

The Irish Catholic

SECRETS REVEALED

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GUIDE TO RETREATS

“Come you yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while” - Mark 6:31

MARIA STEEN

No integrity in voting for those hostile to Catholicism Page 6



Thursday, March 5, 2020

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The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

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Church poised for ‘radical action’ on coronavirus crisis

No decision yet on postponing Confirmations

Chai Brady, Róise McGagh and Aron Hegarty

Irish bishops say they are poised to take radical steps to stem coronavirus infection, including, if necessary, postponing Confirmation ceremonies and other gatherings, *The Irish Catholic* has learned.

Dioceses around Ireland have already taken on board guidelines issued by health authorities to contain the virus, but with Confirmation season in full swing bishops say they are ready to take “more radical steps” if the outbreak worsens.

Bishop Dermot Farrell of the Diocese of Ossory told *The Irish Catholic*: “there is no immediate plan to stop gatherings, but that may change depending on how things develop and we will be keeping a close eye on things. We are in a contamination phase at the moment, but we are following the general guidelines which have been distributed around all the parishes in the diocese.

“It’s a delicate and important purpose in order to contain what is a risk to where we are at now and we may have to take radical steps going forward, should the situation

worsen,” he said.

Echoing this sentiment Bishop William Crea of Cloyne said they have circulated the HSE guidelines and are focused on “containing the virus”.

“Now if it advances beyond the current situation surely that will lead us to reconsider matters but now that’s not the intention. Should things

change...we will seek their [HSE] advice and guides,” he said.

Dr Crea said that “as of now we don’t envisage cancelling any gatherings in light of the advice that we have.

“Almost every gathering for Confirmation is in a very crowded church even if it’s a small enough number with all families and relatives

and all that,” he said.

The number of confirmed cases has jumped in Europe in the past few days, with the EU commission raising the risk level of COVID-19 to the EU to ‘moderate to high’.

Contained

Meanwhile, Bishop Denis Nulty of Kildare and Leighlin said that anything the Church can do to help contain the virus “should be encouraged”.

Bishop Nulty like many other bishops has been travelling across his diocese to preside at Confirmation ceremonies, which involves anointing each child with oil on the forehead. Regarding having to postpone Confirmation he said “we very much hope not, they’re wonderful ceremonies”.

“But again in those ceremonies you’re going into churches that won’t be using holy water in fonts, won’t be having a sign of peace. People who have any kind of a sense of a cold, any respiratory issues obviously should stay at home, that’s always important, to mind yourself and to take good precautions,” he said.

Bishop Nulty said that he

» Continued on Page 4

Praying for the Pope to get well



Young priests from an international college in Rome arrive in St Peter’s Square for the Angelus prayer. Pilgrims prayed for the swift recovery of the Holy Father who is apparently suffering from flu. Photo: CNS

No ‘smoking gun’ in Pius papers

Róise McGagh

A Church academic has said historians are not expecting a ‘smoking gun’ from the Pope Pius XII ‘secret’ archives.

The archives were opened to scholars on Monday who will likely take time to examine the documents. Pius XII has been accused a number of times of turning a blind eye to the Holocaust in 1963 of Rolf Hochhuth’s play, *The Deputy and John Cornwell’s Hitler’s Pope* (1999).

Salvador Ryan, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in St Patrick College Maynooth said: “I don’t think too many historians are expecting to see a smoking gun in that there will be huge revelations.”

“Maybe his greatest contribution will be in those post war years.” Information on these years will tell of the Holy See’s involvement the post war reconstruction of Europe and its diplomatic relations with different countries.

While Prof. Ryan said it’s a step forward that may bring closure and historians are not expecting major revelations, no one knows what the documents could contain.

MARY KENNY

The loss of personal touch almost as damaging as the pesky virus PAGE 5



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DAVID QUINN

The religious will continue their work, outbreak or not PAGE 8



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Shop: shop@irishcatholic.ie

Managing Director: Garry O'Sullivan

Annual Subscription Rates: Ireland €145. Airmail €250. Six months – €75.

ISSN 1393 - 6832 - Published by The Irish Catholic,

23 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.

Printed by Webprint, Cork.

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Let's get back down to basics

In business as in life, one of the killer phrases is “we’ve never done it that way before”. In the Church context we might well add: “We tried that before and it didn’t work.”

Those who seek to calibrate our lives and actions by the light of the Gospel would do well to be wary of such cynicism and avoid such pessimistic voices.

This is not a rallying cry to folly or to dismiss challenges, rather it is a signpost to the need for proper discernment within the Church.

The temptation to pessimism was something Pope St John XXIII was acutely aware of when he convoked the Second Vatican Council. He wrote that: “In the daily exercise of our pastoral office, it sometimes happens that we hear certain opinions which disturb us – opinions expressed by people who, though fired with a commendable zeal for religion, are lacking in sufficient prudence and judgment in their evaluation of events.

“We feel that we must disagree with these prophets of doom, who are always forecasting worse disasters, as though

the end of the world were at hand,” John XXIII wrote.

A key part of the ministry of Pope Francis has been to call the Church to discernment. And what is central to discernment is to read the signs of the times not merely as they are, but in the light of the Gospel.

Challenges

There can be a tendency in the Church to look at the present challenges (fewer people attending Mass, less appetite for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, a dearth of vocations, etc.) and see in them the work of the Holy Spirit.

That’s bad discernment. For sure, the Holy Spirit is there in the midst of the challenges and difficulties but to put the blame for our own lack of pastoral success at the foot of God is to renege on our baptismal mandate to work to build up the Body of Christ.

It’s not enough to throw one’s arms in the air

Editor’s Comment Michael Kelly



while yelling “no one is interested”. Pope Francis constantly insists that if the Gospel is to be lived anew in every generation, the Church must find new ways to reach people.

Sometimes, the new ways will be not so much new, but re-finding tried and tested things like the sacraments in a new way.

“When the Sacrament of Penance was re-presented to parishioners... they jumped at the chance”

As Fr Eugene O’Neill writes on page 15 of this week’s paper, the parish of St Patrick’s in Belfast, after years of dwindling numbers at penance services, went back to the drawing board. What they found was that when the Sacrament

of Penance – Confession – was re-presented to parishioners and when they were equipped with the practicalities of how to avail of the sacrament, they jumped at the chance.

This is in stark contrast to the view articulated in some Church circles that would see Confession as a thing of the past.

Unnourished

Too often people turn their backs on the Church when they experience a felt need or turn to the Church and find themselves unnourished.

Successful pastoral strategies and initiatives are not magic. In some ways, there’s nothing new under the sun – but what the experience of St Patrick’s shows is that people are open to seeing things in new ways.

Maybe you did try it before, and maybe it didn’t work – but maybe it’s time to try again.

Fr Ray Kelly into *Dancing With The Stars* quarter-final stage

Aron Hegarty

Singing priest Fr Ray Kelly continues to defy all odds after making it into the quarter-finals of RTE1’s *Dancing With The Stars* this weekend.

Fr Kelly was saved by the public vote once again after dancing the quickstep to *I’m a Believer* by the Monkees on March 1.

The priest and his pro dance partner Kylee Vincent scored a total of 13 points from the judges.

TV presenter Mary Kennedy was sent home after facing off against model Gráinne Gallanagh in the dance off.

Fr Kelly will be back on the dance floor this Sunday, March 8 on RTÉ1.

#LivingLent initiative launched

Archbishop Eamon Martin has invited the Faithful to use social media to grow closer to God during the Lent season.

Dr Martin launched the initiative on Twitter and Instagram this week, which offers daily suggestions for Lent including prayer and scripture, opportunities for penance and fasting,

charitable acts and behaviour.

“The objective of our Lenten digital initiative is to assist our spiritual preparation for the joy and hope of the Easter season,” Dr Martin said. He encouraged people to use the hashtag #LivingLent and share how they are putting Lenten themes of into practice.



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Flood of Noahs but Jack is nimble in new baby names

Chai Brady

Six out of the top 10 baby names chosen for boys last year in Ireland were from the Bible according to figures from the Central Statistics Office (CSO).

There was 677 Jacks born in Ireland last year, making it the most popular boys name in 2019. Jack is a derivative of John, and has been in the top spot since 2007 except in 2016 when James took the lead.

The second favourite was James, followed by Noah, the Irish name Conor, and then Daniel coming fifth. James was the only name in the top five boys' names in 2019 that was in the top five list 50 years ago in 1969, while Noah was new to the top five in 2018 and remained there in 2019.

Connection

Alternatively, there was only two Biblical names for girls in the top 10 list for last year. There was 452 babies called Emily, making it the favourite name for Irish parents for the ninth year in a row. This was followed by Grace, which although is not a Biblical name, it can have a Christian connection particularly regarding the concept of 'Divine Grace'.

In third place was the Irish name Fiadh. The only two Biblical names were Hannah, which came in

fifth, and in seventh is Ava – commonly believed to be a derivative of Eve. Different spellings of a name were treated as separate names by the CSO.

Variety

In 2019, if the number of girls named Hanna (57)

and Hannah (321) were combined, it would fall into third place ahead of Fiadh.

There was a wider variety in the names registered for girls, with 4,814 girls names in 2019 compared with 3,725 for boys.

Jack was the most

popular name for boys where both parents were Irish nationals, while Oliver was the most popular choice with parents of UK nationality. Muhammad was the highest ranked name of baby boys born where both parents were from outside the EU.

Grace was the most popular girls name when both parents were Irish nationals. Georgia, Isla and Sarah were the names most often chosen by parents of UK nationality.

Emily was the main choice for parents from outside the EU.

'Don't look at me, I didn't do it!'



A young family who received their ashes at St Patrick's Church on Donegall Street in Belfast on Ash Wednesday last week. Photo: Mal McCann



The Prophet Isaiah as depicted in the Sistine Chapel.

Sistine Chapel to come alive in Dublin

Staff reporter

The wonders of the Vatican's Sistine Chapel will come alive in a unique event in Dublin next week with renowned art historian Liz Lev.

Newman's University Church on St Stephen's Green will play host to the event on Monday, March 9 which will see guests walked through the art masterpiece that is the jewel of the Vatican.

Using visual displays with commentary by Dr Lev – one of the most prominent authorities on the art of the chapel – those present will be invited to enter in to the experience of visiting the chapel and understand it as both a spiritual and artistic experience.

● Behind the Veil: Deciphering the Sistine Chapel will be held in Newman's University Church, St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2 on March 9 at 7.30pm. All welcome.

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All politicians should be pro-family says Bishop

Staff reporter

All politicians should be pro-family and look after the example set by Hungary's family policies, according to Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan.

The bishop of Waterford and Lismore said: "We see the promotion of the rights of the individual over family (in Ireland). In Hungary, in contrast, you are promoting the priority and importance of families."

The Hungarian Minister for Family, Ms Katalin Novak from the Fidesz party spoke at Glencomeragh House in Co. Waterford about the initiatives her government has taken to incentivise young people to have large families.

She said in 2010 they began with a country "on the brink of collapse politically, economically and morally as well". There was a low fertility rate and an ageing population.

Reductions

One of the right-wing nationalist party's main initiatives, alongside a personal income tax reduction for every child, is the Baby Expecting Subsidy; every married couple with the wife between 18 and 40 years old is eligible for an interest-free loan of €30,736 (HUF 10 million), which buys a home in Hungary.

Suspended repayments, reductions in debt and debt cancellation are on the cards for couples who have one to three children.

Ms Novak presented the Bishop with a book about Our Lady of Gyor (Our Lady of Consolations).

The book shows a connection between Hungary and Ireland through Bishop Lynch who brought an image of the Blessed Mother from Clonfert Cathedral and to the Cathedral in Gyor. It's said on St Patrick's Day, March 17, 1697, the image wept tears of blood.

Bishops say Accord should not have to cater for same sex couples

Róise McGagh

Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland have stated Accord should not have to provide marriage related services to those contracting in same-sex marriage.

Accord told this paper (IC 13/02/20) that they would not turn away any person from their counselling services if they came to seek help.

The bishop's response to the Northern Ireland Office Consultation on same-sex religious marriage stated that they wish for pastoral care providing marriage support to be "covered by the principle that no religious body, or person acting on behalf of such bodies, should be compelled to undertake activities relating to same-sex marriage".

Requirements

Bishop Denis McNulty, president of Accord Catholic Marriage Care, when asked if funding had been affected by Tusla equality requirements said: "In preparation courses it's sacramental marriage but in counselling if somebody needs support, Accord will welcome people, its non-judgementally done, we accommodate people in where they're coming from."

The Bishops in Northern Ireland feel that protection should be granted legally for individual ministers, those mandated by the Church and pastoral organisations such as Accord so they are "not to be compelled to provide marriage preparation, relationship counselling or other marriage related services in respect of

those contracting same-sex marriage, should they believe it is inconsistent with their religious belief to do so."

Discrimination

Tusla continue to fund marriage counselling for Accord significantly. Tusla is required to "commission in a manner that promotes equality, prevents

discrimination and protects human rights in line with its Public Sector Duty". Under this falls the responsibility to accept same sex couples

Mary Johnson, specialist in counselling with Accord said on the topic of falling in line with equality requirements: "We do see all kinds of couples who need relationship support."

The bishops also said:

"We would also ask that explicit provision be made that would protect such faith-based organisations, which provide valued and highly effective pastoral services in support of marriage and the family, from being discriminated against in access to public funds because of their beliefs in respect of same-sex marriage."

Back on the right note



Students from St Mary's Secondary School in Glasnevin sing at the blessing and opening of their newly refurbished Prayer Room. The event was part of the school's 80th anniversary celebrations. Archbishop Diarmuid Martin presided and it was attended by sisters of the Holy Faith order, Principal Bernadette Bourke, Deputy Principals Mary O'Donnell and Frances Devaney, staff and pupils. The room is dedicated to Sr Antoinette Keelan who was chairperson of the Board of Management for many years.

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Church should not cancel Mass over coronavirus – poll

Chai Brady

A social media poll of over 700 people conducted by this paper has found 85% of people who voted are in favour of the Irish Church not cancelling Masses over coronavirus (Covid-19) fears.

People were asked: "In parts of the world worst affected by coronavirus, Masses have been cancelled. Now that the virus has been detected in Ireland, do you think Masses should be cancelled as a precaution or do you

think this is an over-reaction?"

A large amount of those polled voted 'No', saying it would be an overreaction. The overall view among voters was the need to avoid panic and hysteria, and that Mass is needed now in Ireland more than ever. One commenter said: "It's not the first virus to hit the world...basic hygiene and cover your mouth when coughing and sneezing".

A second said: "Times of trouble are when we need Mass even more. Our Lord heals and remedies all."

Church prepared to take radical action

» Continued on Page 1 believes that "we're a long way away" from suspending gatherings like Confirmation, adding: "the important thing is we show some responsibility, we show some caution and common sense."

Fears

Asked whether he felt that Confirmation ceremonies might have to be postponed as a result of fears around the

spread of the virus Bishop of Meath Dr Tom Deenihan said: "I would think not, I would hope not."

However, he warned "we have to be careful and see how it develops, obviously we'd listen to whatever advice we were being told, but I'd be surprised if it [Confirmation] was problematic."

"I would feel that those who feel unwell have an obligation in charity not to

attend liturgies so as to avoid the risk of infecting others," he told *The Irish Catholic*.

Responding to a query regarding Confirmations the Department of Health said that the National Public Health Emergency Team have formed a sub-group who will develop criteria for the risk assessment of mass gatherings and this will be done on a "case by case basis".

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kylemore Abbey lights up to mark 100 years of Benedictine Order

The Kylemore Trust switched on the lights of Kylemore Abbey to celebrate 100 years of the Benedictine Order of nuns in Co. Galway this week.

The illumination of the Abbey is part of a year-long programme of events to mark the residency of the nuns in Connemara since 1920.

"Over this year we will remember all those who have helped make Kylemore Abbey such a special place," said Abbess and Chair of Kylemore Trust Mother Máire Hickey OSB.

"As we celebrate, we give thanks for the blessings of the past century and we look forward with confidence to the future."

Catholic school teacher makes her voice heard

A Catholic school teacher in England has made it through to the knockout stages of *The Voice UK* after coming out on top at the battle stage at the weekend.

Elly O'Keeffe, 31, wowed mentor Tom Jones and rapper Will.I.Am as she competed against teammate Shaun Samonini on March 1.

The pair sang a duet of *Lived* by OneRepublic and following the performance, the judges chose to keep the Cork-born singer-song writer on the show.

Ms O'Keeffe from Knocknagree is based in London and teaches music at St Raphael's Catholic Primary School in Northolt.

Pro-life group threaten legal action over NI abortion law

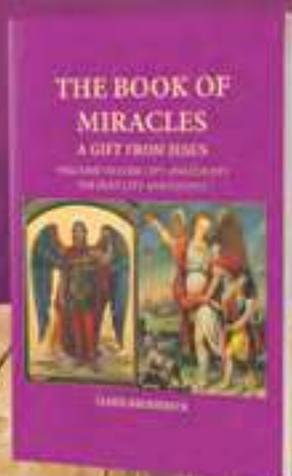
A pro-life group is threatening to take legal action against the UK Government over abortion laws in Northern Ireland due to come into force on March 31.

Right to Life UK has warned it will seek a judicial review if the final legal framework goes further than what is legally required under the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2019.

The group's spokesperson Catherine Robinson fears the legislation will allow for more abortions on the grounds of sex or disability.

She said: "If the UK Government pushes ahead with their extreme abortion framework proposals, they would be acting unlawfully and would be undermining the devolution settlement."

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Are we doomed to 'social distance' by the coronavirus?

My inclinations are to regard the hullabaloo about the coronavirus – Covid19 – with a pinch of salt. Yes, it's upsetting that more than 3,000 people worldwide have died from the epidemic: but (at the time of writing) that's out of 90,933 who have caught it. To put it in perspective, the World Health Organisation estimates that, globally, up to half a million people die each year from ordinary influenza.

Yet what is beginning to be alarming about Covid-19 is its contagious effect, and the way it is already changing our way of life – and maybe, in consequence, attitudes. We're being advised to practice 'social distance' from one another, because a handshake transmits countless numbers of germs and bacteria.

The social kiss – once obligatory among the 'ladies who lunch' – has declared *verboden*. Although, so far, I seem to be reasonably healthy, I've already been greeted by friends with a wave in the air and shrieks of "Hi – no kissing! No handshakes!"

“The lifestyle of monks and nuns is now being upheld as a model of health and safety”

We are told to avoid gatherings – don't get into clusters with other people. Wash your hands possibly 20 times a day while singing *Happy Birthday* twice. (That's the length of time you should spend on each hand-washing.) Somewhat OCD?

New protocols are being



Mary Kenny



All together now: 'Happy hand wash to me, happy hand wash to me...'

put in place for government and business. Is that face-to-face encounter really necessary? Can't you do it all by video-conferencing? As Boris Johnson's Brexit negotiating team meet the EU's negotiating squad, they have been instructed to sit far apart from one another and to avoid any personal touching. Not a very good augury for furthering mutual understanding: in all such encounters, much may depend upon the personal touch.

The word 'self-isolate' is being increasingly used. The hermit, the monk and the enclosed nun once

followed a vocation: now their lifestyle is upheld as a model of health and safety.

Sensible

It's sensible to avoid catching or transmitting a virus. But in this battle plan to combat any possible pandemic, it looks as though two elements of our lives will diminish or disappear: the personal, human touch, and the gregarious contact with others which is fundamental to community. That seems to me almost as discouraging as the pesky virus itself.

Read it and weep

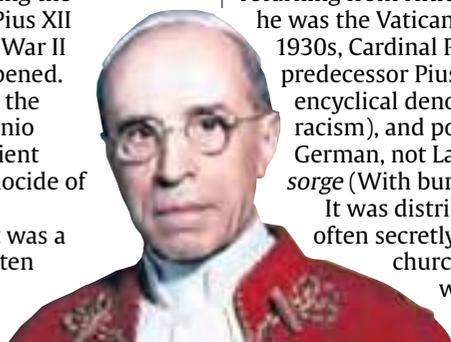
My mother-in-law used to say "the book you get rid of today is the one you need tomorrow" – perhaps a metaphor for many things which we miss when they're gone. I had to give away a shoal of books when I was de-camping from my old Dublin flat in 2017, and often, indeed, I miss one of them.

Some turn out to be quite valuable. I've been looking for a copy of John Healy's slim memoir about growing up in Mayo, *Nineteen Acres*, for which I once paid around a tenner. Now, Amazon UK can offer me a 'collectible' version 'from' £125 (€143.50), a new copy for £141.95 (€162.96) and a used edition in good condition for £52.50 (€60.27). It's a very fine, short book about the poverty of small Irish farms in the 1930s, and now, it seems, such memoirs are a goldmine.

The 'burning desire' of Pius XII

It will take months, perhaps years, for historians to trawl through the Vatican archives examining the papers relating to Pope Pius XII [pictured] during World War II which have now been opened. It has been alleged since the 1960s that Pius XII, Eugenio Pacelli, didn't take sufficient measures to halt the genocide of the Jews.

As is often the case, it was a drama, *The Deputy*, written by the German Rolf Hochhuth in 1963,



which first prompted this accusation. What we do know, already, is that after returning from Hitler's Germany, where he was the Vatican legate during the 1930s, Cardinal Pacelli helped his predecessor Pius XI write a stinging encyclical denouncing Nazism (and racism), and pointedly written in German, not Latin: *Mit brennender sorge* (With burning concern).

It was distributed in Germany, often secretly, by the Catholic church. It enraged Hitler. The world should have paid more attention to it.



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Maria Steen

The View



There is no integrity in voting for those hostile to Catholicism

With one election over, we await another: the Seanad election. Of the 60 seats in the senate, six are allocated to the university panel. The other 54 are filled by the Taoiseach's nominees and those nominated by the Vocational Panels. The university panel electorate is small, at only 175,000 between Trinity and NUI. It is a real privilege for a relatively small fraction of the population to be able to elect senators, and deserves due attention.

Last month, Bishop Kevin Doran of Elphin Diocese, issued a pre-election statement which read: "No seriously committed Catholic can simply accept that human life is disposable, at any stage.

If we are to reverse the 2018 legislation, which may take many years, and if we are to prevent the legalisation of euthanasia, our first step must be to ensure that we elect public

representatives who are committed to the right to life, from conception to natural death. For that reason, irrespective of traditional party loyalties, it seems to go completely against the common good for any committed Catholic to vote for a public representative who, in the outgoing Oireachtas, voted for abortion."

While not as susceptible to tribal party loyalties as the Dáil election, the Seanad election displays – perhaps more vividly – a real cultural battle between candidates, many of whom are not affiliated to any political party but have very definite views, particularly on social issues, such as the right to life – including euthanasia – marriage,

religious liberty and the education of children (particularly relating to religious education and sex education) that must be of interest to any Catholic.

