

The Irish Catholic

CHRISTIAN VALUES

Waiting for an Irish champion
Page 9



VOCATIONS SUNDAY

God is still calling
Pages 11-30



SISTERS & STATE

A scandalous alliance?
Page 10



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Church urged to stand up to 'relentless' media bias

Resentment against inaccurate reporting

Mags Gargan and Greg Daly

Church leaders have been urged to stand up to negative bias in the media, after a recent spate of 'Church-bashing' during emotive debates around abortion.

This comes after Archbishop Diarmuid Martin [pictured] said there was a "justified resentment" among priests, religious and committed Catholics at being "unfairly under attack" and a sense that it is "time to stand up and respond" to bias and unfair reporting.



"justly feel resentful about blanket criticism". Baroness O'Loan said she was "appalled" by recent media coverage around the proposed National Maternity Hospital to be built on a site owned by the Religious Sisters of Charity.

The archbishop warned that there is a sense in Ireland today in which "there is a culture of relentless reminding the Church of the sins of its members and at times of painting every individual and every moment in the history of the Church with the same condemnation".

Baroness O'Loan welcomed the archbishop's remarks insisting that "so much media comment is

» Continued on Page 2



Rosary crusade at Mass rock site

A section of the crowd at a Rosary crusade on May 1 on a country road close to a Mass rock near Greencastle in Co. Tyrone, where a Canadian mining firm refused permission for a Catholic service last year. The Rosary will be said at the site every night during May. Photo: Mal McCann

FR RON ROLHEISER

Remembering the real Dorothy Day PAGE 34



MARY KENNY

The next big thing in our lives – ectogenesis PAGE 5



DAVID QUINN

What has the Church ever done for us? PAGE 8



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Inside this week

Children's Corner

Exploring your local area

Page 32



Film

Unremitting evil in 19th Century England

Page 35



Books

Varied visions of an Irish century

Page 37



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Michael Kelly's Editor's Comment returns next week

Catholics expect more accuracy and balance from the media

Baroness Nuala O'Loan



I have criticised the media previously and do so again. I have been appalled by recent coverage in relation to the Church. So much media comment is based on untruth or exaggeration: for example elements of the media have not acknowledged the fact in the context of St Vincent's Hospital, that the Sisters of Charity have no outstanding obligations to the Irish State under the redress scheme. Rather the media has stated that they have not settled their agreed liabilities.

More generally there is an implication in much of the media that all were aware of – and by association – guilty of the dreadful wrongs committed by some Catholics.

Culture

There is no attempt to enlighten the reader that the culture which existed in

Ireland towards unmarried mothers, so-called illegitimate children and children generally was reflective of culture, for example, in England and other countries (which were not Catholic countries) and which still exists in many countries today.

The media does not take into account the generosity and goodness of the generations of men and women in priesthood and religious life who dedicated and still dedicate their lives to others – often in difficult and very challenging situations.

The Catholic Church globally is the second largest aid donor after the United Nations, working sometimes in countries where even the UN has withdrawn its workers because of the risks. This is not reported with the same prominence.

Much media reporting does not take into account so many factors which impact on the situations which are

reported. The way in which Ireland provided for unmarried mothers and their babies was terrible, but the same thing happened in England and babies who died at birth or before birth were often simply incinerated or buried, without their parents' presence, in communal graves. That this happened does not make it right. It is how it was.

“The media does not take into account the generosity and goodness of the generations of men and women”

As a Catholic I feel that in attempting to deal with the wrongs – societal and religious – of the past, there is a risk that the core truths of Catholicism – that we are made by God, that we are loved by Him and called to love others as He has loved

us, that we are called to live by the Gospels and that the Church was established by Jesus to help us on our way back to the father who loves us so – are denigrated and treated as just quaint, old-fashioned ideas inflicted on a naive people, which no right minded person would believe today.

The way in which Catholics are treated by parts of the media today is for the most part not respectful, not reflective of the fact that we have a right to freedom of belief and conscience under the law, and is not going to make Ireland a better place.

I know that I get many things wrong, I know that my Church and members of it have done great wrong in the past, but I believe and I think that it is time for more accuracy and balance in the way in which Catholicism is portrayed in the media today.

Church urged to stand up to media bias

» Continued from Page 1

based on untruth or exaggeration”.

The Association of Catholic Priests (ACP), meanwhile, has said that priests do feel that priesthood and the Church are portrayed unfairly in some sections of the media.

Fr Gerry O'Connor of the ACP said he was pleased with Archbishop Martin's comments. However, he also said he felt an “absence of any leadership voice” from the Church during recent debates such as in relation to the maternity hospital.

“Silence doesn't help matters.

It creates a vacuum where this branding and labelling can flourish,” he said.

Fr O'Connor said “priests and others [in the Church] do feel that there is a very negative image being presented” and that it was at times “very difficult to defend ourselves”. However he said it was “important for priests not to shy away, to continue to engage in the public square and to continue to listen to people's concerns and try to be one voice among others in putting the Church's view across”.

Baroness O'Loan said she was disappointed that “the media does

not take into account the generosity and goodness of the generations of men and women in priesthood and religious life who dedicated and still dedicate their lives to others – often in difficult and very challenging situations.

“I know that I get many things wrong, I know that my Church and members of it have done great wrong in the past, but I believe and I think that it is time for more accuracy and balance in the way in which Catholicism is portrayed in the media today,” the former Police Ombudsman insisted.



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First major move to tackle vocations crisis announced

Greg Daly

Church leaders will this month open a new national office dedicated exclusively to promoting vocations to priesthood as the shortage of priests continues to bite and some dioceses are no longer able to staff parishes.

Bishop Phonsie Cullinan admitted that the Irish Church is playing 'catch up', telling *The Irish Catholic* that Ireland is "behind the curve" in not having had a national office for vocations until now.

The Waterford and Lismore bishop, who heads the Irish bishops' council

for vocations, praised the work of vocation directors around the country, but pointed out that a lack of clerical manpower means that priests often cannot dedicate themselves full-time to their roles as vocational directors.

The new office, he said, will coordinate the national vocations strategy, "helping vocations directors in each diocese, keeping the vocations question to the top of the agenda, providing training for vocations directors and encouraging vocations initiatives".

Funding for the project has been provided by the Knights of St Columbanus,

with Supreme Knight Barry McMahon telling *The Irish Catholic* the knights have agreed to provide funding of €25,000 a year for the next three years.

Adamant that the funding is to be used for specific initiatives, rather than wages or equipment, Mr McMahon said the funding "will help them go out and do the initiatives, and will help vocations because we're so short of priests at the moment".

Commenting on Ireland's lack of a national vocations office before now, Mr McMahon observed that "each diocese would have had a vocational director,

but there was no joined-up thinking between them".

One of the knights has been appointed to a committee to oversee the actions of the new office, he added, explaining, "We do that now anywhere we put money into – we need control and accountability."

While Dr Cullinan says it could take time for the fruits of this attempt to build a culture of vocation to show, he maintained that Irish people are still called to the priesthood. "There are people out there, of that I am convinced, and it's a question of having the courage to ask," he said.

See page 12.

Politicians call on Govt to declare ISIS atrocities against Christians genocide

Staff Reporter

A group of 22 TDs and Senators has called on the Government to recognise as genocide ISIS's persecution of minority communities including Iraqi and Syrian Christians and Yazidis.

In a letter drafted by The Iona Institute, Aid to the Church in Need and Church in Chains, the politicians urge the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Charlie Flanagan, and the Government "to make an immediate referral to the UN Security Council with a view to conferring jurisdiction upon the

International Criminal Court so that perpetrators can be brought to justice".

Signatories to the letter include every Labour TD, Green party leader Eamon Ryan, Fianna Fáil Foreign Affairs spokesman Darragh O'Brien, and Fine Gael Seanad spokesman on Foreign Affairs, Joe O'Reilly.

Destruction

They state there is clear evidence that actions of the so-called Islamic State towards minority communities include mass murders, assassinations of Church leaders, torture, kidnapping for ransom, sexual enslavement and systematic

rape of girls and women, forcible conversions, and the destruction of churches, monasteries, cemeteries and Christian artifacts.

The nature and extent of ISIS's actions has become clearer as it has been pushed back from Mosul, revealing evidence of its actions.

The group noted that Britain's House of Commons and the US House of Representatives had both unanimously asked their Governments to denounce ISIS's actions as genocide, with the European Parliament passing a similar resolution by an almost unanimous vote.

First church soup kitchen opens in the North



Fr Dominic McGrattan, in the background, serves food at St Patrick's Church, Donegall Street in Belfast after a Mass of Hope for the city's homeless community. A soup kitchen will operate at the church every Friday and Saturday night from 7-11pm. Photo: The Irish News

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Paray-le-Monial

Britain's Got Talent judges wowed by St Patrick's school choir

Mags Gargan

The principal of the Co. Down primary school whose choir got a standing ovation from the judges on *Britain's Got Talent* at the weekend, has said the school is "overawed by the reaction that the children received".

Mrs Sorcha Lyness told *The Irish Catholic* that "to see everyone on their feet was just phenomenal and the support we have received from everyone following our appearance has been tremendous".

"I can't say how proud we are of these young children who went out and represented our school, sang so amazingly well and looked fantastic. It's just unbelievable. It was a very emotional experience for us," Mrs Lyness said.

"We are delighted we were given the opportunity to be a part of it. It has given us all such fantastic memories to treasure forever and I know the children will too. The per-



The choir from St Patrick's Primary School of Drumgreenagh, Co. Down performing on *Britain's Got Talent*.

formance was truly beautiful and they couldn't have done any better."

Auditions

The latest auditions for the TV talent show saw the choir from St Patrick's Primary School of Drumgreenagh, near Rathfriland, perform Keane's 'Somewhere Only

We Know'. The 39 children, aged eight to 12, received a standing ovation from the audience and judges Simon Cowell, Amanda Holden, David Walliams and Alesha Dixon.

"Loved it, loved it, loved it...I am thrilled to start off this off with a 'yes'," Mr Cowell told the children.

