformation and Penal Laws saw the introduction of British institutions – notably workhouses during the period of the Famine.

It also gave birth to a provincial mentality, with Ireland now simply a part of the UK. This led over time to Irish Catholicism taking on a new character, one marked by whatever devotional reading was available in English and where the same social pressures that drove the abandonment of the Irish language also promoted and inculcated a tendency to conform to the norms of respectable Victorian society.

“Throughout the 1920s it was a commonplace that Irish morality was in decline”

The result, Fr Twomey observes, was in some ways "a Protestant culture decked out in some second-hand Catholic garments".

The first decade of independence would be the decade that saw the genesis of the

Mother and Baby Homes, an offshoot of the workhouses or 'county homes' that were, with the industrial and reformatory schools, Magdalene laundries and psychiatric hospitals, part of the what the 2013 McAleese Report identified as the new State's "inherited networks of social control".

The same decade saw a decision to ramp up reliance on the industrial school system such that even as early as 1924, independent Ireland had more children in industrial schools than did the entirety of the UK.

Throughout the 1920s it was a commonplace that Irish morality was in decline, and it is no coincidence that this was a concern beyond Catholic conversations.

High reputation

As Ferriter notes in *Occasions of Sin: Sex and Society in Modern Ireland*, even the Protestant-oriented *The Irish Times* decreed in a 1927 editorial that: "Throughout the centuries, Ireland has enjoyed a high reputation for the cardinal virtues of social life. She was famous for her men's chivalry and for her women's modesty. Today, every hon-

est Irishman must admit that this reputation is in danger ... our first need is full recognition of the fact that today the nation's proudest and most precious heritage is slipping from its grasp."

“The technique of birth control devised by post-famine Ireland required vigorous self-control”

This sort of language was hardly unusual in the Europe of the day, still traumatised as it was by the devastation of the Great War and the social turmoil that had unleashed, but it had extra frisson in newly independent Ireland, determined to justify its independence after centuries of foreign occupation. The Easter Proclamation had pledged the lives of Irish people to their country's "exaltation among the nations", with Ireland being called to an "august destiny", this being, it was clear, to be the teacher of the nations, once more the bearer of Christian truth and wisdom.

There would be little point

in talking such a talk without walking the walk too, of course, so the prospect of Ireland's moral decline – testified to by, among other things, rising numbers of extramarital births – was terrifying. Sex was a threat as potent as poverty to Ireland's desired image, and had been so since the Famine.

"The technique of birth control devised by post-famine Ireland, late and few marriages, required vigorous self-control from the disinherited, and indeed from the inheritors until they belatedly came into their legacy," observes Lee.

Noting that the only way to protect the property interests and social structures of Ireland following the Famine was to lay an "exceptional emphasis" on the perils of sex, he observes that Ireland's clergy, Catholic and Protestant, were children of a society that believed it needed this emphasis.

Early attempts to dismiss Catherine Corless's research claimed any bones found there were simply 'Famine graves'. In a strange and profound way, it appears that they were just that.

ADVERTORIAL

Families invited to celebrate 'Family Day' at Knock Shrine

On Saturday, April 8, Knock Shrine will welcome Archbishop Michael Neary and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin for one of the most important events of the year entitled 'Celebrating Family; Preparing for World Meeting of Families 2018'.

This will be a day-long event, the main purpose of which is to invite families to the National Shrine and help them to prepare for the World Meeting of Families next year.

It is also an important aspect of trying to link in with Pope Francis' message of renewal of faith in Ireland and of the family.

Fr Richard Gibbons, P.P., Rector of Knock Shrine is hoping that the day will be both informative and inspiring for families.

"We hope that it will offer families the opportunity to start thinking about the WMOF 2018 and how it can inspire and guide them in family life," Fr Gibbons said.

"The family as a collective, faces enormous challenges today, however it is hoped that this event will be a positive and meaningful connection for people, facilitating

open discussion, time for questions as well as a prayerful and special day with family Mass celebrated by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin and Archbishop Michael Neary."

The programme for the day will consist of a number of talks, including a presentation from keynote speaker Fr Timothy Bartlett, Secretary General for the World Meeting of Families who will discuss the theme chosen by Pope Francis for WMOF2018, 'The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World' and provide information to give families a better understanding of the various aspects of the celebration.

Discussion with Families

Breda O'Brien, columnist for *The Irish Times* will facilitate a public discussion from a number of families who will speak of their own personal experiences and the challenges of living as a Catholic family today. This will be open and relatable for families coming to Knock from all over the country. The afternoon will offer opportunity for questions and further discussion with the speakers.

Fr Richard continued: "In light of all the heart breaking news that has come out in recent weeks, it is hoped

that this will offer people the opportunity to engage with the new direction Pope Francis is taking and renewed hope for the life of the Church in Ireland."

A range of workshops and activities will be made available for children (aged five years and over) and young people who are attending the day with their parents.

This will be facilitated by the Youth Ministry at the Shrine who run the HUB programme every summer, offering children and young people a fun, safe and happy environment to learn more about their faith.

The activities will be available in the Rest & Care Centre to coincide with the talks throughout the day. Youth are also asked to get involved in the Mass which will be celebrated by at 3pm in the Basilica.

The day is just one of a number of new events taking place at the Shrine as a part of the Faith Renewal programme which seeks to connect people with their faith.

Find out more at www.knockshrine.ie/faithrenewal



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11.00am Fr Timothy Bartlett, Secretary General for World Meeting of Families 2018

12noon Breda O'Brien discussion with families. Breda is a teacher and columnist with the Irish Times

12.45 - 2.00pm Break for Lunch

2.00 - 2.45pm Forum Q & A with Speakers

3.00pm MASS in the Basilica celebrated by Most Rev. Archbishop Michael Neary, D.D. and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, D.D.

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Schools are struggling to articulate Catholic ethos

‘Catholic’ has to mean more than a sign over the school door, writes **Bairbre Cahill**

Timidity, a lack of clarity and confidence, fragmentation, consciousness of a damaged brand. These were just some of the challenges articulated by a group of school principals, teachers, members of Boards of Management and local clergy at a recent conference in Letterkenny. ‘Catholic schools – opportunities and challenges in a pluralist society’ was the title of the conference at which Dr Daire Keogh from DCU was the keynote speaker.

Dr Keogh urged participants to challenge media perceptions of what Catholic schools are. Education is not a functional or mechanical process but the work of inspiration and formation.

The relationship between the teacher and pupil is essential. As Catholics, we are called to believe in and share the good news of Jesus Christ and to co-operate with God’s vision of how the world can be. So, for Catholic schools, education is about transformation of the individual and society.

Forum

The café style set up created a forum for conversation. Participants explored the strengths and weaknesses of Catholic ethos within their schools and then the opportunities and challenges presented by the political, cultural and media context within which we live. Conversations were strikingly open and honest.

The opportunity to dialogue, to be energised and challenged by the vision and commitment of each other was greatly valued.

The feedback highlighted many issues. Catholic ethos is hugely dependent on the commitment and loving generosity of our teachers. Consequently, there is a need to nurture our teachers, to help them grow in faith and take ownership of their experience of God, so that they can inspire and nurture the children in their care.

Catholic ethos is more than a mission statement or the



Bishop Philip Boyce, Bairbre Cahill (facilitator and organiser), Dr Daire Keogh (DCU, main speaker) and Colm Breathnach (organiser) at an education conference in Letterkenny.



Conversation between teachers, principals and board members.

presence of religious imagery in school classrooms.

“Catholic schools have long been the dominant influence in the Irish education system. The danger is that we have become complacent”

Participants identified the culture within the school, how the liturgical calendar shapes the life of the school, prayer, the capacity for a faith-based understanding and celebration of school life, that each person is created

in the image and likeness of God.

These elements underpin the hospitality and openness of the school not just to Catholic families, but to the rich diversity of children who make up our school communities.

Catholic schools have long been the dominant influence in the Irish education system. The danger is that we have become complacent. We have not asked ourselves those vital questions about who we are and what our purpose is.

As a result, we have left ourselves now in a vulnerable position struggling to articulate what a Catholic ethos looks like and feels like in real life.

Participants noted that

reality has also shifted within the Catholic school. Many families send their children to a Catholic school and expect them to receive the sacraments despite the fact that the family has little engagement with or commitment to the Faith.

Challenges

It can no longer be taken for granted that all teachers – or indeed principals – believe or practise their faith. This clearly adds to the challenges of living out a vibrant Catholic ethos in a school.

Being Catholic has to mean more than words on a sign over the school door. Schools however cannot take on the responsibility for the faith development of the whole



Conference feedback forms.

family.

There was a clear call for parishes to find new ways to help families grow in faith. Moreover, parishes need to become more involved in sacramental preparation programmes so that this vital part of our children’s faith development comes to be seen as family, school and parish truly working together.

Perhaps the greatest challenge was the suggestion that we need to engage positively and creatively with the Government’s process of divestment.

“We need to find our voice and engage with the media to promote a more honest and authentic view of what a Catholic school is”

Choice is a positive thing both for families who do not want a Catholic education for their children and for some teachers.

Greater choice offers Catholic schools the opportunity to be more authentically Catholic.

Some participants felt that the theory works but their anxiety was for the security of jobs in their own schools. Somehow, we need to find a way of opening up this conversation.

There was a concerted call from participants to have

confidence, to engage in these vital conversations within the whole school community, to redefine our brand and to celebrate it.

Authentic view

We need to find our voice and engage with the media to promote a more honest and authentic view of what a Catholic school is and what it offers to society.

From the buzz and energy in the room it was clear to me as the facilitator that there is great passion and commitment in schools to being a place of encounter with Christ, a place shaped by gospel values.

Teachers and principals spoke about how they often feel they are struggling alone, constantly battling the negative messages perpetuated by the media. The priests present could identify with that experience.

All were energised by the sense of solidarity, the shared vision and the realisation that so many good initiatives growing and celebrating faith are happening across the schools in the area on a daily basis.

Clearly more needs to be done to build this network.

Indeed it was suggested that with so many Catholic patrons across Ireland we need to work together, find our voice and engage the media in a positive and consistent way.



The girl from the 2004 Trócaire box tells **Mags Gargan** how the charity changed her life

Josiane Umumarashavu saw the sea for the first time last week on Dollymount Strand in Dublin's Clontarf. It was a week of firsts for the 26-year-old: the first time on a plane, the first time outside of her native Rwanda, and her first time speaking to large groups of people in English.

She came here to thank the people of Ireland for their support after appearing on the Trócaire box in 2004, when the charity's Lenten campaign focused on Rwanda and highlighted the situation in the country 10 years after the genocide of 1994.

Josiane's father, sister and two of her brothers were killed during the genocide. Her mother and two brothers survived but were struggling to make ends meet, living off a small piece of land and constantly facing the threat of hunger. The generosity of Trócaire supporters helped to provide families such as Josiane's with the farming equipment they needed to improve their food production.

In 2015, Josiane graduated in accounting from university and she now works as a finance intern in the Trócaire office in Rwanda's capital, Kigali.

"I am used to focussing on my numbers," she tells *The Irish Catholic*, as she relates how nervous she was at first about speaking in front of large groups during her tour of schools and parishes across Ireland. But she has enjoyed meeting Irish people, who she describes as "very kind and friendly", especially the children, and one little girl in particular who gave Josiane her pencil as a present.

Skipping

Josiane says when she was photographed happily skipping 13 years ago, she had no idea she would be featured on over one million Trócaire boxes displayed in homes around Ireland, or how that Lenten campaign would change her life.

"When I was a child we struggled to find enough to

The girl on the box



Josiane pictured with her two brothers in Rwanda.



Josiane Umumarashavu with her Trócaire box picture and Lucia Conroy Garcia (8) at St Colmcille's National School.

eat and we faced hunger," she says. "Thanks to Trócaire supporters, families like mine were provided with the different farming equipment we needed to grow more food. The support from the people in Ireland continued to help me and my family long after that campaign had finished.

Because of this support I was able to finish my schooling."

Rwanda is one of the smallest and most densely populated countries in Africa with an estimated 11.5 million inhabitants. The genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi people in 1994 resulted in approximately one million

deaths, with a large number of people still suffering trauma.

Memory

Josiane's earliest memory is when she was three years old, fleeing from home to find a place to hide. "I remembered that my favourite doll was left at home and I cried a lot asking to go back and get it, but it was impossible," she says.

"War affects children in all the ways it affects adults, but also in different ways. Children are dependent on the care, empathy, and attention of adults who love them. These attachments are disrupted in times of war, due to the loss of parents and emotional unavailability of depressed or distracted parents. War affects the life trajectory of children. Many children in war will never attain the potential they had."

Rwanda is classified among the world's poorest countries, ranked 163 out of 188 countries according to the 2015 Human Development

Josiane tells the story behind the Trócaire box picture to students at St Colmcille's National School in Knocklyon, Dublin. Photos: Mark Stedman

Index report. Over the last 22 years the country has made tremendous progress in terms of rebuilding its economy, peace and reconciliation, but it still faces significant challenges.

Agriculture is the main source of food and income, with 87% of people relying on rain-fed farming to feed themselves. Farming is becoming more difficult as rains have become erratic due to climate change.

“My mum works for a local village group who get support from Trócaire”

"When I was a child I used to wake up very early so that I could fetch water for my mum before going to school," Josiane says. "I attended school from 8am-4.30pm. During the weekends, I helped my mother farm. The only thing that pushed me to continue going to school was the hope of finishing my studies someday and find a job to help my family."

Trócaire started working in Rwanda after the genocide in 1994. Today Trócaire continues to work in the country focusing on peace and reconciliation. The organisation is also focusing on agricultural and economic support for families where, despite the peace, poverty is still a challenge to be overcome.

Joining Josiane on her trip

to Ireland is Sr Ancille, from the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of the Angels. She works in the Tree of Life centre, a Trócaire partner in Rwanda that aims to empower women. "We want to give vulnerable women a voice in decisions affecting their lives, so that they are free from any kind of violence, especially gender-based violence, and for them to be capable to defend their rights. We work with them to lift them from poverty so that they can have a better future," Sr Ancille says.