To what extent should a Catholic be concerned about politics and the implications of his or her vote? After all, politics will always fall short, governments come and go, regimes change, nothing stays the same forever – as we saw with the repeal of the Eighth Amendment that had protected so many lives for so long. Does it really matter? Do we have to wear our Catholic hat into the voting booth?

I agree with Bishop Doran that it is essential that we do so, or else stop pretending that we are Catholic in any real sense.

What is demanded of us, as Jesus himself confirmed, is that we obey the first and greatest Commandment: to love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our soul and all our mind (Matthew 22:36-40). In essence, this means acting with integrity in all we do.

“We must see to it that our reason is directed towards God, as well as our hearts”

Integrity doesn't just mean being truthful and of high moral character, it also means being whole and undivided. We have respect for those who practise what they preach: they demonstrate integrity because they try to live up to the ideals they espouse. Equally, we quickly lose respect for someone who does the opposite: who says one thing and does another.

When it comes to voting, we must see to it that our reason is directed towards God, as well as our hearts.

It is no good loving God in your heart if you continue to vote for candidates who, to your knowledge, will seek to implement policies that contravene God's laws, and seek to influence the culture in a manner that will shut God out. Often, politics is a question of choosing the lesser evil, but this too

requires the exercise of reason and intellect.

There is a wonderful tradition of devotional Catholicism in Ireland. This should be cherished. But, from time to time, it is combined with disengagement of the intellect from the Faith. We saw this most clearly in the abortion referendum, in which Massgoing Catholics voted in their thousands for a measure that is unambiguously condemned by the Church as a grave moral wrong.

There is no integrity for a Catholic in such a vote. While the Seanad election is a less acute moral issue, in this too those of us with a vote to cast are called to do so with integrity.

* * * * *

In our society, for the last number of decades, we have seen a strong anti-intellectual streak develop with the elevation of emotions and feelings over reason and faith. This is sometimes called 'emotivism'.

Our education system too has for many years exhibited a strong anti-intellectual streak – where students are encouraged to regurgitate stock answers, without really having to think things through for themselves.

It seems to me that many students have been discouraged from memorising facts (such as maths facts, spellings and grammar, historical facts, etc.), and instead are encouraged to memorise opinions – often not their own, whether it be on repeal, women's rights, LGBTQ+ politics or modern atheism. Dissent is not encouraged.

Desensitised

It's not just the children and teenagers. We consume junk food every day in the form of print, broadcast, and social media. These dull our minds as well as our senses. We become desensitised to their effects on us, the chief one being that we stop questioning the message.

We outsource our responsibility to exercise our intellect and proper judgment to organisations that generally hold us and what we hold dear in

contempt.

We are instead swept away by our feelings, influenced only by personal stories that tug at the heart strings as presented to us by media outlets that are either explicitly or surreptitiously anti-Catholic.

Compassion

An anti-Christian culture has adopted what are Christian values, namely compassion and care for others. But there is no integrity in a position that elevates these virtues over all others, that elevates feelings over reason.

After all, compassion comes from the head as well as the heart: how can one administer justice or act fairly without making a rational decision? Is justice really served by making decisions based only on one's feelings (which are subjective for each of us, depending on our personality and life experience)?

“It is a question of giving the intellect its proper place”

The remedy, then, is an integrated approach that gives due place to the intellect. Due place. This is not to imply that the intellect is supreme, or that it should be elevated above all other aspects of our personhood.

That too is incompatible with true integrity, as it diminishes and undervalues the significance of the heart and the soul. It is a question of giving the intellect its proper place.

For those who have a vote, the forthcoming election is an opportunity to engage the intellect as well as the heart. If we call ourselves Catholic and truly believe in Christ then let us proclaim it in how we vote, by choosing a candidate who upholds the dignity of every human being, who will not join the mob seeking to take religious liberties from us or impose ideologies on our children. Let us act with integrity by voting for a candidate who will do the same.



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Asia Bibi 'forgives' those who wanted her killed



Free after eight years: Asia Bibi

Chai Brady

A Pakistani Catholic who was on death row for eight years and tortured after she was falsely accused of blasphemy before being released last year has said she's "forgiven everyone".

Ms Bibi's case was followed closely by charities who fight against Christian persecution around the world, who have consistently condemned Pakistan's severe blasphemy laws.

Regarding those who would have seen her killed Ms Bibi said: "I'm not angry at all, I've forgiven everyone from my heart and there is no hardness in me, there is patience in me because I learned how to be patient after having to leave my children behind."

Charges

Speaking to the BBC, Ms Bibi who now lives in Canada, called on Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan to free anyone unjustly accused or convicted of blasphemy and

to ensure that the charges are investigated properly.

Ms Bibi said her Faith helped her through her imprisonment. "They said change your faith, and you'll be freed. But I said no. I will live my sentence. With my Faith," she said.

"I found out from my husband that the whole world was praying for me. And that even the Pope had prayed for me. That made me happy. And I found out the whole world was praying for my misery to end.

"That made me feel that their prayers would definitely free me."

Ms Bibi has written a memoir called *Enfin Libre!* [Finally Free], in which she documents some of the inhumane and cruel treatment she experienced at the hands of the prison guards. This includes being pulled around with a neck brace that was tightened by a key. Pakistan authorities have denied her claims.

There was widespread protests and violence

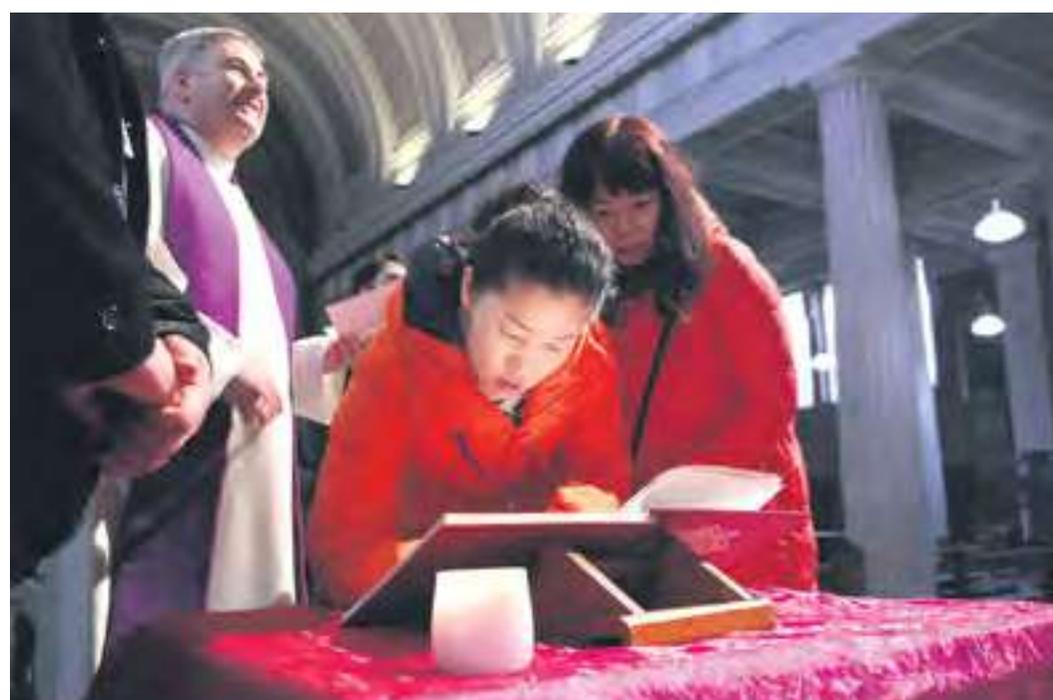
when Mrs Bibi was found innocent of blasphemy in Pakistan in October 2018. The government, citing fears for her safety, kept her in protective custody after

extremist Islamist groups protested for three days and made death threats.

Political parties such as Tehreek-e-Labbaik (TLP), whose sole aim is the

punishment of blasphemy and keeping the country's blasphemy laws which carry an automatic death penalty, were behind much of the protests and violence.

Ms Bibi's lawyer confirmed she had arrived in Canada on May 8 last year, and had been reunited with her family who fled Pakistan for asylum in 2018 due to fear for their lives.



Electing to sign on the dotted line

One of 20 new Catechumens signing their name in the Book of the Elect at a ceremony on Sunday in the Pro Cathedral, Dublin. The Catechumens and two Candidates were presented by their parishes to Archbishop Diarmuid Martin at the Rite of Election. Photo: John McElroy

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The Christian response to the coronavirus



If the Black Death didn't stop the religious working then Covid-19 probably won't either, writes **David Quinn**

How should the Catholic Church respond when a pandemic breaks out? What is the correct pastoral response? What kind of pastoral response best fits with medical best practice? Are priests generally good at a time like this? What should we as



individual Christians do?

It's hard to know at this stage whether ordinary people have an exaggerated fear of the coronavirus, properly called Covid-19,

or not. In their own minds do they have an over-heightened fear about the number who will die?

To judge from the international experience

so far, the risk is greatest to the very elderly and those who already have a serious illness. According to Chinese figures, it is fatal in about 14% of cases where the person who has caught it is 80 or more, but when a person is this elderly, they may have other underlying conditions anyway. A healthy 80-year-old would have a bigger chance of shaking off the virus.

The younger the person, the better the chance they will shrug it off, possibly with few if any symptoms. It will very rarely be fatal.

“As at mid-January, 44 Irish people had died from ordinary, seasonal flu – almost all aged 65 and over – and more than 2,700 were diagnosed with it”

Most Massgoers are obviously on the older side and so will be more at risk if there is an outbreak of the virus. But even if that happens, we should be careful not to give into exaggerated fears. Every year, there is an outbreak of flu, but we do not stop going to Mass for that reason, even though older people are more at risk and worldwide the flu is estimated to kill between 300,000 and 600,000 annually. That is vastly in excess of the numbers who have so far died of Covid-19, although it is still very hard to know how all this is going to develop.

As at mid-January, 44

Irish people had died from ordinary, seasonal flu – almost all aged 65 and over – and more than 2,700 were diagnosed with it. Again, we do not stop going to Mass for this reason.

The Churches have issued guidelines on how to minimise the risk of contracting anything. For example, we should not shake hands for the Sign of Peace but simply nod to each other instead. Many parishes do that anyway during the winter months.

Ministers of Eucharist have to make sure they properly disinfect their hands before distributing Communion.

These are simply common-sense precautions.

The HSE has issued advice to the Churches. This includes telling people who have the virus and have self-isolated at home not to expect priests to visit them as that would only expose the priests themselves to it and then they would then infect others.

If a person is self-isolating at home, that will, in any case, mean their case is not serious enough to warrant hospitalisation. In fact, medical experts estimate that just 1-4% of those who contract the virus would require hospital treatment.

However, priests will continue to visit seriously ill people in hospital, taking the precautions they take now when visiting highly infectious patients.

Quarantined

As we know, limited parts of northern Italy are in lockdown, that is, they have been quarantined and people are being told to stay at home, not travel and not congregate anywhere including churches.

What are priests doing in those parts of Italy? They are keeping in touch with ill or worried parishioners by phone or Skype or email. Only a tiny minority of parishioners in the affected parts of Italy have the virus.

Francis Rocca, Rome correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal*, reports that priests are using modern forms of communications to raise the spirits of worried people and to encourage a religious perspective on the outbreak. One priest commented: “The contagion of the virus is leading to a contagion of prayer.”

In its long history,

the Catholic Church has obviously seen vastly worse outbreaks of disease than this one. Until very recently, in fact, humans had to live in nearly constant fear of outbreaks of TB, or cholera, or typhoid which could often be deadly. Smallpox was particularly virulent and a huge killer.

Then, of course, there was the Black Death, which struck Europe in the 1340s wiping out about a third of the populations of the countries it swept through, including Ireland. This is very hard for us to fathom. If we measure these things on an earthquake-style Richter scale, then the Black Death (a version of bubonic plague, it appears), registers a 9.0, but even if Covid-19 gets very bad, it will be more like a 0.9.

“Priests and religious have historically been incredibly courageous at times like this”

There are records of how priests behaved during the Black Death, and it appears they did so very well. They ministered to the sick and dying to such an extent that their death rate was even higher than that of the general population. It is estimated that about 45% of all priests were killed in the infected regions, mostly the best and the bravest.

Indeed, priests and religious have historically been incredibly courageous at times like this, including during the regular outbreaks of deadly diseases in Ireland until the development of antibiotics and vaccinations only a few decades ago.

As for ordinary Christians, well, we have to keep an eye out for our neighbours as well if the Government introduces containment policies.

We can't leave it all to the clergy.

Indeed, in the quarantined northern Italian town of Codogo, with its 15,000 inhabitants, a dozen volunteers for the church's charitable arm, Caritas, continue to bring food to the poor and disabled there.

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Shedding new light on the

The role of Pope Pius XII during the Nazi Holocaust of the Jews is controversial. It wasn't always so, writes **Michael Kelly**



News this week that the Vatican is opening the archives for World War II (1939-45) to historians will bring fresh focus on the Pope Pius XII. Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli – who had been Papal Nuncio in Bavaria and then Secretary of State to Pius XI – was elected Successor of St Peter in 1939 on the eve of war.

His election was not a surprise since cardinal-electors wanted a quick election and a known quantity as darkness enveloped Europe. Under Pius XI, Cardinal Pacelli had been a key drafter of the encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* (With Burning Sorrow) which was smuggled in to Nazi Germany in 1937 and read at all Masses on Palm Sunday. It contained a firm condemnation of the racist underpinnings of the Nazi ideology. Adolf Hitler was furious and the document precipitated an intensification of the Nazi persecution of the Church, including many priests and religious being imprisoned or sent to concentration camps.

Pius XII was familiar with Germany: Pope Benedict XV sent him as nuncio to Bavaria in 1917. Three years later, he was dispatched as the first papal ambassador to the new Weimar Republic. He soon set about negotiating a *concordat* aimed at preserving rights such as Catholic education. During his time, he developed a fondness for German culture and music – a stick with which critics would late beat him to imply a softness of German colonial ambitions.

Foreign policy

In 1930, Archbishop Pacelli was recalled to Rome and became Vatican Secretary of State, effectively responsible for the entire foreign policy of the Holy See. Evidently, he quickly saw the threat of the rise of national socialism. Diplomatic papers reveal that he warned the US

consul in Berlin in 1937 that Hitler was “an untrustworthy scoundrel and [a] fundamentally wicked person”. He is also quoted as saying he believed the Nazis were incapable of moderation and was fully supportive of the anti-Nazi stand of the German hierarchy.

When he was elected Pope in 1939, the Nazis were clearly disappointed. Holocaust historian Martin Gilbert has noted that “so outspoken were Pacelli’s criticisms that Hitler’s regime lobbied against him, trying to prevent his becoming the successor to Pius XI. When he did become Pope, as Pius XII, in March 1939, Nazi Germany was the only government not to send a representative to his coronation.”

“The historic record also shows that Pius intervened in several countries to try to stop the Nazi deportation of the Jews”

The curious thing about the allegations against Pius XII – chief of which are that he was a Nazi sympathiser and did little or nothing to help the Jews – didn’t surface until the 1960s. And ever since the publication in 1999 of John Cornwell’s *Hitler’s Pope*, Papa Pacelli has been framed in the public imagination as either a coward or a villain.

Yet, during his papacy and indeed afterwards, Pius was hailed as a heroic defender of human rights. In a Christmas editorial in 1941 the *New York Times* – an organ not known for reverence to the Catholic Church – noted that “the voice of Pius XII is a lonely voice in the silence and darkness enveloping Europe this Christmas”.

A year later, the newspaper leader writer returned to the Pontiff’s “lonely pulpit”.

“Just because the Pope speaks to and in some



Pope Pius XII visits the San Lorenzo neighbourhood in Rome in this undated photo. Photos: CNS



Drafts of the encyclical letter *Mystici Corporis Christi* (The Mystical Body of Christ), by Pope Pius XII are pictured in the Vatican Apostolic Archives.

sense for all the peoples at war, the clear stand he takes on the fundamental issues of the conflict has greater weight and authority. When a leader bound impartially to nations on both sides condemns as heresy the new form of national state which

subordinates everything to itself: when he declares that whoever wants peace must protect against ‘arbitrary attacks’ the ‘juridical safety of individuals:’ when he assails violent occupation of territory, the exile and persecution of human beings

for no reason other than race or political opinion: when he says that people must fight for a just and decent peace, a ‘total peace’ – the ‘impartial judgment’ is like a verdict in a high court of justice.”

The historic record also shows that Pius intervened

in several countries to try to stop the Nazi deportation of the Jews. In the eternal city itself, when the Nazis ordered the deportation of the Roman Jews almost 5,000 of the city’s 5,715 Jews found shelter in Church institutions with hundreds hidden inside the walls of the Vatican and many more at the Pope’s summer residence at Castel Gandolfo.

“It was John Cornwell’s 1999 book *Hitler’s Pope* that did much to vilify Pius in the English-speaking world”

A mark of the esteem in which the Pope was held in the immediate post-war period for his stance is found in the fact that the Chief Rabbi of Rome converted to Catholicism in 1945. Israel Zolli – who upon becoming Catholic took the Pope’s baptismal name Eugenio – recalled how during the war

wartime Pontiff



Pope Pius XII.

he and his family had been hidden in various Catholic institutions in the city of Rome to evade Nazi capture and certain deportation to one of the death camps.

At the time of his death in 1958, Pius XII was widely hailed as a courageous voice who had not only denounced the Nazis, but has also shown true metal by shielding many Jews in Church-run property both at the Vatican and across Nazi-occupied Europe.

His reputation on the Shoah was first tarnished in a 1963 play by the left-wing German activist

Rolf Hochhuth which portrayed Pius as having failed to act or speak out against the Holocaust. While critics have pointed out that the work is clearly unhistorical and lacking credible substantiation, it captured part of the public imagination about the often austere Pontiff.

It was Mr Cornwell's 1999 book *Hitler's Pope* that did much to vilify Pius in the English-speaking world.

The book's serialisation in the *Sunday Times* did much to copper-fasten the allegations in the public imagination. Coupled with a general ignorance about the Pontiff and the period, Mr

Cornwell's account went unchallenged for some years.

Suggestion

In his 2005 book *The Myth of Hitler's Pope*, the Jewish historian David Dalin also countered Mr Cornwell even going so far as to suggest that Yad Vashem – the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem – should honour Pope Pius XII as a 'Righteous Gentile,' concluding that "[t]he anti-papal polemics of ex-seminarians like Garry Wills and John Cornwell... of ex-priests like James Carroll, and or other lapsed or angry liberal Catholics exploit the tragedy of the Jewish people during the Holocaust to foster their own political agenda of forcing changes on the Catholic Church today".

In his book *The New Anti-Catholicism: The Last Acceptable Prejudice*, Philip Jenkins said that Hitler's Pope could not be understood except as a series of "very low blows against the modern Catholic Church, and specifically the papacy of John Paul II".

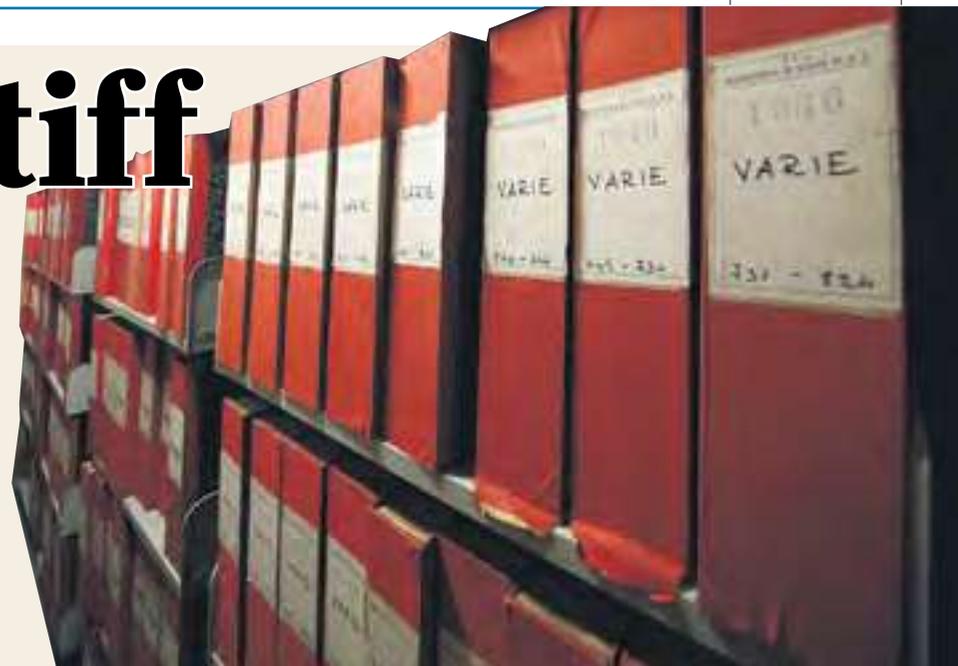
Whatever about the personal prejudices of the critics of Pius XII, the newly-opened archives will prove to be a treasure trove for those who want to shed new light on the period.

"The Church is not afraid of history," the Pope said on his decision to open the archives. But, it's likely to be many years before there is much concrete information to glean given the extensive nature of the holdings. Bishop Sergio Pagano, prefect of the Vatican's Apostolic Archives, said the World War II documents alone ran into millions of pages, divided into 121 sections according to topic.

Questions

The scholars who will look at the papers include some from the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC and award-winning German historian Hubert Wolf, a specialist on the Pius XII pontificate.

The central unanswered – perhaps unanswerable – question is whether Pope Pius XII did enough in words to speak out against the Holocaust. It's ultimately a moral question and one that has no easy answer. For starters, how much is enough? What did others like the allies know and choose to remain silent?



What would more trenchant public denunciations from the Pontiff have achieved?

“Many will also hope that the research will clear the way for the stalled process of canonisation for Pius XII”

We know, for example, that both papal interventions and criticism from hierarchies of the Nazis often led to more persecution and more people losing their lives. Did Pius believe that the better way was to work on the ground to save lives rather than having the moral high ground in speeches?

These are prudential judgements and ones that will continue to be debated alongside the demonstrable

actions the Pope took to protect and shield Jews and others from the Nazis.

As well as the papers themselves, many will also hope that the research will clear the way for the stalled process of canonisation for Pius XII. That will be a decision for Pope Francis and, perhaps, his successors.

But for now, the release of the archives will allow for a more rounded picture of one of the most prominent Popes of the modern period.

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“Did Pius believe that the better way was to work on the ground to save lives rather than having the moral high ground in speeches?”



Out&About

Kilkenny students visit Newgrange



MEATH: First Year students from Presentation Secondary School Kilkenny visit Newgrange with teacher Ms O'Carroll.



KILDARE: Bishop Denis Nulty visits the Clane parish centre after celebrating their morning Mass.