Mrs Lyness said the school's social media has "gone crazy". Their Twitter account was inundated with praise over the weekend, including from *X Factor* winner Sam Bailey who said the performance "gave me chills". "It is very encouraging to receive all those messages of support from people

throughout the whole of Ireland and beyond," Mrs Lyness said.

After receiving four yeses from the judges the choir moves to the next stage of the competition. Auditions will be shown for another two weeks, before viewers get to find out who has made the live semi-finals.

'Suicide is not the way' – Priest's plea to youth

A Co. Tyrone priest has given his phone number out from the church altar at a teenagers' funeral, in a direct appeal to young people in need to seek help. Fr Daniel McFaul told mourners at St Mary's Church in Killyclogher that Elle Trowbridge was "a young and beautiful lady... who was caught in the live fast, die young culture".

"I can't stop this as much as I want to, as much as the professionals, as much as your teachers, your parents want to stop this. You are the only ones who can stop this, you are the only ones who know what is going on behind the screens of social media," he said.

"For any of you here today, who are suffering or thinking about ending their life by suicide, look around you, look at the devastation it leaves behind. I beg you on bended knee, please, there are countless support groups...please, please, please reach out because this is not the way, suicide is not the way, it's a long-term solution to short-term problems".

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The next big thing in our lives – ectogenesis

It is well known that the greatest political changes often occur through 'events', rather than through the carefully-laid plans and projects of politicians.

And perhaps the biggest changes to our social and cultural lives often occur through technology. Charles Dickens set *Oliver Twist* in the 1830s when poor little boys (and girls) were sent up chimneys as chimney-sweepers – a horribly cruel practice. Christians campaigned to stop this, but what made a real difference was the invention of a chimney-brush which could do the job instead.

Awareness of technological innovation and change can make us alert to cultural and social change. And one of the extraordinary innovations happening right now is the development of the artificial womb.

Photographs

Just recently, photographs were released showing a successful experiment on unborn lambs,



Mary Kenny



who were brought forward to gestational age in a newly-developed 'biobag'. This replaces the uterus, and is much more sophisticated than the current incubator, (currently employed for premature babies).

This is a radical innovation which, the biological scientists say, will very soon make

'ectogenesis' possible.

'Ectogenesis' is a word coined by the scientist J.B.S. Haldane in 1924 – meaning foetal development outside the womb, or via an artificial womb.

Transplants of the uterus are already taking place: 10 women in Britain have been approved by the medical authorities

to proceed with a pregnancy through a donated uterus.

The artificial womb and the donated uterus have huge implications for the future of life sciences. These developments could save the lives of very premature babies – who are surviving, now, from 22 weeks' pregnancy, but need a high degree of medical support – and transform the debate, too, on abortion. "Artificial wombs, able to gestate a foetus outside the body, will completely upend feminism's arguments on bodily autonomy," writes Eleanor Robertson in *The Guardian*.

Ectogenesis is also being hailed as "a gift to gay men, transwomen and many other groups whose longing for children is circumscribed to varying extents".

It is an extraordinary development and should be on the agenda for anyone concerned with bio-ethics.

Lay-led liturgies genuinely communal

That Limerick should have had a recent 'day without a Mass', three evening ones aside, because priests were on an in-service day was greeted with dismay, and understandably so. But I've recently attended prayer events conducted by the laity and they often have a warm spiritual feeling and generate a true sense of community. In our seaside town in Kent, there have been a series of Stations of the Resurrection, entirely lay-led and they've been lovely.

This is, of course, not at all the same as the Mass, whose position is unique. But I do think something special happens when the community gets together to in a prayer, not priest-led, but genuinely communal. It strikes me that the experiences of the early Christians must have been very like this, and there is a sense of extraordinary continuity in that feeling.



Expect the unexpected

Yes, events can surprise: after nearly a century of campaigning for a united Ireland through patriotic rhetoric, historical claims on geography, and sometimes, through violence – who would have predicted that the prospect would suddenly look realistic following on a British referendum rebellion against Brussels' rule? Prepare for the unexpected!

Abortion rarely needed to save mother

I am slightly puzzled by the statement made by Dr Chris Fitzpatrick's in *The Irish Times*, saying that: "Having worked as a consultant for over 20 years in Ireland, I have direct experience of terminating pregnancies in order to save the life of the mother."

From a purely obstetric point of view, I would like to be told more about what

the circumstances involved. When I was researching a book about abortion in London, I was told by a gynaecologist and obstetrician, Dr David Painter, who I watched carry out social abortions, that it was very unusual today to have to terminate a pregnancy to save the life of the mother. "If the woman wants the child, we can nearly always bring

her through," he told me.

I don't question Dr Fitzpatrick's evident sincerity, but we do need, I think, more clinical information about the medical circumstances he refers to. I had been led to believe, by other medical consultants, that this operation is now very unlikely indeed – thankfully, too.

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Safeguarding chief welcomes fast Vatican abuse case handling

Greg Daly

The Vatican department that tackles the cases of priests accused of abuse has accelerated its handling of such cases, the head of Ireland's child protection board has said.

Teresa Devlin, CEO of the National Board for the Safeguarding of Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC), told *The Irish Catholic* that she believed the development was connected with the appointment a month ago of Dublin priest Msgr John Kennedy as head of the disciplinary section in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Assistant

Msgr Kennedy has worked in the CDF since 2003, and had been an assistant to the previous head of the disciplinary

section, Fr Miguel Funes Diaz.

"I understand from people working on the ground that Msgr Kennedy has been in touch and has been progressing a number of cases much more quickly than has been the case," Mrs Devlin said, noting that she had drawn attention to the issue of delays in the CDF when she addressed Australia's royal commission on institutional abuse.

Reluctant to take credit for the subsequent acceleration in case-handling by the CDF, she said: "If that's due to me that would be great – I don't know if it is or not, but certainly a number of people have contacted me to say that cases that have sat a while have now taken just weeks to progress. It's fabulous, I'm delighted with that."

In her submission to the

Australian commission, she said the CDF disciplinary section was overworked and understaffed, with the effect that the average case could take two to three years to be processed, and called on Ireland's bishops to push for more resources to be given to the Vatican department to enable justice be served more promptly.

Complainant

"As I said in Australia, anything that ensures justice for the complainant, the accused and the Church authority is good news in my opinion," she said, continuing, "cases that are sat around in limbo for years on years are just destructive for everybody, so I'm very pleased that this is now happening, that the Irish cases are now being dealt with more expeditiously."

Sr Stan receives 'Social Justice Hero' award



The DIT student volunteering committee has presented Sr Stan Kennedy with its inaugural 'Social Justice Hero' award, in recognition of her work supporting Ireland's most vulnerable, at the launch of a new website Studentvolunteer.ie/DIT: Ciarán Freeman (Student Volunteering Chairperson), Sr Stan Kennedy with her Social Justice Hero award and Emmet Jordan-Kelly (DIT Student Volunteering Development Officer).

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Curial training event was 'excellent' – Marie Collins

Staff Reporter

Marie Collins' first training event for Vatican officials since her resignation from Pope Francis' child protection commission was "encouraging" and "very positive", the leading advocate has said.

Mrs Collins announced her resignation in February from the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, citing frustration with obstructive curial officials. Despite this, she joined commission head Cardinal Sean O'Malley and commission member Fr Hans Zollner SJ last weekend in a training session for the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples.

"It went very well," Mrs Collins told *The Irish Catholic*, describing the congregation as "a very important dicastery from the point of view of child

protection", since "it influences parts of the world where there wouldn't have been much attention on child abuse in the Church up to now".

Informative

The session was very well attended, according to Mrs Collins, with the training team being made very welcome. "Quite a few of the participants already had a good grasp of what's needed, and for others it was obviously informative and that's the whole point," she said. "It was encouraging and very positive, and as I say, particularly that dicastery because it has such a wide sphere of influence being in so many countries where it's really a missionary Church."

Describing the exercise as "excellent", she said, "It was very, very worthwhile and very positive."

Uniform plans 'micro-management'

Government demands that schools reduce uniform costs to ease parents' financial pressures have been criticised as reactive and unacceptable micro-management by the president of the body which represents faith-based schools in Ireland.

Speaking at the AMCSS/JMB annual general meeting in Killarney, Fr Paul Connell said the planned changes would do "little or nothing to reduce costs for parents", but would impact negatively on schools, and contradict established policies on giving them autonomy.

Fr Connell said the plans seem to assume schools do not listen to parents, pointing out that parents, on whom schools depend for 30% of their costs, overwhelmingly supporting current uniform policies.

If the Government genuinely wants to reduce costs for parents, it should fund schools properly, he said.

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Blood of innocents unites Catholics and Copts – Pope



Pope Francis and Coptic Orthodox Pope Tawadros II, right, attend an ecumenical prayer service at Cairo's Church of St Peter during the Pontiff's two-day visit to Egypt. Photo: CNS

Greg Daly

Pope Francis' visit to Egypt last week may have been one of the shortest overseas trips so far in his papacy, but it may prove one of his most important.

Friday morning saw the Pope arriving at Cairo airport and being officially welcomed to Egypt at the Heliopolis presidential palace, before joining the chief imam of Cairo's Al-Azhar University, the academic heart of Sunni Islam, in addressing an international conference on peace hosted by the mosque.

Speaking at the conference in this, the seventh time he has visited a Muslim-majority nation, the Pontiff called the visit a journey of "unity and fraternity", and called on Egypt's religious leaders to expose violence masquerading as holy and condemn religiously-inspired hatred as an idolatrous caricature of God.

His call came against the backdrop of attacks on the country's Coptic Christians that had killed 45 people.

Violence

Describing violence as "the negation of every authentic religious expression", and accompanied by such religious leaders as Sheik Ahmad el-Tayeb, who had invited him to the conference, he continued: "As religious leaders, we are called, therefore, to unmask the violence that masquerades as purported sanctity and is based more on the 'absolutising' of selfishness than on authentic openness to the absolute."

"We have an obligation to denounce violations of

human dignity and human rights, to expose attempts to justify every form of hatred in the name of religion and to condemn these attempts as idolatrous caricatures of God," he continued, maintaining that God is holy and "the God of peace".