Happy

Josiane still has the 2004 Trócaire box in her office in Kilgali and a copy of the photograph in her home. "It makes me very happy to look at it and to think that people in Ireland saw my photo and thought about life in Rwanda," she says.

"Life is definitely better now. My mum works for a local village group who get support from Trócaire. We have a home, a piece of land, cows and goats. One of my brothers also has finished university studies and the other one is at university now."

"It was amazing to think that people from a different country were interested in my family. Trócaire made my dreams come true. I am so happy to be in Ireland to say thank you and I'm very happy to be now part of the Trócaire team making changes in people's lives in Rwanda."

● This year Trócaire's Lenten campaign highlights the plight of people facing humanitarian crisis around the world. Visit trocaire.org/lent for further information.



With declining numbers of priests, lay people are stepping up to lead worship, writes **Greg Daly**

Necessity, as they say, is the mother of invention, so on Tuesday, April 25, while the clergy of the Diocese of Limerick are gathering with Bishop Brendan Leahy, every parish in the diocese is to have a lay-led liturgy service.

"It relates to the synod we had last April in Limerick," says Fr Eamonn Fitzgibbon, the synod coordinator, who is now director of the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Mary Immaculate College.

"One of the strongly expressed wishes that came out of it was that we would somehow connect liturgy with ordinary folk, and that a lot of our liturgy and prayer would be delivered by ordinary folk," he says, continuing: "We can see that that's clearly a need now with the declining number of clergy and the availability of clergy and religious to lead prayer, as has been traditionally done in Ireland. So we're looking at the whole area of lay people leading prayer and liturgy in their own parish communities."

Describing the April 25 liturgies as "the first step", he says. "Down the road people in parish communities will give a commitment to be involved in leading public prayer, that might include things like receiving remains over the extended period of a funeral, it might include at other times when clergy are unavailable leading prayer in nursing homes – all those kind of moments which traditionally would have been led by clergy would now be led by lay people."

Skills

Noirín Lynch from the Diocesan Pastoral Centre has already been involved in training a group of 90 lay people from around the diocese in this, he says, with her also studying in Maynooth to develop her skills in this area.

"A lot of our pastoral plan is on building capacity at diocesan level, making sure that someone like Noirín is trained up and qualified and competent at diocesan level but then at local level building capacity by training people at local level to do this sort of thing so



Letting the laity lead

they are competent and confident to lead prayer and bring people together," Fr Eamonn says.

The first day's training started with emphasising the centrality of Sunday to the Church, Noirín explains, before considering the role of weekday prayer on behalf of the whole community, looking then at the areas of ritual, prayer, and liturgy.

"Then we went through some templates of what might Morning Prayer look like if we used it, what would a liturgy of the Word look like if we used it. That brought up loads of questions for people. They loved the experience of Morning Prayer, and then went 'Obviously we'd receive Communion,' and I asked 'What if that wasn't possible? Let's talk about that.'"

There can be a tendency to think of the Mass as the only real form of public prayer, says Fr Eamonn, pointing out that, "the Eucharist is the source and the summit and the

fulfilment, but Sunday really is the day that we need to be focused on, and during the week we could explore the whole range of possibilities.

"I think in Ireland we have become very narrow in our understanding of community prayer and liturgy, that it's almost as if it's the Mass and only the Mass," he says, adding, "I'm often reminded of that famous line from *Father Ted*, 'Is there anything to be said for another Mass?'"

“The idea of people having a daily Eucharist is taken to be an unbelievable privilege that is incredibly rare, except in cities”

Certainly how our parishes will cope as our clergy numbers decline is an increasingly pressing issue, and weekday Masses look like an obvious casualty of this, but the question is whether Communion services are a plausible solution.

Spiritan missionary Tom Whelan, who teaches at the National Centre for Liturgy in Maynooth and is visiting professor

of theology in Trinity College Dublin says that, "while Sunday Eucharist is obligatory from a faith point of view, because Sunday is the day of the Resurrection so that Christians always gather on a Sunday, weekday Eucharist is optional and devotional".

Viewed in terms of the Church's history, the notion of ordinary parishioners receiving Communion on a daily basis is a recent development, he says. "This is not a popular thing to say at all, but the reality of parishes everywhere as a norm having daily Eucharist is no older than approximately 150-160 years or so."

Traditional form

Noting that there have always been exceptions in cathedrals and monasteries, he says that through most of the Catholic world: "The idea of people having a daily Eucharist is taken to be an unbelievable privilege that is incredibly rare, except in cities. In these places whatever happens on weekdays is that people have some form of Liturgy of the Hours, or Daily Prayer – Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer, and it's normally not necessarily the version of Evening Prayer that clergy might pray. It would be a much more

traditional form, that lay people could lead themselves."

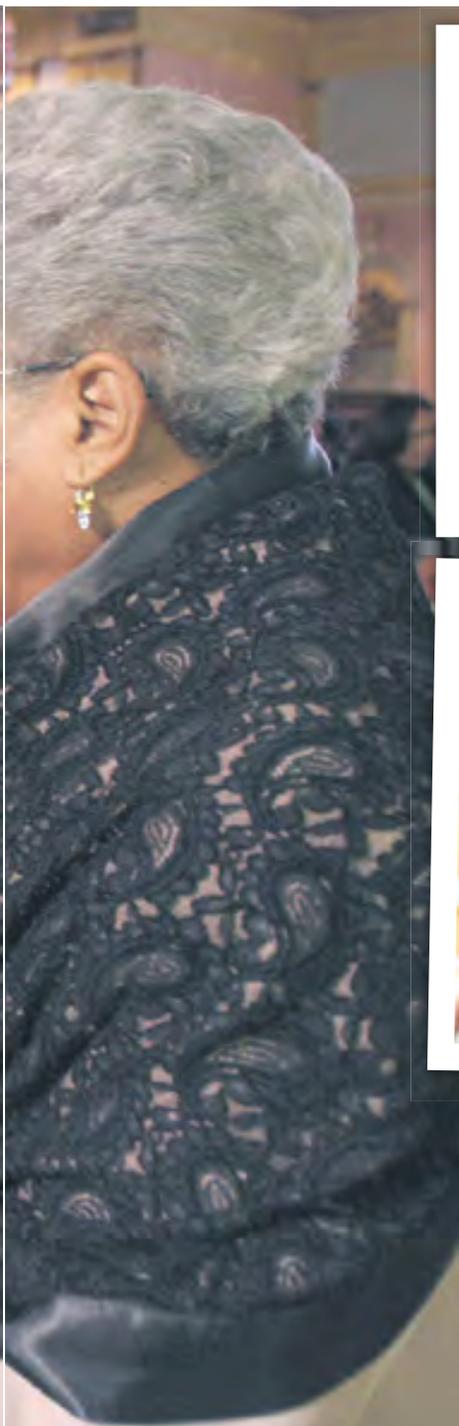
Recalling how the Liturgy of the Hours dates back to the Church's early history and is the traditional daily prayer of the Church, Tom admits that it would have been rare – if it happened at all – for entire parishes to gather to pray the Office in this way, but says, "when we move away from a sense of individualism in prayer – saying 'I'm going off now for my Mass' – and when you look at the corporate, it means that you are able to make the accurate statement that our parish prays every day. Now, maybe Mrs Murphy or Mr O'Brien can't be there, but it's still the parish that's praying."

“Eucharist is meant to be an action – we take, we break, we share”

Keen that simple versions of Daily Prayer should become more common, he says Ireland's vocational decline is hardly grounds to turn to Communion services to replace regular Masses, observing: "Countries like ourselves complain about lack of vocations, but proportionately



Fr Eamonn Fitzgibbon.



Bishop Brendan Leahy speaking at the Limerick Diocesan synod.

Reading the Liturgy of the Hours.



pastoral questions that come up here, and how this is dealt with in a pastoral context is slightly different from the cleaner profiles that theology might propose," he says.

Creativity will be needed in terms of what speaks to people and connects with their lives, says Fr Eamonn. "The challenge is we also have people who are very committed to the Eucharist and wish to receive Communion and we need to honour that. We need to be respectful of that, so whatever happens it needs to be done sensitively and carefully. We need to be very mindful of the pastoral reality on the ground.

Commitment

"There's no point in a dictat coming from on high, saying this is how we're going to do things and we're going to make you like it whether you like it or not – that can't happen."

Many of Ireland's daily Massgoers have a profound commitment to the Eucharist and to receiving Communion, he says, so it can be difficult for them to understand why, if they're gathering, they cannot receive.

There can be a real sense of loss around this issue, says Noírín, explaining, "people are used to the opportunity of daily Mass and when there isn't that possibility, it raises the question of how do we celebrate on weekdays".

She agrees with Fr Eamonn in emphasising the necessary distinction between Sunday as core day and weekdays as days when the community comes together to pray. The question is what form their gatherings should take: should they be liturgies of the Word – with or without

Communion services – or should they be versions of the Morning Prayer of the Church?

"One of the things in the Second Vatican Council that was very strong was that they used the image of the table of the Word, not just the table of the Eucharist," says Fr Eamonn, "We never really broke that open, we never really managed to create that sense that the Word too is something that nourishes us and brings us life, where Jesus is present, and how do we create a sense among ourselves of the table of the Word being as important and as valued as the table of the Eucharist. There's a challenge there."



He notes that "the priority is about keeping the community together to pray and worship regardless of whether or not a priest is available to them", and Noírín says: "There's also another conversation about the parish being the faith community where people gather. Sometimes you say what's most important is Mass, and people can get into their car and drive somewhere, but then what happens to the sense of community and praying on behalf of the people of God?"

"When people gather on a weekday morning, they're not just gathering for the 15 people who are

there," she continues, "when we gather for liturgy, the official Prayer of the Church, we don't gather for ourselves alone. Our prayer includes all the people of the parish and beyond. It's about the parish seeing itself as a faith community, not simply a service where Father comes out and serves, but that actually the parish is alive."

The challenge, then, is to empower people, to give the laity the kind of role that the Council envisaged them having and that Limerick's synod sought to recall.

Tom thinks that one useful way of promoting the Liturgy of the Hours in parishes would be for priests to join parishioners in this where possible, not taking over leadership but simply praying alongside the people. "It would be a very small but important way of giving that a bit of status," he says.

This isn't the first time Limerick has tried to promote lay leadership, Noírín says, noting: "We did this 10 or 15 years ago and people did the training, but though people thought it was a nice idea they didn't feel there was a need," she said, adding people now realise that "we're in a different time".

After the first training day, she says, participants were urged to go home to reflect and discuss things with their priests. "Priests are the liturgy leaders in the parish, so if you're going to be leading liturgy or public prayer, you're going to be with them preparing that – it's going to be very much about the whole parish together, not about being separate," she says.

The participants will meet again on April 1 to look at practical resources for lay-led liturgies, very practically walking through what's involved in leading liturgies, fitting with Scripture, and how the liturgies of the Word can be prepared for and the Gospel reflected upon so, for instance, Prayers of the Faithful come from prayerful reflection on Scripture, not merely our own thoughts.

“Any of this now is looking towards the long term, towards the future, 10, 15, 20 years down the road”

A third meeting will follow in which participants reflect on their experience of lay-led liturgy, she says, and look to the future. "What we really want is that in every parish, people will say what is the need for public prayer now, so some parishes will say we have a daily Mass, but we don't have anyone to go to funeral homes or to pray with people in their homes when they're waking a family member, or they have a nursing home and they're not able to offer daily Mass there, but we could go down maybe twice a week and offer a prayer service," she says.

Ultimately, this is all building for the future, says Fr Eamonn. "Any of this now is looking towards the long term, towards the future, 10, 15, 20 years down the road, so

these are kind of initial tentative steps, a new way of doing things that will evolve and develop and we'll see lay people taking on greater roles and far more responsibility in terms of all of that world of liturgy."

Lots of parishioners already have the ability to lead parish liturgies, Noírín notes, but lack the confidence to do so, so the training aims to tackle the issue of whether parishes feel capable of gathering together in prayer in the absence of a priest – it shouldn't be the case, she says, that a parish says "when we needed to gather and pray, we didn't have the confidence to do it".

“It's about trying to build community, imagination will be needed to do this, as well as more focus on the theology of the Eucharist”

"It's about giving people resources and skills so that when we need to gather and pray, if a priest isn't available to lead us, that we're able to do that, always saying that it comes back to Sunday Mass at the heart of where we are, and that we would hope that we would have daily Mass where possible, but that we would never say that we don't know how to gather," she says.

It's about trying to build community, she says, saying that imagination will be needed to do this, as well as more focus on the theology of the Eucharist. "What we really need is probably a general catechesis around Eucharist not being simply reception. There's the piece that when we gather, we are part of an action, that God is acting, transforming us. That whole Eucharistic prayer is fundamental. If you lose that sense of what Eucharist is, it becomes a sort of private devotion in public," she cautions.

Communicants

While noting how warmly people respond to the Liturgy of the Hours when introduced to it, she is keen to stress that the feelings of daily communicants need to be respected at a time when weekday Masses will become less and less frequent.

"People are grieving a loss, it's a relationship and how they relate and connect with Jesus Christ in their daily lives, so sometimes it can sound like people talking about rights, but actually what we have to do is explore how the Word could be as nourishing as Eucharist, but not to just jump in and say 'you should know this'," she says.

"It's about journeying together," she says, continuing: "In practice we're bringing people from a place to somewhere and the pastoral journey is quite important. If we miss the journey we could lose people who've been with us always. It's a duty of care really to people who are our core, and are gathering every day to pray for us."

Out&About

Fundraising bazaar for Tralee Church



KERRY: The bazaar committee, and student helpers, with Canon James Linnane, Fr Bernard Healy and Fr Francis Nolan at the presentation of a cheque for €38,724 by Margaret Crean and Fr Piotr Delimat to Fr Tadhg Fitzgerald PP, St John's Church, Tralee for the upkeep of the three churches in the parish. Photo: John Cleary



KERRY: Fr Tadhg Fitzgerald and Aileen Murphy introducing people to the UN walk-in Gift Box in Tralee. The Gift Box aims to raise awareness about human trafficking and its Irish tour is a joint initiative of the Loreto Sisters and APT (Act to Prevent Trafficking).



CAVAN: Angela O'Reilly and Treasa McCabe who welcomed Kizito Mutahi from Trócaire when he spoke in Kingscourt parish about the 2017 Trócaire campaign.