GALWAY: John Coughlan of the Knights of St Columbanus with the joint winners of the Clonfert public speaking competition Seinna Fahy, Caoimhe Callan, Robyn McDonagh, Annie Clarke of Portumna Community School and Bishop Michael Duignan of Clonfert diocese. They will be going forward to the Connacht heats of the Knights of St Columbanus All-Ireland Competition.

IN SHORT

Archdiocese of Armagh plans big St Patrick's Day celebrations

Kicking off the festivities, choirs from all over the island and further afield will join together in an evening of music and spoken word on Saturday, March 7 at 8pm in St Patrick's Cathedral to celebrate St Patrick. A limited number of audience seats priced at £5 are available through The Market Place Theatre Box Office. Organisers note that attendees may have restricted views and the event will be recorded for future broadcast and marketing purposes.

Next, the Armagh Cathedrals Partnership will hold an evening of music, story, poetry

and prayer to celebrate St Patrick in The Market Place Theatre on Wednesday, March 11 at 7.30pm. The event is free but booking is essential through The Market Place Theatre.

The guest speaker will be Rev. Ruth Patterson who has been a Presbyterian minister for many years and has been deeply committed to peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

She was the first woman to be ordained a minister in Ireland and has authored a number of books and articles stemming from her commitment to unity and peace.

On Friday, March 13 from 1-2pm there will be a lecture on St Patrick in The Market Place Theatre, booking is also essential. Archbishop Eamon Martin and Dean Gregory Dunstan will give the annual lecture, and will speak on 'Patrick as a model for

reconciliation today'.

St Patrick's Vigil will take place in both Col and Catholic St Patrick's Cathedrals on Monday, March 16, commencing at the Col Cathedral at 9pm with prayer.

Visitors will then be led in torchlight to the Catholic Cathedral where the event will conclude with prayer.

Light refreshments will be served in the Synod Hall afterwards.

Responding to the Gospel with 'Unbound'

Fr Gerry Campbell and a team from Armagh archdiocese will be leading a day on 'Unbound - Freedom in Christ' on Saturday March 14 from 9.30am-5pm at St Bride's Hall, 38 Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast.

Unbound Ministry is an approach to deliverance and healing prayer developed by Neal Lozano. Organisers say: "The focus is a safe, loving, effective prayer model that helps people to respond to the good news of the Gospel. It applies the truth to our lives by using five basic responses called the Five Keys."

The day is hosted by Divine Healing Ministries. Tea and coffee will be provided through the day. Attendees are asked to bring a packed lunch. Information on further training taking place in dioceses will be provided.

Those who are interested can contact Fergus McMorrow on 00447526056059 or by email at f.mcmorrow@gmail.com.

Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



ANTRIM: St Malachy's College Belfast welcomed back past pupil Daniel Finnegan to the college to speak to some examination classes. He spoke about his experience of studying GCSE and A Level history. He also agreed to speak about his first year at Queen's University studying Modern History and International Studies.



GALWAY: Michael John Rooney, teacher and mentor with the winners of a public speaking competition Michael Flynn, Aoife Stratford, Georgia Deely of St Raphael's College Loughrea and Bishop Michael Duignan of Clonfert diocese. The winners will continue on to the Connacht heats of the Knights of St Columbanus All-Ireland Competition.

DUBLIN: DCU chaplain Fr Séamus McEntee, Professor Daire Keogh, Deputy President of DCU – soon to be president from June 2020, Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin and Deacon Frank Drescher from Germany, who will be ordained a priest for Dublin archdiocese on June 14 at the Pro Cathedral, attend an ecumenical prayer service for the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday.



DUBLIN: Fr Séamus McEntee, DCU chaplain, Prof. Anne Lodge, Director of the Church of Ireland Centre for Education in DCU, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough Michael Jackson, Prof. Brian McCraith, President of DCU and Rev. Viji Varghese Eapen, an Anglican priest from India attend an Ecumenical prayer service for the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday.

CLARE

Cloughleigh Oratory will continue to pray the Novena Prayer to St Anthony every Tuesday morning at the 9.30am Mass.

CORK

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

A Pro-Life Mass is held on the last Friday of every month at the Poor Clares Monastery, College Road, at 7.30pm.

DERRY

Dungiven Parish: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Monday to Friday, 8-12pm and 3-9pm.

St Maria Goretti Prayer Movement: Prayer for healing for victims of abuse and reparation for the Church. First Holy Hour of prayer in the Immaculate Conception Church, Trench Road, at 8.15pm led by Fr Sean O'Donnell on the third Tuesday of every month.

DONEGAL

New Holy Face of Jesus prayer meeting: The oratory St Mary's Buncrana, Tuesdays following Rosary after 10am Mass. Contact: 085 2525 612.

DUBLIN

Our Lady of Knock prayer meetings take place on the last Thursday of every month in St Gabriel's Nursing Home, Glenayle Road, Raheny, Dublin 5 from 8-9pm.

The Pope, the Word and the World: This Lent Our Lady Help of Christians on the Navan Road will spend time with the Word of God as the Pope interprets it in Laudato Si' in their pastoral centre beside the church on Mondays 2, 9, 23 and 30 in March at 7.30pm. Facilitator: Céline Mangan OP.

Adoration Hour for Healing during Lent. In St Laurence O'Toole Church, Seville Place, Dublin 1 at 8pm every Tuesday in Lent. Periods of silence, reflective music, individual prayers for healing all in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament www.northwallparish.ie.

GALWAY

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

KERRY

Weekly Monday prayer meetings led by Ben Perkins, from 8-9.30pm in the Ardferret Retreat Centre.

KILDARE

Praying, reading and sharing the following Sunday's Gospel in Resurrexit, Kilmeague, every Wednesday from 8-9.30pm. See www.resurrexit.ie for details, or ring 087-6825407.

KILKENNY

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

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the Church of the Assumption, Urlingford, every first and third Friday, from 2.30-5.30pm.

LOUTH

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

Mass in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary will take place at 10.30am every first Saturday of the month in St Malachy's Church, Anne Street, Dundalk. Organised by the Legion of Mary, Presidium of Our Lady of the Listening Heart. Spiritual Director Fr Bede McGregor OP.

MAYO

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in the Church of St Joseph and the Immaculate Conception Bohola every Wednesday from 10am until 10pm.

The next Latin Mass in the Extraordinary Form (Tridentine) will take place in the parish church in Knock on Sunday, March 8 at 5.30pm.

MEATH

Enfield Prayer Group meets every Monday afternoon from 2.30-3.30pm in the Oratory, Enfield, for Adoration, Rosary, Chaplet and petitions. Also once per month a Lay Apostle meeting.

Adoration in St Patrick's Church, Stamullen, after 10am Mass every Thursday until 5pm, and in St Mary's Church, Julianstown, on Wednesdays from 9am and after 10am Mass.

Trim parish – 'Life in the Spirit' seminars continue Thursdays, 7.30pm, in the parish centre. All welcome.

Light the Fire! Hosted by the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal will be held in Slane on St Patrick's Day, Tuesday March 17 at 4.15pm meet on the Hill of Slane for prayer and procession to St Patrick's Church. 5pm Mass in the church celebrated by Bishop Thomas Deenihan of Meath, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

ROSCOMMON

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at St Bride's Church, Ballintubber, every Wednesday, 7.30-8.30pm.

Eucharistic Adoration takes place in Drumbolyan Church on the first Friday of the month from 9am-11pm.

TIPPERARY

Three Hour Vigil organised by the Fatima Apostolate in honour of Our Lady of the Annunciation in the Pallottine Chapel in Thurles, March 24, the eve of the Annunciation, from 7.30-10.30pm. Eucharistic hour: Fr George Ranahan SCA, Marian hour and Mass: Fr John Regan SCA.

WESTMEATH

Holy Face of Jesus prayer meeting: La Verna retreat centre beside private hospital Ballinderry, Mullingar. Thursdays at 7.30pm. Contact: 085 2525 612

WEXFORD

Taizé prayer services every first and third Friday at 8pm in Good Counsel College Chapel, New Ross.

WICKLOW

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

Big money donors and left-wing lobby won the war amongst US Democrats on



It is clear that there is no room for pro-life Dems. It didn't used to be this way, writes **Larry Donnelly**

At a recent town hall forum sponsored by Fox News, likely Democratic primary voters had a chance to interact with the 38-year-old Mayor of South Bend, Indiana and then a candidate for his party's presidential nomination, Pete Buttigieg.

One possibly unexpected and trying question came from Kristen Day, head of the Democrats for Life organisation which advocates for "more moderate platform language [on abortion] to ensure that the party of diversity, of inclusion really does include everybody".

Language

Ms Day rather modestly asked if 'Mayor Pete' could back "language...that said that we understand that people have very differing views on this issue, but we are a big tent party?"

Mr Buttigieg's long-winded and circuitous reply was nonetheless crystal clear: No. The town hall moderator, Chris Wallace, didn't let go. He said: "So what do you say to Democrats who are pro-life...on an issue of such conscience, that they should overlook this particular issue and look at the whole sum of views, or go find another party?"

While Mr Buttigieg declined to answer the final part of the question in the affirmative, his subsequent comment – "that's just where I am on the issue" – was a telling response. This is quite a hard-line position for one deliberately portrayed by himself and thereafter by media organs in the United States as a moderate.

Earlier on in the campaign, when asked at a



debate if the anti-abortion Democratic Governor of Louisiana, John Bel Edwards, who had shortly before been re-elected against the odds, was welcome in the party, not one of the candidates on stage had either the guts or the political nous to speak warmly of Governor Edwards or to congratulate him on his triumph.

* * * * *

Louisiana is one of the reddest states in America and ordinarily hostile territory for Democrats. Mr Edwards' victory actually demonstrates that it is entirely sensible and politically astute for the Democrats to be, as Kristen Day urges, a "big tent party". But what was the loftiest praise any of the debaters could muster for Governor Edwards? It was Elizabeth Warren's tepid assertion

“One very prominent Democrat opined at the start of his political career that “when it comes to issues like abortion...I’m about as liberal as your grandmother. I don’t like the Supreme Court decision on abortion (Roe vs Wade). I think it went too far”

that she's "not here to drive anyone out of this party".

At a lower level of electoral politics stateside, the Democratic Attorney General Association announced last year that it would not endorse or provide financial and strategic backing for anyone who "does not support reproductive rights and expanding access to abortion services".

In sum, it is clear that there is no room at the inn for putative Democratic political candidates with objections to or reservations about abortion. It didn't used to be this way.

In fact, one very prominent Democrat opined at the start of his political career that "when it comes to issues like abortion...I'm about as liberal as your grandmother. I don't like the Supreme Court decision on

abortion (Roe vs Wade). I think it went too far. I don't think that a woman has the sole right to say what should happen to her body".

“There are a mere handful of Democrats in Washington, DC left who oppose abortion. Two of them are facing serious challengers”

While his perspective definitely changed over the years, in 2007, he wrote that "I still vote against partial birth abortion and federal funding, and I'd like to make it easier for scared young mothers to choose not to have an abortion".

The author of those

words is Joe Biden, former vice-president and current presidential candidate, who now refuses to say whether John Bel Edwards is wanted in the Democratic Party.

Not so long ago, there were dozens of Democratic members of the US Congress who thought as Joe Biden once did. This writer's uncle, Brian Donnelly, was one of them when he served seven terms in the House of Representatives from 1979-1993 and, memorably for many Irish people, was the driving force behind the bill that became known as the Donnelly Visa.

Even then, despite his being among the most powerful behind the scenes operators on Capitol Hill and his enjoying very close personal relationships with Speaker Tom Foley and Ways and Means Committee Chair Dan Rostenkowski, Brian was made to understand that, as long as he voted against liberal abortion legislation, a formal leadership position lay beyond his reach because of how big money donors and left-wing lobby groups would react.

And they have certainly won the war. There are a

mere handful of Democrats in Washington, DC left who oppose abortion. Two of them are facing serious and well-funded ardently pro-choice primary challengers at present.

How did the party become so vehemently and, indeed, proudly intolerant of variations in outlook on abortion? Well, a considerable amount has correctly been made of the polarisation of American politics. Two factors have been central to this.

First is the role of the almighty dollar and special interest groups. Put bluntly, there isn't much money to be found in moderation or in nuance. Extremism is where it's at. The pro-choice lobby invested all of its resources in the Democrats; the pro-life movement flocked to the Republicans. Second is the highly partisan, but simultaneously mutually beneficial, gerrymandering of congressional districts to ensure that they are 'safe' for one party or the other. Hence, the more trenchantly the standard bearer espouses the party line, the better her cash raising and electoral prospects.

groups have abortion



virtually impossible to dispute the finding that one in five Democrats is against abortion in most circumstances. Crucially, African American and Latino Democrats are generally far more anti-abortion.

Irish readers might retort that political parties must take positions on issues and, if individual members can't accept what is adopted, they should leave. That ignores the unfortunate, peculiar, systemic reality that there are only two viable parties (thanks to their collusive efforts to perpetuate this arrangement) in a country of approximately 325 million people who are diverse in every conceivable fashion. Theirs ought to be large, accommodating, malleable tents.

That said, there are genuine differences between Democrats and Republicans. Anti-abortion Democrats, especially those with a strong religious faith and just as those on the left who have a divergent view on when life begins, often oppose Republican policies which they think treat immigrants and poor people badly. They believe in human rights.

“For lots of these Democrats who are committed to staying in a shrinking tent as a result, casting a ballot for Trump is not an option”

In a similar vein, they lament the gross excesses of the unfettered capitalism that is a *sine qua non* of political conservatism and that has made the US an astonishingly unequal and unfair society in 2020. For lots of these Democrats who are committed to staying in a shrinking tent as a result, casting a ballot for Donald Trump is not an option. Others are persuadable, however.

As such, it is more the pity that Democrats who disagree with abortion are deemed second class citizens by candidates who desperately need their votes to deny this abhorrent president a second term. Leaving aside what's right and what's wrong, it's dumb politics. D-U-M-B.

i Larry Donnelly is a Boston attorney, a Law Lecturer at NUI Galway and a regular media commentator on politics, law and current affairs in Ireland and the US. Twitter: @LarryPDonnelly

Analysis of political polarisation in the US typically dwells on the pronounced drift to the right of the GOP. And that is manifest. Less emphasised, though, is the Democrats' undeniable collective lurch to the left, and to the cultural left in particular.

For a number of complicated reasons, the latter grouping has probably paid a heavier price for repudiating centrism. This has opened a chasm between a not insignificant swathe of its traditional voters and those who aspire to lead them.

* * * * *

Writing in this winter's edition of *National Affairs* magazine, John Murdock notes that, while the Democratic presidential candidates literally struggle to identify any specific restrictions on abortion they favour, 34% of ordinary, registered Democrats described themselves as pro-life in an opinion poll taken in 2019 by Marist College. And looking across numerous surveys and allowing for myriad variables, it is

‘We abandoned penance services and interest in Confession boomed’

Few things are calculated to raise the hackles of hardworking priests in parishes more than being told how it should be done by fellow clerics with fewer years in the Lord's Vineyard under their belt.

I once turned to an older colleague – a man of depth, wisdom and vast experience – at the end of a presentation by the dynamic pastor of a successful parish, a talk I had personally enjoyed, and asked him how he would sum up the speaker's central point? Mischievously, he replied: “I run a better parish that you: learn from me!”

So, it is with hesitation that I accepted the Editor's invitation to share a recent experience from my own parish in inner-city Belfast. I offer it tentatively, as someone who has learned hugely from the pastoral endeavour of esteemed colleagues witnessed at first-hand about what works and what does not; and also, that what is successful in one place, may bomb elsewhere.

Anonymity

St Patrick's on Donegall Street, Belfast, is the biggest and most prominent Catholic church in the Belfast city centre and the parish which it serves combines both an indigenous population and a large transient population of workers who commute into the city each day. Soon this mix will include almost 20,000 university students and staff from the campus of Ulster University being completed beside the church.

Like so many city-centre churches, it is a centre for confessions. People seem to prefer the anonymity of not attending the sacrament in their own parishes. We hear confessions for several hours each weekend, and by request, after our daily Masses.

“Confessions were heard during each Mass – an option that Pope Francis has mentioned in recent writings”

However, for the last years, the parish team have been reflecting on what seems to be the dying out of Christmas and Lenten penance services in Belfast – both the falling numbers and a sense that we were going through the motions for fewer and fewer people. At one service, I heard the confessions of only five people. Quite a change from 20 years ago when one would have expected to be listening without a break for an hour or more.

In response, the parish team at St Patrick's tried a number of experiments over 18 months. In Lent and Advent, we had better advertising

New pastoral strategies can breathe fresh life into the sacraments, writes Fr Eugene O'Neill



of the availability of Confession and more references both at Mass and in parish social media. Eventually we dropping the penance service entirely and concentrating on having Confession available after each Mass in the weeks before Easter and Christmas. Numbers increased but only slightly.

We reflected and in early Advent we took soundings amongst parishioners. Two common themes emerged which surprised us: parishioners told us that they were too busy to stay after Mass on Sundays, and we learned that many people were too embarrassed to go because they had forgotten the practicalities of what to say.



So, in response we tweaked our approach. We decided to make a big deal of Confession as a way of experiencing the innocence of the coming of Jesus at Christmas more deeply and designated the Sunday before Christmas as ‘Christmas Confession Sunday’ advertising it all through Advent. Each member of the parish team preached about the sacrament, what it does and how to go practically for the week previous and on the day itself. The bulletin was used for practical Confession information; and – most significantly – Confessions were heard during each Mass – an option that Pope Francis has mentioned in recent writings. Clearly this is easier in a multi-priest church like St Patrick's, but it can still be done with organisation even in a single-priest parish.

What happened? We were astounded at the response. There was a huge upswing in attendance. On that Sunday before Christmas, over the course of five Masses, 15 hours of confessions of a quality and depth that I have rarely experienced as a priest. And a sense of gratitude

by parishioners that came as a great encouragement to the team. So much so that we have now permanently abandoned – at least in this urban parish – penance services, however rich and uplifting they are elsewhere, and designated the Sundays before Christmas and Easter as our ‘Confession Sundays.’

It was a throw of the dice, an experiment, but it caught the mood and worked. With only slight alterations to what was already happening, by observing, listening and adapting, we in St Patrick's had found a way of offering the Sacrament of Reconciliation that chimed with our parishioners work and family rhythms and the demands on their time.

We made an act of faith in that Catholics still basically want to experience the freedom that Confession gives when they understand it as such. We made this message the centre of our communication. And we adapted our approach to fit with their lived experience. We had no expectations of success but approached our experiment with faithful curiosity, ready to learn and adapt again.

“It is better to experiment; to risk the new; to dare to fall flat; to reflect on success and failure; to adapt and move on; and try again”

What have we learned? In parish life, it is impossible ever to feel fully prepared or adequately resourced. Carefully worked out pastoral plans have their place but can sometimes become an end in themselves, absorb huge energy in the production, and end up with little practical happening. It is better to experiment; to risk the new; to dare to fall flat; to reflect on success and failure; to adapt and move on; and try again. To trust that the Holy Spirit is constantly at work prompting one to take risks.

When I shared this experience with a venerable and senior colleague, he quoted something a famous vicar general of yesteryear said to him as a young priest: some priests try nothing and are never wrong; some priests try many things – half the time they are wrong but half the time they are right.

That has been our experience. It's worth remembering.

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2020

GUIDE TO RETREATS

*“Come you yourselves apart into
a desert place, and rest a while”*
- Mark 6:31

The Irish Catholic



Retreats give people silence and the space to re-energise away from the drain of hectic lifestyles and technology, **Aron Hegarty** is told

In a time where people are very busy in a world where there is persistent noise and commentary from social media, I think it's very important for people to have the space to get away, be centred and in touch with their own self."

These words from Sr Peggy Collins of Glendalough Hermitage Centre not only stress the importance of taking retreats, but also describe life in contemporary Ireland.

"There is a movement in modern life that is expressed in the attendance of mindfulness and yoga classes," according to Sr Collins, adding that there is "a hunger for silence" which is "growing".

"People want to find themselves," she said. "People value silence and a lack of any type of intrusion."

"The natural beauty of Glendalough and its Christian history is what brings people here. It is very much a place for tourists and mountain climbers, all of which is lovely, but our vision was to restore the tradition of hermit seekers and it has really lived up to that expectation."

She added: "The evidence is there that hundreds of people have come here. We have 500 to 600 different people every year and their assessment and evaluation of the retreats is very positive."

Self-reflection

Glendalough, a traditional place of pilgrimage, is one of several centres in the country which offer individuals the opportunity for quiet self-reflection and restful days of silence and prayer.

The Emmaus Centre is another and its' director Julie Cosden concurred it has become vital for those who are constantly busy to "set time aside" for themselves.

"I think it's important for people to set time aside," she said. "Life can be so busy, to go away to have an experience away where you can really enter into silence, prayer and community either by yourself or with other people."

Satisfying the growing hunger for silence



Youth Retreat Team at the Emmaus Centre in Swords, Co Dublin.

The centre, according to its website, is especially attentive to the "faith development of young people", but in challenging times it can be difficult to reach out to the youth of today.

Asked if retreats were important to young people in modern times, Ms Cosden replied: "Absolutely."

She said: "I was just on a retreat myself recently and the priest giving it said the advice he had received was to try set aside one day a month for yourself and one week a year for a retreat or for a day of silence."

"I know that might sound like a lot for some people, but if you don't schedule it or you don't have a plan for it, life just keeps moving at such a fast speed."

"We have to be intentional about putting time aside to grow our relationship with God."

The Swords venue located close to Dublin Airport is used for conferences, workshops and retreats with a spiritual focus.

Ms Cosden said the centre offers a wide variety of retreats for individuals who are short on time or have other commitments.

"We would offer a lot of one day retreats on Saturdays, which is probably the minimal amount of time that you would do a retreat for, but it allows people who are working to still take time away."

"The more traditional retreat model would be maybe a week-long retreat, but that may be very difficult for people who are

working or who have children.

"We like to offer a lot of one-day programmes or weekend programmes so that it can appeal to people who are working or who can't take the time of a full week."

* * * * *

Many of the retreats Emmaus offers are based on personal improvement, be it emotional, physical, mental or spiritual. But the focus of their retreats nowadays, according to Ms Cosden, is on aspects less spoken of.

"We are doing more retreats around happiness, life purpose and goals – things around joyfulness and positivity," she said.

"It's something that's not really spoken of very often and

something that's not put as a priority in our spiritual life to focus on our desires, what makes us happy and things like that. It's a different way of approaching God's plan for our lives by looking at it from the realm of Christian joy."

Ms Cosden believes Lent would be a "good time" to "set time aside to go on a retreat" be it formally or simply taking time for yourself alone.