He warned too not just against acts of violence in God's name, but against attempts to fight fire with fire, saying "every unilateral action that does not promote constructive and shared processes is, in reality, a gift to the proponents of radicalism and violence", instead urging people towards turning an "incivility of conflict" to a "civility of encounter".

“How many martyrs in this land...have lived their faith heroically, shedding their blood rather than denying the Lord”

Afterwards, the Pontiff met with Pope Tawadros, the leader of Egypt's approximately 272,000 Coptic Christians, where in a historic move toward greater Christian unity, the two leaders signed an agreement to end a longstanding disagreement over the Sacrament of Baptism.

Until then the Coptic Orthodox Church had required new members joining from most non-Coptic churches – including Catholics – to be baptised again, but the two leaders declared that they "seek sincerely not to repeat the baptism that has

been administered in either of our Churches for any person who wishes to join the other".

Afterwards, the two leaders prayed at the spot where dozens of Copts were killed by an ISIS militant last year, with Pope Francis saying that in the attack "the innocent blood of defenceless Christians was cruelly shed", and that it was such innocent blood that has united them.

"Your sufferings are also our sufferings," he said, continuing, "how many martyrs in this land, from the first centuries of Christianity, have lived their faith heroically to the end, shedding their blood rather than denying the Lord and yielding to the enticements of evil or merely to the temptation of repaying evil with evil?"

Pope Tawadros praised the Pontiff as a symbol of peace "in a world tormented by conflicts and wars", and thanked him for following in the footsteps of his namesake, St Francis of Assisi, who visited Egypt to meet Sultan al-Kamel and engage in "one of the most important experiences of intercultural dialogue in history", a dialogue, Pope Tawadros said, that Francis had renewed.

The following day saw the Holy Father celebrating an open-air Mass with 15,000 people in Cairo's Air Defence Stadium, during which the Pope cautioned people against succumbing to despair by "refusing to believe that God's omnipotence is not one of power and authority, but rather of love, forgiveness and life".

The only kind of fanaticism acceptable to God is a fanaticism of charity, he said.

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What we owe Christianity



Many people mistakenly confuse the Catholic Church with its governing structure, writes **David Quinn**



Pope Francis chairing a meeting with cardinals at the Vatican

People are by now well familiar with the case against the Catholic Church. As Archbishop Diarmuid Martin said in a little-noticed address a few days ago, the attacks are relentless. We are much less familiar with the case in favour of the Catholic Church, so let's make a stab at it here, in the space

allowed.

We should begin by asking ourselves what the Catholic Church is. When boiled down to its essence, it is the community of the followers of Jesus Christ through time. The Catholic Church has a hierarchical structure being led by the Bishop of Rome and the other bishops.

Unfortunately, when people think of the Catholic Church, they often think of the hierarchy and little else. That would be like thinking of the FAI when thinking of football. Every organisation needs a governing structure, but to confuse the thing in itself with the governing structure is a big mistake.

Nearly all the scandals

involving the Catholic Church involve the governing structure, including what you might call the 'officers' of the Church, that is, the priests and religious apart from the bishops.

They ran, and run the parishes. They founded and ran so many institutions from hospitals to schools to industrial schools, mother and baby homes and Magdalene homes. When people think of the actions of the Catholic Church, they think mostly of the actions of those who ran these places, as well as the parishes.

“Without them, we would have no parishes, no monastic communities, no convents”

If this sounds a bit like saying we'd have been better off without the priests, the bishops and the religious, it isn't. Without them, we would have no parishes, no monastic communities, no convents and for a very long time few if any hospitals, far fewer schools (for the poor in particular) and few universities.

Going back centuries, the monasteries were often the only places of learning and civilisation for miles around. They cultivated the land and they looked after the poor. When the Roman Empire collapsed, cultivation of the land often disappeared in large areas as well. The poor would not have been looked after, even in a limited way, without the monasteries.

When Henry VIII suppressed the monasteries, he had to introduce England's first Poor Law to compensate for the fact.

We Irish should hardly

need reminding of our tremendous monastic tradition.

In Ireland and elsewhere for a very long time only the rich could afford to have their children educated and could afford any kind of real medical care. The religious orders saw this gap and so set up and ran schools aimed at the poor. The State only began to step in from more or less the late 19th Century on, when money became more available.

Critics

When critics attack the Church over the way it ran its schools and hospitals etc., they ought to remember that for the most part without the Church and without the congregations (or some equivalent, for example Protestant societies), many schools or hospitals wouldn't have existed at all.

Why did the Church set up such establishments? The answer to this question brings us all the way back to Jesus himself who told us to love our neighbours as we love ourselves, that everyone is our neighbour, and that when we care for the least of our brethren we care for him.

We borrowed a lot of this from Judaism, but Christianity universalised the message. The message wasn't just for the Jews. It was for everyone. Nothing like this message had ever been properly heard or preached in the West before.

Christianity taught us that we are all created morally equal, that we all have equal moral worth and dignity no matter what our station in life. The king and the peasant are morally equal.

This was an absolutely revolutionary message. We take it for granted now, but as *The Guardian* newspaper (no friend of the Church)

observed in an editorial a few months ago: "The idea that people have some rights just because they are human, and entirely irrespective of merit, certainly isn't derived from observation of the world. It arose out of Christianity, no matter how much Christians have in practice resisted it."

In other words, the idea we are all morally equal is a Christian doctrine that is very hard to maintain if you believe we are chance products of evolution rather than the creatures of a loving God who bestows each of us with ultimate value.

The Guardian went on: "Although human rights have become embedded in our institutions at the same time as religious observance has been in decline, they could become vulnerable in an entirely post-Christian environment where the collective memory slips from the old moorings inherited from Christian ethics." Precisely.

To put it another way, when people attack the Church for not treating people with the dignity they deserve, they are drawing on Christian doctrine in a way they fail to recognise.

They review history and they see the Church standing with oppressive rulers and therefore they condemn the Church in its totality. But they cannot see what *The Guardian* writer can see, namely that the idea we are of equal moral worth "arose out of Christianity, no matter how much Christians have in practice resisted it".

This teaching began with Jesus Christ (and Judaism) and was spread to the world of the Gentiles (us) thanks to St Paul who convinced the early followers of Jesus that his message wasn't only for the Jews.

There is so much more to be said, but suffice it to say that the Church (meaning all the faithful) is at its best when it is most faithful to the teachings of Jesus and at its worst when it is not.

In the final analysis, Christianity is a failure as a religion only if the example and person of Jesus are not worth emulating. But his teachings, and especially his teaching that we must love our neighbour, and that everyone, including the 'least of us' is equally my neighbour, is the single greatest teaching that has ever been given to us.

We should not forget the origin of this teaching or take it for granted. It is one of the inestimable things we owe Christianity.

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Martin Mansergh

The View



Many people inside and outside the Catholic Church were glad Bishop Eamonn Casey received full honours from the Church when he died. He was, in his heyday, a charismatic and progressive figure, closely identified with the Catholic-founded development aid charity Trócaire.

He was exposed to the crossfire in El Salvador that cost the life of Archbishop Oscar Romero, whom he joined in protest against the US-backed right-wing dictatorship (not that US-opposed left-wing Latin American dictatorships are the answer either).

With hindsight, the failing that abruptly ended Bishop Casey's episcopal ministry can be seen as the first breach of the citadel. At the time, the Church was privately criticised in high places for not doing more to reassure the faithful. In public perception, the clarity of the Church's teaching became clouded by the contrast with the behaviour of a few priests who abused their trust in far worse ways.

In all walks of life, especially those demanding a high level of public responsibility, maintaining standards is a constant struggle both at a personal level and for society. Since early Christianity, the Church has sought to raise moral standards in the light of Christ's teaching. Sometimes, unfortunately, the effect has been the opposite, but that does not mean the mission should be abandoned, particularly given some of the alternatives.

Memorable sayings

The spirit of the New Testament was not rigid adherence to old religious law, but the tempering of justice with mercy. One of Pope Francis' most memorable sayings, when asked about a class of persons with proclivities frowned upon by the Church, was: "Who am I to judge?" – a theme taken up by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, when he asked how the Church (actually all Churches) could have been so judgmental towards broken people?

When Ireland less Northern Ireland became independent and order was gradually restored, one of the biggest changes, understandably in terms of history, was to make Ireland, as near as made

Waiting for an Irish politician to speak up for Christian values



no difference, a Catholic country.

This was long a source of pride. Eamon de Valera spoke of Ireland's 'spiritual empire' in contrast to the 'materialistic' one next door. In the late 1940s, it had a most unexpected admirer, reference to which is not to be found in modern Irish history books, in Winston Churchill, when he stated: "As the Minister responsible for carrying out the Cabinet decisions embodied in the Irish Treaty of 1921, I have watched with contentment and pleasure the orderly Christian society with a grace and culture and a flash of sport thrown in, which this quarter of a century has seen built up in Southern Ireland, despite many gloomy predictions."

“Human rights are regularly invoked as a battering ram”

Moving on from spats over neutrality, shared antagonism to communist tyranny and aggression had brought the British and Irish peoples closer together, and "the Catholic Church has ranged itself amongst the defenders and champions of the liberty and dignity of the individual".

Today, we hear only about the underside of that society, which in some minds damns the Church in totality and justifies excising it from all influence in society.

The combination of ecumenism, liberalisation, and the desire to prevent

the spread of the Northern Troubles led to a change of religious tone, with pluralistic inclusion replacing tolerance and strict demarcation. Pluralism certainly meant taking notice and account of minority views and positions, but was sometimes articulated as a demand that, rather than finding ways to accommodate difference, all religious views must be given the same weight, regardless of the number of their adherents. This was not really tenable from a democratic point of view.

For a period liberal Catholics sheltered their aspirations under a not always altruistic pluralistic concern for the rights of religious minorities. Dean Victor Griffin, a leading light in the Anti-Amendment campaign of 1983, referred in his autobiography *Mark of Protest* to "a great number of liberal Roman Catholics who were looking to the Church of Ireland and Protestantism in general to give a lead".