OFFALY: Bishop Denis Nulty with parishioners from Rhode parish on a windswept Croghan Hill following the annual pilgrimage on St Patrick's Day.



WESTMEATH: Second year students from Colaiste Mhuire in Mullingar provided a Lenten reflection for teenagers at the Cathedral of Christ the King during a Day of Prayer organised as part of a 15-hour prayer vigil for the season of Lent.

Edited by Mags Gargan
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Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



CORK: Young Social Innovators (YSI) from St Mary's, Mallow advocate for change at the YSI Speak Out supported by Ulster Bank in Cork City Hall. The Speak Out tour is part of the YSI of the Year Awards which challenges young people to think differently and come up with ways to tackle social issues affecting them and their communities. Photo: Darragh Kane



DOWN: Aidan Vaughan with his son Jarlath at the baptismal font in the garden of the parochial house in Ballygalget (near Portaferry) where his father, Alfred Vaughan, was baptised in 1897 by Fr Richard McBride.



MAYO: James and Mark Barbieri brought up symbols of St Patrick to the altar at the St Patrick's Day Mass in Knock Basilica.



CARLOW: Some of the 33 Pope John Paul II award recipients from Graiguecullen & Killeslin parish pictured at a youth Mass at the weekend.

CLARE

International centennial pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fatima is coming to Ennis Cathedral on Friday, March 24 for 10am Mass.

Lenten talk in Ennis Cathedral by Brigid Haran, counsellor with Sláinte an Chláir, during the 12noon Mass on Sunday, March 26.

CORK

Catholic Bible teaching and healing with Johnson Sequeira on Friday, March 24 Leahy's Farm, 10am-1pm; Saturday, March 25 Mitchelstown Parish Hall, 10.30am-7pm, Mass at 3pm with Fr Michael Fitzgerald; Sunday, March 26 Glounthaune, 11am-9pm, Mass with Fr Ted at 12.

DUBLIN

Ewe Thina: We Walk God's Way. Want to get fit? Embrace God in nature and build true friendships? Join other young adults (20's & 30's) for reflective hikes around Dublin area. Monthly event. Contact: siobhan.tighe@dublindiocese.ie, <https://www.facebook.com/wewalkgodsway>

Missionary Sisters of St Peter Claver will hold their annual Spring Sale of Work at St Joseph's Parish Hall in Terenure on Sunday, April 2 from 10.30am-3pm in aid of Fr Anthony Reddy from the Karimnagar Parish in India. Tel: 01 490 93 60

'Monday at the Monastery' at the Presentation Brothers' house in Glashule, concludes on March 27, with Marianne Quinn from 7.30-9pm. Booking is advisable by emailing events@PresentationBrothers.org

The Encounter: Join other young adults for a night of live acoustic music from Riaghan O'Callaghan, reflective prayer in adoration, with guest speaker Donncha McKenna, followed by pizza & refreshments on Friday, March 24 at 8pm in St Paul's Church, Arran Quay. st.pauls@dublindiocese.ie

Holy Hour in St John the Baptist Church, Clontarf on Sunday, March 26 at 7.30pm with Fr Martin Hogan.

GALWAY

Our Lady's School of Evangelisation, Unbound Programme of Healing Prayers with Fr Benny McHale and John McCarthy from 8-10pm on March 27 at Abbey Hall, Newtownsmith. Contact 087-9980525.

KERRY

Series of Lenten events organised by Kerry diocese continue Friday/Saturday March 24/25 at 8pm with 24 Hours with the Lord Reconciliation & Eucharistic Adoration in Parish Church, Listowel and Parish Church, Cahersiveen. Bro. Richard Hendricks will speak on 'Keep Lent Mindfully' on Tuesday, March 28, 8pm, Killyarney Heights Hotel.

LIMERICK

The Dominican Sisters are hosting a day of reflection for women at St Saviour's Priory

on Sunday, April 2 from 2-8pm (option of 1pm Mass at St Saviour's Dominican Church). RSVP by March 25 to limerick@op-tn.org or 085 2255796.

LOUTH

Lenten Prayer for Healing 2017 at St Joseph's Redemptorist Church, Dundalk, 7pm, Sunday, March 26. This year's theme is: Wherever two or three gather in my name (Matthew 18:20). Dr Fainche Ryan is the speaker on the topic 'Is Church Home for All?'

MAYO

A celebration of the Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord in Knock Shrine organised by the Apostolate of Atonement for Mercy on Saturday, March 26: 9pm-11pm, Adoration, Benediction & the Veneration of Precious Relic from the Holy House of Loreto. Mass at 11pm with Fr Freddie Warner, SMA & Fr Bernard McGuckian, SJ. Contact (094) 93 88100 or email: info@knock-shrine.ie

On Saturday, April 8, Knock Shrine will welcome Archbishop Michael Neary and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin for a family day entitled 'Celebrating Family; Preparing for World Meeting of Families 2018' with Mass at 3pm. For information contact (094) 93 88100 or www.knockshrine.ie

TIPPERARY

Traditional Latin Mass at 3pm, Saturday, March 25 for the Feast of the Annunciation, in the Parish Church of the Annunciation, Bansha, organised by the Catholic Heritage Association.

The Fatima Apostolate is holding a three-hour vigil in honour of the Feast of the Annunciation in the Pallottine Chapel, Thurles commencing at 7.30pm on Friday, March 24 and concluding with Mass.

WATERFORD

Annual Cúrsa SPioradálta do Ghaeilgeoiri in Mount Melleray April 1-2. The theme for this year is "Dóchas Linn - AN Tiarna". Information from Aine on 086 2227533 or annanif@eircom.net

New Beginnings in Faith: A series of talks given by members of the Neo Catechumenal Way each Sunday and Wednesday at 7.30pm in St Paul's Parish Centre, Waterford.

Taizé prayer in Good Counsel Chapel, New Ross from 8.15-9pm every Friday during Lent - concluding with 'Prayer around the Cross' on April 14.

WESTMEATH

A programme of events to mark the centenary of the appearance of Our Lady at Fatima continues at the church of St John the Baptist Whitehall, in the parish of Coole on Friday, March 24 at 8pm with Fr Noel Weir CC, Mornington and Friday, March 31 with Fr John Walsh OP.

WICKLOW

Taize prayer at the Carmelite Monastery, Delgany every Wednesday from 8-9pm during Lent.

World Report

Edited by Paul Keenan
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IN BRIEF

Pope set for Colombian trip

● Pope Francis will visit Colombia later this year, the Vatican has confirmed. From September 6 to 11, the Pontiff will undertake a visit that will take in the cities of Bogotá, Villavicencio, Medellín, and Cartagena.

The visit comes following an official invitation from Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos.

According to the Holy See Press Office, the visit will take place under the papal motto 'Demos el primer paso' (Let's take the first step), a reference to Colombia's fledgling peace process after 50 years of violence.

Pope Francis is also set to visit India and Bangladesh this year and in May he will be making a visit to Portugal for the 100th anniversary of the Marian apparitions in Fatima.

25 seminarians evacuated in Democratic Republic of Congo

United Nations peacekeepers have moved to safely evacuate 25 Catholic seminarians who were in hiding after their seminary was attacked late in February.

Located in the flashpoint Kasai-Central province, the seminary came under attack by fighters linked to the late tribal leader Kamwina Nsapu. Since his death in August last year in a botched military operation to capture him, his

fighters have been engaged in a campaign of violence against state authorities.

The seminarians caught up in the attack reportedly fled to a nearby forest after a road to safety was cut off by the fighters, leading to appeals for their rescue from Church leaders.

That rescue came last week when the 25 were airlifted to Mbuji-Mayi. All have been reunited with their families.

Argentina priest forced out by drug dealers' death threats

● A priest in Argentina has been moved from his parish following death threats from drug dealers. Fr Eduardo Farrell has been forced out of his Sagrado Corazon parish in the Diocese of Merlo-Moreno after repeated threats, based on his work in denouncing the scourge of drugs in his community.

In an angry response to the issue, Bishop Fernando Carlos Maletti of Merlo-Moreno said the Church's work, carried out fearlessly by men such as Fr Farrell, clashes "with the petty and obscure interests of those who only seek territorial power and profit at any cost with illegal activities and suspicious complicity".

Declaring the Church's unwavering commitment to working against all forms of addiction, Bishop Carlos concluded: "We reiterate our commitment to continue as a Church to work with our brothers and sisters who ask, with all reason and justice, their right to a dignified life."

Trudeau's abortion fund is criticised

The Catholic bishops of Canada have criticised plans by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for a Cad\$650million fund for increased international access to abortion.

In an open letter to the Canadian leader, the prelates describe the plan as "a reprehensible example of Western cultural imperialism" that

"exploits women".

Mr Trudeau had used International Women's Day to announce that his government will commit the funds over the next three years to "address gaps in sexual and reproductive health and rights in the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities".

Nigerian Christians 'denied food aid'

● An Anglican bishop in Nigeria has alleged that Christians under threat in famine-struck areas of the country are facing discrimination when attempting to access emergency food supplies.

Bishop William Naga of Gwoza in Borno state, speaking during an interview with the Open Doors Christian advocacy group, said that Christians who had been forced to flee the violent activities of Boko Haram have struggled to gain emergency supplies in camps which are being run by Muslim organisations.

Obamacare replacement threatens people 'on the margins' – US bishops

Health care proposals currently going through the House of Representatives have met with a mixed reaction from US bishops, praising "critical life protections" but taking issue with other "troubling" issues under consideration.

In a letter to House members about the American Health Care Act, introduced to repeal 2010's Affordable Care Act, the chair of the US hierarchy's Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development wrote: "By restricting funding which flows to providers that promote abortion and prohibiting federal funding for abortion or the purchase of plans that provide abortion – including with current and future tax credits – the legislation honours a key moral requirement for our nation's health care policy."

Venice, Florida's Bishop Frank Dewane criticised the bill's failure to provide conscience protection against obligations to provide coverage for contraception and other services that have been "the subject of large-scale



Republican Representative Jim Renacci takes notes as House Budget Committee members deliver statements on the American Health Care Act.

litigation especially involving religious entities like the Little Sisters of the Poor".

Warning

He also described the bill's Medicaid-related provisions as "very troubling", warning that they would have "sweeping impacts, increasing economic and community costs while moving away from affordable access for all".

Predicted that the bill could leave as many as 24 million additional people uninsured over the next 10 years, Dr Dewane said the US bishops believe "all peo-

ple and every family must be able to see clearly how they will fit within and access the health care system in a way that truly meets their needs".

Other issues that "must be addressed" before the measure is passed, he said, included a tax credit system that could limit health care affordability for older and poorer people, high insurance premiums for older people, and high surcharges for those who do not maintain continuous coverage.

Recalling how the US bishops "registered serious objections" when the Afford-

able Care Act was introduced, Dr Dewane warned that "in attempting to improve the deficiencies of the ACA, health care policy ought not create other unacceptable problems, particularly for those who struggle on the margins of our society".

His letter follows a previous one from New York's Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Baltimore's Archbishop William Lori, and Austin, Texas's Bishop Joe Vasquez, who chair the US bishops' pro-life, religious liberty, and migration committees.

Church rejects invite to join Philippines violent anti-drug campaign

The Church of the Philippines has rejected an invitation from the national police to become part of President Duterte's murderous campaign against drug dealers.

Following the call, issued by police chief General Ronald dela Rosa, the Filipino bishops' conference insisted that it supports "whatever strategy there is, for as long as there's no killing and it is devoid of any corrupt and unjust practice".

After months of controversy and some 7,000 deaths, the anti-drugs clampdown launched by President Rodrigo Duterte was halted temporarily at the end of January

amid accusations of extra-judicial killings and of corrupt practices on the part of the police, some of whom, it emerged, were engaging in kidnapping and extortion under the cover afforded by the campaign.

Now seeking to re-launch the initiative, General dela Rosa suggested that if priests were to accompany police on drugs raids, it was more likely suspects would surrender and not resist officers. A standard line cited by police to date in connection with the thousands dead is that they were shot only when resisting arrest, something disputed by many eyewitness accounts.

Kidnapped aid workers freed in South Sudan

Eight Christian aid workers kidnapped in South Sudan have been freed unharmed.

The eight members of the US-based Samaritan's Purse charity were reportedly snatched by armed gunmen on March 13 in the central Mayendit area. Despite subsequent claims by the county's military that the aid workers were being held for ransom, no such demand was made. Approximately 24 hours later, the abductees were freed.

Members of Samaritan's Purse are engaged in a range of development projects in and around Mayendit, including agricultural, medical and emergency feeding initiatives.

The work of the group is now under threat following a government announcement that South Sudan is to levy over €9,000 per foreign aid worker present in the country.



Archbishop Ivan Jurkovic.

UN urged to bring peace to Syria

The Holy See's Permanent Observer to the United Nations has urged the international community to forge an enduring peace for Syria. As the conflict in the Middle Eastern nation reached its sixth anniversary in March, Archbishop Ivan Jurkovic told a sitting of the UN in Geneva that "six years of ongoing conflict indicate the failure of the international community at large".

"The situation in Syria is our common responsibility as a family of nations," the

archbishop stressed. "The rights of the Syrian people, regardless of their religious or ethnic identity, must be protected as all Syrians share the just aspirations to justice and peace, fundamental elements of integral human development. In this regard, it is of the utmost importance that religious and ethnic minorities do not become the pawns of geopolitical trade-offs, but be fully involved in a transparent and inclusive negotiating process, with

equal rights and equal responsibilities, as this is the only way to build a peaceful future," Archbishop Jurkovic said.

"The Holy See wishes to reiterate its solidarity with the Syrian people and especially with the victims of violence, and encourages the international community to embrace the perspective of victims. Six years of senseless slaughter expose once again the illusion, and the futility, of war as a means to settle disputes."

Congo's hidden conflict



Paul Keenan

The latest news is as grim as any emanating from the bloody battlefields of the Middle East currently dominating airtime with the international media. But this is Africa and, more specifically, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Thus, as embedded journalists in Iraq warned us to prepare for the worst as mass graves turned up amid the rubble of Mosul, the uncovering of three mass graves in DRC warranted no such coverage.