“When groups come in here for a retreat, we start off by going back to their Baptism”

"At the Emmaus Centre," she explained, "we offer formal retreats where people can sign up, pay and go on a formal retreat, but we also allow people to come, book in and utilise the prayer room, the grounds and have a meal, so people can do their own day or weekend of reflection and silence."

"It doesn't have to be something specific that you sign up for, but most retreat centres do offer people the opportunity to come on a self-guided retreat or just a day of silence."

She added: "I would encourage people to sign up for a retreat or to try one for Easter."

* * * * *

Fr Steve Gibson, spiritual director at the Father Peyton Memorial Centre, said retreats from his experience have always been a significant part of people's lives.

"I was director of a retreat house in Indiana [US] for 30 years before I came here and I always found that it was a very important time in people's lives, especially if they were in need of some kind of healing from a personal event or something to celebrate."

He added: "They would certainly find a time of retreat to be alone in their own space to find a direction that they needed."

Fr Steve said that a retreat is similar to a journey which takes people back to their Baptism.

"A retreat is to go back to the

“We are doing more retreats around happiness, life purpose and goals – things around joyfulness and positivity...it's not something that's not really spoken of very often and something that's not put as a priority in our spiritual life to focus on”



A prayer retreat hosted by Fr Steve Gibson at the Father Peyton Centre.

Fr Steve Gibson at the Father Peyton Centre in Ballina, Co. Mayo.



beginning and so we go back to the beginning of our journey of Faith, what we are doing is going back to our Baptism.

"When groups come in here for a retreat, we start off by going back to their Baptism, talking about all of the things that happened then; all the promises that were made by their parents, by our godparents in our Baptism to be the best that we could be. That's what a retreat would be for anybody."

As regards to taking retreats and what role it plays in modern society, Fr Steve answered: "It's essential I would say. It's not just a

good thing, it's an essential thing to do.

“This is not a static Church and we should be changing because if we don't change, that is not a good thing”

"There are so many different ways to do it. We would consider this an opportunity for a spiritual journey back to the beginning. People go on vacation, why do they go on vacation? For retreat to re-energise and that is what we are

trying to do here."

The Mayo-based centre, which opened in 1998, is described as a "place for respite prayer and peace" according to its website.

As part of the centres' aim to be as "socially inclusive as possible", Fr Steve wants people to have greater recognition on the importance of being a part of God's family.

"Here at Father Peyton, we don his personal experience in the phrase which he was so well-known for: 'the family that prays together, stays together', and so our emphasis would be on the family prayer and taking advantage of all the opportunities that we have

as families to grow in our Faith, so often in our society that's not what's happening.

"I hope that people would recognise the importance of being a part of family. You see that in so many different aspects. I would hope that would be the emphasis. We would encourage people as they do retreat to recognise the importance of being part of a family."

The Fr Peyton Centre recently took up new residence in Ballina, which can accommodate up to 12 people.

“Retreats are designed in line with the Ennismore vision for ‘calmness, spirituality and spending time with yourself’”

"It's a very peaceful place," Fr Steve said. "It's a wonderful place for walks, there's lakes and mountains."

"The first thing that anybody who comes through our doors says is that this is a beautiful, peaceful place."

He added that modern retreats help to bring about an understanding of the changing times in the Church.

"It's an opportunity for us to study scripture," he said. "And to study what are some of the meanings for our personal life: do we really have an understanding of what that is supposed to mean for us today?"

"Our Churches are changing; this is not a static Church and we should be changing because if we don't change, that is not a good thing."

He added: "We are looking at the different ways the Church is changing – our understanding of the role of laity, women and clergy – which is a diminishing role and the space needs to be taken up by the lay people."



Ennismore Retreat Centre

advertising coordinator Johanne Ridgeway said retreats are about "wellness" and "time on your own to reflect".

"We ask people to leave their phones in their rooms so that they can get away from technology," she said.

"They can spend time on their own or join a group or they can be in silence away from the outside environment."

Ms Ridgeway, who describes the Cork-based Christian organisation as a "centre of relaxation", says retreats are designed in line with the Ennismore vision for "calmness, spirituality and spending time with yourself".

"We have our own private garden and a beautiful walkway around Ennismore, which is roughly a mile long, and people can sit out in the garden and on a good day you may see a red squirrel running up and down the garden."

"Out in our back garden you have a flower garden and trees; there's a beautiful place in the centre of the garden where you can sit and read a book."

According to its website, Ennismore describes itself as "an oasis of beauty, peace, hospitality and calmness" for nurturing Christian spirituality.

The centre, Ms Ridgeway said, offers one to one discussion on an individual's spirituality when it comes to catering for their needs in a retreat.

"People would come to us on a Sunday and stay with us for six nights," explained Ms Ridgeway. "The first evening they get information about what is going to happen for the week and the next day, they start into their program."

"They are offered tea and coffee, they can drop in and out of the centre as much as they like during the day, all meals are provided for and they can go to the garden if they wish to be private and have their own personal retreat."

She concluded: "We have a huge variety of retreats throughout the year and they are not just for priests and nuns, they are for everybody."



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Tel: +44 2890 508080
belfast@corrymeela.org
www.corrymeela.org

De La Salle Pastoral Centre
141 Glen Road
Belfast
BT11 8BP
Tel: +44 28 90 501 932
info@delasalleretreat.org
www.delasalleretreat.org

Drumalis Retreat and Conference Centre
47 Glenarm Road
Larne
Co Antrim
BT40 1DT
Tel: +44 2828 272196
drumalis@btconnect.com
www.drumalis.co.uk

Clare

Seaside Retreats
FCJ Ibricken Lodge
Spanish Point
Co Clare
Tel: 086 3423692
geraldinefcj@yahoo.ie
www.miltownmalbayparish.ie

Cork

Nano Nagle Centre
Ballygriffin
Mallow
Co Cork
Tel: 022 26411
secretary@nanonaglebirthplace.ie
www.nanonaglebirthplace.ie

Ennismore Retreat Centre
Ennismore
Montenotte
Cork T23 CT95
Tel: 021 4502520
ennismore@eircom.net
www.ennismore.ie
info@ennismore.ie

Donegal

Ards Friary
Creelough
Letterkenny
Co Donegal
Tel: 074 9138909
info@ardsfriary.ie
www.ardsfriary.ie

IOSAS Centre
Derryvane
Muff
Co Donegal
Tel: 074 9384866
www.celticprayergarden.com

St Anthony's Retreat Centre
Dundrain
Burnfoot
Co Donegal
Tel: 074 9368370
sarce@eircom.net

St Patrick's Purgatory
Lough Derg
Co Donegal
Tel: 071 9861518
info@loughderg.org
www.loughderg.org

Down

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Newry
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BT34 1RH
Tel: +44 2830 821964
www.dromantineconference.com

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16 A Downpatrick Road,
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BT30 9EA
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www.tobarmhuirecrossgar.com

Dublin

Avila Carmelite Centre
Bloomfield Avenue
Morehampton Road
Donnybrook, Dublin 4
Tel: 01 6430200
info@avilacentre.ie
www.avilacentre.ie

Benildus Pastoral Centre
160a Kilmacud Road Upper
Dublin 14
Tel: 01 2964195
benilduspastoralcentre@eircom.net
www.benilduspastoralcentre.com

Dominican Retreat Centre
Tallaght Village
Dublin 24
Tel: 01 4048123
Retreathouse@eircom.net
www.domsr.com

The Emmaus Centre
Ennis Lane
Lissenhall
Swords
Co Dublin
Tel: 01 8700050
emmauscentre@emmauscentre.ie
www.emmauscentre.ie

Iona Pastoral Centre
Idrone Avenue
Dublin 16
Tel: 01 4943712
ionacentre@knocklyonparish.ie
www.knocklyonparish.ie

Manresa Jesuit Centre of Spirituality
426 Clontarf Road
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www.manresa.ie

Margaret Aylward Centre
Holy Faith Sisters
Glasnevin
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www.margaretaylwardcentre.ie

Galway

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Tel: 057 91551552
contact@emmanuelhouse.ie
www.emmanuelhouse.ie

Esker Retreat Centre
Esker
Athenry
Co Galway
Tel: 091 844549
info@redemptoristsesker.ie
www.redemptoristsesker.ie

Esker Youth Ministry
Redemptorist Monastery
Esker,
Athenry,
Galway
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eskeryouthministry@gmail.com
www.jesuitcentregalway.ie

Kerry

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ardfertretreat@eircom.net
www.ardfertretreatcentre.org

Laois

Mount St. Anne's Retreat and Conference Centre
Killenard
Portarlinton
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Tel: 057 8626153
msannes@eircom.net
www.mountstannes.com

Limerick

Glenstal Abbey
Murroe
Co Limerick V94 A725
Tel: 061 386328
events@glenstal.com
www.glenstal.org

Louth

Monastery of St Catherine of Siena
The Twenties
Drogheda
Co Louth
www.dominicannuns.ie

Mayo

Ballintubber Abbey
Ballintubber
Claremorris
Co Mayo F12 W584
Tel: 094 9030934
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www.ballintubberabbey.ie

Fr Patrick Peyton Memorial Centre
Attymass
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Co Mayo
Tel: 096 45374
ppmc@eircom.net
www.fatherpeytoncentre.ie
info@fatherpeytoncentre.ie

Knock Shrine
Main Street
Knock
Co Mayo

Tel: 094 9388100
info@knockshrine.ie
www.knockshrine.ie

Meath

Anam Aras
Laytown
Co Meath
Tel: 041 9828952
mcelwee.monica@gmail.com

Roscommon

Ard Chiarain Prayer Centre
Shannonbridge
Athlone
Co Roscommon
Tel: 090 9674305
www.ursulines.ie

Galilee House of Prayer
Tintagh
Boyle
Co Roscommon
Tel: 071 9664101
galileecommunity@gmail.com
www.galilee.ie
info@galilee.ie

Sligo

The Spiritual Life Institute
Holy Hill Hermitage
Skreen
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holyhill@eircom.net
www.spiritualifeinstitute.org

Star of the Sea Retreat Centre
Mullaghmore

Co Sligo
Tel: 071 9176722
staroftheseacentre@gmail.com
www.staroftheseacentre.com

Tipperary

Glencomeragh House of Prayer
Kilsheelan
Clonmel
Co Tipperary
Tel: 052 33181
info@glencomeragh.ie
www.glencomeragh.ie

Pallottine Retreat Centre
Thurles
Co Tipperary
Tel: 0504 21202
www.pallottines.ie

Waterford

Mount Melleray Abbey
Mountmelleray
Cappoquin
Co Waterford
058 54404
www.mountmellerayabbey.org

Westmeath

La Verna Centre
Franciscan House of
Spirituality & Hospitality
Ballinderry
Mullingar
Co Westmeath
Tel: 044 9352000
info@fmolireland.ie
www.fmolireland.ie

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Ballyvaloo Centre
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Enniscorthy
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www.ballyvaloo.ie

Wicklow

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Kilmantin Hill,
Wicklow Town A67 YX26
Tel: 0404 61833
info@antairseach.ie
www.ecocentrewicklow.ie

Glendalough Hermitage Centre
Glendalough
Co. Wicklow
Tel: 0404 455 71
www.glendaloughhermitage.ie

Shekina Sculpture Garden
Glenmalure Vallery
Co Wicklow
Tel: 01 2838711
www.shekinasculpturegarden.com

Tearmann Spirituality Centre
Glendalough
Co Wicklow
040 445 208
tearmannspirituality@gmail.com
www.tearmann.ie

DRUMALIS RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTRE

RETREAT PROGRAMME 2020:

MAY

Sat, 30 – Sun, 31 Focusing Workshop: A Path to Self Acceptance with Pat Duffy CP & Margaret Webb

JUNE

Sat, 27 June – Wed, 1 July 3 day Individually Guided Retreat with Drumalis Team & ISC, Glasgow

Sat, 27 June – Sat, 4 July 6 day Individually Guided Retreat with Drumalis Team & ISC, Glasgow

Sat, 27 June – Mon, 6 July 8 day Individually Guided Retreat with Drumalis Team & ISC, Glasgow

JULY

Wed, 1 – Mon, 6 July 4 day Individually Guided Retreat with Drumalis Team & ISC, Glasgow

Mon, 6 – Sat, 11 "Dying to Live:" Creation Spirituality retreat with Sr Margaret Rose McSparran CP, Sr Anne Harnett CP & Team

Tues, 7 – Tues, 14 "The Gift of Life and Years": Guided Retreat with Sr Joann Heinritz CSJ

AUGUST

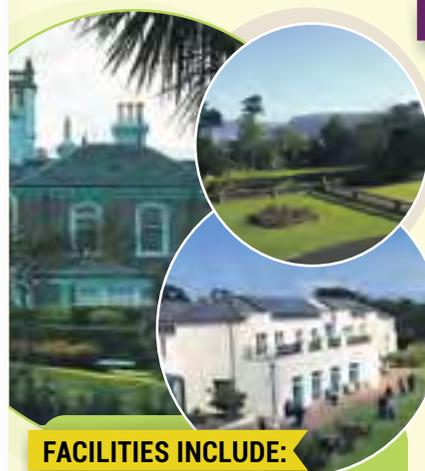
Tues, 11 – Thurs, 20 8 day Directed Retreat with Joseph McGee MSC & Team

Thurs, 13 – Thurs, 20 6 day Directed Retreat with Joseph McGee MSC & Team

Sat, 15 – Thurs, 20 4 Day Directed Retreat with Joseph McGee MSC & Team

DECEMBER

Fri, 11 – Sun, 13 Advent Retreat



FACILITIES INCLUDE:

- Chapel, Oratory and Prayer Spaces
- 2 large conference rooms, smaller meeting rooms, craft room, library, spacious dining room and two lounges with tea/coffee making facilities
- Accommodation in custom built building (39 double/twin ensuite rooms – 4 of which are disabled friendly)
- 15 additional bedrooms in Heritage House.
- Lift access and free wifi available

Set in spacious grounds overlooking Larne Lough and the sea, Drumalis offers space for contemplation and prayer – "an oasis on the journey of life."

For further information, please contact Drumalis - by telephone - 028 2827 2196 / 2827 6455 (from UK) or 048 2827 2196 / 2827 6455 (from Republic of Ireland) or by email - drumalis@btconnect.com or keep up-to-date on the website: www.drumalis.co.uk



Augustinian OSA Lay Forum

On March 21st we will gather in Kilkenny for our Synod, the first such gathering we have had in our 750 year history in Ireland.

At the Synod, building on the quiet work of our Forum over the past six years, we will seek to discern the future of the Augustinian mission in Ireland at this time of great challenge and change.

It will be a day of prayer and questioning and planning...an exciting day informed by the input, wisdom and inspiration of our communities all over the country.

We warmly invite you to attend.

Come and see! Be Restless! Gather with us to voice your contribution - it will be held and heard respectfully. Together let us journey and shape our Faith and our future.

Augustinians in Ireland have worked the length and breadth of the country since their first arrival shortly after the Order was founded in Italy in 1256. Jesus Christ is our only reason for being and Saint Augustine of Hippo is our inspiration. Presently there are Augustinian communities in 12 locations in Ireland with a variety of activities and works.

We recognise that our communities are a vibrant network which comprise our professed members and our lay brothers and sisters, our lifeblood, who welcome us when we arrive, support and accompany us when we are about and are saddened when we go. This network respects the variety but equality of our chosen vocations as lay, professed, ordained and other seekers.

The Forum, which is ongoing, is an exciting and vibrant opportunity for us to share our journey with each other. As restless people with a God shaped vacuum at the core of our being, we experience the greatest fulfilment in community...time shared in prayer, work, conversation and relaxation together. We make our road as we walk this journey together.



We constantly seek others to share the journey! SO...
"Come and See"
Would you join us as a member of our Forum community?
"Let us be restless together"
Share your journey with others who share your love and your concern for the message~ Jesus Christ.
Our Faith. Our Church. Our future as Augustinians in Ireland
How does that look to you... how does that look to others?



For more information or to register your place at the Synod please visit our website www.augustinians.ie and download a **Registration Form** or contact the Provincial Office on info@augustinians.ie - Tel: **01 4851516**.



Galilee Spirituality Centre

Nourishing Spirituality – Exploring Faith
Caring for Creation – A Welcome for All

Programme:

- Exploring faith and spirituality: retreats, scripture, discussions, talks, spiritual accompaniment.
- Pastoral support for groups in particular experiences including pregnancy loss, caring for someone at home, and families coping with addiction.
- Programmes of nourishment and reflection for people in Christian ministry.
- An annual Climate Change Symposium and Active Hope Workshops. We are a member of the Quiet Garden Movement.



Groups are welcome to come and use the centre for their meetings or quiet time, or to request days of reflection, parish renewal and ministry training, or facilitation.

A Community of Prayer

Our prayer community extends beyond our walls to anyone who would like to join us. We particularly invite people to pray with us on the last Friday of each month 9.00-10.00pm.

All are welcome to come and spend some quiet time at Galilee and we have some accommodation for those who wish to stay for a few days.

Contact

Tintagh, Boyle, Co Roscommon, F52 TX93 | 071-966-4101 | info@galilee.ie

Follow us on [@GalileeSpirit](https://www.facebook.com/GalileeSpirit) or [@GalileeBoyle](https://www.facebook.com/GalileeBoyle).

*Our programme is regularly updated on our website www.galilee.ie



Star of the Sea Retreat & Conference Centre

MAY

1st – 6th Erasmus Group

8th – 10th AA Group Dublin

11th – 16th Retreat. Fr. Seamus O'Connell. In the Parable of the Treasure hidden in the Field

17th – 24th Little Way Healing Ministry

24th Legion. Afternoon of Prayer.

29th – 2nd June Partners in the Gospel.

JUNE

7th – 13th Retreat; Centering Prayer Retreat. Fionnuala Quinn OP. & Suzanne Ryder rsm. That we may be one

17th – 23rd Retreat; Seek First the Kingdom (Matt 6.33), Living in the Presence. Martina & Patrick Lehane Sheehan.

25th – 1st July Meditation & Personal Development Retreat. John Keane

JULY

8th – 14th Contemplation as gift given. How can we allow it to grow and live it out in daily life. Retreat. Fr. Michael Ruddy SSCC.

17th – 23rd Retreat. Fr. Seamus Devitt CSSR. 20-20 Vision - 'The Disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord' (Jn. 20:20)

26th – 1st Retreat. Fr. John Finn. MSC. Come away all by yourself and rest a while.

AUGUST

5th – 11th Retreat. Fr. Patsy Kelly. Life Through the Liturgy. "and that is what you are - the Temple of God". (2 Cor 6.15)

14th – 21st Holidays. Enjoy a few relaxing and restful days

Events normally start with tea at 6.00pm and end after lunch on final day.

Difficulty in paying should not prevent one from attending a retreat. Concessions will be made in cases of difficulty.



Contact:

Star of the Sea Retreat and Conference Centre, Mullaghmore, Co. Sligo
Tel/Fax: 071-917 6722 | www.staroftheseacentre.com | Email: staroftheseacentre@gmail.com
Facebook: [StaroftheSea-Mullaghmore](https://www.facebook.com/StaroftheSea-Mullaghmore)



JESUIT CENTRE OF SPIRITUALITY

426 Clontarf Road +353 1 833 1352
 Dollymount
 Dublin reception@manresa.ie
 D03 FP52
 Ireland www.manresa.ie

Manresa - Ireland's Jesuit retreat house - welcomes hundreds of people annually as they come to seek renewal and rest. In addition to the regular retreats, many courses and events draw on the rich heritage of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Ideally located within easy reach of Dublin city centre, Manresa is a choice location for quiet and reflection whether joining an organised event, coming with a group or seeking some personal time for prayer in the modern building with its 40 en suite single rooms.



One-day retreats

An **Oasis Day** one-day retreat (9:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.) offers time to step aside into an atmosphere of quiet and to benefit from reflections, guided meditations, prayer and an opportunity to meet with a spiritual director - the day concluding with the celebration of the Eucharist. Lunch and refreshments are provided.

- 14 March, 4 April, 2 May, 6 June, 11 July, 8 August, 19 September, 24 October, 21 November, 5 & 12 December 2020

€60

Other One-day Retreats

- Saturday 2 May World Labyrinth Day Retreat
- Saturday 30 May Newman Society Retreat

Disceart
 Lá id' thost - ach as Gaeilge!
 Satharn 29 Feabhra
 Satharn 29 Lúnasa
 Domhnach 6 Nollaig



Pilgrim Ways is a gathering of walkers who get to the heart of Camino through reflection and prayer - third Thursday of each month (7:30 - 9:00 pm)

- Saturday 30 May Pilgrim Ways Walking Retreat
- Saturday 4 July Pilgrim Ways Walking Retreat

Details of more retreats, events and courses are available on our website. Sign up for our newsletter or consult www.manresa.ie. We will be happy to send you a printed brochure - just call 01-833 1352.



Short Residential Retreats

Retreats variously offer reflections, group prayer and one-to-one conversation - all with plenty time for silence. Check our website for details of any of these retreats.

Spring Weekend Retreat

- Friday 20 March - Sunday 22 March

To Love the Earth

POETRY

- Sunday 26 April - Friday 1 May

Imaging God

ART

- Sunday 7 June - Friday 12 June

Introductory Directed Retreat

- Sunday 7 June - Friday 12 June

Seeing the Light in Life

PHOTOGRAPHY

- Sunday 5 July - Friday 10 July

Introductory Directed Retreat

- Sunday 5 July - Friday 10 July

Time for rest and reflection

- Thursday 23 July - Sunday 26 July

Mid-term Retreat

- Sunday 25 October - Thursday 29 October

Advent Weekend Retreats

- Friday 4 December - Sunday 6 December
- Friday 11 December - Sunday 13 December

Hop-on/Hop-off Retreat

- Monday 14 December - Friday 18 December

SOME RETREATS TAKE PARTICULAR THEMES

www.manresa.ie



Father Peyton Centre

Attymass, Ballina, Co Mayo F26 X884



We are dedicated to keeping alive the story of Venerable Patrick Peyton, the Rosary Priest, who brought his message of Peace and Family Prayer to the world.

Residential Retreat Centre for Private & Group Retreats.

School Retreats for First Holy Communion, Confirmation and Secondary School classes
 A day of Prayer and Fun.

Guided Tours - Multimedia Presentation - Gift shop -
 Memorabilia Exhibition - Dining Room - Oratory - Home Baking

Summer Opening Hours

April - September
 Monday - Friday 9.30pm - 5.30pm
 Saturday & Sunday 12.00pm - 5.30pm

Winter Opening Hours

October - March
 Monday - Friday 9.30pm - 5.30pm

www.fatherpeytoncentre.ie
info@fatherpeytoncentre.ie

Tel 096 45374



SEASIDE RETREATS

FCJ Ibricken Lodge, Spanish Point, Co. Clare
 Retreats and Workshops

Ibricken Lodge FCJ, beautifully situated overlooking the sea, Ibricken Lodge, Spanish Point is close to the beach and is two miles from Milltown Malbay.