Such cover has ceased to be necessary, and advancing secularism has largely discarded pluralism. Church of Ireland bishops have had to point out that the rights of minority denominations to run faith-based schools should not be trampled upon on the basis of some populist surge.

Human rights are regularly invoked as a battering ram to break down the place of religion in this society. They have the advantage of trumping democracy, as democracy cannot deny human rights.

The interpretation of

human rights can be highly tendentious. While many people support Amnesty International Ireland, because of their campaigns

against clear human rights abuses, some would have strong reservations about their including abortion rights, which is a highly divisive issue, among their causes, and about the idea of their receiving funding for this from American billionaire George Soros' 'Open Society'.

The subject is not covered in any international rights convention. We are never given the country composition of UN Human Rights sub-committees that are prompted to condemn Ireland's position.

Weak arguments are put up that to be 'a true 'republic' (i.e. following the arguable French paradigm) we need to get rid of what is left of the Angelus on RTÉ, prayers in the Oireachtas, and, where practicable, every other manifestation of Ireland's religious traditions, under the plausible cover of making migrants feel welcome. Most

migrants, especially Muslim, come from countries where that religion is far better entrenched than Christianity here today.

In supposedly secular Britain, the *Times* ran an editorial on Good Friday entitled 'Easter Rising', referring to the Resurrection not 1916, which was a passionate plea for the Coptic Christians in Egypt, subject to murderous attacks. It also ran an article by former Minister Michael Gove, of Presbyterian background, in praise of the Church of England. Last year, then Prime Minister David Cameron stated: "we are a Christian country and proud of it".

This year, his successor Theresa May evoked the Christian values she learnt growing up in a vicarage. How long must we wait to notice anything similar said by our own political and opinion leaders?



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Greg Daly asks whether the Religious Sisters of Charity can legitimately host the new National Maternity Hospital

In recent days a story broke in California that the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) had filed a lawsuit against a Catholic hospital for denying a hysterectomy last year to a woman who identified as a man, and wanted the procedure as part of a sex reassignment.

Evan Minton, on whose behalf the suit has been filed,

had had surgery scheduled with the Mercy San Juan Medical Centre in the Sacramento metropolitan area, but says surgery was cancelled when the hospital learned that Minton was transgender and asked to be referred to as "he"; as a Catholic hospital, the centre does not provide elective sterilisations.

Dignity Health, which owns Mercy San Juan, transferred Minton to one of its Methodist hospitals shortly after refusing the initial procedure.

Claiming Minton had been illegally discriminated against as transgender, the ACLU is seeking a court order that would force the hospital to perform elective hysterectomies in the future.

The story should ring alarm bells for the Religious Sisters of Charity in light of the controversy that has surrounded plans for a new National Maternity Hospital on the grounds of their St Vincent's University Hospital at Elm Park in South Dublin.

As Elphin's Bishop Kevin Doran told *The Sunday Times* against the background of the controversy, "A health-care organisation bearing the name 'Catholic', while offer-

The Sisters and the State: a scandalous alliance?

ing care to all who need it, has a special responsibility to witness to the presence of Christ and to Catholic teachings about the value of human life and the dignity and the ultimate destiny of the human person. Public funding, while it brings with it other legal and moral obligations, does not change that responsibility."

That the new National Maternity Hospital would not bear the name 'Catholic' is clear enough, but in some ways that's not necessarily the point. Neither, despite vociferous opposition from a significant portion of the population, are questions about whether or not the sisters would have sole ownership of the hospital, or what this would mean in terms of governance.

“The Church’s defence of life encompasses the unborn and the care of women and their children during and after pregnancy”

Far more pertinent, in practical terms, is the fact that the new hospital is planned to be on land belonging to a religious order, and that the National Maternity Hospital's board has repeatedly insisted that the new facility will be run independently and will carry out procedures such as IVF, sterilisations and abortions, all of which are opposed by the Church.

The real question, therefore, seems to be whether or not the sisters can legitimately provide land for activities they know are likely to run contrary to Catholic teaching.

In the US, for example, Catholic hospitals operate under the US bishops' *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services*,



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin.

a 43-page document, now in its fifth edition, which maps out the theological principles that should guide Catholic healthcare, reaffirms the ethical standards of healthcare behaviour that flow from the Church's teaching about the dignity of the human person, and provides authoritative guidance on specific moral issues that face Catholic healthcare today.

Banning abortion, sterilisation, emergency contraception and tubal ligations, the guidelines are based primarily on the natural law, and explicitly state that the Church "cannot approve medical practices that undermine the biological, psychological, and moral bonds on which the strength of marriage and the family depends", continuing, "Catholic health care ministry witnesses to the sanctity of life 'from the moment of conception until death'. The Church's defence of life encompasses the unborn and the care of women and their children during and after pregnancy."

The American guidelines seem especially relevant to the developing Irish situation, and should be considered carefully by the sisters – and by the Archbishop of Dublin – before the deal is finalised.

Noting that abortion is never permitted in Catholic facilities, the guidelines state that "Every procedure whose sole immediate effect is the termination of pregnancy before viability is an abortion, which, in its moral context, includes the interval between conception and implantation of the embryo."

They continue: "Catholic health care institutions are not to provide abortion services, even based upon the principle of material cooperation. In this context, Catholic health care institutions need to be concerned about the danger of scandal in any association with abortion providers."

Material cooperation is at the core of the problem with the National Maternity Hospital, since the planned arrangement, however the details are finally worked out, will in practice be a partnership in which the sisters will facilitate the performing by others of actions contrary to Catholic teaching.

Problem

Some may say that this is a problem that religious-run hospitals in Ireland already face, given how 2013's Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act permits abortions in some circumstances.

Against this, however, the act, in line with the Constitution, allows for abortions only when there is no other way of saving a mother's life, and as pro-life doctors and psychiatrists have repeatedly pointed out, there are no circumstances in which abortion is the only way of saving a mother's life. It should be possible, therefore, for a hospital to act in full accordance with the law without ever performing abortions.

The proposals of the so-called 'Citizens' Assembly' look set to change this, however, and it would be a brave person who would bet against a widening of Ireland's abor-

tion laws over the coming years.

This is a problem our American cousins have been grappling with for some time, with the bishops observing that "new partnerships can pose serious challenges to the viability of the identity of Catholic health care institutions and services, and their ability to implement these directives in a consistent way, especially when partnerships are formed with those who do not share Catholic moral principles", adding that "the risk of scandal cannot be underestimated when partnerships are not built upon common values and moral principles."

Partnerships

While not rejecting partnerships out of hand, the US bishops insist that systematic and objective moral analysis should be undergone when considering whether Catholic healthcare institutions should enter into them.

Advising that "as a rule, Catholic partners should avoid entering into partnerships that would involve them in cooperation with the wrongdoing of other providers", the bishops warn that decisions that "may lead to serious consequences for the identity or reputation of Catholic healthcare services, or entail the high risk of scandal, should be made in consultation with the diocesan bishop".

The diocesan bishop, the guidelines note, "has final responsibility for assessing and addressing issues of scandal, considering not only the circumstances in his local diocese but also the regional and national implications of his decision".

Ultimately, it may be Dublin's Archbishop Martin, still in law – however reluctantly – the chair of the National Maternity Hospital's Board of Governors, who must decide what the sisters can do.

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'Led by the Spirit for Mission'

Pope Francis on Vocations Sunday 2017

In the message for this year's World Day of Prayer for Vocations, Pope Francis focuses on the missionary dimension of our Christian calling.

He insists that "commitment to mission is not something added on to the Christian life as a kind of decoration, but is instead an essential element of faith itself". A relationship with the Lord," he adds, "entails being sent out into the world as prophets of his word and witnesses of his love."

Even if at times when "we are conscious of our weaknesses and tempted to discouragement", Pope Francis underlines, "we need to turn to God with confidence", and he reiterates that by "virtue of baptism, every Christian is a 'Christopher', a bearer of Christ, to his brothers and sisters."

In the message divided by three subtitles, the first being 'Jesus is

anointed by the Spirit and sent', the Holy Father explains that, "to be a missionary disciple means to share actively in the mission of Christ".

Under the second heading, 'Jesus is at our side every step of the way', Pope Francis describes how "the questions lurking in human hearts and the real challenges of life can make us feel bewildered, inadequate and hopeless".

But he goes on to say, "if we contemplate the risen Jesus walking alongside the disciples of Emmaus we can be filled with new confidence".

Proclamation

In the third section, 'Jesus makes the seed grow', the Pope says that, "it is important to let the Gospel teach us the way of proclamation".

"The seed of the Kingdom", he adds, "however tiny, unseen and at times insignificant, silently continues to grow, thanks to God's tireless activity."

Pope Francis underlines the fact "there can be no promotion of vocations or Christian mission apart from constant contemplative prayer", and he encourages this kind of profound friendship with the Lord "above all for the sake of imploring from on high new vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life".

"The Christian life needs to be nourished by attentive listening to God's word and, above all, by the cultivation of a personal relationship with the Lord in Eucharistic adoration, the privileged 'place' for our encounter with God," the Pope adds.

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Catching up with the vocational curve

Ireland has lagged behind other countries in the promotion of priestly vocations for several years, according to Waterford and Lismore's Bishop Phonsie Cullinan, chairman of the Irish bishops' Council for Vocations, but that's set to change this month with the establishment of the country's national vocations office.

"I believe the idea has been there for years," Dr Cullinan says, continuing, "as far as I know, all other countries in Europe have a dedicated vocations office – certainly our nearest neighbours have one up and running. We're behind the curve in that sense."

“It was great work, but of its very nature, because everyone involved was busy doing other tasks, they couldn't be fully devoted to it”

Now, however, following the receipt of a three-year donation from the Knights of St Columbanus, Ireland's national vocations office is going ahead, with a full-time administrator being appointed to head an office that "will be able to coordinate the national vocations strategy, helping vocations directors in each diocese, keeping the vocations question to the top of the agenda, providing training for vocations directors, and encouraging vocations initiatives".