The sites of burial, in the central Kasai region, were reported to a largely indifferent world by the United Nations back in early March. No further details were offered at the time, but a later rejection on the part of the government in Kinshasa of a UN offer to help probe both the graves and allegations of civilian killings in Kasai is surely telling.

The rejection, uttered by a government spokesman was quick to assert that NGOs were hardly equipped to help the Congolese authorities with an investigation already under way and, quite aside from that, the murderous activities of the local militia known as Kamuina Nsapu could not be ignored in the investigation.

Rebellion

An open-and-shut case, then, at least in the minds of those in power in Kinshasa. But this is a case very much complicated by the fact that while the ongoing rebellion in Kasai has indeed seen Kamuina Nsapu atrocities, the military personnel sent to quell the violence also stand accused of gross human



A file photo from late 2016 shows a Kinshasa protest against DRC President Joseph Kabila as armed UN peacekeepers look on. Photo: CNS

rights violations.

The case against the military rests on unauthenticated video footage posted online in February which appears to show soldiers of the DRC slaughtering unarmed civilians. That same month, in a spike in clashes, soldiers were implicated in a free-for-all shooting in Tshimbulu, Kasai which left at least 100 people dead after members of Kamuina Nsapu were spotted in the town.

“The results to date are hundreds dead in attacks and hundreds of thousands displaced”

That shooting would subsequently prompt Pope Francis to use his Sunday Angelus address of February 19 to lament the DRC violence.

With its roots in the growing

disaffection of many for the rule of President Joseph Kabila - who steadfastly refuses to relinquish power as is the democratic imperative upon him - the actions of Kamuina Nsapu are aimed directly at ousting Kinshasa's rule from Kasai. The goal is one promised by the tribal ruler for whom Kamuina Nsapu is named and in whose memory the fighting is conducted; Nsapu died along with eight followers in a military raid in August.

The results to date are hundreds dead in attacks and hundreds of thousands displaced in what is becoming that which the Catholic bishops of DRC repeatedly warned of and worked against over these past months. Urging all political parties to the table in order to broker a path towards peaceful elections by the end of 2017 (now thwarted by government), the prelates time and again urged Mr

Kabila and his supporters to pull DRC from the edge of the abyss and adhere to democratic principles. Time and again, the Kabila administration carried or fudged in the hope of retaining power.

“The Church is already suffering through attacks on its staff and seminarians”

Today, Kasai is aflame with the resulting conflict (which is overflowing into neighbouring Lomami). It is a fight powered on one side by a militia overstocked with drug-addled child soldiers, and which has not yet found a replacement leader to rein it in, while on the other, an unrestrained military is apparently meeting fire with fire in the absence of a willingness on the part of Mr Kabila to offer his people a meaningful alternative.

The Catholic bishops, prompted to host an emergency plenary session on the crisis, are now warning of a very real “unravelling” of the nation born as much of stubbornness as of the current violence.

Time is not on anyone's side in this. The Church is already suffering through attacks on its staff and seminarians (see the preceding page), while the populace exists under a threat of violence from all sides. As for Mr Kabila, news last week of the abductions of two United Nations staff in Kasai can only ramp up the pressure the international body will bring to bear on him. The fact that one of those kidnapped is also an American citizen promises no smaller measure of pressure from an outraged US.

Very soon it is going to be impossible to ignore DRC's increasing woes.

Iconic Chaldean church liberated in Mosul

A Chaldean Catholic church whose image announced the fall of Mosul in 2014 has been liberated.

When so-called Islamic State (ISIS) swept through Iraq in June 2014, a 'before-and-after' picture of the Church of Our Mother of Perpetual help in Mosul emerged showing the crucifix topping the building replaced by the black banner of the terror group. Reports at the time detailed how the Christian community desperately fled the city as ISIS rapidly imposed its rule there.

Now, liberating forces have revealed how the



Perpetual Help became a central location for that rule. According to emerging reports, ISIS fighters quickly identified the church as an ideal location for their religious police and set

up a headquarters there. That process involved the complete desecration of the church interior and destruction of all statues adorning the interior. Only the original altar is reported

to have survived the wanton destruction.

“The liberation came just days before the last road west from Mosul was cut by Iraqi forces”

Also surviving the rapid evacuation of the site ahead of the ongoing Iraqi army offensive is a document said to detail 14 key rules under which the remaining residents of Mosul were policed.

Not unexpectedly, there were harsh penalties meted out for smoking or

drinking, and a prohibition on women being outdoors unless absolutely necessary. Some offences attracted a death penalty, while women baring too much flesh in public faced torture.

Troops entering the Perpetual Help reported that the 14 rules were individually spray-painted on the church's interior columns as a reminder for all working at or detained in the building.

According to Lieutenant Colonel Abdulmir al-Mohammedawi of the elite Rapid Response Division, the church “was an important office for the

authorities tasked with making sure Mosul residents had a beard, wore short robes and followed their extremist convictions”.

The liberation of Our Mother of Perpetual Help came just days before the last road west from Mosul was finally cut by Iraqi forces, effectively trapping those ISIS forces who had not already fled.

However, far from signalling a quick end to the battle for Mosul, commanders have warned that ISIS fighters are expected to exploit the fact that some 600,000 civilians are also trapped in the city.

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

Irish people still turn to prayer in face of tragedy

Dear Editor, The loss of four good people with the crash of the Rescue 116 helicopter off the Mayo coast last week was a tragedy, and yet it was one which revealed a side of Christianity and of God that we often overlook – that of compassion.

I know of no person who, upon hearing the news, was not stricken with sadness. The fact that most of us did not, personally, know the crew of the helicopter was of no consequence; we all felt the pain of unexpected loss.

Compassion is unique to human life on Earth. It is much more than

“the feeling that arises when you are confronted with another’s suffering and feel motivated to relieve that suffering”, as dictionaries define it. It is one of God’s greatest gifts, perhaps secondary only to life itself.

And it is when confronted by the reality that compassion is the only immediate response to an incident as shocking as the loss of Rescue 116 and its crew that we can call on yet another of God’s gifts – prayer.

I have noticed that the theme of prayer has featured recently with the columnists of your

newspaper’s ‘Notebook’ section, and I have heard so many people – proclaimed religious and those who shy away from the title – saying that they would keep the crew and their families “in their prayers”. In times of deep distress, prayer is an open channel to the presence of the God and the heart of Christ himself.

Sometimes, it’s all we have and it’s something to be grateful for.

*Your etc.,
Deirdre Murray,
Mullingar,
Co. Westmeath.*

A rule of thumb for selecting sacred music for Mass

Dear Editor, I too play the church organ and often have difficulties too with the music and accompanying lyrics which are chosen by family and friends for weddings and funerals (Letters 16/03/2017).

That said, some time back I asked a priest as to his approach particularly

in the case of funerals. His answer was that if the song gave solace to the relatives and if it helped them to bear the grief, then that was fine with him.

I have always found that difficult but remind myself that in the creed we praise God as the maker of invisible things and those must

include music and what it brings to the listener.

My rule of thumb therefore is that the Mass begins and ends when the celebrant says so, while the processional and recessional music is a matter for the participants. It does not always work.

However, I will always

recall one exception. This was the occasion of the funeral of a four-year old boy whose habit it was to sing a non-religious song as he went to bed. His teenage cousin sang it at Communion.

*Your etc.,
Gerald Murphy,
Dublin 16.*

Clarity needed on priestly celibacy

Dear Editor, I’m confused at Pope Francis willing to consider the possibility of married men of proven faith becoming Catholic priests carrying out duties in isolated areas, however he will not advocate removing celibacy vows. Are these men married or widowed? I’m confused as to what this means.

If married how could they remain celibate? They would not be living their vows and would this not be wrong? Or have these men one foot in the grave and have no interest in sex?

The Catholic Church is very hung up on sex. The only major sins in Ireland for years was sex outside of marriage and not attending Mass on Sundays. They were mortals.

Why do priests have to be celibate? Surely a loving marriage would help him perform his priestly duties even better. The non-Catholic clergy with a wife do tremendous work.

I can understand many priests will have more time to do priestly works if single, however a married priest would

have a wife to assist him in his duties as the non-Catholic clergy do.

Where did this celibacy rule come from? Is it because we have no record of Jesus being married? Is it because Mary, Mother of God was a Virgin? Does being celibate make you nearer to God? It’s all as clear as mud to me.

*Your etc.,
Terry Healy,
Kill,
Co. Kildare.*

Irish Catholics need to show courage of fellow Christians

Dear Editor, I wish to add my voice to those who advocate non-payment of the TV license as a response to the insulting behaviour of RTÉ to Catholics (Letters 09/03/2017). There is now no other option available to us. It is pointless complaining directly to RTÉ as this has no effect, and the Broadcasting Authority is a joke as they have failed time and time again to change ingrained attitudes in RTÉ.

This behaviour continues because Irish Catholics allow it to happen. There is a deep reluctance to stand up and

defend the Faith.

It’s almost as though Irish Catholics think that being a Catholic is the same as being a wimp. As I write this our fellow believers in places such as Iraq and Syria are paying for their faith with their lives and in some cases being literally crucified as Jesus was. What a contrast, what faith, what courage, what love. If only we could take a leaf out of their book the Irish Church would be transformed.

*Your etc.,
Gerard Rooney,
Ballymacoda, Co. Cork.*

Shamrock symbolises our Christian heritage

Dear Editor, When An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny presented President Trump with the traditional bowl of shamrocks on St Patrick’s Day, did he explain the significance of the shamrock?

Did he say that the shamrock is the emblem of our national airline or explain that the shamrock represents for Irish people, the Blessed Trinity? This second explanation may cause him some embarrassment? When asked by Gay Byrne on the *Meaning of Life* in June 2012 if he believed in a personal God, his response was: “I believe that there is a force for good out there.” Gay did not follow up with the question “do you believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ?” as he did with other persons in this series. This omission leads us to believe that An Taoiseach’s Christianity is in question.

*Your etc.,
Herbert F. Eyre,
North Strand, Dublin 3.*

Medjugorje deserves more than bishop’s criticism

Dear Editor, I note that the Bishop of Mostar is once again criticising Medjugorje. Some interesting facts regarding the bishop are that he has never interviewed any of the visionaries and secondly, he has been asked on several occasions not to issue statements on this place of pilgrimage but continues to do so.

As far as I know it is the first time that an apparition has been taken out of the hands of the local bishop, which, in this case, has led to a number of commissions investigating the site. However, none but the bishop have actually condemned it. A real phenomenon here is how a man who has been prayed for so much – in every Mass said in Medjugorje – never ceases criticising it. Surely such constant prayer from a place defined as holy from all the prayer emanating from it, deserves more than criticism?

*Your etc.,
Mary Stewart,
Ardeskin, Donegal Town.*

Inappropriate language around Tuam home

Dear Editor, By referring to the Tuam burial site as a “chamber of horrors”, the Taoiseach has rushed to judgement.

It is highly likely that:

1. Each child interred there died of natural causes,
2. Each was given a name and baptised or prayed over and
3. The bodily integrity of each infant was respected.

As we have seen in the United States, the term ‘chamber of horrors’ is more appropriate to the abortion industry where these three conditions do not apply.

*Your etc.,
Eamon Fitzpatrick,
Strandhill Road,
Sligo.*



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: Residents of Tultepec push bulls laden with pyrotechnics to celebrate San Juan De Dios, the patron saint of fireworks makers. Tultepec's fireworks retailing market town exploded on December 20, 2016, killing 42 people.



EL SALVADOR: Protesters participate in a march convened by the Catholic Church against mining in San Salvador.



UNITED STATES: A worker clears snow in New York City's Times Square as snow falls. States of emergency were declared in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut for the "life-threatening" nor'easter that was packing blizzard conditions and a blanket of heavy snow.



GUATEMALA: A family member places a candle outside the morgue in San Jose Pinula. A fire broke at the government-run Virgen de Asuncion home for abused children, killed at least 30 people, mostly girls.



VATICAN: Canadian flags are seen as pilgrims attend Pope Francis' general audience in St Peter's Square. Photos: CNS



IRAQ: A displaced Iraqi woman carries her severely dehydrated 5-month-old child in Mosul. The woman fled her home during a battle between Iraqi forces and Islamic State militants.

Our shadow and our self-understanding



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

What is meant when certain schools of psychology today warn us about our 'shadow'? What's our 'shadow'?

In essence, it's this: we have within us powerful, fiery energies that, for multiple reasons, we cannot consciously face and so we handle them by denial and repression so as to not have to deal with them. Metaphorically speaking, we bury them in the hidden ground of our souls where they are out of conscious sight and mind.

But there's a problem: what we've buried doesn't stay hidden. While these energies are out of conscious sight and conscious mind, they continue to deeply impact our feelings, thoughts and actions by pushing through in all kinds of unconscious ways to color our actions, mostly negatively.

Our deep, innate energies will always act out, consciously or unconsciously. Carl Jung, one of the pioneer voices in this, says that we are doomed to act out unconsciously all the archetypal configurations which we do not access and control through conscious ritual.

“Our shadow is not just made up of the negative parts that frighten us, it is also made up of the most luminous parts of us that we feel too frightened to handle”

Perhaps a simple image can be helpful in understanding this. Imagine living in a house with a basement beneath your living room, a basement into which you never venture, and every time you need to dispose of some garbage you simply open the basement door and dump the garbage there.

For a while, that can work, it's out of sight and out of mind; but soon enough that garbage will begin to ferment and its toxic fumes will begin to seep upward through the vents, polluting the air you breathe. It wasn't a bother, for a time, but eventually it poisons the air.

That's a helpful image, though it's one-sided in that it has us only throwing our negative garbage downstairs.

Interestingly, we also throw into that same place those parts of us that frighten us in their luminosity.

Our own greatness also scares us, and we too bury huge parts of it.

Our shadow is not just made up of the negative parts that frighten us, it is also made up of the most luminous parts of us that we feel too frightened to



handle.

In the end, both the negative and positive energies inside us which we are too frightened to handle come from one and the same source, the image and likeness of God imprinted in us.

The most fundamental thing we believe about ourselves as Christians is that we are made in

the image and likeness of God. However it isn't very helpful to imagine this as a beautiful icon stamped inside our souls. Rather we might think of it as irrepressible divine energy, infinite eros and infinite spirit, constantly wrestling with the confines of our finitude.