Blessed with beautiful surroundings of sea and countryside, the area is an ideal venue for retreats, workshops and holidays. There are thirteen single bedrooms in the house with a large area around the house where one can sit or walk.

People come from far and near to this holy place by the sea for spiritual refreshment and renewal. It is a place of peace and healing.

Programme 2020

**Fri June 19 -
 Mon June 22**
 (3 Days: Fri evening
 - Mon lunchtime)

Lay Retreat

Theme: 'Meeting God in Creation'.

Directors:

John Feehan
 Hugh O'Donnell SDB

**Wed Aug 19 -
 Wed Aug 26**
 (6 Days)

Directed Retreat

Directors:

Marion Dooley FCJ
 Fr. Joe Coghlin

**Fri Aug 28 -
 Sun Aug 30**
 (2 Days: Fri evening
 - Sun lunchtime)

Dreams Weekend

DREAMS - A Pathway to Inner Wholeness

Directors:

Mary Leahy FCJ

Dreams, it is said, can provide inspiration that can be revealed to us in no other way.

Laity, Religious and Priests are welcome.

Retreats begin with 6pm meal on the Opening Evening and end after breakfast on the Closing Day.

Offering for Retreats €75 per day.
Non-refundable deposit: €70
 (All cheques payable to - FCJ Spanish Point)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

GERALDINE LENNON FCJ, 5 Laurel Hill Court, Summerville Avenue, Limerick.

Tel: 0863423692. Email: geraldinefcj@yahoo.ie

Faithful Companions of Jesus - RCN No. CRN 20013745



TOBAR MHUIRE RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTRE

Tobar Mhuire is a well equipped modern Retreat and Conference Centre, set in sixty acres of woodland, in the heart of County Down. We hope that visitors will enjoy our new facilities as well as the peace and quiet of the beautiful surroundings.

The Passionist Community in Tobar Mhuire is committed to keeping alive the authentic memory of Christ's Passion as a source of life and hope to all those struggling to find meaning in their lives. We welcome individuals and groups from Ireland and beyond who wish to take time out to reflect on their human

and spiritual development. In Tobar Mhuire they will find a peaceful setting and encouragement from the Passionist Community who reside there.

We welcome all who are searching for meaning and purpose in their lives and who are open to discovering a sense of the sacred in life.

The Passionist Community extend a welcome to their sisters and brothers of the Reformed Churches and hope that the resource that is Tobar Mhuire Retreat and Conference Centre will become a shared blessing for all.

TOBAR MHUIRE SUMMER INSTITUTE 2020.

1ST – 3RD JULY 2020

Befriending the Earth

Speaker: **Dennis O'Hara, DC, ND, MDiv, PhD**

University of Toronto

Reflections on the teachings of Pope Francis in Laudato Si and Thomas Berry CP
An opportunity to come to a better understanding of humanity's relationship with the rest of creation.



CONTACT US:

16 A Downpatrick Road, Tobar Mhuire Retreat and Conference Centre
Downpatrick Street, Crossgar, Co. Down BT30 9EQ
T: 028 44 830242 | Email: secretary@tobarmhuirecrossgar.com

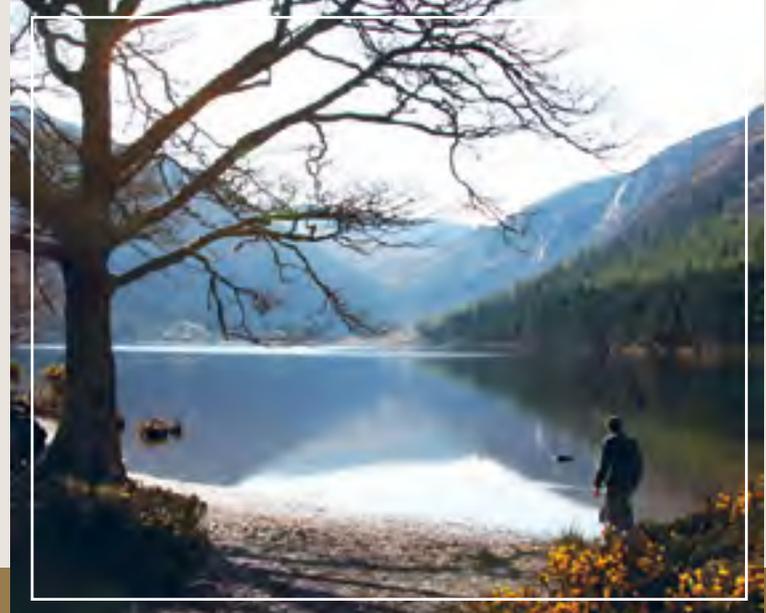


Invitation

For almost 20 years pilgrims of all persuasions have been welcomed to Glendalough Hermitage Centre from all over the world. In an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity, people from different walks of life come to be renewed in body, mind and spirit. Here you will find time to reflect, rest, pray and journey inwards.

- Would you like the opportunity to experience a hermit way of life that involves a short stay in the Glendalough Hermitage Centre?
- Need a few days of quiet reflection and rest?
- Can you take time out to experience the presence of God in the peace and tranquillity of the Valley of Glendalough?

The team at the Centre is available, by prior arrangement, to lead reflective walks or outdoor retreat days for faith groups, parish groups, support groups, and schools (particularly Confirmation classes).



Find out more:

Glendalough Hermitage Centre | Website: www.glendaloughhermitage.ie/ | Email: failte@glendaloughhermitage.ie | Telephone: 087 9356696

World Report



Edited by Aron Hegarty
aron@irishcatholic.ie

Pope warns Legionaries: reform is not over

Renewal is a continuous journey requiring humility, patience and prayer to discern God's will, Pope Francis told members of Regnum Christi and the Legionaries of Christ.

The communities' "journey of renewal is not over because a change in mentality in individuals and in an institution requires a lot of time for assimilation and, therefore, continuous conversion", he said in a written message.

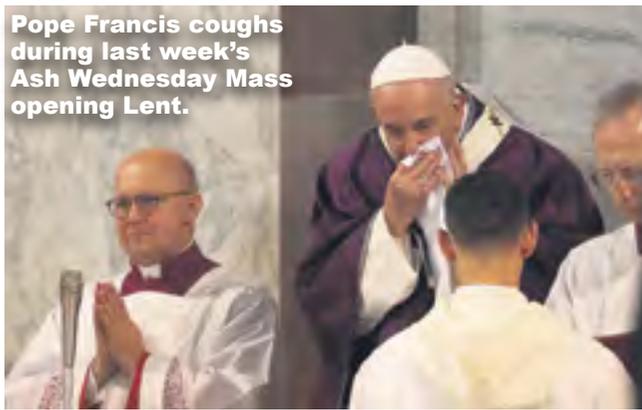
A "return to the past would be dangerous and meaningless", he added.

The Pope's written speech was delivered to leaders and delegates taking part in the general chapter of the Legionaries of Christ and the general assemblies of lay consecrated men and women of Regnum Christi.

The Pope had been scheduled to meet with them on February 29 at the Vatican, but the meeting was cancelled. Nursing a cold, the Pope has been celebrating his daily morning Mass and holding smaller meetings, but he has not attended audiences with larger groups since February 27.

Regnum Christi and the Legionaries of Christ had

Pope Francis coughs during last week's Ash Wednesday Mass opening Lent.



wrapped up their month-long general assembly and a general chapter in Rome, which included elections of a new superior general and new general directors for the consecrated women's and consecrated men's branches of Regnum Christi.

"I hope that your new governments are aware that the journey of renewal is not over," the Pope told them in his written text.

Renewal

All members, including the "individual governments of the three federated institutes", must follow this path of renewal "with perseverance and patience" and maintain "a vision consistent with

the will that the Church has shown all these years with her closeness and all concrete means she has put at your disposal".

The Pope specifically mentioned one of the main reasons for their need for renewal, that is, "the criminal behaviour of your founder, Fr Marcial Maciel Degollado".

"On the one hand, it cannot be denied that he was the 'historical' founder of the whole reality you represent, but, on the other hand, you cannot consider him an example of holiness to be imitated," the Pope said.

Fr Maciel made himself the "point of reference through an illusion he was able to create with his double life",

the Pope said.

Also, his many years leading with a "personal" form of governance, "had, to some degree, corrupted the charism the Holy Spirit had originally given to the Church and this was reflected in its norms, as well as in the practice of government and obedience" and people's way of life.

With the assistance of the Vatican and under its oversight, the Pope told them, "you have carried out with patience and willingness a demanding job to overcome tensions, even very strong ones, which sometimes came about. This prompted a further change in mentality because it required a new vision in the mutual relations between the diverse realities that make up Regnum Christi."

"I know well that it has not been easy because what we are most strongly attached to are our own ideas", and often what has been lacking is the detachment needed to be open to the Holy Spirit and to seek God's will, because "the good for the whole Church and for each of us can only come from God's will," the Pope wrote.

Toyko diocese suspends Mass as coronavirus hits Japan

The Tokyo archdiocese has suspended all public Mass until March 14 as a precaution to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

Archbishop Isao Kikuchi issued the directive on February 25 for two weeks from the day after Ash Wednesday.

The directive is in response to Japan's government policy on measures to protect against the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus by suspending events with large gatherings.

"It is not easy for the Church to make this decision to suspend Masses, which should be offered daily," said Dr Kikuchi in his statement.

The priest asked for the Faithful to

understand the gravity of the situation which led to the decision being taken.

"Recalling the words of our Lord commanding 'Do this in memory of me' would lead us to think the suspension of the Mass is for us a spiritual defeat."

He added: "We must offer more prayers than usual during this time of crisis. I recommend everyone find time to read the Bible and offer prayers."

Doubts

Matches in Japan's professional rugby, football and basketball leagues have also been postponed with doubts being raised over preparations for the Tokyo Olympics in July.

At the time of writing, more than 160 people in Japan had been infected and one had died.

The figure does not include the 691 on the quarantined cruise ship 'Diamond Princess'.

There are more than 30 confirmed cases in Toyko and Hokkaido each – the prefectures with the highest number of infected patients in Japan.

The Sapporo diocese, which covers Hokkaido, has issued the same instruction with the country's other 14 dioceses expected to issue directives about the cancellation of Masses in the coming days.

Middle East bishops call for an Arab World Youth Day

Bishops in the Middle East have called for a regional youth gathering similar to World Youth Day to be established for young Catholics in Arab countries.

The proposed 'World Day of Youth of the Arab Regions' would take place in Jordan as the first host country with the

goal of encouraging "mass participation", according to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

A total of 14 bishops representing Catholics from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Israel, Cyprus and Somalia met with Pope Francis in Rome last week.

There they discussed the possibility of an Arab World Youth Day gathering at the meeting of the Conference of Latin Bishops of the Arab Regions (CELRA).

The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem said more details would be released at the next CELRA meeting in Lebanon in

February 2021.

World Youth Day, which takes place every two to three years, was first established by Pope John Paul II in 1985.

The next World Youth Day is scheduled to take place in Lisbon, Portugal in 2022 with the theme: "Mary arose and went with haste."

IN BRIEF

Ethiopian Catholic delegation refused entry at Eritrea airport

● A Catholic delegation has hit out at being stopped at an airport in Eritrea and forced to return to Ethiopia.

"We condemn the gesture" said the Catholic Secretariat of Ethiopia on February 28, who claimed they were "illegally detained without reason".

"We also express our solidarity with the Catholic Church in Eritrea, which lives in a very complex context."

The delegation consisting of Cardinal Bérhaneyesus Demerew, Msgr Musie Ghebregiorgis and Abba Teshome Fikre left Addis Ababa for Asmara on February 22.

They were traveling to the jubilee of the Archbishop's Church of Asmara, which celebrates 50 years and the annual feast of its patron Kidane Méhret.

Bishops told Nigerian Catholics to wear black on Ash Wednesday

● The bishops of Nigeria told the nation's Catholics to wear black on Ash Wednesday to protest the ongoing persecution of Christians in the country.

In a letter on February 26, Archbishop Augustine Obiora Akubeze said black clothing would be a show of mourning and solidarity with the victims of kidnappings and terror attacks by Boko Haram.

Mr Akubeze, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria, also called for support from the international community in the fight for security and religious freedom.

"The number of killings is just mind boggling," he said. "The government is certainly not doing enough."

German Catholics resist bishops' plans to 'Protestantise' Church

● Prominent Catholics in Germany have publicly opposed the German bishops' "synodal path" in a statement released last week.

The statement, titled 'Call to Resistance Against the Synodal Path', issued on February 26 condemns the German bishops on topics like celibacy, clerical authority and gender theory to name a few.

The representatives in the

document claim the synodal path is pushing the Catholic Church in Germany "on the way to a division".

"We oppose this synodal path. We remain Catholic," wrote the signers in the document.

Among the 20 signatories were professors, pro-life activists and organisations like the Forum of German Catholics and Circle of Catholics.

Kazakhstan priest rejects Mass ban after branding Pope a 'heretic'

● A retired archbishop in Poland has rejected a directive barring him from public appearances and vowed to go on denouncing "heresy and sectarianism".

"Christ gave me authority through the Church to proclaim the truth, and I'll do so as long as I live," said retired Archbishop Jan Lenga, 69, on February 25.

Ukraine born Dr Lenga, who served in Kazakhstan, was ordered to stop preaching, celebrating Mass or speaking to the media, after he accused the Pope of "spreading untruths".

The clergyman said he still recognised Pope Benedict XVI as Pope and dropped Pope Francis from his prayer intentions for "leading the world astray".

Clergy in Philippines oppose construction of dam

● Catholic bishops in the Philippines are being praised for their call to stop the construction of a dam that will reportedly displace hundreds of tribal people. The Catholic Bishops Conference, in a statement titled 'I Look Up to the Mountains', spoke out against building the €205.5m Kaliwa Dam project in Quezon province. "For the sake of the common good, we strongly recommend that ecologically sustainable alternatives be carefully considered," read their statement issued on February 26.

"The ongoing Kaliwa Dam project of the government, in the guise of providing water to Metro Manila, is to our mind against inclusive development."

World Report

Beating drums to mark Lent



African dancers take part in the opening procession during an Ash Wednesday service in Port of Spain, Trinidad which commemorates the Black Power Revolution's 50th anniversary. Photo: CNS.

Pope accepts resignation of Buffalo bishop over sex abuse

Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Bishop Edward Grosz, auxiliary bishop of Buffalo, who has been accused of mishandling a sex abuse allegation.

Grosz, who turned 75 on February 16, offered his resignation at the age required by canon law.

The Vatican's announcement on March 2 accepting Grosz's resignation did not indicate whether it will conduct any investigation into the allegation against the bishop.

His retirement comes following a year of allegations of a cover-up of clergy sex abuse made against the leadership of the Diocese of Buffalo, including an allegation of negligence on the part of Grosz himself.

In September, a priest who was sexually abused as a seminarian alleged that Grosz responded to his 2003 report of the abuse by threatening his vocation.

Fr Ryszard Biernat, who was abused

as a seminarian in Buffalo by a priest who was later removed from ministry, recalled the auxiliary bishop's response:

"He said [it] was my fault because I [didn't] lock the door," Fr Biernat quoted Bishop Grosz. "And then he said, 'and Ryszard, if you don't stop talking about this, you will not become a priest. You understand me? You understand me?'"

Investigation

Bishop Joseph Malone, who led the diocese from 2012 until last year, resigned in December following a Vatican-ordered investigation of the diocese.

Following Malone's resignation, Bishop Edward Scharfenberger of Albany was appointed by Pope Francis to oversee the diocese until a replacement was named.

Grosz told local media in December that his role under Scharfenberger's administration of the diocese would

be "primarily sacramental and in assistance to priests", and said that he planned to submit his resignation in February after his 75th birthday.

As auxiliary bishop, Grosz and Malone met with Pope Francis on November 15 during the ad limina visit of bishops from New York.

Grosz had been an auxiliary bishop of Buffalo since 1989. A native of Buffalo, he studied at St John Vianney Seminary in New York and was ordained a priest in 1971.

The Diocese of Buffalo announced on February 28 that it is declaring bankruptcy as hundreds of abuse lawsuits have been filed against it in the last several months.

The diocese said it was formally filing for Chapter 11 reorganisation under the US bankruptcy code to provide the most compensation for victims of clergy sex abuse while continuing the day-to-day work of its Catholic mission.

Argentina President proposes new bill to legalise abortion

The President of Argentina has said he will send a bill to legalise abortion to Congress within the next week.

Alberto Fernandez, who was sworn in as the country's president in December, has previously described abortion as "a matter of public health".

At present, abortion in Argentina is only allowed in cases of rape or if the mother's health is in danger.

If the bill is passed, Argentina would become

the largest country in South America to legalise abortion.

"Abortion happens, it is a fact," said President Fernandez.

"A state should protect its citizens in general and women in particular. And in the 21st Century, every society needs to respect the individual choice of its members to decide freely about their bodies."

Mr Fernandez also vowed to introduce a new

programme to improve sex education in the country.

A previous attempt in 2018 to legalise abortion in Argentina, where the population is overwhelmingly Catholic, failed.

The 2018 bill to allow for abortion within the first 14 weeks of pregnancy was narrowly approved by Congress, but later rejected by the country's Senate.

One major difference this time is that the country's

president – Mr Fernandez – is in favour of the bill.

Cuba, Uruguay and Guyana are currently the only Latin American countries to permit abortion in the first weeks of pregnancy.

While some other countries allow abortion in the case of rape or risk to the mother's life, it is completely banned in El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti.

Vatican roundup

Put down phone, pick up Bible – Pope's Lent advice

● Pope Francis has told Catholics to use the season of Lent to spend less time watching television or being on their phones, and to spend more time reading the Bible.

The Pope reflected on the "desert" of Lent during his weekly general audience and how countercultural it is to spend time in silence; away from the noise of the modern world.

"Lent is the right time to make room for the Word of God," he said on February 26.

"It is the time to turn off the television and open the Bible. It is the time to disconnect from your cell phone and connect to the Gospel."

The Holy Father also said fasting is a way of seeking a simpler life by giving up superfluous, vain things.

However, he warned the faithful that fasting is not about "slimming down".

"In the desert, one finds intimacy with God, the love of the Lord," said Pope Francis.

"The road that leads us from death to life opens up in the desert. We enter the desert with Jesus, we will go out savouring Easter...have courage."

Protection of minors better since 2019 summit, says Fr Zollner

● The protection of minors in the Church has improved since last year's summit, according to prominent priest Fr Hans Zollner.

Fr Zollner, a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, says steps have been taken to address clerical sexual abuse.

A year on from the meeting, he said: "We have had a number of changes in the law of the Church. All dioceses are now obliged to establish an office for reporting abuse and for intervention and prevention."

"The age for child sexual exploitation material

was raised from 14 to 18 and that pontifical secret was abolished in regards to those cases."

Fr Zollner, who is also president of the Centre for Child Protection at the Pontifical Gregorian University, says there has been a "change of attitude" towards preventing abuse.

"There is now a deeper awareness and a greater willingness to really tackle the issue, so that young people and vulnerable adults are safer in our Church. The most important thing that we need to learn is that victims need to be listened to."

Algor-ethics essential to use of AI in medicine

● A prominent professor has highlighted the importance of ethics in healthcare at a workshop in the Vatican last week.

The workshop on ethics in artificial intelligence (AI) took place in the New Synod Hall on February 26 and discussed guidance for an increased use of AI in the management and provision of medicine.

Prof. Maria Chiara Carrozza, an Italian industrial bioengineer at the Santa'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa, spoke about how AI can integrate with human intelligence in healthcare.

She said: "AI technologies are becoming more sophisticated but are subject to biases based on ethnic, cultural and religious categories."

"It is therefore necessary to understand the algorithms in AI and how they work in order to develop programmes that follow human ethical principles."

She added: "We must know the process that was used in the making of decisions and even enter into the process. This is algor-ethics."

"We must guarantee human dignity, human access to healthcare mechanisms and ensure that the data of patients is used for good and not for bad – not for business."

Letter from America



Christopher White

Speaking to young people on the beaches of Rio de Janeiro at the 2013 World Youth Day, Pope Francis encouraged those present to go home and shake things up.

Perhaps one result of that was in the US where an experiment took place last month in an attempt to bridge the divide between so-called 'pro-life Catholics' and 'social justice Catholics'.

For 50 years now, tens of thousands of pro-life marchers have battled the frigid January temperatures to gather on the National Mall in Washington, DC and march to the steps of the Supreme Court to mark the anniversary of Roe vs Wade, when abortion was legalised throughout the country.

The annual March for Life has long been considered the highlight of the year for the pro-life community in the US – and with the annual Vigil for Life that takes place the night before at the National Shrine each year, which is attended by scores of US bishops – the March certainly has tacit backing from the highest ranks within the US Church.

Last year it was announced that for the first time ever, the annual Catholic Social Ministry Gathering, which is organised by the US bishops and traditionally held each February, and brings together activists on a range of issues – such as immigration, climate change, the death penalty – would now be held the same weekend as the March for Life in an attempt to bring the two worlds together.

Bridge

The metaphorical bridge that was trying to be built between the two camps, however, seemed to face detonation when it was announced that President Donald Trump would become the first ever sitting president to address the March for Life in person.

President Trump has divided the US Church and the pro-life community from the earliest stages of his candidacy when he used Mexican immigrants as a political punching bag in his first speech announcing his bid for the presidency.

Yet as his 2016 campaign gained momentum and he became the inevitable nominee, single-issue-voting, pro-life Catholics hitched their wagons to his, initially



People hold signs aloft at January's 'One Life LA' walk in Los Angeles.

LA's 'One Life' initiative may be the boost the US pro-life movement needs

with skepticism and now with enthusiasm, as many now hail him the most pro-life president the US has ever had.

For others, that moniker has been hard to reconcile with his record of separating children from their parents at the southern border and his boasting of the way in which he has treated women. Just two days after he declared that "mothers are heroes" from the stage of the March for Life, his administration announced that pregnant mothers seeking immigration visas in the US would be denied – further punctuating the hangover from his appearance at the March for Life for those wary of the fact that for all intents and purposes, he was now the face of the pro-life movement in the US.

Kicking off the Catholic Social

Ministry Gathering just 24 hours after the March for Life ended, Cardinal Blase Cupich of Chicago cautioned that "the Church's job is not to discern which political, partisan or military force we should support in order for good to triumph", but to see Christ as the "starting point" for the Church's ministry on every issue.

Yet his remarks weren't a one-way criticism of Catholics who have allied themselves with a political party, but rather a warning of those who have come to see politics as a salvific vehicle for bringing about the Kingdom of God.