Bishop Phonsie Cullinan tells Greg Daly about the new National Vocations Office



Up until now, Dr Cullinan explains, while good work was being done on vocations around the country, there was a lack of central coordination and support.

"It was great work, but of its very nature, because everyone involved was busy doing other tasks, they couldn't be fully devoted to it," he says, saying that with the appointment of a full time vocations administrator, "we have a plan and now we have a dedicated person to put that plan into place".

Planned approach

The administration officer will assist the Diocesan Vocations Coordinator in working with the country's regional groups on a planned approach to vocation promotion including such things as 'Come and See' events and careers fairs, while planning and organising conferences on vocational themes, working with other agencies involved in vocational promotion, and supporting the training of

vocational directors.

Training and support for vocational directors will be key, Dr Cullinan points out. "I would doubt if we would have dedicated full-time paid vocations directors in each diocese," he says, continuing, "The quality of vocations work varies greatly from diocese to diocese. For some dioceses, the vocations director might be one of several jobs that he's doing."

National and regional support for vocational directors has been happening, Dr Cullinan says, especially with regard to 'come and see' events, but the office will enable this to happen in a more structured way, as it will training.

“What people will be looking for out of all this is literally how many guys are ending up in seminary”

"We have a retreat coming up in June for vocations directors and/or vocations teams from dioceses around the country," he says as an example, "That is being given by an American priest, Fr Brett Brannon, in June in Maynooth. He has been very successful in vocations promotion in the States, and has written what is more-or-less the manual for vocations directors in the States – I believe it has been bought in bulk by dioceses right across the States."

Research and the production of promotional material will also be central to

the new office's role, Dr Cullinan says, along with prayer initiatives including one this month related to Our Lady of Fatima.

A core aim, he says, is to "support the building of a culture of Vocation – that all are called by God for a specific vocation in life", but it could take time to see how effective that will have been.



Bishop Phonsie Cullinan.

"What people will be looking for out of all this is literally how many guys are ending up in seminary," he says, continuing, "There are people out there, of that I am convinced, and it's a question of having the courage to ask and to be sure of who we are as a Church, and who it is on whom we depend."

Cautioning against succumbing to popular perceptions of a defeated or private Church, Dr Cullinan says "that's not coming from confidence in Christ – we've got to get out there and ask".

Remembering the Love that flows from the Cross

Paul Francis Spencer CP

In his first homily after his election, Pope Francis said: 'When we walk without the Cross, when we build without the Cross, and when we profess Christ without the Cross, we are not disciples of the Lord.' This might seem a stark message from a pope who radiates so much joy wherever he goes. But, according to Pope Francis, 'the Cross of Christ contains all the love of God, his immeasurable mercy.' (Way of the Cross at the World Youth Day, 2013).

Crosses

Sometimes we feel we want to run away from the crosses we face in life: sickness, loneliness, depression, bereavement. At times like these, we can feel isolated or abandoned. But the Psalm tells us that 'the Lord is close to the broken-hearted' (Ps 34: 18), and to see that

closeness, we need simply to look at the Cross. On the Cross Jesus opens his arms to welcome the poor and the suffering, giving strength and comfort to the weary.

St Paul of the Cross founded the Passionist community to remind people of the Passion of Jesus which he described as 'the greatest and most overwhelming work of God's love'. The

Cross teaches us that God's love is shown not just in words but in deeds and that if we are to walk with the Cross, build with the Cross and profess Christ with the Cross, then our discipleship must also express itself in deeds of love.

It was Jesus on the Cross who moved St Charles of Mount Argus to spend thirty years ministering to the sick and suffering, the poor and abandoned in Dublin and all over Ireland. His healing blessing cured many of

their illnesses and his simple preaching of the message of the Cross brought hope to those whose lives he touched.

“The Cross teaches us that God's love is shown not just in words but in deeds and that if we are to walk with the Cross, build with the Cross and profess Christ with the Cross, then our discipleship must also express itself in deeds of love”

As Passionists we recognise that 'the Passion of Christ and the sufferings of his Mystical Body form one mystery of salvation' (Passionist Constitutions, 65). Through our preaching, retreat ministry, parishes and chaplaincies, we seek to help God's people to remember the love that flows from the Cross.



There are ambitious plans to build a culture of vocations in Ireland, writes **Greg Daly**

PLANTING THE SEEDS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE



Margaret Cartwright.

It's been just over a year since the US-based Hilton Foundation announced it was awarding a grant of \$290,000 (€268,000) to Vocations Ireland, and Margaret Cartwright, director of the organisation, has had her hands full in the meantime.

Explaining that the umbrella group that supports vocations directors from Ireland's religious congregations has just received the second phase of the Hilton money, Margaret says, "Hilton were very conscious of the fact that a certain amount would have to go into capitation to re-set up Vocations Ireland, because we'd had to move office, there was a change in direction, and all that sort of stuff. So most of the money went into the development of promotional materials and websites and media work, and increased promotional events."

One of the last year's key projects was the development of Vocation Match, an online tool used effectively in the US and UK to help people explore the type of religious vocation that they might best be suited to. A range of more 'personal' approaches have been tried as well, she says, pointing out that "we have to use every means we can get".

“We’re working on creating lesson plans for junior cycle and senior cycle around the whole concept of creating a culture of vocations”

Among these are Samuel groups to help young people explore their paths in life, an updated version of the Explore Away programme that had previously been abandoned because of a lack of finance, and various retreats and other opportunities for young people to meet religious.

"We've created new conversation spaces where we've encouraged people to come and engage in conversation with religious," Margaret says, explaining: "This came out of the career fairs I was attending where I was hearing young people saying 'I don't know anything about religious life, I've never met a priest, I've never met a nun,



I've never met a brother – oh, I might know the parish priest, but I've never met any other kind of priest'."

The Sisters Café events were perhaps the highest profile of such events, and while they proved slow to start, Margaret says the enthusiasm and publicity that surrounded them were good signs, such that they'll try them again this year.

"We ran workshops for teachers around creating a culture of vocation," she says, continuing, "and again this came out of career fairs where teachers were coming up to me and saying 'I don't know how, really, to teach

about vocation – not just religious vocation, but vocation in general. We're really struggling with this and struggling very much with the whole idea of religious vocation: we don't know enough about it ourselves'."

Vocations Ireland hopes to build on such workshops this year, she says, explaining that, "we're working on creating lesson plans for junior cycle and senior cycle around the whole concept of creating a culture of vocations, and we hope to be able to give workshops again this year, maybe through the diocesan advisors. We had three diocesan advisors present at the workshop, and they were very enthusiastic about it, so we're going to develop that a bit further."

Instructive

The last year has been as instructive as it was busy, Margaret says, pointing to how some things didn't work and lessons that should be drawn from them, not least regarding how the organisation found summer wasn't a great time to put on programmes for young people, given the "mass exodus" of

students to America through the J1 visa scheme, and also given how many committed young Catholics were focused on going to Krakow for World Youth Day.

One key lesson Margaret has learned over the last year, she said, is that while vocations directors tend to be over 40 or even 50, and so have experience to offer in guiding those who approach them, when it comes to vocations, there is a need for young people to engage with young people.

"So, this year we've taken all the programmes that we started and tried to develop them further this year but getting young people to help us with them," she says, explaining that Vocations Ireland have taken on a NET ministries team to work with them.

"When the NET ministries would go out to schools and parishes, we would be sending a religious out with them so the religious would be given an opportunity to share their story," she says, with the older religious being able to complement the testimony of the young team. "Hopefully we can create a healthy

approach to the conversation around faith in general and the questions that young people are asking about faith and about religious life," she says.

Similarly, she says, Vocations Ireland hopes to tap into the enthusiasm and experience of lay missionaries who have returned home to Ireland, pointing out that religious engage in "tough ministries" like prison ministry and work with refugees and homeless people.

“Vocations Ireland hopes to tap into the enthusiasm and experience of lay missionaries who have returned home to Ireland”

"Young people have a real thirst for being involved in justice issues and working around social issues, so why not let them come along and work alongside us as volunteers," she says, continuing, "again, that's another way of conversing with them, hearing their views, exploring faith with them, and encour-

aging them, supporting them, and developing a whole culture of vocations. We're going to lead on from what we've built last year, and hopefully build that to more fruition this year."

It's not had much coverage, but there have been increases in young people joining contemplative congregations in recent years as well as male orders like the Franciscans, she says, but it will take time for current projects to bear fruit. "Often people will say 'do you see what you're doing is working?'" she says, observing: "It's very hard to say yes or no. It's not now that we're going to see that but in a few years' time."

Collaboration is central to the Vocation Ireland project, she says, pointing out that not merely are about 80 groups actively involved in Vocations Ireland, but that the organisation works with the diocesan vocations directors, and hopes to build this year on its ties with AMRI, the Association of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland, formed last year from the merger of the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union.

She points also to how the organisation is gaining through collaborating with vocations bodies in the UK and US, not merely with regard to Vocations Match but most notably with a 10-day course for vocations directors to be held this month in Athlone.

"I did that course in the States last year, and I found the course extremely helpful, but it's quite expensive to be sending people from Ireland to the States every year, plus the fact that there are aspects of the course that wouldn't apply to us – we'd need to make it more applicable to Ireland," she says, explaining that plans were made to bring the course to Ireland.

Fifty people, she says, are set to attend: "It's a big project."

It may take time for the work of Vocations Ireland to bear fruit, but one thing it can't be faulted for is a lack of ambition.



Vocations Ireland executive meeting with Margaret Cartwright on far right.

God is standing at the door of your heart.. He is waiting.. open to Him.
There is no need of beautiful thoughts,
only an outpouring of your heart.

- St Elizabeth of the Trinity



Carmelite Monastery

Roebuck Road Dublin 14

Carmelites are women searching for the face of God and in doing so are praying for the suffering faces of today's men and women. As Carmelites prayer is at the heart of our lives. This means being occupied with Christ, setting our eyes on Him, praising God in all we do, mediating on the Word of God, living a life that reveals a generous and loving God. Prayer is a love affair of the heart.