No surprise then that we have to contend with energies, feelings,

pressures, and impulses that frighten and threaten us in their magnitude.

Ironically, the struggle with this can be particularly trying for sensitive people; the more sensitive you are, morally and religiously, the more threatening these energies can be. Why? Because two fears tend to afflict

sensitive souls: first, the fear of being egoistical. Greatness isn't easy to carry and few carry it well, and sensitive souls know this.

The wild and the wicked unreflectively feed off of sacred fire, except they aren't known for their sensitivity and too often end up hurting others and themselves.

Sensitive souls find themselves considerably more reflective and timid, and for good reason. They're afraid of being full of themselves, egotists, unhealthily imposing. But that timidity doesn't everywhere serve them well.

Too sensitive in dealing with certain energies inside them, they sometimes end up too empty of God.

The second reason sensitive people tend to bury much of their luminosity is because they're more in touch with that primal fear within us that's expressed in the famous Greek myth of Prometheus, namely, that our most creative energies might somehow be an affront to God, that we might be stealing fire from the gods.

Sensitive people worry about pride, about being too full of ego. Healthy as that is in itself, it often leads them to bury some or much of their luminosity.

“So much of our undirected anger, constantly looking for someone or something to land on, is the shadow side of a greatness which is repressed and buried”

The consequence isn't good. Like the negative parts of ourselves we bury, our buried luminosity too begins to ferment, turn into toxic fumes, and seep upward through the vents of our consciousness.

Those fumes take the form of free-range anger, jealousy, bitterness and cold judgments of others.

So much of our undirected anger, constantly looking for someone or something to land on, is the shadow side of a greatness which is repressed and buried.

Where to go in the face of this? James Hillman suggests that a symptom suffers most when it doesn't know where it belongs. We need more spiritual guides who can diagnose this. Too often our spiritualities have been naïve in their diagnosis of human pride and ego.

We need more spiritual guides who can recognise how we too-much bury parts of our luminosity and how our fear of being too full of ourselves can leave us too empty of God.

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, March 23, 2017

Youth Space
Religious education is a 'lived' subject
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14 tips for marrying the

RIGHT person



Jennifer Roback Morse and Bety Kerekes of the Ruth Institute offer advice on how to meet your life partner

We all want reliable love in our lives. In this, we are no different than people in any other time in history, despite the tatters of failed marriages all around us.

'The One' must be someone to whom you can be deeply committed. The first step is getting to a place where you're ready for marriage and are marriage material yourself. You'll want to take stock of any baggage or issues you may have and need to overcome. Next you need to figure out what kinds of behaviours you think you can or want to overlook or put up with in another.

Unfortunately, marriage discernment faces significant hurdles. Many people have already experienced so much relationship brokenness that they lack the conviction that real and lasting love is possible. Children of divorce doubt their skills for keeping a marriage going.

Conflicting signals

To make things worse, we receive many confusing and conflicting signals from society around us. Our culture has dismantled many of the 'guardrails' that used to keep people from making huge mistakes.

The good news is that finding and being a worthy person to marry is indeed

possible. Our aim is to help you pick a winner, while at the same time helping form you into the best, most marriage-ready version of yourself.

1. Associate with people who share your values and interests

If your faith is important to you, church activities and young adult groups are great options – singles' bars, not so much.

If your current group of friends shares your values and interests, they're a great start for finding a suitable marriage partner. If they don't, maybe you need a different group of friends.

2. Be friends first

Starting out as friends is an excellent, no-pressure way of getting to know each other without stress or expectations. If you discover down the line that you have feelings for each other, you can rest assured that it happened naturally. No one, yourself included, pressured you into it. You are dating for the right reasons.

We hasten to add: if you're already friends and are becoming interested in one another, don't be afraid to break out of the 'just friends' mold. Guys, ask her out. Girls, you can let him know you're interested without coming off as pushy or aggressive. Invite him to

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Children's Corner

ERIN FOX



Become a March hare or an Easter bunny

We're now nearing the middle of Lent and Easter is fast approaching. Seeing as we are still in March and Easter is right round the corner, this March hare/Easter bunny head piece is just the craft to make.

If you're having an Easter party or a birthday party, make several of these for you and your friends to wear, or to include in party bags. For the rabbit ear head piece you will need: pink felt, black, white, brown or grey felt, scissors, fabric glue, cereal card and one hair band the same colour of the felt you choose.

First make two templates for the rabbit ears. Place the hair band on the card to use as a guide for the ear sizes.

Draw two ears and cut them out. Pin these to a sheet of white felt and cut around them. Remove the pins and templates from the felt, and take the scissors and make two snips at the bottom of each ear so you have three tabs.



Make two smaller ears and cut them out from the pink felt. These will be the fleshy insides of the rabbit ears.

If you can't get a hair band in the same colour as the felt you are using, wrap white ribbon or thick white yarn neatly all around the hair band. Trim any excess ribbon, and secure with some of the fabric glue.

“You can add a few fresh flowers to the head band”

Now, start attaching the ears. Take one ear, fold it horizontally, and pinch it just above the three snip marks. Dab a little glue so that it holds in place. You will see now that the shape is starting to look more like a rabbit ear.

Fold the middle tab underneath the hair band, and the outer two tabs onto the top of the hair band. Glue in place and hold for 10 seconds to make sure it sticks.

Repeat with the remaining ear.

Take the pink felt and place these inside the ears. Secure with some more glue. Leave the hair band to dry overnight before you wear it, you don't want to get glue in your hair!

You can add a few fresh flowers to the head band if you like. Place the flowers in the centre, right between the two ears.

Make the ears extra long so they are more hare-like. Bend the tips of the ears over slightly.

Extreme positivity can be quite harmful



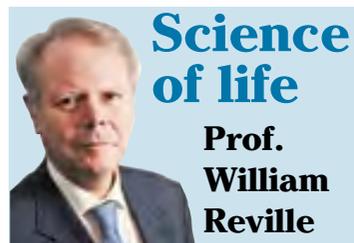
Positivity, having a positive and optimistic attitude towards life, has long been considered to be a very good thing and is widely recommended in popular psychology. Innumerable books have been published over the past several decades promoting the value of positivity and positive self-esteem, eg. the classic *The Power of Positive Thinking* by Norman Vincent Peale (Prentice Hall, New York, 2012 - reprint), originally written in 1952.

However, it is now recognised that, although positivity is generally good, in certain common circumstances positivity is either an inappropriate or an unwise attitude to adopt. This is explained by Kate Sweeny, a professor of psychology at the University of California, Riverside, in the February 2017 issue of *The Psychologist*.

However, Sweeny is at pains to emphasise the many benefits that flow from having a generally positive and optimistic outlook on life. People with positive attitudes tend to be more resilient, open-minded, creative, connected to others, healthier, more active, more productive, happier and better at making friends.

Optimistic

For example, people who are optimistic about their performance on an upcoming task also tend to persevere better when the task proves to be more difficult than anticipated. On the other hand, having an attitude of resignation can be bad. For example, Sweeny reminds us that people who contracted AIDS in the 1990s and who responded with a positive outlook, survived twice as long as those who adopted a resigned coping strategy called 'realistic acceptance'. Positivity ignores our natural



Science of life

Prof. William Reville

psychological flexibility, our ability to access and pick from the entire spectrum of our emotional responses when we need them most. This psychological flexibility model rejects the notion that we should always strive for more positivity and promotes the idea that all our emotions serve us in some way and we should groom our understanding of when best to use optimism and when best to use pessimism.

But, of course, positivity has a lot going for it, as Sweeny emphasises, so, the trick is to recognise the situations where positivity is not the optimum response.

“Marriages tend to last longer when spouses have realistic appreciations of each other's characteristics”

When deployed inappropriately, positivity can inhibit us from making sensible preparations while awaiting important news that could turn out to be either good or bad. It could also deflect us from taking up new healthy lifestyle habits, minimise our effectiveness to be helpful in relationships, and even threaten good mental health.

One example of a situation where uninhibited positivity is unwise is when are you are awaiting the outcome of an important job or promotion interview. It is sensible in most such cases to soberly temper your expectations and even to

consider worst-case scenarios.

To get bad news in these situations is disappointing enough, but to get unexpected bad news is a real pain in the behind. On the other hand, if you have sensibly tempered your expectations a bad result is not nearly so devastating as it would be had you been confidently expecting good news, while a good result is extra pleasurable.

Another important exception to the general rule that positivity is the best policy is motivating oneself to adopt habits that will protect/enhance ones health, where negativity appears to provide a more powerful incentive to action.

Behaviours

Being concerned about your health spurs you to seek out information, to engage in healthy behaviours, to quit unhealthy habits and to seek medical or psychological advice more often. Sweeny quotes good evidence supporting this point from studies of how women deal with the possibility of contracting breast cancer.

Women who report worrying about breast cancer are much more likely to keep up-to-date with their mammography screening schedule. So, inappropriate application of the 'think positive' approach can undermine motivation to work hard to protect long-term health.

Again unbridled positivity is not good for the health of long-term relationships. Marriages tend to last longer when spouses have realistic appreciations of each other's characteristics.

When this is the case they tend to support each other better when arguments and disagreements arise. And having realistic expectations of the other is particularly important in marriages afflicted with severe problems.

Neither is pronounced positivity helpful when trying to support a friend who is experiencing hard times. The recipient of this help (typically - "Everything will be okay. Stop worrying and cheer up.") often finds such advice insensitive or dismissive. And consistently positive people are particularly prone to make this mistake because research has shown that such people are markedly poor at appreciating when others are feeling low.

“Those who are consistently extremely happy tend to engage in more risky behaviour”

On the contrary, consistently positive people feel they are particularly good at understanding how others are feeling.

While positivity is generally good, extreme positivity can be quite harmful. Specifically, Sweeny points out that extreme positivity is a marker for mania. Research has shown that those who are consistently extremely happy tend to engage in more risky behaviour, to be less creative and are at a greater risk of mental illness.

Finally, Sweeny warns of the futility of actively pursuing happiness. Some people place more value on achieving happiness than others. If you strive hard to achieve happiness and fail you risk becoming even more miserable than less happiness-obsessed people who find themselves on an unhappy road.

Happiness is the by-product of a well-lived life and is best stumbled-upon while living that life rather than actively chased down.

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

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go somewhere with you or to your house for a home-cooked meal. The point is to be brave. Don't stay in the 'just friends' zone indefinitely if this person may be the one.

3. Go out with groups of friends

A group date can reduce pressure, enabling you to relax and be yourself. After all, your real self is who you want the other person to see. Group dates also mean less temptation toward inappropriate behaviour. When you're surrounded by other people, those opportunities don't present themselves.

4. Ladies: let him be a man. Gentlemen: be a man!

Ladies, we realise this is retro, but allow yourself to be feminine. Allow him to be a gentleman. Be grateful when he opens the door for you. Let him treat you well.

Gentlemen, we know this is so 20th Century, but make the first move. Take the lead. She'll respect you for it. It's okay to woo her. Start now with the romance. She'll love you for it.

5. Remember that good looks are fleeting. Physical attraction is not enough to sustain a relationship

If you're tempted by appearances only, you may have a problem in the marriage later on when your spouse's looks fade. It may sound cliché, but it's what's underneath the surface that truly counts and sustains a lasting relationship.

6. Keep in mind that infatuation can mask itself as love

If you can't get this person off your mind, that doesn't prove your relationship is real love. Puppy love can be a lot of fun, but it doesn't last. If you find yourself having intense feelings early in the relationship, try not to get carried away by them. Instead, step back and see how they stand the test of time.

7. Recognise that it is possible to fall in love with the wrong person

It happens all the time. Sometimes engaged couples break up.

Sometimes they break up the day before or the day of the wedding. Remember that an engagement is not a permanent covenant, but marriage is. Don't make the decision lightly.

8. When the relationship begins to get serious, seek the opinion of an objective third party, with emphasis on 'objective'

Your best friend may be biased in your favour, too excited about the possibility of wedding planning, or simply afraid to tell you the truth. When you're so gaga in love, can you blame him or her, especially if it could mean ending your friendship?

66 Take a break until you figure out who you are. Then you can figure out who you want to be with"

Find someone who knows you, loves you, and has nothing to lose by telling you the truth. Think parent or sibling. Resolve to listen to that person. Alternatively, ask yourself this: "If my best friend were dating this person, would I approve?"

9. Do not try to remake yourself or be defined by the person you're with

If your personality is changing to better match that of this other person, he or she is probably not the right one for you. Take a break until you figure out who you are. Then you can figure out who you want to be with.

10. Do not be with someone for the sake of not being alone

This makes the relationship a selfish one from the start. Additionally, you'd be keeping yourself and the other person from being with whomever they are truly meant to be with. You'd only be setting

yourself up for a lot of hurt feelings and regret later on.

11. Ask yourself, do I feel at peace with this person?

This goes beyond a longing desire to be with someone, which is not a guaranteed indication of compatibility. When you are with this person, are you completely relaxed, with no nagging feelings of something not being quite right?

12. Does this person care enough to cheer you up or commiserate when you're down?

Just as importantly, does he or she know and respect your preference, understanding that some people like the Pollyanna approach of looking on the bright side of a negative situation while some just want others to say "That really stinks. I'm sorry that happened to you"? Figuring this out now, and respecting each other's wishes, even when they go against your natural inclinations, will be greatly appreciated in your future life together.

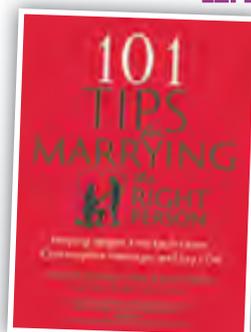
13. Is he or she a good listener? Am I?

Having great communication skills – both listening and speaking – will be crucial for lasting marital peace. If the two of you aren't great at verbally sharing with each other, listening and responding, work on improving those skills now. You'll definitely need them later on.

14. Keep your head. Guard your heart

Sometimes our imaginations carry us away into happily-ever-after prematurely. We may find ourselves forcing the relationship into the 'perfect situation'. We can rationalise that the other person lines up exactly with our plans. Instead, relax and let the relationship take its natural course. That way you can let it end when it should, if it should.