"Losing sight of Christ's saving action as our point of reference, risks fragmenting our approach to social justice by giving priority to one issue or a set of issues according to our standards or worse yet, our compromises with

worldly powers," he went on to warn.

The divisions among US Catholics are no great secret, but January put on full display the frailties of what could and should be a strong, big tent coalition eager to work to protect and promote life at all stages.

“For the past six years, the archdiocese of Los Angeles has reimagined its own annual pro-life initiative”

Yet if the March for Life exposed the fractures that exist, some 3,000 miles away, another event perhaps offered a way forward.

For the past six years, the archdiocese of Los Angeles (LA) has

reimagined its own annual pro-life initiative with its 'One Life LA' walk. The LA equivalent isn't about political power, but rather, it's focused on individual people and the places in which they live.

There's music, food trucks, dancing, and yes, speakers, too – but the focus isn't the political. It's personal testimonials and is community centered, engaging local partners rather than trying to attract the attention of powerbrokers. In short, it's a true celebration of life, which, for many at least, provides a better witness to what Catholics are for and not just against.

"Hagan Lio" were the words Pope Francis challenged young people in Rio de Janeiro. Some commentators translated it as "shake things up", others as "make a mess" or "make some noise". Catholics in LA have accepted that challenge. Perhaps they paint a better way forward for all of us.

i Christopher White is the national correspondent for *Crux* and the *Tablet* newspaper of the diocese of Brooklyn. Follow him on Twitter @CWWhite212.

“The Church's job is not to discern which political, partisan or military force we should support in order for good to triumph, but to see Christ as the 'starting point' for the Church's ministry on every issue”

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

Would Jesus want us to eat pancakes?

Dear Editor, When I first went to Jaffa, Israel, to work as a chef for an Anglican guest house a different choice of breakfast was offered each morning of the week. One of the choices was homemade pancakes, or *crepes*, which had to be tossed in a very hot frying pan.

Some of the volunteer workers from various countries assigned to this duty dreaded the ominous 'pancake day' as it often had its share of disasters, giving them the in-house nickname of 'panic cakes'!

In the various hotel and catering establishments I have worked in over the years, even if they were secular, there was always the obligatory 'Pancake Day' or 'Shrove Tuesday',

even though the tradition is linked to the fasting of Lent that begins the following day on Ash Wednesday observed by Protestant and Catholic denominations as a precursor to Easter.

Today many folk celebrate this holiday without even realising its ecclesiastical connections. It was a day to use up eggs, milk and other rich foods before the 40-day fasting period.

This gave rise to the name 'carnival' coming from the Latin *carnem levare* (to take away the flesh) and for others *Mardi Gras* meaning 'Fat Tuesday'. Pope Gregory (d. 604) issued the following rule to Augustine in Canterbury: "We abstain from

flesh, meat and from all things that come from flesh, as milk, cheese and eggs."

Ash is still daubed on the foreheads of participants on Ash Wednesday in some denominations from burnt palm fronds made into crosses from the previous year, almost reminiscent of some religious practices in India, but which was linked to the time of penitence and confession.

I have never panicked making pancakes, but I do question whether Jesus would actually require this practice from anyone who chooses to follow him?

*Yours etc.,
Colin Nevin,
Bangor, Down.*

Further investigation of MIC's stance warranted

Dear Editor, I sincerely hope that *The Irish Catholic* will follow up on its report on the rejection by Mary I College (IC 27/02/2020), Limerick of a Christian ethics course, especially in view of the fact that this course was to be self-funded, which

contradicts the statement by MIC that the rejection was caused by "such programmes necessitating a diversion of resources from MIC core programmes".

It is vital that this issue be properly investigated so that it can be confirmed that no

due pressure was involved in ensuring that this most important and necessary course was not allowed to proceed.

With much evidence available of an increasing secular society unwilling to allow freedom to promote

and protect Catholic ethics, a thorough examination of what was at play in the refusal to allow this course to proceed is warranted.

*Yours etc.,
Mary Stewart,
Ardeskin, Donegal.*

Promote Passion Play to inspire Faithful

Dear Editor, The Passion Play in Oberammergau [Germany] will attract thousands of visitors in a few months time. In a short few weeks every parish will celebrate Holy Week and Easter.

While some of the liturgy and symbols resonate with the smaller numbers who now attend, much of the language and content is seen as archaic and out of touch with today. Many priests have omitted several of the readings from the Easter Vigil.

If every diocese in Ireland were to encourage a Passion Play and stage it in the main towns of its diocese I believe the faithful would come in droves to be spiritually nourished. We are now at the eleventh-hour and it's time to act.

*Your etc.,
Patrick Mulcahy,
Clonlara, Clare.*



We can't afford to have priests dancing

Dear Editor, With the continuous cry and fear of the Faithful being without priests and the Holy Eucharist, can we afford to have priests

dancing with the stars? All the time that is spent practising and conversing with the celebrities, robs the Church of a priest and his priestly duties. Perhaps

the priest involved should take another look at what it really means to be a priest.

*Yours etc.,
Luisa Hammon,
Courtown, Wexford.*

Compassion for the poor in Manila

Dear Editor, A few times each day a helicopter passes overhead and lands on the helipad of a five star hotel near Manila bay [Philippines], a service to guests who would prefer to avoid our famous traffic. Its flight path goes over the national sports stadium in whose covered alcoves the homeless sleep and store their handful of belongings...so close, and yet so far.

The distance between rich and poor here is greater than anywhere I have seen in the world. Unbridled

capitalism and endemic corruption work synergistically to ensure an ever growing underclass and untouchable and increasingly isolated elite.

Added to this, are the aspirations of the middle classes which can counter compassion and build walls against the poor. It all chips away at our humanity and increases separation and isolation.

A big event like the Papal visit for example, sees the homeless shunted away by the government, dehumanised as an embarrassing problem.

We must seek out a new way, of compassion and dignity. Everyone has a story but not all have a voice.

How easy it was to help; how much easier not to bother to engage though, like in the parable of Lazarus and the rich man.

Compassion is the better choice; the better choice for rich and poor alike.

*Yours etc.,
Steve Clarke,
Manila, Philippines.*

facebook community

Each week we publish a selection of comments from *The Irish Catholic* Facebook page

Likely candidates to become the next Archbishop of Dublin

I would add two: the proven safe hands of Archbishop Eamon Martin from Armagh to Dublin (as with Cardinal Paul Cullen); and the tried, tested and much-liked Dubliner Bishop Kevin Doran with his willingness to speak up on matters of doctrine. – **Alan Whelan**

I would like to see either Bishop Kevin Doran or Bishop Cullinane of Waterford, two very sound Bishops who are not afraid to speak the truth. – **Mary King**

I pray we get a holy and courageous bishop who will stand up and speak out for the true teaching of the Catholic Church and who will stand up for life. Amen. – **Antoinette Dillon**

Young people express their Faith at Divine Mercy Conference

If only these young people had some practical support from Church leaders, they would generate great inspiration and leadership for others to engage also. With the John Paul II Awards, Youth 2000 and other youth groups, there are green shoots appearing in Faith revival. – **Matt Moran**

What do you think? Join in the conversation on *The Irish Catholic* Facebook page

Vatican 'befriending' China is difficult to understand

Dear Editor, Congratulations to you and to Aron Hegarty for an excellent and informative article on recent developments in the Catholic Church in China (IC 27/02/2020). The world needs constant reminding of the horrors of China's persecution of Catholics.

The Vatican's befriending of China whilst simultaneously denigrating the US is hard to fathom. The latter's president is pro-life and the greatest defender of religious freedom in the world today. For some of us the Holy See's approach can only be explained by allowing its Marxist ideology take precedence over its obligation to defend Catholics worldwide.

*Yours etc.,
Seán Grace,
Malahide,
Dublin.*

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



▲ **FRANCE:** Asia Bibi is seeking political asylum in France. The Catholic woman has spent almost 10 years on death row after being falsely accused of blasphemy in Pakistan.
 ▲ **INDIA:** People for and against a new citizenship law throw stones at each other during a clash in New Delhi on February 23. Photos: CNS



▲ **COLOMBIA:** A woman prays during a pro-life protest in Bogota. A Constitutional Court judge has proposed to make abortion legal until the 16th week of pregnancy.



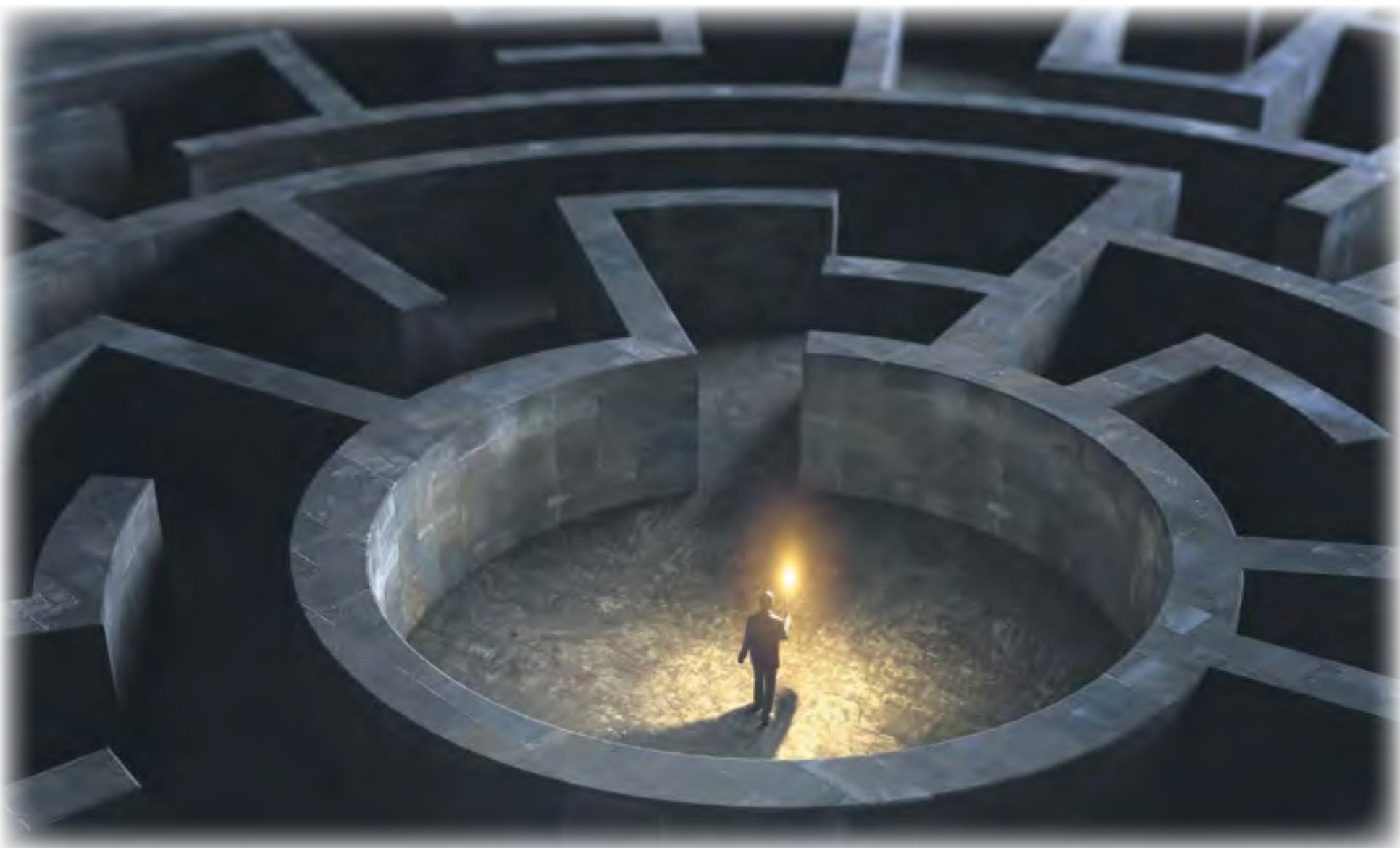
▲ **HOLY LAND:** A demonstrator holds a Palestinian flag while surrounded by border police during a protest in the Jordan Valley against Israeli settlements on February 25.



▲ **USA:** A kindergarten girl prays during an Ash Wednesday Mass for the parish school at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in New York.



▲ **ITALY:** Military officers wearing protective face masks stand outside Milan Cathedral (Duomo di Milano), which was closed last week by authorities due to the coronavirus outbreak.



Jean Vanier's transgressions do not negate the good work of L'Arche

Like many others, I was deeply distressed to learn of the recent revelations concerning Jean Vanier. He was a person whom I much admired and about whom on numerous occasions I have written glowingly, so the news about him shook me deeply. What's to be said about Jean Vanier in the light of these revelations?

First, that what he did was very wrong and deeply harmful, not least to the women he victimised. Without knowing the specifics of what happened (and without wanting to know them) enough is known to know that this was a serious abuse of trust. No cloak of justification can be placed around it.

Second, what he did may not be linked to or identified with clerical sexual abuse. Vanier was not a cleric, nor indeed a canonically vowed religious. He was a layman, a public celibate admittedly, but his betrayal of his commitment to celibacy may not be identified with the clerical sexual abuse. He broke the sixth commandment, albeit in a way that merits a harsh judgment, given his public stature and the abuse of a particular kind of sacred trust. However his breaking of his professed celibacy doesn't put into question the legitimacy and fruitfulness of vowed celibacy



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

itself, any more than a married man being unfaithful to his wife puts into question the legitimacy and fruitfulness of the vocation of marriage.

Third, Vanier's transgressions do not negate the good work of L'Arche nor cast any negative shadow on the dedication and good work of the many women and men who work there and who have worked there. By their fruits you shall know them! Jesus taught that and no one, no one, can deny or question the good work that L'Arche has done and continues to do in more than 30 countries.

Grace

L'Arche is a work of God, of grace, of the Holy Spirit. It turns out now that its founder had some flaws.

“L'Arche is a work of God, of grace, of the Holy Spirit. It turns out now that its founder had some flaws. So be it. Jesus is the only founder who had no flaws”

So be it. Jesus is the only founder who had no flaws. Indeed, the good work being done by L'Arche attests too to the fact that Vanier is and was bigger than his sins. Nobody who is essentially duplicitous can leave behind such a grace-filled legacy.

Finally, the disillusionment and anger we feel says as much about us as it says about Jean Vanier. In Luke's Gospel, a young man comes up to Jesus and says to him: “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (18.18-23) Jesus immediately challenges the way he is being addressed by saying: “Don't call me good! Only God is good.”

That was our mistake with Jean Vanier, just as it's our mistake with other persons whom we cloak

with divinity in an idealisation that's supposed to be reserved for God alone. And whenever we do that, and we did it to Jean Vanier, we cannot not ultimately be disappointed and disillusioned. Nobody, except God, does God well; all the rest of us eventually disappoint.

What Jean Vanier did to us was unfair. We cannot *not* feel betrayed by his betrayal. Conversely, though, what we did to him was also unfair. We asked him to be God for us and that's also not a fair request.

When I was a 21-year-old seminarian, searching for mentors, one of my seminary teachers came back from a Vanier retreat gushing with superlatives as he described Vanier as the “holiest, most-wonderful, most single-minded, spiritual man” he'd ever met. My critical faculties immediately put me on guard: “No one's that good!” So I deliberately didn't look to Vanier for mentorship.

However, in the 50 years since, I did look to him for mentorship. Though I never met him personally, I read his books, was much influenced by numerous people who counted him as a formidable influence in their lives (including Henri Nouwen), I wrote a preface for one of his last books, and wrote a glowing tribute to him for the newspapers when he died. So I was

also enough besotted by him so that now I too felt dismayed and disillusioned when I learned of his moral lapses.

“Once we accept that only God is good, we can accept too that nobody's perfect”

However, disillusionment is a curious phenomenon. After the initial shock, you soon enough realise it's a positive thing. It's the dispelling of an illusion, and an illusion is always in the mind of the one who is doing the perceiving rather than on the part of the one being perceived. With Jean Vanier, the illusion was on our part, not his. There was, as we now know, a certain falsity in his life – but there was one on our part too.

Yes, the revelations about Jean Vanier shook me deeply, but not to my core because at our core, when we touch it, we know that no one, except God, is good, at least with a goodness that has no imperfections. Once we accept that, we can accept too that nobody's perfect, even a Jean Vanier. At our core we can accept that, despite this betrayal, Jean Vanier did a lot of good and that L'Arche is clearly a graced reality.

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, March 5, 2020

Personal Profile

Filling small bellies around the world

Page 34



The other side of St Patrick's Day



St Patrick, the most famous of the Patron Saints of Ireland worldwide, although not quite hailing from Ireland himself but from the United Kingdom, he is credited with driving the 'snakes' out of Ireland, or bringing Christianity to the island and pushing out Paganism if you'd like to be more literal. One might wonder if he were to see the celebrations of his work today would he be pleased? Would he also enjoy a few libations in a break from Lent?

This is probably the second most popular thing St Patrick is known for: drinking. In Ireland the tradition of 'drowning the shamrock', making a toast to St Patrick then throwing the alcohol over one's shoulder is actually a relatively new one.



Róise McGagh looks at the relationship between our national holiday and alcohol.

Despite now being a well-known break from Lent, St Patrick's Day only became a national holiday in 1903. Pubs were not allowed open on the day until 1973. That isn't to say people weren't celebrating in their homes 100 years ago but they definitely weren't celebrating to the extent that we do now.

St Patrick wasn't ever officially canonised by a Pope but he still makes the list of saints. His feast day has been marked on

the liturgical calendar since the early 1600's and in Ireland it was once a sombre day of prayer and one where attending mass was essential.

Many young people, and maybe even some not so young people, might not be familiar with this version of the celebration as the other. Many might even have had their first sip of alcohol on a March 17 some year.

Underage drinking and binge drinking in Ireland are

two prominent societal issues. While the numbers of young people consuming alcohol are going down it is still an issue as alcohol can have adverse health effects for the development of young people.

An international study by the International Alliance for Responsible Drinking found the number of 15 and 16 year-olds drinking alcohol fell from 50% to 35% between 2011 and 2015. The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Drugs (ESPAD) also stated in 2015 that the number of 15-16 year-olds consuming alcohol was around this mark.

The same study showed how Alcohol use in Ireland peaked in 1999 at 74% and in 2003 at 61%.

In May 2019, data from the Western Regional Drug and

Alcohol Task Force was released. The lifestyle survey, conducted by the Icelandic group Planet Youth, looked at 15-16 year olds in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon. It showed that 77% of respondents had drunk alcohol at some point with 46% reporting being drunk at least once.

It also showed that 30% had tried alcohol by the age of 13 and 26% had been drunk in the last month. Most of them had been either drinking at discos, in a public area such as the street or a park or at their friend's house.

Alcohol Action Ireland noted, "In comparison to the results of the nationwide European Schools Project for Alcohol and Drugs Survey in 2015, levels of alcohol consumption are significantly

» Continued on Page 33

Family News



AND EVENTS

SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR ST PATRICK'S DAY

Parades can be great for some, but standing for long periods of time with young kids is never ideal – especially in big crowds. If you're looking for something different to do with the family this St Patrick's Day there are plenty of events to choose from around the country. All of the national museums of Ireland have tours and workshops on over the holidays, you can find them all on the museum.ie website. The Dublin St Patrick's Day Festival has some quieter family-oriented shows happening in Merrion Square. The Festival Village will have activities on spanning the festival so you don't necessarily have to go into town in the height of the mayhem on March 17. Outside of Dublin, glór arts centre in Ennis is running events on the feast day, the Kilkenny Tradfest runs along the same weekend as well as Tullamore's Seahctain na Gaeilge Festival. It's very worth looking into what's happening in your local area so the whole family can mix it up and steer clear of stressful crowds.

SAVE YOUR FAVE WITH A FABRIC SHAVE

This is a product that looks a bit weird and really sounds too good to be true. How many jumpers have you lost over the years to piles in the fabric? Well apparently you can get rid of them – and its not with any of the fancy washing powders you're being sold. A fabric shaver is a small handheld device which you can get that runs with a cord, or batteries. You run it along your piece of clothing with the correct head for the material, and it takes all of those little bumps away. They range from €15 to €30 and are great for reviving any old item of clothing, the Amazon reviews and comparison pictures say it all. If you frequent charity shops and often find things that have a bit too much wear on them, this can be a great way to turn it around for yourself or sell it on.

DAIRY MILK MAY INCREASE RISK OF BREAST CANCER

Consistently drinking just one cup of dairy milk a day could double the risk of breast cancer in women according to a new study. Loma Linda University Health, recorded the dietary intakes of 52,795 North American women for just under eight years who were initially free of cancer. Dr Gary E. Fraser, first author of the paper, said: "Dairy milk does have some positive nutritional qualities but these need to be balanced against other possible, less helpful effects. This work suggests the urgent need for further research."

By the end of the study there were 1,057 new breast cancer cases. There was no link between soy products and breast cancer, independent of dairy. Higher intakes of dairy calories and milk were associated with increased risk of breast cancer, independent of soy intake. Fraser noted little variation when it came to full fat and low-fat milk. There were no associations between breast cancer and cheese and yoghurt

Discover peace of mind over Lent



Etty Hillesum, a young Jewish woman who had a deep sense of her spiritual nature, once wrote: 'Ultimately, we have just one moral duty: to reclaim large areas of peace in ourselves, more and more peace, and to reflect it towards others.'

We all experience suffering at some stage in our lives. Yet, meditation helps us to realise that we can be suffering and still be at peace because we have learned to see ourselves in a way that enables us to integrate our trials and troubles into a wholesome sense of who we truly are.

This may seem like a paradox but it is nonetheless true. While the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' have the capacity to make us lose our sense of balance in life, meditation helps us to restore that balance. And we discover – or recover – a deeper appreciation of what it means to be whole. We have all experienced how, when suffering assails us, our mind begins to identify with negative thoughts and feelings, crowding out possibility and hope. One of the ways the mind does this is to replay over and over again the negativity of the situation and this heightens our sense of despair. Ultimately, the phrase 'peace of mind' is a contradiction; our minds seem to be designed to keep stirring things up!

We discover the truth of this when we begin to meditate. Meditation is ultimately the practice of being still in body and mind. Most of us find it relatively easy to be still in body, but stillness of mind is a real challenge! Thoughts arise of their own volition, out of nowhere, and they are continuous, relentless and repetitive. They crowd our space and make us feel very confined. One of the very

Mindful living

Dr Noel Keating



practical benefits of meditation is that we learn this experientially, for ourselves, and we become keenly aware of the pattern our thoughts take and how useless such inner chattering is.

“We have all experienced how, when suffering assails us, our mind begins to identify with negative thoughts and feelings

Richard Rohr, one of the foremost contemplatives of our day, suggests that: 'When you're in your mind, you're hardly ever at peace, and when you're at peace, you're never only in your mind.'