The daily celebration of the Eucharist, nourishes us, forms us and holds our Community life together. The Liturgy of the Hours is a continuation of our celebration of the Eucharist throughout the day.

Our Foundress, St Teresa of Avila, wrote "the world is all in flames..." (Way 1.5). Since the 16th century things have not changed. We are still confronted with the reality of the flames of oppression, violence, war, natural disasters, poverty, injustice, illness, and list goes on. The contemplative life of prayer, the same



life that St Teresa lived and nurtured, is as necessary and important today as it was during her lifetime. Teresa was one of the first to stress the apostolic nature of prayer – the belief that prayer indeed reaches out beyond the monastery, enters with strong

vibrations onto the currents of human consciousness and transforms the lives of people throughout the world.

Through work we share in the creative action of God. Like everyone else we have to earn our living and we do so by making altar breads for

many churches around Ireland.

Situated on the boundary of U.C.D. and surrounded by schools, exam time is always a special time for prayer for students, parents and teachers. Like St Teresa we carry all our priests in our hearts as we go about our daily round of prayer work and recreation.

We welcome the recent apostolic constitution Vultum Dei Quærere (seeking the face of God) as a great gift to us as contemplative women. In it Pope Francis calls our monasteries to be schools of prayer and contemplation. This must lead us to being expert in the "art of listening" which "is more than hearing".

We feel that there has never been a better time to be a Carmelite. Let us rejoice!

From time to time we organise days of prayer and reflection for women aged 25-45 who are interested in exploring the possibility of a vocation to religious life.

For further information email maria@roebuckcarmel.com

Or visit us on www.roebuckcarmel.com



The Christian Brothers



Working with Refugees in Salford, England

Our world needs compassionate people. Christian Brothers respond to this call. They are present in education, in ministry with young people and in social justice advocacy.

Christian Brothers work for a better world, addressing issues such as climate justice, homelessness, and refugees.

Above all, they are believers in Jesus of Nazareth and follow their founder, Blessed Edmund Rice.

To learn about becoming a Christian Brother visit our website www.christianbrothervocation.org.

Or contact Brother Phil Ryan, Christian Brothers, Mount Sion, Waterford. email: philr@edmundrice.ie.

What am I looking for?

Okay. Stop! Before you read on, ask yourself, "What am I looking for?" Really think about it. If the answer is that feel you might be called by God to do something more with your life, then this article might be for you.

You might not be sure what you want to do or how you could possibly go about doing it. You want to know more, but you're not ready to make any commitment yet. However, something in your heart continues to prompt you that you are meant for more, and no matter how hard you might try, you can't forget it. The question still endures. For many, they've thought about it on and off for quite some time. Could I be a brother? Am I called to be a priest? Is God inviting me to be a missionary?

Mission territory

As Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, or MSCs as we are often called, we have worked and continue to minister in over fifty different countries, including South Africa, Venezuela, Namibia, and the US. We are also active here at home in Ireland and in the UK. Indeed, many say that today, Europe is the new mission territory. We look to the future and ask where God is calling us. The answer is clear and the challenge is real. As missionaries, we are told to go out to the whole world and proclaim, share, and celebrate the Good News, whether that is in a township in South Africa, a soup kitchen in Venezuela, or in a parish in Ireland. There's a lot of work for love to do. If you feel that you might be called to join us, you're not alone.



Mark Quinn, one of our students, working in the Holy Family Centre in South Africa



MSC group during World Youth Day in Poland building a multi sensory garden for people with special needs.

Fr. Alan Neville
MSC, vocations
director, during
a mission to
Venezuela.



MSC novices from the Flame Catholic youth event in Wembley last March.

Mark Quinn's story

Mark Quinn from Castlebar is a first year student in our formation house in Dublin. Here, he shares his reasons for choosing the MSCs.

"In the midst of a deep discernment process, I found myself on a volunteer trip in the coastal city of Dar es Salam, Tanzania. One evening, while travelling home from our daily trip to the orphanages, my gaze was drawn to a small girl standing outside a makeshift hut as we sped along the dusty road. While her impoverished surroundings were heart-breaking, it was the expression on her motionless face that captured my attention. Her eyes

transfixed on mine, I felt as if Christ himself was looking at me, calling me, or asking something of me that I was yet to fully understand.

A couple of days later, home in Ireland and with East Africa still fresh in my mind, I began to look deeper into religious mission-ary orders in Ireland. If I am to be honest (and maybe a bit superficial), I was initially attracted by the MSC's online presence. It showed that the congregation was very much contemporary, and alive and kicking. I contacted Fr Alan, who came to my home to meet with me for a relaxed chat. He was genuinely interested in my story and was honest and informative about the MSCs.

It was a revelation for me to learn about the diversity and internationality of the congregation, and how I could bring my skills to them as well as being formed by their unique charism."

A few weeks later, I was invited to stay with the MSCs at their formation house in Dublin. It was great to see and talk to more young men in formation, and I was able to meet a number of priests who are working in a wide variety of roles for a question and answer session. It was a revelation for me to learn about the diversity and internationality of the congregation, and how I could bring my skills to them as well as being formed by their unique charism.

Then, in July, I was also able to take part in their fantastic annual volunteer programme. I travelled to the Holy Family Care Centre for children orphaned by HIV/AIDs or TB in South Africa, where I could see first-hand the heart of Jesus being brought to life. It confirmed for me that God was indeed calling me to be a missionary. But not just any missionary, a missionary of his Sacred Heart!"

Michael McCaul's story

Michael McCaul from Derry is another first year student studying in our formation house in Dublin. He shares his experiences of daily life in formation with the MSCs.

"Having spent most of my life in education, working as a teacher, my body clock is somewhat set at this stage, so adapting to the community timetable was relatively less challenging. I awake from my slumber at 6:00am and follow a ritual of washing, grooming, and styling that would baffle most cultures, but I am from Derry after all! We have morning mass at 7:00am three days a week, and morning prayer on the other two days. Having spiritually prepared our souls for the day, we have breakfast, then set sail for Maynooth around 7:45am to prepare our minds. We normally have theology classes from 9:00am to 1:00pm and

tutorials from 2:00 to 3:00pm every other week. The rest of our time at home is taken up by essays or preparatory readings for the next day.

We gather again at 5:30pm for evening prayer, or for Mass on the days we didn't have it in the morning, and have dinner at 6:00pm, during which all the world's problems are discussed and solved. On Tuesday evening, we have a holy hour, and on Fridays, we have in-house classes on human development. Pastoral work takes place on Thursdays and can consist of either school, parish, or local charity placements.

Saturdays are what we call our 'DIY' days, which usually begin with a race for the washing machine! Mass is at 9:00am and the rest of the day is free. For me, it might include shopping, a trip into Dublin, visiting family, or attending local football games – especially when a quality team

like Derry City FC are playing the Dublin-based teams. We gather again at 7:00pm for what is meant to be a light evening meal, and we spend the rest of the evening in recreation as a community, watching a movie or box set.

On Sunday mornings, we go out – not quite like Matthew's Great Commission yet – to all the local parish churches. We are encouraged to get involved or help as needed. I find it a great opportunity to spend some real quality time with the people of God. Sunday evening closes with evening prayer and a quick meeting to sort out the weekly liturgical roles. Then it's into the PJs and into the 'ou' bed in preparation for the joys of another week of preparing our body, minds, and souls as MSCs to be the Heart of Christ throughout this world and beyond!"

If you would like to know more, or if you have any questions, you can contact me by email on vocations@mscmisions.ie or by phoning (086) 7857955. You can find further information about the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart on our website

www.mscvocations.ie



Our Patroness - Our Lady Help of Christians

Sisters of Bon Secours

core intention stays the same, to bring the healing hand of Christ to all those in need.

Today Sisters minister in healthcare, social services, pastoral and community based ministries.

“We are all called to serve. It is just a matter of finding the way that best suits your interests and talents.”

In Ireland Sisters of Bon Secours are based in Cork, Dublin, Galway, Tralee and Knock. Their ministry includes more than just the physical; it is a holistic

approach which includes people's spiritual, psychological and emotional needs.

We are all called to serve.

It is just a matter of finding the way that best suits your interests and talents.

See our website and Facebook page for opportunities to come and spend some time with us in prayer and get to know the Sisters.

We regularly host retreat days and prayer events which are open to all young adults.

If you feel that God is calling you, you are welcome to contact our Vocations Director in confidence.



Foundress Josephine Potel

Sisters of Bon Secours



Our Mission as Sisters of Bon Secours since 1824 is to bring compassion and healing, by serving God's people in a diversity of ministries.