❶ Excerpt from *101 Tips for Marrying the Right Person*, reprinted with permission of Ave Maria Press.



Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



Last weekend, we had royalty in the house. A gaggle of six-year-old princesses, to be precise. Our eldest girl turned six and she insisted on having a girls-only princess party. We've never encouraged our girls to play only with traditionally girly toys or to wear pink, but from an early age Rose's favourite colour has been pink – and the more unsubtle the shade, the better.

Birthdays are a huge deal for children at that age. Rose had been counting down the days for months. She had been leafing through magazines to select the cake she wanted her mother to make. She had been imagining the day and deciding what she might do.

Our regular trips to our local castle, which even hosts jousting events in summer, had fired her imagination about all things medieval and so the idea of a princess party was alighted upon.

Yet there is something in this desire of small girls to be princesses for a day. There is of course something stereotypical and even saccharine about it, and Chinese t-shirt factories do very well printing millions of t-shirts with 'Daddy's little princess' emblazoned on them.

66 Ultimately, a birthday shows a small child that they are loved"

Speaking as someone who has survived more than one princess-themed event, I also think that there is something quite important in it.

It is perhaps a particularly feminine expression of the natural desire small children have to know that they are valued, they are special, and that their existence is something to be celebrated.

Ultimately, a birthday shows a small child that they are loved. Their parents arrange a big party. Grandparents, godparents, uncles and aunts all send cards and presents.

Their friends come together for the event with cards and gifts. The day is marked in school with an announcement from the head teacher at assembly. For one day, a small child is made to feel very important.

Small children are ordinarily beholden to do what adults tell them, but their birthday sees them call the shots for a day.

We always let the child decide what family outing to go on for their birthday weekend.

Rose had long been fascinated by the spinnaker tower, a modern 300 foot tower overlooking the Solent, with a viewing platform on top.

She decided that we should all go up there.

What's more, she specified that we were not to travel from the Isle of Wight to Portsmouth on the boring old car ferry, but instead upon the hovercraft!

There were some very excited little faces as the hovercraft rose up above the sands and glided out over the water at high speed.

We had cake at the very top of the tower and even went to the naval museum nearby, where we explored the amazing 250-year-old HMS Victory, or "the pirate ship" as Rose insisted upon calling it. I was excited as the kids at all the old naval paraphernalia.

Adventure

There was even an element of an old sea-going adventure on our trip home as a gale had whipped up and it was quite an exhilarating and bumpy ride home, as we skimmed over the white caps.

Birthdays also provide a chance to have a reflective moment with the child; to tell her how much she is loved, to tell her about the day was when she was born, and how overjoyed we were to have her enter our lives.

Small children never tire of tales of their being born, perhaps because the great adventure of coming into the world is so recent for them.

When our newly-minted six-year-old was tucked in to bed that night, after a magical birthday weekend, there was a smile on her face that showed just how profoundly loved she felt.



Religious education is a 'lived' subject



Religion is an exam subject I experience outside the classroom, writes **Aoife Kehoe**

Religious education became an exam subject in 2008. Last year, 1,320 students throughout Ireland sat the exam. The curriculum presents 10 topics from which students must study four. In my class we studied four divergent and truly engaging themes.

- The search for meaning and values, which examines philosophical and religious answers to the question of the meaning of life.
- Christianity, origins and contemporary expression. This section profiles the early Christian movement and its influence on contemporary Christian identity.
- World religions – explores two major religious traditions, i.e. Islam and Judaism.
- Religion and gender – seeks to provide an understanding of the role gender plays in people's religious experience.

Students are also required to complete a research project. My research involved profiling a theologian and a scientist's perspective on climate change. Notwithstanding my concerns regarding the exam in three month's time, my experience of religious education has been overwhelmingly positive.

Many commentators on the educational system in Ireland



Aoife and her fellow students in RE class with their teacher Mr Kehoe.

YOUTH SPACE

criticise its limitation in terms of the need for rote learning and the lack of opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking. These criticisms cannot be levelled at Leaving Cert religion. In the search for meaning and values section of the course, I have experienced 23 opinionated and vocal young women grapple with deep philosophical questions originally posed by famous philosophers.

Justice

How do we know we exist? (Aristotle) Can one trust one's senses? (Plato) What's the definition of justice? (Socrates) Can we prove God's existence? (Aquinas).

I can't proclaim that any of the above questions have been decisively answered by my classmates, or indeed by our teacher Mr Kehoe, however it

has been a most rewarding and challenging adventure to engage in such a deep reflection on questions that are central to humanity's existence.

“Jesus' actions challenged me to treat all people with respect”

Religious education is a 'lived' subject; it does not exist in a vacuum or within the confines of a textbook. It is a subject that I experience on a daily basis in the world beyond the classroom. My classmates often comment on how relevant the information we learn in class is to the world that surrounds us. Issues that arise in the media are often explored in our class.

We've learned the meaning of concepts such as atheism, agnosticism and secularism. It is

quite stimulating to then listen to a debate on radio or TV about the need for the Catholic Church to divest its role in education in Ireland or to read articles in newspapers about the need for pubs to be allowed to open on Good Friday.

Had I not chosen to study religious education as an exam subject, I believe my interest or understanding of many current affair issues would be diminished.

On a more personal level the opportunity to learn in some depth about Jesus and his message has strengthened my faith. I have learnt a great deal about Jesus, the person and his message of love, inclusiveness and compassion.

In Luke's Gospel Jesus shared a meal with Zaccheus, the greedy tax collector. In Mark's Gospel we witness his compassion towards the man with leprosy and in the Gospel of John he treated the women at the well with dignity and respect. These were all excluded and marginalised people.

Respect

A good Catholic education challenges us to reflect on the contemporary world in light of the Gospel. Therefore, Jesus' actions challenged me to treat all people with respect. His actions challenge me to be aware of the marginalised in today's world. His loving commitment to society's most vulnerable urges me to examine my attitude towards homeless people, to extend compassion to Syrian refugees and indeed travellers who are often on the margins of society.

In this secular society the values espoused by religion are often presented in a negative light. At best religious belief and practice is seen as irrelevant, at worst religion is presented as a dark force which restricts human freedom. To be fair some criticism of organised religion is justified and warranted. However, my studying of religion for Leaving Cert has reaffirmed

for me the positive contribution religion can have on society.

I have learned about how the work of people like venerable Catherine McCauley and Fr Peter McVerry have made enormous contributions to the lives of Irish people.

Catherine McCauley's personal sacrifice and total commitment to the needs of teenage girls throughout the world is truly inspirational. Her vision, determination and her Christian faith are testament to the positive impact religious faith can have in the present and the future.

“I have been given a broad understanding of the world around me”

Fr Peter McVerry's work with the homeless and his critique of materialistic and consumerist society highlights how relevant the Christian message still is in a secular Ireland.

Through my studies I have been given a broad understanding of the world around me. I have learned to appreciate the many wonderful rituals and customs associated with the Islamic faith.

I have developed skills of reflection when I reflect on the ministry of Jesus Christ and the impact his message can have on my life. I have grown to respect the many philosophers and the deep thinkers who have sought to make sense of and give meaning to humanity's shared existence.

Martin Luther King Junior believed “the goal of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically”. I believe Leaving Cert religion fulfils this goal. My hope is that my Leaving Cert examiner believes it too.

i Aoife Kehoe is a 6th Year student in Coláiste Bríde, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford – a CEIST school.



Eco Eye

Sr Catherine Brennan SSL

Parishes should turn off lights for Earth Hour

Now in its tenth year, Earth Hour 2017 takes place this Saturday, March 25 from 8.30-9.30pm. Earth Hour is the single largest symbolic mass participation event in the world.

Born of the hope that people could be mobilised to take action on climate change, Earth Hour now inspires a global community of millions of people in 7,001 cities and towns across 178 countries to switch off the lights for an hour. The event recognises our global responsibility for the climate change, which is already devastating lives and threatening the future of the planet.

Our actions today can change our tomorrows. We love and care about our beautiful, fragile planet – “our common home” (*Laudato Si*) and its people, especially the poor in the global south who suffer most from the effects of climate change.

Earth Hour is an opportunity for parishes and other faith groups to celebrate, pray and explore environmental concerns and how our faith calls us to address them. Did you know that your church's Earth Hour activities can count towards your parish's application for an Eco-Congregation

Ireland (ECI) Award?

Eco-Congregation Ireland encourages churches of all denominations to take an eco approach to worship, lifestyle, property and finance management, community outreach and contact with the developing world. The Catholic Church, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches are involved as well as the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

Vision

Our vision is to see churches of all denominations throughout Ireland celebrate the gift of God's creation, recognise the inter-dependence of all creation and care for it in their life and mission and through members' personal lifestyles.

We ask Christians everywhere to reflect on the beauty of God's world and to consider what practical steps can be taken to prevent further damage to the environment. Also,

to pray for our wounded planet, for people in the developing world already affected by climate change and for future generations.

As a global campaign, Earth Hour neatly intersects with ECI's four award criteria – spiritual, practical, local community and global solidarity. Our current understanding of parish includes the whole bioregion with all that exists, lives and grows.

Many parishes are already taking part around the world in different and creative ways:

- Arranging for any lights on or in your church to be turned off for an hour.
- Organising a candlelit holy hour with a climate change theme.
- Planning a torchlight wildlife or stargazing walk to make the most of the hour of darkness.
- Using the special prayer on the ECI website at Mass on Saturday evening and/or Sunday. (www.ecocongregationireland.com)

If you live in Dublin you are welcome to join the Church of the Ascension, Balally, Dundrum, Dublin 16 for their candlelit hour of prayer and reflection from 8.30-9.30pm on Saturday, March 25.

i Sr Catherine Brennan SSL is the Catholic representative for Eco-Congregation Ireland.



TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Different perspectives are so easily sourced

American politics have become much more prominent in the media since the election of Donald Trump, and I reckon it's important to sample a variety of media sources to get a balanced picture.

Dipping alternatively into CNN and Fox News certainly gives the viewer different perspectives, but of late I've taken to following EWTN's **News Nightly**, which gives some interesting viewpoints but also the latest Church news as well.

Host Lauren Ashburn is personable and professional, and her team of reporters come across as respectful and fair-minded. It's a good source for news that doesn't get much coverage on mainstream media here, especially in relation to Church matters.

On last Thursday's show, we got Republican Speaker Paul Ryan talking about Trump's new healthcare plan, and were told that the Priests for Life group welcomed the defunding of Planned Parenthood for a year.

We saw Pope Francis thanking the President of Lebanon for welcoming over a million refugees and got a review of the persecution of Christians and other minorities by ISIS, one year on from the US declaration that what was going on amounted to genocide.

There was also a reference



Emma Watson and Dan Stevens star in *Beauty and the Beast* as reviewed on EWTN's *News Nightly*.

to Pope Francis declaring that those "surrounded by wealth" lose their sense of direction, and that those who have the poor in their midst and do nothing to help are sinners.

It was reported that Supreme Court justice Samuel Alito had commented on challenges to religious freedom, saying "a wind is picking up that is hostile to those with traditional moral beliefs".

Taoiseach Enda Kenny's visit to the White House was covered briefly and we got a glimpse of a White House fountain flowing green, contrasting nicely with the sur-

rounding carpet of snow. There was coverage also of President Trump's budget proposals – two worrying features I thought were the ideas of diverting money from the arts and assigning funds to the building of the Mexican border wall.

Effects on the poor

Last Friday night's edition, for St Patrick's Day, returned to that budget with Catholic Relief Services expressing concerns about the effects on the poor, e.g. through reductions in development aid. Democrat leader Nancy Pelosi

was also critical, but some Republicans thought it was an act of justice to get spending and the deficit under control.

There was a prayer from St Patrick for the day that was in it, and a striking scene of Pope Francis going to Confession, and then hearing Confessions during a penitential service.

Earlier he had spoken to priests about the Sacrament of Reconciliation, saying "a good confessor is one who prays, discerns and evangelises...above all a friend of the good shepherd".

The entertainment scene wasn't ignored – prominent Catholic film critic Steven D. Greydanus of decentfilms.com discussed controversies surrounding the new live action *Beauty and the Beast* film from Disney. A big admirer of Disney's animated version (1991), he thought there was too much innuendo and inappropriate humour in this version, and wouldn't

take his kids to it. While these elements were often subliminal he felt that certain film makers were trying to get certain controversial themes into films on a 'winks and nudges' basis.

The show ended with a reference to our 'island of saints and scholars' and linked this in a practical way to the setting up in the Diocese of Meath a new monastery run by Benedictine monks from Oklahoma.

EWTN News Nightly can be watched, weekdays, live on EWTN (satellite or cable), in the video archive or 'on demand' sections of the EWTN website or on the excellent EWTN Apps for mobile devices and Apple TV.

Maternity leave

Another powerful thriller series from the BBC finished Tuesday of last week. **The Replacement** starred the excellent Morven Christie (also in *Grantchester* and last year's *A-Word*) as a young architect on maternity leave whose substitute (Vicky McClure from *Line of Duty*) seemed psychotic and determined to completely take over her life. It was nerve wracking and tense to the point of discomfort. The ending was satisfactory, but I thought a little rushed.

Finally, on Tuesday's **New-2Day** on RTÉ2 there was a touching item about the Trócaire boxes – a woman from



Morven Christie.

PICK OF THE WEEK

THE SIMPSONS

Channel 4, Saturday March 25, 11.25am
Homer has a vision from God and decides to start his own religion, which doesn't go down well with the neighbours.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE?

RTÉ One, Sunday, March 26, 10.30pm
New Series. On Mother's Day WYB celebrates some of Ireland's amazing mothers.

THE INQUISITION

EWTN, Tuesday, March 28, 11.30am and Friday, March 31, 9.30pm
Church historians explore the history of heresies, while noting how the Medieval Inquisition saved lives.

Rwanda, Josiane Umumarashavu, who had appeared on the Trócaire box in 2004 was now a finance intern with Trócaire in her home country and had come to Ireland to express her gratitude for the generosity of the Irish people. Catch it on the RTÉ Player.