The first part of that sentence is easily understood, but what does he mean by the second part? He is pointing out that when we do find inner peace, it is because we have accessed another, deeper, dimension of what it means to be human, a dimension beyond the mind. While rational thinking is very important to our survival and development, it is also limiting. To achieve our full human potential we need an open heart as well as an open mind. When we access this hidden dimension, which is our innate spirituality, inner peace arises

within us and our way of being in the world changes.

Meditation awakens the heart. It stirs in us an awareness of who we are at the very depth of our being. It animates the true-self so that, as John Main described it, our centre of gravity moves from the head to the heart. The rational mind tends to be egoic – it focuses first on me, on my needs. But when the mind is re-centred in the heart, as a result of regular meditation, our way of seeing everything is changed and our behaviour changes as a result. We begin to live life out of a sense of abundance, not scarcity. We discover that we can develop a freedom from reactivity, from the need to defend or assert ourselves. We learn how to be fully present wherever we are, rather than caught up in the past or projecting into the future. Because our centre of gravity has moved to its true centre, we find we are not so easily knocked off balance by whatever challenges life throws at us.



To discover that inner peace, we must begin by taking our attention away from the mind. In Christian meditation we do that by bringing our attention to a word. We choose a word that will not by its nature give rise to thoughts. John Main recommended the word 'Maranatha', an Aramaic word that means 'Come, Lord'.

Because it is in a language we are not familiar with, it doesn't distract us. If anything, knowing what it means reminds us that our intention in Christian meditation is to be still in the presence of God, open and vulnerable to the discovery of who we really are in God and who God is in us.

“Ultimately, the phrase 'peace of mind' is a contradiction; our minds seem to be designed to keep stirring things up!”

Inner peace is not brought about by peace of mind but the other way around. It is when we discover the peace that is already within ourselves that we begin to experience peace of mind. If you would like to experience that for yourself, why not take up the practice for lent? Christian Meditation Ireland and Contemplative Outreach Ireland have groups in towns and cities all over Ireland where people gather once a week to sit in silence together to anchor themselves in their true-self. Check out their websites, find a group near you and discover the truth for yourself.

1 After 40 years in the education sector Noel Keating was awarded a PhD for his research into the child's experience of meditation and its spiritual fruits. Noel now leads, in a voluntary capacity, a project which offers free in-service to primary schools who may wish to consider introducing meditation as a whole-school practice. Noel is author of *Meditation with Children: A Resource for Teachers and Parents*.

» Continued from Page 31



higher in all categories – for example in 2015, 34% of the 15-16 years old in Ireland reported being drunk in their lifetime compared with 46% in this most recent survey.”

This could mean the numbers are going up, or that there needs to be more research done on the topic.

The Public Health (Alcohol) Act (PHAA) was signed into law in 2018. It was aimed at providing for the minimum unit pricing of alcohol in Ireland as well as regulations on advertising and health warning labels. However, over a year on, nothing has yet been implemented. However, is more expensive alcohol going to be the thing that stops young people from indulging?

Last year before St Patrick's Day the Health Service Executive (HSE) warned the Bank Holiday weekend on which it fell would be very busy for emergency departments due to an influx of people presenting with alcohol-related injuries and it wouldn't be surprising if one were issued this year as well.

Injuries are not the only danger for underaged teenagers drinking on St Patrick's Day, or any other day.

Alcohol affects the developing brain in a different way to the adult brain. Alcohol use and misuse can damage two important areas of the brain, one which is responsible for logic, reasoning, self-regulation and judgement, and the part that relates to learning and memory.

Evidence has also shown alcohol misuse and mental problems are closely related.

Children who start to drink by age 13 are more likely to go on to have worse results, to skip school and also to be excluded from school. Underage drinkers are also more likely to smoke cigarettes, use cannabis or use hard drugs. The ESPAD report from 2015 showed underage smoking was at 13%, cannabis use was at 19% and other drugs were between 3% and 10% of substance use in under 18s.

Planet Youth showed that 18% of young people smoke cannabis.

The risk of developing liver disease can be increased by drinking alcohol and young people who drink regularly are also at risk and start to damage their livers without realising.

As these kinds of studies have been done on the affect of alcohol and this information becomes more widely available, the numbers have been decreasing.

“Evidence has also shown alcohol misuse and mental problems are closely related.

It can be very difficult as a parent to stop teenagers from acting out and drinking. Being overly strict could just result in a young person lying about where they are and what they're doing, which is arguably just as dangerous as the drinking itself. However, the opposite, saying it's okay to try it out or even allowing



teens to try out alcohol at home can have the effect of making it seem like underaged drinking is an okay thing to do, despite everything they were taught in SPHE.

Drink Aware, the UK website suggests that resilience and self-esteem in young people contributes a lot to whether they feel the need to drink – for confidence or to forget their problems.

They say that parents need to play a role in helping their children feel that they don't need to drink. Building resilience and self-esteem involves expressing love for a young person even when you're not happy with their behaviour. Parents need to help teenagers learn they can overcome difficulties, praise them when they do try hard and encouraging them to do their best.

Rules, routine and a positive attitude at home as well as strong connections with family and friends are key for this. Not everyone will get it right all the time but an effort will go a long way.

When young people see their capabilities in solving problems, they develop better resilience and self-esteem.

Looking at your own approach to alcohol is something that's important too. Children do as we do. Setting an example for children from a young age all the way up until they're 18, that just because it's a holiday doesn't mean they shouldn't take care of their bodies.

Outright banning them from going out on St Patrick's Day might work in the short term, but for the long haul a more holistic approach might be more effective. Maybe the culture of bingeing on this public holiday and in general the Irish relationship with alcohol says something about self-esteem and resilience that may need some work.

Faith — IN THE — family



Bairbre Cahill

I was listening the other day to the radio and an Irish conductor was talking about being asked by Elmer Bernstein to work on the music for Martin Scorsese's film *The Age of Innocence*. Things were not sounding as they should and the conductor was trying to listen intently to isolate the problem. Behind him there was a rumble of conversation until he turned and told the group of people to shush. Later that day a woman approached him and asked did he know what he had done, he had told Martin Scorsese to be quiet! This, she explained, was seriously inappropriate and could lead to him being sacked.

Fortunately it appears that at least on this occasion Martin Scorsese had less of an inflated notion of himself than his personal assistant did. Rather than sacking the conductor he went and apologised for the disruption and invited him out for dinner. When I heard that, I found myself wondering why we are inclined to lionise certain individuals, to treat them as if they are due a level of respect and adulation far beyond the rest of us.

That question has been given added significance with the revelation that Jean Vanier, the founder of L'Arche, had been involved in exploitative and abusive sexual relationships with women for decades before his death. This was a man referred to by so many of us as a "living saint" and a "spiritual giant". He had founded communities where people with disabilities could live positive and meaningful lives. He wrote about the encounter with God amidst vulnerability – and yet he exploited the vulnerability of women to whom he was supposed to be giving spiritual guidance.

Like hundreds of thousands around the world I looked up to Jean Vanier. I heard him speak on a number of occasions. I believed that he was someone in whom the Holy Spirit was powerfully present. I cannot deny the good that he did but I am shaken and shocked to discover that he was capable of such appalling behaviour towards women. The L'Arche communities are devastated by the discovery of this dark side to their founder. They should not be tarred with the same brush.

Why did we lionise him? How did we believe that he could be so utterly without fault? Could we not have rejoiced in the good that we saw without presuming Vanier to be a saint? This is not a call for us to be cynical but rather to acknowledge that we are all fragile, complex, capable of darkness.



Mary Ward who founded the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary known here in Ireland as the Loreto Sisters, called upon the women in her company to "be such as you appear and appear such as you are". It was a call to integrity. This is something I now see was not the case with Jean Vanier. He allowed us all to believe in a version of himself which he knew was untrue. I cannot see myself ever picking up one of his books again to read. The truth which seemed to shine out from his writing has been sullied.

Again and again in the Church we have faced the scandal of realising that some people are not who they seem and their actions have betrayed their calling. I'm left feeling that there is something to be learned here about humility and integrity. I think we all need to be aware of and honest about our own weaknesses. It really heightens for me the need for the sacrament of Reconciliation – that it is not enough to quietly give the nod to my own weaknesses, I actually need to speak those out, share them with another person and ask for healing and forgiveness.

We also need to be realistic about those we look up to. Let's not rush to turn people into saints or put them on pedestals. Like us they are fragile and susceptible to sin, sometimes shockingly so.

Filling small bellies around the world

Personal Profile



Róise McGagh

Patricia Friel always had a want to help people. From her hometown of Ramelton to where she lives now in Cavan, she has ended up having a positive impact in those close to home and in faraway lands.

Now the executive director of Mary's Meals in Ireland, she works full time at ensuring young people get access to food at school in some of the places most in need.

She got involved in 2013 when her friend Fr Eamonn Kelly, who is now the Chair of Mary's Meals Ireland Board, asked her to do the fundraising walk to Knock.

"He rang me up, I thought he was looking for somewhere to stay, so my mind was saying yes already. He was actually asking me to walk to Knock and I wouldn't walk the length of myself," she tells *The Irish Catholic*.

It took her five days to walk to Knock with the group. "I got nine blisters. It was the most beautiful summer, I was covered in sun cream yet I was getting burned by the wind," says Patricia. They walked for about 25 kilometres each day until they reached their destination.

The walk to Knock still happens annually with starting points across Ireland in Limerick, Kilkenny, Coal Island and Malin. Since 2013 Patricia has also done the walk from Malin which is nine days long – taking five days just to walk out of Donegal. The efforts she says, raises around €100,000 for the charity.

Patricia says the main reasons she was so taken with the charity

was a video, Child 31, that Fr Eamonn showed her made by Mary's Meals. "Even to this day that little movie caught my heart, I'd say it cracked my heart a bit to see what those little children go through but yet then to see the joy that Mary's Meals brought when they started feeding their local communities."

"Although I wasn't fit to do the walk, my feet weren't fit, my body wasn't fit; I had a new sense of purpose for this one little boy that was in the video." She tells of a little boy who sleeps on a fertiliser bag and who has to sew his schoolbag closed every day.

This is not the first time Patricia has volunteered for anything. "I always did a bit of volunteer work, my mum had Alzheimer's and after my mum died, we did a bit of fundraising for the Alzheimer's society because they were just so wonderful." She ended up going skydiving as a fundraiser for them.

Back in her younger years Patricia said she had thought she wanted to be a farmer and went to agricultural college. "I did marry a farmer so that was a full turn around," she says, but decided against pursuing it.

“Just before she started in the position in January, she went over to Zambia with a group of seven from the charity”.

Most recently she worked with Junior Development Ireland. "I loved my job, 12 and a half years in and I was going nowhere," she says.

She first joined the board of Mary's Meals in 2018 while still

working, then the director position opened up.

"When the opportunity came, I just said with faith, if this is the way my life is meant to go, I have a great love for Mary's Meals and I just applied for the job." She ended up getting it, and while she said she felt there were people more qualified than her, the fact that she was chosen felt like a sign that this was where she was meant to be.

Just before she started in the position in January, she went over to Zambia with a group of seven from the charity, paying her own way to go and see what kind of impact their work had been having.

"It was a wonderful experience we got to visit six schools that Mary's feed in and we got to meet the most beautiful teachers who care so much about their children and then the very shy children, very excited.

"The one thing that I thought is, children are the same the world over," she says.

"Whether they've got houses full of stuff or they're sitting on plain floor with nothing they still have that wide-eyed excitement. The one thing I thought was those children, those people I met, they had so much joy," she says she got a lot from seeing how happy everyone was with nothing, not even a schoolbag to their name.

Mothers and other volunteers cook the food provided by Mary's Meals, this is so they can take ownership and really feel like they are helping their community according to Patricia.

“Whether they’ve got houses full of stuff or they’re sitting on plain floor with nothing they still have that wide-eyed excitement.”

She says what struck a chord for her the most were the mothers who came with their children or came to cook, "there were mothers who came to meet us and they just came to thank us for feeding their children and that really stayed with me. They were thanking me they were also saying not to stop, please don't stop feeding our children."

Patricia although not a mother herself says she can imagine the stress of not being able to feed your children.

"I suppose I always had a want to help people. I've been left with a lovely life, if you can do something to help someone else why not?"



Sweet Treats

Laura Anderson



Churros - a golden delicious fried dough treat

Churros are a traditional Spanish treat made with dough similar to a choux pastry which is piped into cylinders and deep-fried. They are crunchy and golden on the outside but wonderfully soft on the inside. If that doesn't sound indulgent enough, they are then coated in cinnamon sugar. A definite crowd pleaser!

Ingredients

(Makes about 14 churros)

For the churros:

- 2250ml water
- 40g unsalted butter, cubed
- 2 tsp granulated sugar
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt
- 140g plain flour
- 1 large egg at room temperature
- 650 ml vegetable oil for frying

For the coating:

- 100g granulated sugar
- 1 tsp of ground cinnamon

To begin, prepare the coating by mixing the sugar and cinnamon together in a large shallow bowl and set aside. Line a large baking tray with baking paper. Preheat the oil in a deep pan or wok (ideally you want a depth of about 1½ inches of oil) over medium heat to 170°C/338°F. A sugar thermometer is a useful tool to use here if you have one. Be aware of the dangers associated with pans of oil, never leave them unattended. While the oil is preheating prepare the batter. Over medium-high heat in a saucepan bring the water, butter, sugar, vanilla extract and salt to a boil. Now working quickly add the flour all at once, reduce heat to medium and stir constantly until the mixture thickens and combines into a smooth dough.



Remove the pan from the heat and transfer the dough to a mixing bowl. Leave to cool for about 5 minutes. In the meantime beat the egg. The next step involves adding the egg to the flour mixture. This should be done with an electric mixer. Initially, the dough will seem like it is separated but keep mixing and it will come together. Transfer the dough to a piping bag fitted with a star-shaped tip about ¼ inch wide. Pipe six-inch strips of dough onto the prepared baking tray and then drop them into the preheated oil to fry. Alternatively, you can pipe the strips directly into the oil and cut them off after six inches using scissors. Fry 3-4 churros at a time for about 2 minutes on each side until evenly crisp and golden. Overall they should take 4-5 mins. Transfer them to a plate lined with kitchen paper to dry for about a minute and then toss in the cinnamon sugar coating. If they are completely dried out the sugar won't stick. Make sure the oil returns to temperature before frying the remainder of the churros. They can be eaten as they are but they also taste great dipped into a homemade chocolate or butterscotch sauce.

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Split personalities put morality on the line

I've been sampling a few TV dramas of late, and while some deal with religious themes it's usually peripheral, as if the programme makers are either unwilling or incapable of more depth when it comes to religious faith.

The Split (BBC1, Tuesdays) captures relationship conflict and family dysfunction in a credible way. The first few episodes of this second season have been entirely absorbing, with skilful writing and pacing. For all that's happening on the surface, there's much that's hinted or hidden. Sometimes it seems like there's a subtle second script bubbling away in the background – what characters say carries more meaning than their actual words.

It features a family of lawyers – a mother and three daughters – dealing with divorce, pre-nuptial agreements and the like. Their own lives are often as messy as the lives of their clients.

Despite the immoral goings on, I think it does have a moral sense at its core. We watch the damaging effects of adultery on children, and how otherwise likeable characters foolishly risk their families and marriages by indulging in marital infidelity. It's tough to watch the emotional destruction at times, and I don't think the show is necessarily promoting any of these behaviours.



Family in law: four of the main characters from BBC's *The Split* – (l-r) Deborah Findlay, Annabel Scholey, Nicola Walker and Fiona Button.

Maybe, if anything, it's staying neutral or perhaps offering subtle but salutary warnings.

Abortion features in at least two story arcs and the line taken seems to be that it's an available choice, but the wrong one. There are a few gay couples but I didn't feel like I was being hammered over the head with an agenda. In the first series, one of the husbands was seen to be a serious Christian, with the couple attending a pre-marriage course, but this angle hasn't resurfaced yet.

The acting is excellent throughout (especially by Nicola Walker and Stephen Mangan) and the closeness

of the three sisters involved is touching. It's certainly a drama for adults – frank but not exploitative, though one scene last week went a bit too far in the 'adult content' department.

Disturbing

The Welsh drama series **Hidden** (BBC4, Saturday nights) is a dark, slow-moving affair. Not as dark as the first series, it's disturbing enough in its story of the killing of an alleged child abuser. Annes Elwy is chilling as a calculating and destructive teenager, though she does elicit some sympathy considering her unpleasant uncaring mother and the mother's latest live-

in boyfriend.

Last Saturday's episode was particularly atmospheric with the victim's funeral service taking place in a fog shrouded church set in the rugged Welsh countryside. The pastor's sermon was quite strong as he called for those with information to come forward – one young man's conscience was suitably disturbed.

Some said they were not religious but were going on out respect and the event led to some other religious discussions. The main policeman (Sion Alun Davies) was in two minds about whether he'd have his child baptised; the female detective (Sian Reese-Williams) was more open to religious faith and had fond memories of being consoled by a sympathetic vicar when he mother died. Unfortunately the same episode featured a crude scene that was gratuitously suggestive.



Sian Reese-Williams stars in *Hidden* (BBC4).

PICK OF THE WEEK

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

BBC2, Saturday (night), March 7, 1.45am

(Film) Fourteen-year-old Maria is undergoing instruction within a strict fundamentalist Catholic order to prepare for her Confirmation. Challenging.

SUNDAY

BBC Radio 4, Sunday, March 8, 7.10am

Topical religious affairs with William Cawley.

THE HOLOCAUST

EWTN, Tuesday (night), March 10, 3.30am, also Friday, March 13, 7am

Exploring Pope Pius XII's response to the Nazi persecution of Jews, revealing how his discreet yet decisive actions saved tens of thousands of Jewish lives.

Like the other shows, **Baghdad Central** (Channel 4, Monday nights) has its share of bad language but is quite tense, enthralling and very earnest. Waleed Zuaier is in fine form as an Iraqi policeman investigating the disappearance of his daughter who has perhaps joined the insurgency against the American and British – occupiers or liberators, depending on your political point of view.

The human drama is well portrayed and the political context well developed too. We see these characters under Saddam Hussein, and later in the fragmented post-Saddam era, with US army personnel seen as arrogant and culturally insensitive, while a British official alternates between apparent concern and outright sleaze. Considering the cultural context, I thought more could have been made

of religious issues and tensions, but there's very little so far.

On a lighter note, **The Windsors** (Channel 4, Tuesdays) is a rather crude and unsubtle send-up of the British royal family. The mimicry is well done, and it's bang up to date topical, with focus on the withdrawal of Prince Harry and Meghan from royal duties and sly references to Prince Andrew and Jeffrey Epstein. More slapstick than satire, the approach is rather scattergun with an unnecessary smattering of foul language and more than a touch of cruelty.

Like the others, it's not the most comfortable of viewing.

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Film

Aubrey Malone



The importance of being earnest (without a climax)

Dark Waters (PG)

There are two ways of looking at a film like this, which is based on fact. On the one hand you commend Todd Haynes for resisting the temptation to give it a 'wow' factor, i.e. the obligatory scene in the underground car park where the hero's life is threatened. Or when he meets a Deep Throat (*à la All the President's Men*) who tells him his life is in danger and the corruption goes "all the way to the top".

On the other hand you can criticise it for veering too close to documentary.

Rob Bilott (Mark Ruffalo) is a corporate lawyer embarking on a lucrative career with a major company. His frame betrays the well-fedness of

financial comfort. His wife Sarah (Anne Hathaway) is the 'little lady'. She doesn't want to be bothered with his rants about a company (DuPont) that's dumping toxic waste into rivers and poisoning cows.

But when she learns humans are also threatened with the carcinogenic properties of such toxins – Teflon is a big part of it – she becomes more eco-friendly. And a supporter of his cause.

It all kicks off when a farmer who hails from his neck of the woods comes into his snazzy office one day with evidence as long as your arm.

At this point Bilott isn't interested. He sees him as a bit of a crackpot. Only with time does he realise the



Mark Ruffalo stars in *Dark Waters*.

Very good
★★★★

man is a victim of corrupt practices.

Ripples

The ripples widen. He starts to investigate DuPont's various pollutions. Almost apologetically at first. The

company's MD asks him at a black tie event if he wishes to flush his career down the toilet for a smalltime farmer.

We've been here before: *Silkwood*. *Erin Brockovich*. *The China Syndrome*. *Promised Land*.

Mark Ruffalo is a fine actor but here he just does an ecological version of *Spotlight*.

He needed to be more dynamic to make the David and Goliath struggle generate more heat.

Platitudes

We know where we're headed from early on. The bad guys in the fancy suits are going to fob him off with platitudes until he has his eureka moment.

What's 'FPOA'? More particularly, what's 'FPOA C8'? And why is he disrupting so many capitalistic lives with his pesky questions?

After two hours we get the result of his labours transmitted to us via an endnote. He wins multi-

million dollar suits. This is not a spoiler. An earlier note, transmitted before the names come down, informs us that the film is based on articles published in the *New York Times* called 'the lawyer who became DuPont's worst nightmare'.

I would have kept that information until the end if I were Haynes. I would also have injected more drama into the proceedings. Ruffalo's hand tremors aren't enough. His mini-stroke isn't even enough.

Film is a visual medium. The film lacks a climax. I wanted fast food and I got caviar.

But it's excellently played. One for the connoisseur.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



The sea port of Ireland, great harbour explored

Cork Harbour
by Cal McCarthy
(Merrion Press, €29.95)

J. Anthony Gaughan

Cal McCarthy's important book on Cork Harbour, the second largest natural harbour in the world, is beautifully shaped into three sections: Military Development, Commercial Development and Migration. The period covered is from 1700 to 1918. Hence there are no references to the role of Spike Island as the incarceration place for political later on.

The author traces the beginnings of the history of Cork Harbour to a Viking settlement on its upper reaches in the 10th-Century. Its military strategic importance emerged from 1700 onwards. This was highlighted by the 'Nine Years' War (1688-97) and the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-14). England and France were the main protagonists in both wars and fought for supremacy in the North Atlantic.

In that confrontation Cork Harbour proved to be an important station and victualling centre for the Royal Navy. The presence of the navy in the harbour meant that it had to be adequately protected. McCarthy provides a meticulous account of the construction and the refurbishment from time to time of the defensive forts in and around the harbour.

From 1775 to 1783 Britain fought the 13 American colonies that had banded together to form the USA. The war ended in British defeat and the recognition of the USA as an independent state. Cork Harbour had a significant role in the war. Of the 64 transports of 'Redcoats' Britain dispatched to face Washington's revolutionary army, 39 departed from Cork.

Important

The naval station in the harbour remained crucially important during the Napoleonic period. During World War I, ships from it engaged with German submarines active in the seas



Trading ships entering Cork Harbour in Victorian times under full sail.

around the south coast and two of them captured the *Aud* in 1916.