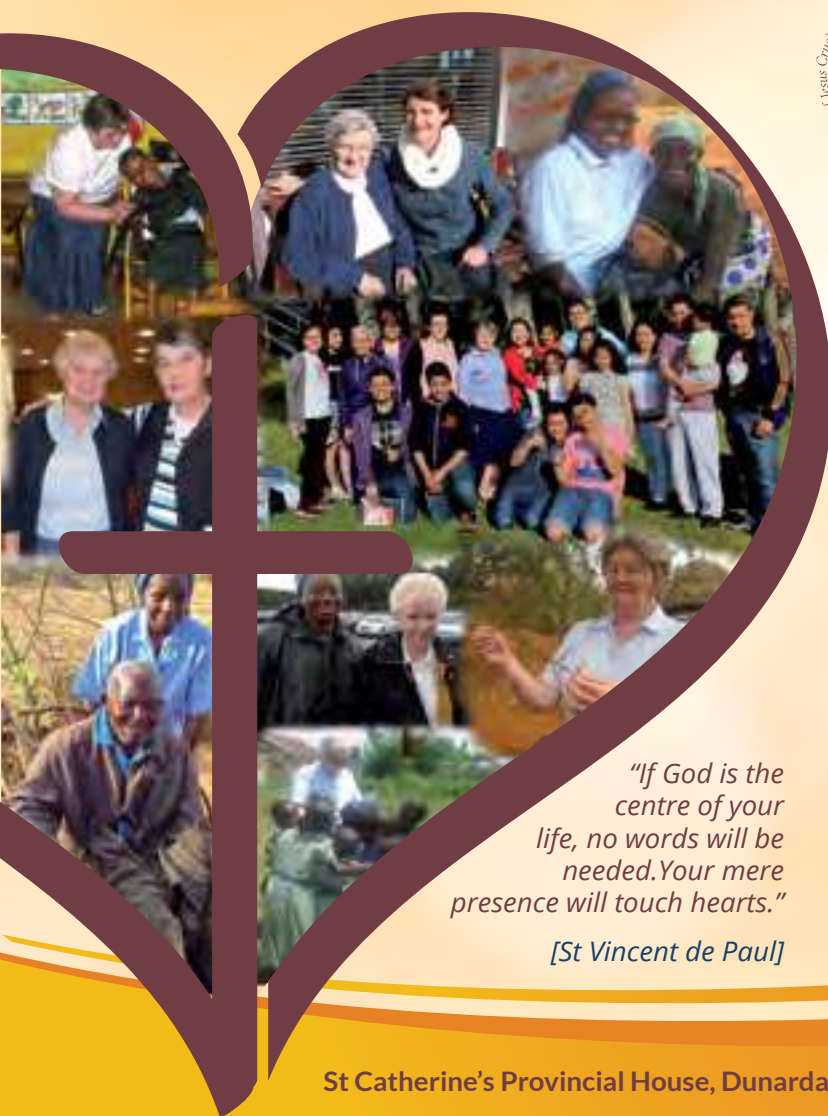


Contact us to learn more about the Sisters of Bon Secours

Website: <http://www.bonsecourssisters.ie/>

Email: eavopost@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/sistersbonsecoursireland/> @BonSecoursIre



"If God is the centre of your life, no words will be needed. Your mere presence will touch hearts."

[St Vincent de Paul]



DAUGHTERS of CHARITY

IRISH PROVINCE

The Daughters of Charity first came to Ireland in 1855 when the country was still recovering from the effects of the Famine and great poverty abounded. Today the Irish Province of the Daughters of Charity comprises twenty-four houses across the country and five in Kenya. The Irish Province also fostered the growth of the now thriving Province of Nigeria. In addition to Kenya Irish sisters are also on mission in Nigeria and Ethiopia.

Our Ministries

The ministries of the Daughters of Charity today in Ireland are many and varied. Sisters are engaged in:

- Social and Community Services
- Services for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities
- Child and Family Services
- Services for refugees, migrants and homeless
- Parish ministry
- Prison Ministry
- Care of older persons
- Hospice care

www.daughtersofcharity.ie

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When Fr Augustine Planque founded our congregation in 1876 he did so with a clear vision and mission. His vision was that the poor and marginalised in the African continent, especially women and children, would be cherished, valued and educated. His mission was to establish a congregation of far seeing missionary sisters who shared his love for the enrichment of people through sharing the joy of the Gospel with them and practicing the Gospel values in a joyful, sincere and committed way. His dream was realised and today we stand at some 750 Sisters spread over 19 countries in three continents. Fr Augustine's dream, like a little seed, has now grown into a strong sturdy unshakeable tree whose branches offer faith, hope, charity, love

OLA Sisters in Lebanon



and light. It is truly Ad Gentes, bringing the Gospel to all people, to the ends of the earth, in action.

Services

We serve the people we work for and with in many

ways; healthcare, education, peace and justice. So why not think of joining us... a young woman has contacted us and is contemplating joining our order but she has a lot of questions!

More Information

Sr Mary Crowley, OLA Vocations: labyrinth@olairland.ie
Website: www.olairland.ie

OLA Communities in Ireland

- OLA Community Ardfoyle, Cork: 021 4291851
- OLA Community Dublin: 01 6685796
- OLA Community Claremorris, Co. Mayo: 094 9373569
- OLA Community Rostrevor, Co. Down: 048 41737653

Interested in...

Volunteering with OLA?
Email volunteer@olairland.ie
OLA Lay Mission Movement (LMM) in Ireland? Email imm@olairland.ie



Sr Mary Crowley (back row, right), OLA Vocations Director, with OLA Sisters and volunteers during World Youth Day 2016 in Poland

Dear Sr Katie,

I am 25 year old woman who loves life, laughter, fun and friends. I love travelling and I am enjoying my job but there is a restlessness within me, it seems like I am on a search but I am not sure exactly what I am searching for. At the back of my mind is a feeling that I could think about joining a religious missionary order but I am afraid as it is such a huge leap... Please help! – *Aisling*

Dear Aisling,

I know how you feel! I was confused too. It's a big decision, a huge jump into the unknown but 30 years later I can safely say it was the best one I ever made. My life is rich, I have had wonderful experiences and opportunities as well as the fulfilment of knowing that I have made some positive difference in the lives of those I have served. It is a joy to walk with people, to share their journey, to learn and to teach. We are blessed to know the word of God and it is a great privilege to be able to share it with others. – *Sr Katie*

Dear Sr Katie,

Yeah, but thirty years ago when you joined it was still quite a different world. None of my friends would even consider joining a religious missionary order and I am scared I will lose contact with them. Also, I don't even know what I would do if I joined you, like what would I do all day? Pray? – *Aisling*

Dear Aisling,

Well, you wouldn't be idle that's for sure. You could be anything you wanted..You could study to be a Doctor, a Solicitor, a Social Worker...we work across so many areas, Justice and Peace, Healthcare, Education so you would have plenty of scope. We are a presence in 19 countries. Your work is your prayer! As for your friends, you will never lose contact with your real friends and the great thing is as a missionary you will make wonderful friends. – *Sr Katie*

Dear Sr Katie,

What about having to live with strangers? I would find it very difficult. And I may have to learn new languages, I hate languages. – *Aisling*

Dear Aisling,

Living in community is not always easy! We are all individuals and very human so of course there can be difficulties. The most important thing is to respect and value your fellow missionaries. As for learning languages, the wonderful thing is you will be learning as you work and live and it's much easier than you would think. It is a great way of making new friends too. – *Sr Katie*

Dear Sr Katie,

Ok but what if I regret it? Say if I find the life too challenging and what if I meet somebody, fall in love and want to get married..have children? – *Aisling*

Dear Aisling,

Yes, I know the great imponderables!. We all question things in life. Single people, married people and religious people. None of us ever know for sure if we have done the right thing. The best way I can explain it is to give what you do decide to do your best possible shot. Give it your all and remember being able to bring the word of Jesus to those who don't know Him is a wonderful example of love. It brings a richness to the giver and the receiver. All missionaries will tell you that they receive far more than they ever possibly give. – *Sr Katie*

Dear Sr Katie,

Thanks! That really helps but I would love to see how you live before I could even contemplate making a decision. – *Aisling*

Dear Aisling,

You're welcome! I do hope I have given you some better understanding of what we do. Why not come and visit us at any of our four communities in Cork, Dublin, Claremorris or Rostrevor? We would love to share with you our joy in knowing and loving God and making God known and loved. – *Sr Katie*



Sr Mariela, OLA, on mission in Kaduna, Nigeria.

Cork Poor Clare Sisters

In October 2013, on a visit to Assisi, the home of our foundress, St. Clare of Assisi, Pope Francis spoke to young people. He spoke about a calling from God, a vocation: "Family life is the vocation that God inscribed into the nature of man and woman and there is another vocation which is complementary to marriage: the call to celibacy and virginity for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the vocation that Jesus Himself lived. How do you follow it? How do you recognise it? I will respond with two essential elements on how to recognise the vocation to priesthood and to consecrated life. Praying and walking in the Church.

A powerful experience

A powerful experience of God is always at the origin of every vocation to consecrated life. It is God who calls; however it is important to have a daily relationship with him, to listen to him in silence before the Tabernacle... to draw near to the sacraments. Virginity for the kingdom of God is not a 'no', it is a 'yes'! ... at its core there is a 'yes', as a response to Christ's total 'yes' to us, and this 'yes' makes us fruitful."

"Life is always beautiful when we choose to live it fully, when we choose to leave a mark."

Pope Francis (Krakow, 2016)

Improve the world

Pope Francis recently addressed these words to young people, speaking about the Virgin Mary: "Like the young woman of Nazareth, you can improve the world and leave an imprint that makes a mark on history – your history and that of many others. The Church and society need you. With your plans and your courage, with your dreams and ideals, walls of stagnation fall and roads open up that lead us to a better, fairer, more humane world.

As you follow this path, I encourage you to cultivate a relationship of familiarity and friendship with Our Lady. She is your Mother. Speak to her as you would to a Mother. Together with her, give thanks for the precious gift of faith that you have received from your elders, and entrust your whole life to her. She is a good Mother who listens to you and embraces you, who loves you and walks together with you."



If you think that God may be calling you to religious life as a Poor Clare contemplative Sister, please visit our website www.poorclarescork.ie or find us on Facebook. You may email us: vocationspoorclarescork@gmail.com

We also host afternoons during the year for women interested in finding out more about our way of life. We will be very happy to be of assistance to any young woman who is sincerely searching for God's will for her.



SAVE THE DATE! Our next "Come and See" Vocations Afternoon is on **Sat. June 17th, from 2 – 4 pm, here at our Monastery on College Road, Cork.**

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His constant presence.

A spirit of prayer

A great trust in God's care.

He gifted her with

A deep awareness of the great love of God for each person

A desire to reach out to anyone in any kind of need, anywhere.



"Nothing is stronger than love as
it is the spring of all things"
(Servant of God, Fr. Peter Joseph Triest, Founder)



Congregation of The



Brothers of Charity

Brothers of Charity

The Brothers of Charity is a Religious Congregation with a presence in 30 countries. The Communities live and pray together and provide overall governance for the Services under the aegis of the Congregation.

Bro. Noel Corcoran, fc

Belonging to an internationally active movement and rooted in the values of the Christian Gospels, the Brothers of Charity value the dignity and humanity of each person and strive to provide quality services to support people who are in danger of being marginalised.