1 boregan@hotmail.com



Aubrey Malone

Film

Contrived tale of victimisation in 1940s Ireland

The Secret Scripture (12A)

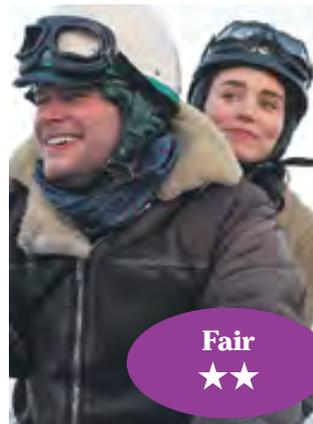
This curious film, based on Sebastian Barry's Booker Prize nominated novel, will confirm watchers in the view that over-arching anti-clericalism seems increasingly prevalent in films today. Many of them seem to delight in shining a laser on Ireland's dark past, particularly in the treatment of vulnerable young women, especially vulnerable young women pregnant outside marriage – or even inside marriage.

The Secret Scripture has been deservedly lauded for its excellent evocation of rural Ireland during and

after World War II and also for the intense performance of Vanessa Redgrave as Rose McNulty, a distraught woman placed in a mental institution for over 50 years on a dubious pretext.

Rooney Mara gives an equally enticing performance as Rose in her younger years. Branded as a nymphomaniac by a priest simply because she captures the attentions of the local men, she alienates herself further from the near-obsessive Fr Gaunt (Theo James) when she falls in love with a dashing young pilot, Michael Eneas (Jack Reynor).

Michael joins the RAF. The fact that he's shot down just yards away from where she lives is just one of the film's



Rooney Mara and Jack Reynor in *The Secret Scripture*.

far-fetched incidents that we're expected to swallow without question.

Rose marries Michael and

shelters him from locals who are out for his blood – presumably because he's been fighting with 'the Brits' – though this, along with many other things in the film, isn't explained.

Rose now becomes pregnant. The scorn of the community, one day she swims to a cave where she gives birth to a son. She then appears to throttle him.

This scene is one of the most confusing in an extremely confusing film. Her character calls up echoes of everyone from Ann Lovett to Joanne Hayes (of the Kerry Babies imbroglio).

She's accused of murder and incarcerated in the asylum. Here she undergoes

horrendous electric shock treatments. She also writes 'the truth' of what happened in the margins of her pocket Bible. Thus *The Book of Job* becomes *The Book of Rose*.

The film moves backwards and forwards in time. Flashbacks alternate with the present.

Eric Bana plays a kind psychiatrist who reviews her case as he decides whether she's to be transferred to another facility – this one is about to be demolished – or released into the community.

Surprise

There's a surprise at the end which is the stuff of soap opera. An impressive Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata'

gives way to a song by Kelly Clarkson, reducing matters to mainstream Hollywood tear-jerker land.

Somewhat like *The Magdalene Sisters* crossed with *Philomena* in tone, my feeling is that the film will polarise viewers on many scores, hardening entrenched positions on both sides of the ecclesiastical – and feminist – divide.

Surprisingly for director Jim Sheridan it suffers from a lack of focus, making it into a familiar tirade against institutional abuses of yore instead of the poignant love story it could have been with a little less agitprop and a little more blance.

Fair

★★

BookReviews

Peter Costello



Michael Davitt: the fulfilment of a career

Michael Davitt: After the Land League 1882-1906

by Carla King
(UCD Press, €50.00)

Donal McCartney

Michael Davitt's early career has been well documented, most comprehensively by T.W. Moody in *Davitt and Irish Revolution 1846-82*. It was Moody's contention that Davitt, in his role as 'father of the Land League', made his most significant contribution to the shaping of modern Ireland.

Davitt was still only 36 years old when the League was suppressed. His last 24 years, between the winding-up of the League and his death in 1906, have received far less attention from historians.

Now this lacuna is well and truly remedied in the present excellently detailed work of over 700 pages by Carla King. Years of scrupulous research have resulted in a remarkably impressive contribution to Irish historical studies.

The book describes the decades after the Land League and Davitt's important work on the world scene that filled them. This is a book which should engage the attention of every reader of Irish history.

Support

After the Land League Davitt espoused a variety of causes and engaged in several campaigns. He vigorously supported trade unionism and the nascent Labour Party in Britain, advocated the alliance of Irish and British workers, land nationalisation, women's political rights, secular education and the non-denominational control of schools.

Fearless as always, he showed great moral courage in his campaigns and controversies. He was passionate in his opposition to injustice and in defence of human rights.

His continued support for Home Rule was never in doubt, but his role in politics was largely that of the freelance, in almost the true sense of the term. He was to have the dubious distinction of being the first of the Irish home rulers publicly to demand Parnell's resignation on moral and political grounds while the Party was still pledging its allegiance to Parnell, and the leaders among the hierarchy were maintaining their silence and hoping for some compromise.

Dr King describes it as 'striking' that Davitt, who was noted for his criticism of the priest in politics, should pressurise Archbishops Croke and Walsh to condemn Parnell.

During the by-elections that followed the Parnell split, a puritanical Davitt played a vigorous anti-Parnellite part. It is true that his language was relatively mild compared with Tim Healy's; but that is hardly setting the bar too high. Later, Davitt did work with others to try to bring about a union between Parnellites and anti-Parnellites.

“His trips abroad in the days before air travel were truly amazing”

Yet he was never quite at ease as a parliamentarian. Elected as an anti-Parnellite for a Cork constituency in 1893 and for South Mayo in 1895, he resigned his seat in 1899. Convinced that more could be achieved for democracy and social justice by extra-parliamentary agitation, he gladly returned to the life of radical journalist.

He was an inveterate, if purposeful traveller. His trips abroad in the days before air travel were truly amazing. Crossing and re-crossing the Atlantic, he visited North America on 12 separate occasions, Russia three times, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa, and several European countries.



While marvelling at his energy and prolific journalism, it is easy to forget that he had lost his right arm at the age of 11 in a Lancashire cotton mill.

The lecture tours to America and Australasia were in response to invitations from the Irish diaspora to a celebrated patriot and ex-prisoner. His international reputation as a journalist was recognised when he was requested to send reports to the Hearst group of American newspapers from the front line in South

Africa during the Second Boer war. His reports were blatantly pro-Boer, and hostile to what he regarded as British imperialist aggression.

“This mission provides a remarkable example of the manner in which he worked”

In 1903 an anti-Semitic attack on a Jewish community in Kishinev, then in Czarist Russia, resulted in the deaths of 51 people, and over 400 injured. About one third of all the buildings in Kishinev were damaged and some 10,000 Jews fled the city. Government officials denied that any massacre had taken place, but there was outrage especially among Jews in America, many of whom were Russian emigrants.

Davitt was specially commissioned by the Hearst newspapers to investigate the Kishinev pogrom. This mission provides a remarkable example of the manner in which he worked, and of the humanity that inspired his journalism.

Before arriving in Russia he had researched the Jewish problem. On arrival he interviewed anti-Semites

as well as leading Jews, doctors who had attended the victims, and eyewitnesses. A rabbi organised for him to hear the stories of about 40 of the raped women, and he met with children orphaned in the horror.

A child's exercise book on which a presumed assassin had wiped his hands is still among Davitt's papers in Trinity College.

Appalled by what he had discovered, he described it as “one of the most abominable tragedies in modern times”, and said that what he had seen and heard would haunt him till his dying day.

Complicity

He had no doubt of official complicity; named those responsible. He urged the Russian government to condemn the atrocity, and the Americans to protest to the Czar in person. Thanks to the electric telegraph his reports were copied into newspapers around the world. As a consequence Davitt backed the idea that a suitable home be should be created for the Jews in Palestine.

This book richly illustrates just how much more there was to Michael Davitt than simply that of Fenian, founder of the Land League, and anti-Parnellite.

Truthfully reading the signs of the times

A Church of the Poor: Pope Francis and the Transformation of Orthodoxy

by Clemens Sedmak
(Orbis Books / Alban Books, £23.99)

Peter Costello

This important book is written with the aim, it seems to this reviewer, of enlarging our sense of what 'orthodoxy' ought to mean in the era of Pope Francis.

Prof. Sedmak is a distinguished



Austrian theologian who currently holds a chair at King's College, London. His main interests are in poverty, its origins, and its spiritual consequences and in social ethics. His multitudinous activities should not, he says, obscure the fact that

“life is about one thing: to grow in the arts of love”, for which the family unit is the best training ground.

This background informs what Dr Sedmak has to say in this book. He takes his departure from Pope Francis's call for “a Church that is Poor”. This “vision of an empty church” is challenging enough for many; but beyond that, in the light of the Pope's encyclicals, the author begins his exploration.

The first part deals with “the joy

of the Gospel” as a call to respond to love. But ancillary to that is “the Gospel of joy” being in many ways the key word of both the Pope's vision, and the theme of this book.

“He leaves the reader aware of just what Orthodoxy has meant”

But a call for “a Church that is Poor” also asks us to consider what it means to be poor. Poverty is all

too often thought of a third world problem; but, as we all realise, this is not the case.

There is poverty, or rather poverties of various natures across all the developed societies, an unfulfilled spirituality is as crippling as lack of food.

Having devoted the third part of the book to poverty as “the wound of knowledge” Sedmak moves on the question of what “a Church of the Poor” can be. The demand, as so many people realise and put

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.

The Goodness of a Guinness

Grace: The Remarkable Life of Grace Grattan Guinness
by Michele Guinness
(Hodder & Stoughton, £9.99)

J. Anthony Gaughan

Grace, born in 1874, was the daughter of Charles Russell Hurditch. He was a leading figure in the Protestant sect known as the Plymouth Brethren. However, she was best known as the second wife of Henry Grattan Guinness (1835–1910).

Taney-born Henry Grattan, was the grandson of the famous Arthur Guinness. After extensive travels abroad he returned to England, where in 1853 he experienced a profound religious conversion.

After his ordination in 1857 as an undenominational evangelist he spent the rest of his life as a preacher. He conducted successful preaching tours at home and around the world, becoming the most celebrated preacher in the Victorian era.

A prolific author, he published numerous books and scholarly articles on the Bible. He also founded the East London Institute for Home and Foreign Missions, which trained over 1,100 people.

Difference

Henry Grattan's first wife, one of the first women evangelists and also a renowned missionary, died in 1898. Seven years later he married Grace.

Although there was a difference of 40 years between them Grace adapted to her new situation very quickly and became his soulmate and indefatigable assistant.

Immediately after their marriage she accompanied him on a five-year global missionary tour. Two years later Henry Grattan died. She had two sons and little money.

No stranger to the rarefied atmosphere of the manse, Grace secured an appointment as a housekeeper in a vicarage in Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow. Later, tiring of secluded of rural Ireland, she ran a pension on Lake Geneva.

Then she became matron and bursar at a theological college, which prepared ministers for the evangelical wing of the Church of England. Here she passed some of the happiest years of her life; but this changed with the advent of World War I. Most of the students went to war as chaplains, many did not return and those who did often had horrific injuries.

“Grace indicated the devastating impact of the two World Wars on the women of these islands”

In her diary, Grace indicated the devastating impact of the two World Wars on the women of these islands. They lost fathers, husbands, sons, brothers. In one family alone, a widowed mother lost all her six sons.

The war effectively closed the college. Grace next acquired and ran a small, exclusive, private hotel in Kensington, but also worked in the Registration Office in London. Finally, before retiring, she did a stint as matron in a boys' boarding-school in Scotland.

Grace was a talented and prolific writer: writing hundreds of letters to family, friends and the press. She was also a dedicated diarist and had a book published in 1935



under the pen name Septima: entitled *The Peculiar People*, it described the restrictions which membership of the Plymouth Brethren placed on Grace and her co-religionists. The book dismayed her family and members of the sect; but was favourably reviewed by the secular press and G.K. Chesterton's *Weekly*.

Recently Michele Guinness, wife of Grace's grandson, discovered a cache of her diaries and other writings and has crafted them into this fascinating narrative of a truly remarkable lady.

Ecumenism

Grace was a woman of her time, when on either side of the Reformation divide not even the slightest sign of ecumenism appeared on the horizon. Hence for her and her fellow-evangelical Protestants pagans and papists had both to be saved for God.

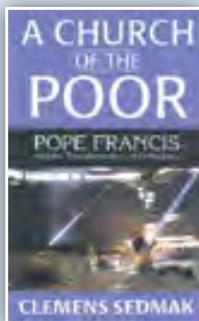
Nor had she much regard for the Irish. In noting that Countess Markievicz was the first woman to be elected to Westminster but had not taken her seat she commented: "So typical of the contrary Irish."

It was a fortunate happenstance that Grace's diaries were rescued as, apart from casting light on her historic extended family, in them she provides a superb social commentary on her times.

away from themselves, is the idea of the call for serious change in them. These chapters are enlightening but the final one, entitled 'Orthodoxy in a New Key' is the truly enlarging.

This is not that legalistic orthodoxy so often invoked by some in a far from loving manner, but an orthodoxy truly based on community and on Christian love and cohesion.

He leaves the reader aware of just what Orthodoxy has meant, and what it should really mean as Catholics try



to move forward in step with the Pope Francis.

This book, inevitably, is aimed at theologians (especially at what are called here "desk-bound theologians") and students of theology.

But though the language of the professional theologian bothers many, the ordinary reader will find it worth the struggle to understand, for here they will find life changing notions, based on

love and joy.

Web Watch

Following Benedict's saintly footsteps: a problematic quest

In the days following the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States, and with both houses of Congress in the hands of a Republican party keen to limit immigration and abolish President Obama's healthcare system, there were no shortage of voices online calling for a withdrawal from civic life.

"I'm just going to sit the next few years out," was a typical decree, "I'm just going to ignore Trump, and read, and paint, and look after my garden, and spend time with my friends. This won't last forever."

True as far as it goes, perhaps, and surely a healthier reaction than the aggression that's marked some of those on the fringes of anti-Trump protests, but one has to wonder whether such a withdrawal might constitute an abdication of our duties to each other. How would our Muslim and Latino brothers and sisters be served by our turning our backs on their troubles in favour of making sure our lawn looks tidy?

It's not for nothing, after all, that the Greek word for someone who looks after their private life while shirking their public obligations has come down to us as 'idiot'.