The commercial development of Cork Harbour progressed *pari passu* with the

military development. Salted goods like pork, beef and butter were the staple of its trade. In the first half of the 18th Century Cork's export of beef exceeded that of all

other harbours combined. But Cork's most famous export was butter, the volume of it moving through the harbour was immense.

The harbour's trade tre-

bled between 1845 and 1870. By 1904 it imported 6.8% of the value of Irish imports and accounted for 7.3% of Irish exports. Throughout its history, ship-building was

A retrospective view of Ireland from the far Left

Navigating the Zeitgeist: A Story of the Cold War, the New Left, Irish Republicanism, and International Communism

by Helena Sheehan
(Monthly Review Press, \$US20.00/£18.99)

Thomas J. Morrissey

Dr Helena Sheehan is a well-known left-wing intellectual. Her book, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Science: Critical History*, published in 1985, became a classic work on its subject.

She has now written her autobiography, and this is the first volume, covering her life from the 1940s to the 1980s, a book which is full of interest for a particular view of Ireland and the world today.

She grew up in a middle class Catholic family in Philadelphia, attended a Catholic school, and was more developed intellectually and had more intellectual interests than most of her



Prof. Sheehan with former Greek prime minister Alexis Tsipras.

contemporaries.

She encountered doubts of faith, but struggled against them and felt called to religious life. She joined the Sisters of St Joseph. She describes the details and rigidity of convent life in the 1950s and the absence of any concession to change.

Noviceship

After the noviceship, she taught in a primary school, read widely, and became caught up in the sense of

change that affected church and secular life. She attended the Jesuit University of St Joseph in Philadelphia, read widely in philosophy, seeking answers for her doubts by means of reason and philosophy.

The values of Vatican II, and her desire for a better and more just society influenced her teaching in school. Parents objected and she was let go. It was the final straw. She left the convent and, finding little support at home,

left home and lived rough for some time.

Praying for light, without effect, and seeking to solve the mystery of God by reason, also without effect, she gave up religion.

She embraced the freedom movement of the late 1960s and 1970s – revolting against war, seeking a free life style, living in communes, while also searching mentally for justice and meaning.

A striking, red haired woman, with capacity for

passionate debate, she became well known in socialist circles. She found that she was searching for something that fulfilled as many aspect of life as Catholicism had done. She failed to find it in one outlet after another, and eventually turned to Marxism for solution.

“In persuading others to be open minded, it is a pity that Helena Sheehan closes her own mind on the matter of religion in its largest sense”

Marxism and science became a preoccupation. She lived with a fellow socialist. They had two children. Following her desire for academic distinction in socialist

philosophy, she was absent from home for months at a time, leaving her companion to look after the children.

She visited conferences across Europe, spent months in the Soviet Union but recoiled from its lack of freedom, then visited East Germany. There too she was welcomed as a committed socialist, but again found the regime too restrictive. She sought always liberation as part of the socialist answer.

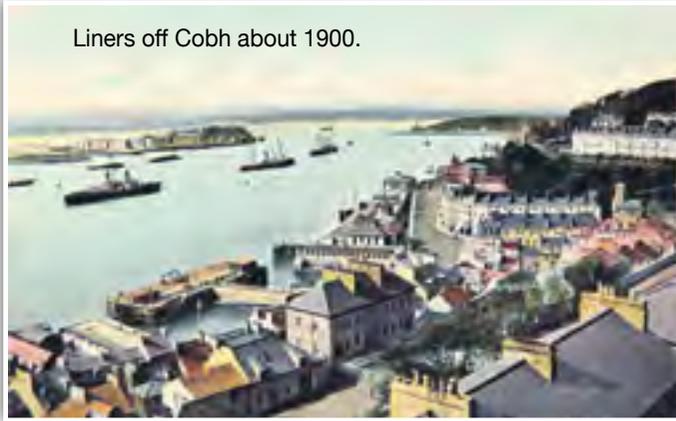
In the 1970s she identified with the liberation movements in places such as Vietnam, Cuba, and Northern Ireland. She came to Ireland in the 1970s because of her Irish roots and to assist the liberation movement there.

She linked with members of the IRA, some of whom she had met in their visits to America, learned the Irish language, and eventually identified with the Irish Communist Party and the Official IRA, both of which

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.

Cork's

Liners off Cobh about 1900.



an important part of the harbour's commercial life. There were shipyards at Cove (Queenstown, modern Cobh), Rushbrooke, Passage and the upper reaches of the harbour.

Emigrants

Cork Harbour has been and continues to be one of the chief exits for emigrants from our country. Cromwell had soldiers, priests and 'vagabonds' transported from it to the West Indies. In the mid-19th Century, convicts were shipped from the harbour to Van Diemen's Land, New South Wales and Western Australia. Then, during the Famine Years, hundreds of thousands left it for North America. Sadly, it seems, the death rate among these emigrants was one in every nine!

The author describes in

considerable detail the untiring efforts of the Harbour Commissioners to develop the harbour and its installations: deep-water berths, jetties, docks, dockyards, piers, quays, etc, their attention to dredging, pilotage and essential maintenance.

Because of their wise stewardship, ships of every shipping line have sailed in and out of the harbour. Among the visitors have been the largest liners ever built, such as the ill-fated *Lusitania* and the *Titanic* – the one sunk by a German submarine, the other by an ice-berg!

This lavishly illustrated monograph is a superb piece of work and will remain the definitive study of Cork Harbour for many years to come. Moreover, it is the work of a local historian.



Sr Sheehan with her family when a young nun in US.

had support from Moscow.

As in her dealings with socialist groups in America, Europe, and the Soviet countries, so too in Ireland, she wrote freely of people and groups in terms of their commitment to socialist principles and their attitude to her. She made enemies, but she made many friends. Her driving energy and intellectual ability was combined with an attractive personality.

In Ireland, her relationship with her American partner came to an end and she settled down with a well-known Irish communist.

She obtained part-time lecturing in Trinity College

Dublin, and later a professorship in Dublin City University, where she taught the history of ideas and media studies.

She has published a significant number of books and articles on politics, culture and philosophy. As regards her children, her influence ensured that they did not become Catholics. In persuading others to be open minded, it is a pity that Helena Sheehan closes her own mind on the matter of religion in its largest sense.

This interesting, complicated, controversial and very honest book has one large deficiency: it does not have an index.

'Just built something modern': creating places of worship in the modern way

Modern Religious Architecture in Germany, Ireland and Beyond: Influence, Process and Afterlife since 1945

ed. Lisa Godson & Kathleen James-Chakraborty
(Bloomsbury Visual Arts, £44.95/\$US80.00)

Peter Costello

This collection of 11 articles derives from a conference held in Newman House in Dublin back in 2014. Alas, for the general reader concerned with religious architecture it is written in the staid and dense prose of the modern academic style, which all too often erects a barrier between researchers and the largest possible audience for the new knowledge they are generating.

The authors are concerned with three large topics: the emergence of religious building in the modern styles, both in Germany and Ireland, religious architecture in the two countries in the last century, the religious spaces of minority faiths specifically Muslim and Jewish – which in both countries have had troubled pasts, and the now pressing matter for both architects and communities of what can be done to preserve and recycle religious buildings for which there seems to be no continuing ritual use.

Exciting things

On all these topics the papers have interesting and exciting things to say. Six of the papers deal with Irish matters. There is a discussion of the work



A modern church at Uyo, Nigeria, under construction.

of Liam McCormack and Imogen Stuart which touches on many vital factors in the emergence of modernism in the Irish Church.

There is an important treatment of Andrew Devane's Dublin churches in what is called here "the age of tentative radicalisation", the period 1960-75.

But equally important is the papers by Melanie Brown on the ritual spaces of the Dublin Hebrew Community,

past and present. It would have been good to have a discussion of Dublin Muslim architecture – seeing as how the enthusiasm for our mosques of the new director of the Goethe Institute when she first came to Dublin gave rise to this whole project.

The discussion by Jill Kerry on the new life that may be given to churches in Ireland (based on experience in Ulster) needs reading and discussion.

This reviewer takes the view that having been paid for by the public in the past and having been intended for public use, they should remain for community use and not be privatised. But the temptation to sell them off is a strong temptation to those who own them – which is not, of course, the parishioners.

“The temptation to sell them off is a strong temptation to those who own them”

But the most exciting paper is one which opens up new perspective not only on the Irish missionary movement, but also of the thrust of Irish art and architecture in contexts far away from this island, is the paper by the editor Lisa Godson entitled 'Ireland's tropical Modernists: Pearse McKenna and the Kiltiegan Fathers in Nigeria, 1947 to 66'.

The young architect was given a brief instruction when he was engaged by the order: "Just build something modern."

The results were remarkable, considering that at this date Archbishop McQuaid was still insisting upon the erection of historicist Roman basilicas in the suburbs of Dublin.

If one were to read only one of these papers it would have to be Lisa Godson's, a really exciting piece of research which alters views, and extends ideas about Ireland in the world today.

On the track of Newman in Georgian Oxford

Newman's Oxford: The places and buildings associated with Saint John Henry Newman during his years in Oxford 1816-1846

by Fr Jerome Bertram FSA
(Gracewing, £6.99)

The canonisation of John Henry Newman will open the way to many more popular accounts of parts of his life. In this very appealing brochure Fr Jerome Bertram, a priest of the Oratory as well as an antiquarian, provides an attractive guide to all the places associated with the Saint in Oxford between 1816 and 1846.

It is filled with extracts from letters, papers, and memoirs, which give a very human, yet detailed impression of his life. It is well illustrated with engravings and paintings from the same late-Georgian period.

Simply said, Oxford was one of

Newman's great loves – naturally not his greatest love. It epitomised for him both as an Anglican and a Catholic medieval and intellectual and literary values which were vitally important to him.

It has also to be said, in an Irish context, that this devotion to Oxford was one of the factors that caused the breakdown of his ambitions for a university in Dublin. In his lectures and in his practical work he aimed at an institution akin to Oxford.

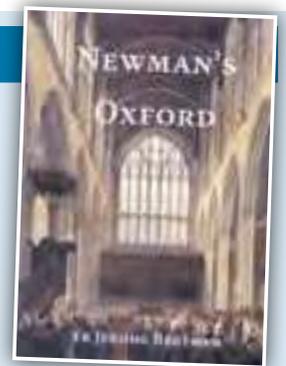
The Irish hierarchy did not want that at all, that would be too British, perhaps even too secular, to akin to the supposedly 'Godless' Queen's Colleges. They had in mind a university more akin to Louvain which was more familiar to them and of which some had personal knowledge.

In any case the college in Dublin, would like those in Oxford, not provide

a universal education but a select, even elite one, largely indeed for clergy.

Any devotee of John Henry Newman will gain much from reading this little book, as the author has room in dealing with such a limited topic room for material that could not find a place in a fuller autobiography.

Anyone planning to follow Newman's steps in Oxford should have this book in hand. They will then be able to experience a place that goes to the heart of who Newman was, and indeed, still is. P.C.



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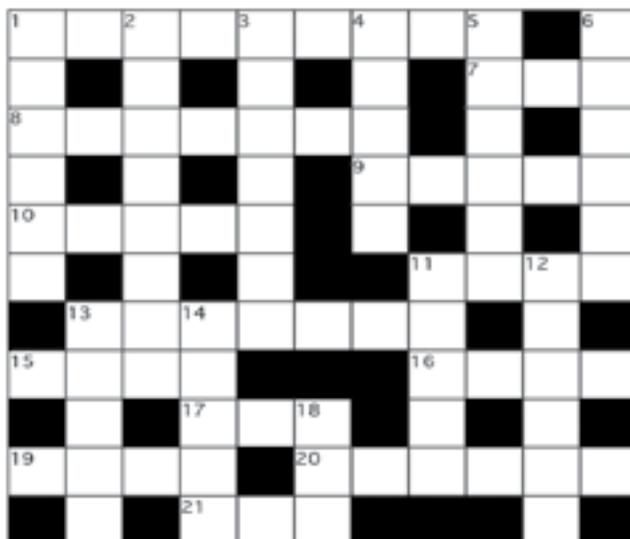
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Crossword Junior

Gordius 322



Across

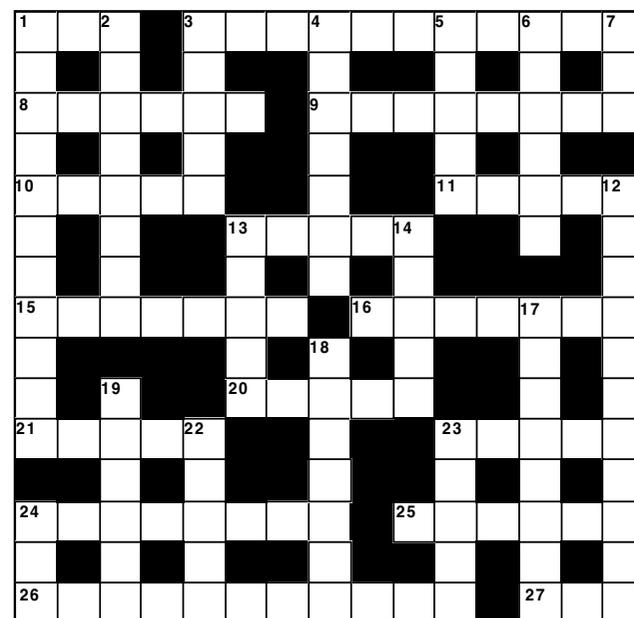
- 1 It's made from oranges, and looks a bit like jam (9)
- 7 At this very moment (3)
- 8 Stumbled, or caused someone to fall (7)
- 9 Ways out (5)
- 10 An Academy Award, given to someone in the movies (5)
- 11 Hens lay them (4)
- 13 Notice about danger (7)
- 15 It's made to be walked on (4)
- 16 Slang word for an American (4)
- 17 Sick (3)
- 19 Eager (4)
- 20 You should stand when you sing the national _____ (6)
- 21 Ancient (3)

Down

- 1 Meat we get from a sheep (6)
- 2 Put it on if you go out when it's wet (8)
- 3 Painkilling tablet (7)
- 4 Britain's only poisonous snake (5)
- 5 "I like a story with a happy _____" (6)
- 6 Turns something sharply; winds or coils (6)
- 11 Country where you'll find the pyramids (5)
- 12 Male goose (6)
- 13 It falls from the sky as rain (5)
- 14 The short name for a thick-skinned, horned animal (5)
- 18 Chap (3)

Crossword

Gordius 445



Across

- 1 On which part of the cooker one heats only breakfast starters (3)
- 3 Twin burden I relocate to a source of renewable energy (4,7)
- 8 Being a religious type, he will chop up no dace (6)
- 9 It facilitates international co-operation between police forces (8)
- 10 Joint just above the foot (5)
- 11 These stories are epic, however you view them (5)
- 13 Permit, let (5)
- 15 Paul sat around making a cooking implement (7)
- 16 Being animated, Homer has little devils inside, my boy (7)
- 20 Brag, coming from Snake Street (5)
- 21 The capital city of Afghanistan (5)
- 23 Stick to French, but continue hitting cricket balls! (5)
- 24 Historically, many of them invested in pyramid schemes! (8)
- 25 Long, slender sword (6)
- 26 One prays it's 'Amen' for the epitome of fashion! (3,4,4)
- 27 Chop, cut (3)

Down

- 1 Game that involves animal skin and a member of an Oriental religion, by the sound of it (4,3,4)
- 2 Back late, drunk? No milk so! (5,3)
- 3 Scripted (5)
- 4 Diminish to some kind of wild end (7)
- 5 Dances employed by anglers? (5)
- 6 Cast aspersions on a little devil with a broken gun (6)
- 7 Slippery creature found in 5 down (3)
- 12 Tennis award redesigned for the Scottish patron (5,6)
- 13 Unrehearsed, 'off the cuff' (2,3)
- 14 One may wish to keep watch on it (5)
- 17 Highly-strung and restless, as a horse may be (8)
- 18 Cutting tool the group espied (4-3)
- 19 Is this affiliate of a religious order able to change? (6)
- 22 Animal of the Andes (5)
- 23 Hog many a plank (5)
- 24 Turn up the faucet for some butter (3)

SOLUTIONS, FEBRUARY 27

GORDIUS No. 444

Across – 1 Fisherman's ring 10 Steak Diane 11 Aubergine 12 Spirits 15 Ashen 17 Worn 18 Lake Windermere 21 Dynasty 23 Canoe 24 Blue 25 Side 26 Basic 28 Reserve 33 Robin Hood 34 Grace

Down – 1 Fuss 2 Sheepskin 3 Esker 4 Meant 5 Nibs 7 Irish stew 8 Green beret 9 Organdy 13 Idly 14 Sweater 16 Blackbirds 20 Alleviate 21 Descent 22 Thus 27 Sabre 29 Ended 30 Edgar 31 Gobi 32 Here

CHILDREN'S No. 321

Across – 1 Christened 6 Armchair 7 Sty 9 Pantomime 10 All 11 One 13 Senor 15 Nod 16 Cue 17 Enough 18 Beauty 19 Edge

Down – 1 Champion 2 Reminded 3 Schools 4 Edition 5 Dirt 7 Searched 8 Yelled 12 Noise 14 Ebony 17 Emu

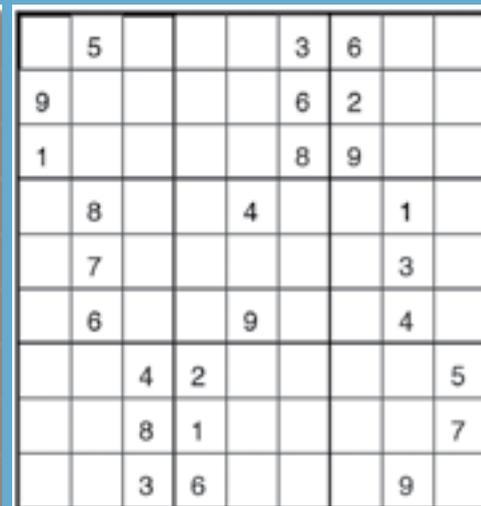
Sudoku Corner

322

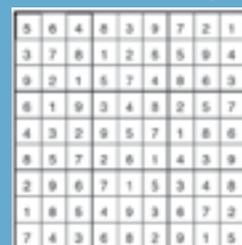
Easy



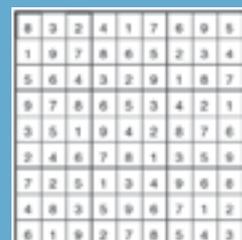
Hard



Last week's Easy 321



Last week's Hard 321



Notebook

Fr Vincent Sherlock



Lent is such a precious time to heal and find peace

We are still in the early days of Lent so maybe there's space here for a thought or two around the journey to and through repentance.

There is a call to repentance that is central to the Lenten season. I recall sitting in the church one morning, a while before Mass. This is something I don't do often enough but was trying to make a better effort. I was reading the 'Office' – Morning Prayer and feeling I was in the right place. A woman came and sat beside me. She thought I was hearing Confessions. Needless to say, I was glad she approached me and even more glad to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with her.

Confused

I celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation in a secondary school a few years ago and a young lad came into see me. He sat down, looking a little confused and looked at me for a nod in the right direction. Before I got a chance to say anything, he found some words: "Bless me Father for I have sinned..."

He stopped as if this were



a question - he seemed to be saying: "Is that what I was supposed to say?" and I looked at him and said "you're through to the next round!" We both laughed and what needed to follow, followed.

What about you? Is Confession on the Lenten agenda this year? Don't worry about words and formulas – the important thing is to be where you need to be and do what you need to do. The words will take care of themselves.

For priests reading this, I suppose our thoughts are around how can we make ourselves more available for this sacrament. Like many priests, I note the decline in attendance and have tried putting on Confessions from time to time but, more often than not, few or nobody turns up. Does that mean we shouldn't bother? Of course not.

I'll sit in the church a few more times during Lent – no announcement about time for Confessions – just 'being there' might be enough.

Thankfully we have the ability to express ourselves – a gift, for sure. I have a dog called Alpha and I recall a time when he seemed to have picked up a soreness in his right front paw. I thought there was something wrong, but the soreness became more pronounced. He slowed down and was very careful leaving his foot on the ground. I tried to see what was wrong – looked and felt around the paw but did not find anything.

As it turned out, within a few days he seemed to shake off whatever it was and there was no need to take him to the vet.

Better story

Where's the Lenten thought in this? I can't help but think how much easier it would have been for me to help him if he could tell

me what was wrong. He hasn't the voice of course and, had he told me, that would have been a much better story! Because he hadn't the voice – the words to communicate his pain – the discomfort remained.

It strikes me that we can be 'spiritually lame' – little thorns and sores bringing pressure to bear on our souls and minds.

We limp and wobble, cry out or muffle our pain. All the while though, unlike Alpha, we have a voice and the ability to express what is wrong. The voice ought to be found, the words or communication skills should be used so that the pain – the spiritual lameness – can be addressed and healed.

God, wants to help us, to heal us and give us peace. We have the words.

Use them. Walk freely and without pain...

● **SHE GOT IT RIGHT AND THEN...** I was getting my hair cut – head shaved – last week. I usually go to the same hairdresser and enjoy chatting with her. We were talking about Lent and she said she had given up all sweet things and felt lighter (this was on Thursday, the day after Ash Wednesday!) so imagine how she will feel on Easter Sunday.

I told her I heard a priest say in recent days, "fasting without prayer is dieting" and she looked, the way they look into the mirror and talked to me: "Oh yeah, to be honest I hadn't thought of that. I was just thinking about losing a few pounds."

We decided that she might say a decade of the Rosary when she walks. She thought this was a great idea. Then she mentioned St Patrick's Day and I complimented her on not calling it 'Paddy's Day'. I told her how much I hate that phrase and she said: "Yes, it lowers it to a boozing session, doesn't it?"

I told her she had gained points there. Then she said: "It's falling good for me this year?"

"What is?" I asked, "Paddy's Day", she replied, "it's a Tuesday so I will have Monday and Tuesday off". I looked at her in the mirror, she smiled. "Ooops," she said. Ooops indeed!



Holy Spirit Sisters need water harvesting system for village school

In a remote area of India, close to the border with Myanmar, the Holy Spirit Sisters run a village school for children unable to travel to the parish centre, which is 33 kilometres distance away. At present the school has 220 pupils, most of whom come from deprived families, living by subsistence farming and struggling to make ends meet. The only source of water in the village is rain water and a nearby stream, as the land is not suitable for a well, or bore-hole. The Holy Cross Fathers, who are in charge of the parish, have appealed to The Little Way Association for financial help to install a rain water harvesting system for the Sisters and their village school.



"Jesus wills that we give alms to Him as to one poor and needy. He puts Himself as it were at our mercy; He will take nothing but what we give Him from our heart, and the very least trifle is precious in His sight."

- St Therese

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