Debate

All of which makes timely the publication of Rod Dreher's *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation*, a book which has sparked vigorous debate on the Catholic – and broader Christian – internet.

The Benedict Option takes its name from the famous closing lines of *After Virtue*, Alasdair MacIntyre's classic 1981 study of moral philosophy which alluded to how, faced with the chaos of Rome's collapsing civilization in the 6th Century, St Benedict of Nursia left the city and founded a series of monasteries, notably the great monastery of Monte Cassino, with these



Rod Dreher.

becoming the seedbeds of a new and rejuvenated civilization.

"This time," MacIntyre wrote, "the barbarians are not waiting beyond the frontiers; they have already been governing us for quite some time. And it is our lack of consciousness of this that constitutes part of our predicament. We are waiting not for a Godot, but for another – doubtless very different – St Benedict."

“It calls for a renewed focus on a range of values necessary to Christian living in a post-Christian world”

Dreher's book builds on *The Rule of St Benedict* in calling for a Christian disentanglement from

America's culture wars, believing the Churches to have lost and to have harmed themselves in the process. It calls for a renewed focus on a range of values necessary to Christian living in a post-Christian world, this focus, in turn, leading to the development and building of practices and institutions to reverse our world's tendencies

towards fragmentation and isolation.

Reaction to this proposal has varied, with, for instance, James T. Keane at americamagazine.org asking "What would Thomas Merton and Daniel Berrigan say about the Benedict Option?" Their answer, he suspects, would be fairly straightforward: "However long one might need to go away and rest awhile...the vocation of most Christians is to participate in the saving work of God, not just in prayer but in other forms of direct action and life 'in the world'."

“What we think does not matter as much as what we do—and how faithfully we do it”

Also at americamagazine.org, Patrick Gilger is at pains to point out where – in his view – this "problematic, infuriating, beautiful, necessary book" hits the mark, highlighting the value of Dreher's emphasis on Christian practice to the effect that to build Christian persons – to create saints – "what we think does not matter as much as what we do—and how faithfully we do it".

Among other thought-provoking takes on the book are Elizabeth Breunig's democracyjournal.org piece 'City of Rod', and those by Gerald Russello at isi.org, the website of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, Scott Aniol at religiousaffections.org, Justin Lonas at jrynalonas.wordpress.com and Jake Meador at mereorthodoxy.com.

Philadelphia's Archbishop Charles Chaput perhaps puts it best at firstthings.com, urging people, even those with limited time and limited funds, to read Dreher's book, praising it for its willingness to name problems truthfully and point a way forward, hailing it as a classic modern instance of what he calls 'Christian realism'.

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

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

Say this prayer for three days.

J.C.

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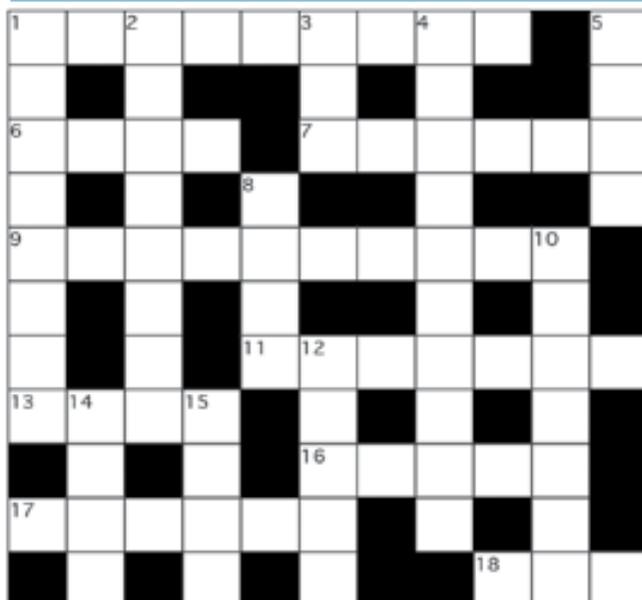
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Crossword Junior

Gordius 174



- ACROSS**
- 1 This kind of electric oven cooks really quickly (9)
 - 6 Make a picture (4)
 - 7 Hopping mad (6)
 - 9 Some people smoke them (10)
 - 11 Small stones (7)
 - 13 You cook them in an omelet (4)
 - 16 Animals in a flock (5)
 - 17 Keep a car here (6)
 - 18 You might find this moisture on the grass early in the morning (3)
 - sick (8)
 - 2 Making it different (8)
 - 3 There are many battles in this (3)
 - 4 Carrots, cauliflower, and other such plants (10)
 - 5 An animal may be locked up in one (4)
 - 8 Stumble (4)
 - 10 Tall church tower, spire (7)
 - 12 Artist's stand (5)
 - 14 Happy (4)
 - 15 You wash yourself with this and water (4)
- DOWN**
- 1 You might take it if you are

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

GORDIUS No.290

Across – 1 Bringing in the sheaves 6 Omit 10 Sepia 11 Up the ante 12 Hurtful 15 Width 17 Alto 18 Need 19 Omaha 21 Chatted 23 Witch 24 Luke 25 Rain 26 Lazio 28 Gutters 33 Unbridled 34 Truth 35 Hoax 36 Water Music

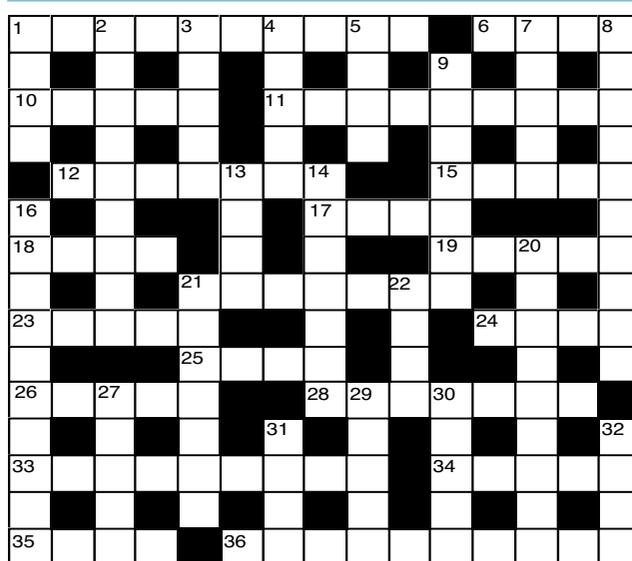
Down – 1 Boss 2 Imprudent 3 Giant 4 Nauru 5 Iota 7 Mined 9 Redwood 13 Fish 14 Lasting 16 Snowplough 20 Aquariums 21 Chronic 22 Eyot 27 Zebra 29 Undue 30 Totem 31 Flea 32 Chic

CHILDREN'S No.173

Across – 1 Road works 6 Ignore 7 Dish 9 Sausage 10 Cent 11 Apostle 13 Reeds 14 Ketchup 15 Sun 16 Ideas
Down – 1 Rhinoceros 2 Announce 3 Worms 4 Kid 5 Athlete 8 Cup of tea 11 Asked 12 Laugh

Crossword

Gordius 291



- ACROSS**
- 1 The Mafia noted the circulation of slander (10)
 - 6 Informal conversation (4)
 - 10 Groom oneself, as a bird may do (5)
 - 11 In some tan patios, Italians serve this first (9)
 - 12 Unyielding (7)
 - 15 Educate (5)
 - 17 Killer-whale (4)
 - 18 In which to measure electrical resistance (4)
 - 19 Mathematical lines (5)
 - 21 Examine a soft-hearted creepy-crawly (7)
 - 23 The Special Air Service keeps iron secure in these (5)
 - 24 & 4d He wrote 'Tom Sawyer' (4,5)
 - 25 Got the ring; got married; was in debt (4)
 - 26 Picturesque scene seen in tidy Llanelli (5)
 - 28 Coincide partly with (7)
 - 33 First close, then object to what a narrow escape that was! (4,5)
 - 34 Many get material for Mr. Eastwood (5)
 - 35 Simple, straightforward (4)
 - 36 Do the strong always throw when at this level of excitement? (5,5)
- DOWN**
- 1 Hoodwink (4)
 - 2 & 16d Liberty to practise in one's faith? Then concede income offers need changing (7,2,10)
 - 3 Type of musical note (5)
 - 4 See 24 across
 - 5 Cereal used to make porridge (4)
 - 7 Get the party-thrower a flower (5)
 - 8 Pointedly, these are the dental selections! (10)
 - 9 Impertinent or insolent person (7)
 - 13 This chap can be seen in the canal, any time (4)
 - 14 Weapon fired from a submarine (7)
 - 16 See 2 down
 - 20 Playwright (9)
 - 21 Seclude, cut off (7)
 - 22 Make the French clergyman better (4)
 - 27 Units of time (5)
 - 29 Fashion (5)
 - 30 Go back over what's at the heart of venture capital (5)
 - 31 Showing great knowledge and judgment (4)
 - 32 Skin irritation (4)

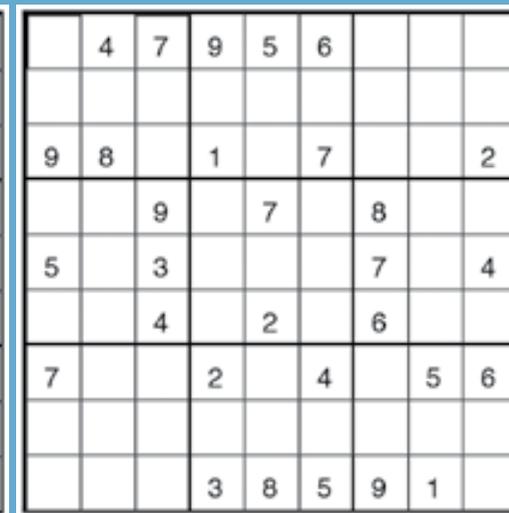
Sudoku Corner

174

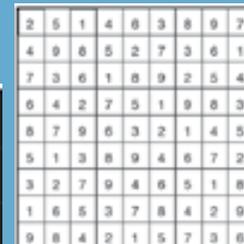
Easy



Hard



Last week's Easy 173



Last week's Hard 173





Inés San Martín

Notebook

If it's fake or implausible, don't share it

FOR A MAN who lashes out against misinformation, defamation, calumny and spreading scandal, even once comparing the last offense to eating faeces, Pope Francis has been a victim of several fake news cycles of his own, with one claiming he wanted to change the Ten Commandments being the latest to go viral.



Pope Francis.

called for merging Islam and Christianity also went viral, with one alleged papal quote saying that "Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Jehovah, Allah. These are all names employed to describe an entity that is distinctly the same across the world. For centuries, blood has been needlessly shed because of the desire to segregate our faiths."

Miraculous things

Further down in the 'news report,' the Pontiff is quoted as saying: "We can accomplish miraculous things in the world by merging our faiths, and the time for such a movement is now."

It's harder to pin down where this story originated, since there are versions of it going back at

least to 2015, recycling alleged quotes that have been denied by the Vatican more than once.

Though better suited for satirical sites such as 'The Onion' or 'Eye of the Tiber,' these stories found their way into mainstream media, either because there are those who actually believe the Pope would do something along those lines, or because a story is seen as too good for traffic to bother with pesky matters such as accuracy and verification.

Pope Francis has been a victim of these hoax stories since the beginning of his pontificate, when countless phrases and even poems were attributed to him on Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp.

A few weeks back, a Twitter account called Ecuador Mundial claimed the pontiff had spoken about recently held national elections, saying that: "When you choose a rich president, he will want to continue being so at the cost of your poverty, [so] never allow it."

The phrase was retweeted 214 times, and seen by several thousands of the account's more than 90,000 followers. Never mind that the Pope didn't say it.

enough traction in the past few days that the Associated Press dedicated a 'fact check' piece to it.

Earlier this year, another fake story that claimed Francis had

From a flat-out falsehood – the Pope wants to change the God-given Ten Commandments – to seemingly harmless poems, all these things would have had no legs had people deemed them too unrealistic to share. Journalists, though fallible, have the responsibility of doing our best to get the story right. Mistakes are sometimes made, and they are the origin of many false news reports. For instance, a pro-life site recently had a piece claiming Pope Francis had called for Catholics to have fewer children, which never happened.

The original story has been corrected, but its spin-offs haven't, and some of them still pop up in internet searches and social media. However, journalists aren't the only ones at fault. It's up to all of us, news consumers as well as producers, to be responsible about what we share and allow to go viral.

Too absurd to be believed, the story claimed the Pope allegedly wanted to reword the fourth commandment so that it included children raised by same-sex parents and to remove the seventh, allowing adultery and same-sex relationships.

According to the fake story, published in *Real News Right Now* by a 'journalist' named R. Hobbus J.D., the Pope was also planning on adding two new commandments, one which forbids genetic engineering and the consumption of genetically modified food.

Selfies

The other new commandment used the Kardashian clan as an example, and had Francis allegedly calling selfies "an abomination in the eyes of our Lord" and banning personal idolisation.

Yet the story, from 2015, gained

Same old news

Then there's the recurring WhatsApp message that claims Pope Francis is in the hospital – which never happened – and one in which he allegedly asks for a day of prayer and fasting for the war in Syria, something the Pope did do, but back in 2013.

My family and friends have forwarded such items to me several times, seeming to forget that I follow the Pope for a living, and if any of these were true I'd be the one passing on the information. And these messages never get to me with a "Is this true?" but as facts: "The Pope is in the hospital, pray for him."

We're inclined to believe that because we got something from someone we trust, it must be true. Never mind that they got it from someone who they believed to be on top of the news, and who never bothered to confirm it.



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Famine is afflicting the people of Africa, and the Little Way Association needs to send urgent relief to priests and religious who are helping the poor and destitute. Fr Peter Ndegwa CSSp of Garissa Diocese, Kenya, writes: "There are tales of households suffering, desperation, hopelessness and imminent loss of life here. We are in a state of hunger leading to famine and a looming disaster of untold magnitude. The residents are boiling leaves of trees to use as vegetables. Livestock have died in big numbers." Kenya is just one of several countries affected. The United Nations speaks in terms of millions at risk of starvation. The disasters are partly man-made, partly natural. The Catholic bishops of South Sudan warn that the church is being targetted for attacks. There are problems also in Nigeria, Somalia and Yemen.



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