Our founder

The Congregation was founded by the Servant of God Fr. Peter Triest, in Ghent, Belgium in 1807. A deeply spiritual man with an overarching interest in the poor, he initiated many projects to enhance their lives, e.g., education, nursing, and mental health care. He was inspired to found the Congregation, so that the Brothers could devote themselves fully to his projects and develop their spiritual lives. Fr. Triest is remembered for his many inspirational sermons and texts, particularly on the theme of commitment:

“Through your commitment to others you share in the mission of Jesus Christ. You could not represent Jesus more faithfully than by coming to the assistance of those who call for help. Is this not to resurrect them and lift them out of the depths of the earth? Is it not creating for them a new Heaven and a new Earth?”

– Peter Joseph Triest

The Brothers of Charity first came to Ireland in 1883 and opened a Psychiatric Hospital in Waterford.

Our services

Today our services focus on providing support services to people with an intellectual disability in Ireland and the United Kingdom and many other countries. We also provide a diverse range of services in health, education, social care and community development around the world.

Pastoral support is an integral part of the holistic approach in our services. Christian Celebra-

tion is an essential part of the life of our services and provides rich opportunities to build communities, to raise us above our daily routines, and to affirm the vitality of our Christian identity, our Catholic affirmation and our Charism. We respond to needs in local communities, promoting and supporting positive engagement and interaction between those who use our services and their community, and supporting them to participate in and be included in all facets of community life as equal and valued citizens.

The Brothers of Charity Services is a learning organisation whose responses are based on best practice, and in full recognition of the right of each person to self-determine their life goals and wishes.

More information on the Congregation and its Services, is available from

The Brothers of Charity

Kilcornan House, Clarinbridge, Co. Galway

Tel: 091 796389

Website: www.bocstjosephsregion.org

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vocations@sjog.org.uk

Web:
www.stjohnofgodvocation.ie
www.stjohnofgodvocation.co.uk

Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart

Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods founded the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred heart to respond to the urgent needs of people in their time.

The time and place for Mary and Julian was the 1860s in Australia and the urgent needs of that time could be found especially in the isolated rural parts of the vast country.

Since the foundation of the Congregation more than 800 young Irish women have joined the Sisters of St Joseph. They have come from every county in Ireland. The majority left their families and country in their mid teens.

Inspired by Mary MacKillop

Mary MacKillop was a first generation Australian of Scottish emigrants and Fr Julian Tenison Woods who was born in England had Irish parents. The young Irish women who were inspired by the same vision as Mary and Julian travelled across the country areas of Australia and New Zealand, living in twos and threes and settling in small towns and outposts and in urban working class areas. The Sisters



also became part of the Aboriginal communities of Australia, the Maori communities of New Zealand and over the years, the communities of Peru and East Timor.

The Sisters' Irishness became layered with heat, dust storms, plagues of insects and mice, floods, cyclones, earth quakes and bush fires as they embedded themselves in the life and struggles of the local

people. Inspired by their deep love of God and the desire to relieve suffering and bring hope, they energetically gave of their gifts and their resourcefulness.

The Irish Sisters of St Joseph are remembered as great teachers, nurses, musicians, story tellers, cooks, leaders, lecturers, youth workers, artists, gardeners, writers and more. Their sense of humour,

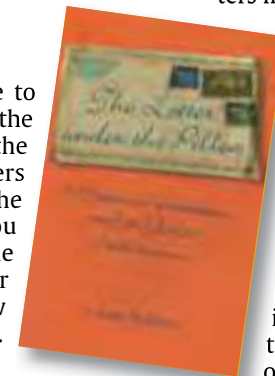
their enjoyment of the craic, their dancing and sing songs are legendary and around many a camp fire, at a barbeque or a party, you will hear Australians and New Zealanders reciting or singing from a Celtic repertoire inherited from the Irish Sisters of St Joseph.

“The faith of these Sisters has always been strong, based on the solid foundation received from their Irish parents.

The faith of these Sisters has always been strong, based on the solid foundation received from their Irish parents. Today there are 850 Sisters of St Joseph, mainly in Australia and New Zealand. There are 97 Irish Sisters and 40 are now living here in Ireland.

Know more

If you would like to learn more about the Irish Sisters and the story of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, you might like to read *The Letter Under the Pillow* by Clare Aherne. This book published only last year can be purchased from the following



bookshops: Veritas Bookshop in Ennis; Just Books in Mullingar; and O'Mahoney's Bookshop in Limerick.

Challenges

The twenty first century has brought new problems to our world. Our Congregation is evolving in different ways endeavouring to find creative and brave approaches to the challenges of our era. Our ministry is still among those for whom Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods founded the Congregation – those people struggling in their lives, those with scarce resources, those on the edges and those often overlooked in our societies.

Josephite spirituality can be seen as an energy that seeks right relationship with God, others, self and the earth. Some women choose to live as vowed members and others choose to be affiliated with the Sisters in a variety of different ways.

Contact us

If you are a woman of faith and courage and feel you have a call to be associated with the Sisters of St Joseph or if you are at a cross roads, wondering what God has waiting for you or how you can bring hope and joy to others, then you are invited to be in contact with one of the Sisters by emailing ireland@sosj.org.au or reading more on our web page: www.sosj.org.au



The Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus



We are an International Congregation of around 1200 Sisters spread across four continents in 25 communities, centred on love for Christ in the Eucharist. We work in partnership with others who share a vision of a just world where people see each other as sisters and brothers and are united in the challenge to make the world a better place for everyone.



Our foundress St. Raphaela Mary was convinced that the impulse and the energy to carry out our mission in the Church is rooted in our relationship with Jesus, therefore daily celebration of the Eucharist and Eucharistic Adoration are central to our Mission. St. Raphaela Mary had a universal spirit and desired that all Handmaids would have the same spirit being ready to care for people in any part of the world. Her message to them was that: “The Heart of a Handmaid should be as big as the whole world”.

“THE HEART OF A HANDMAID SHOULD BE AS BIG AS THE WHOLE WORLD”



As Handmaids with a worldwide vision we are called to work for justice and reconciliation in a broken and divided world through:

EDUCATION:

At all levels and in all circumstances including some areas of health care.

SPIRITUALITY:

Retreats, Spiritual Direction, Prayer groups.

PARISH MINISTRY:

Sacramental preparation, visiting the sick, caring for refugees, the homeless and marginalised.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

If you would like to know more contact Sr Sarah Anne at 012889963. Find us on St. Raphaela's, Stillorgan, Dublin. Or look at our website www.acilondon.org.uk or www.congregacion-aci.org

This year the Medical Missionaries of Mary *celebrate 80 years* since our foundation.

MEDICAL
MISSIONARIES
of MARY



MMM

*Rooted and
Founded
in Love*

Marie Martin: *Foundress of the Medical Missionaries of Mary*

Marie Martin was a pioneer in health services, in women's development, education, and religious life. Born in Ireland in 1892, she worked as a Red Cross nurse during World War I. Her experience convinced her about what could be achieved by a group of women dedicated to God in bringing health care to places of great need, especially for mothers and children. At the time, it was radical thinking. Despite the needs, the Church did not allow women religious to practice surgery or obstetrics.

Marie said, 'How this was to be done I'd no idea but ... I prayed and waited.' Thus began many years of searching. The search included working in Nigeria as a lay missionary and later the thought of joining the Carmelites. She was encouraged instead to find an order that would do the work she saw as so necessary. Gathering a small group around her, she arranged for their spiritual training at the Benedictine foundation in Glenstal, Ireland.

In 1936, Rome gave permission for religious to do maternity work in mission countries, encouraging forming societies for this purpose. Approval soon came for Marie's plans to found an organization including all branches of medicine.

When it wasn't possible to establish the new society in Ireland, arrangements were made to start in Africa instead. In late 1936, Marie Martin sailed for Nigeria with two companions to make the final plans. After Easter 1937, the Church authorized foundation of the Congregation of the Medical Missionaries of Mary and for the vows of Foundress to be received. Marie was then to return to Ireland to begin a foundation there.

God seemed to have other plans when Marie became very ill. Nevertheless, on 4 April 1937, Marie Helena Martin professed her vows, and so began the Medical Missionaries of Mary. When she sailed for home, it was thought she would not reach Ireland alive. Nevertheless, as Marie said, and was to be shown true on many occasions: 'If God wishes this, nothing will stop it.'



MMMs meet with the community in South Sudan prior to borehole drilling.

Mission South Sudan

In the Republic of South Sudan, MMMs of three nationalities living in community witness to God's love and compassion. This young nation has known more than three years of war, displacing over three million people. In the midst of recurrent conflict our Sisters continue to work with the people to bring about a better quality of life – as MMMs have always done.

*MMMs are involved in Capacitar training
for people affected by trauma.*



Eighty years on

Our MMM mission is an adventure in faith, hope and love that can bring us to places or communities where people live in great poverty, lack basic health care or experience human tragedy and deep suffering. There we believe our work of healing and human development makes God's presence alive and gives dignity even to the most marginalized and stigmatized people in our world.

Our Mission Statement

As Medical Missionaries of Mary, in a world deeply and violently divided, we are women on fire with the healing love of God. Engaging our own pain and vulnerability, we go to peoples of different cultures, where human needs are greatest. Our belief in the inter-relatedness of God's creation urges us to embrace holistic healing and to work for reconciliation, justice and peace.

Where we are

MMMs can be found in Angola, the Republic of Benin, Brazil, England, Honduras, Ireland, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, the Republic of South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and the USA. At present there are about three hundred and fifty MMM Sisters from nineteen different nationalities.



*New MMM
Associates
in Malawi*

MMM Associates

After our 1997 Congregational Chapter we began to invite interested lay women and men to share our MMM spirituality and healing charism in a more official way. Associates of the Medical Missionaries of Mary (AMMMs) continue to live their own unique calls, life choices and commitments as part of the missionary thrust of the whole Church. There are now over 140 AMMMs in 17 countries around the globe.

*To find out more about the work of the
MEDICAL MISSIONARIES of MARY
come visit us at:*

www.mmmworldwide.org

or contact

Sr. Brenda Swan at

brendaswanmmm@gmail.com

Carmelite Sisters for Aged and Infirm



We are consecrated religious in the Catholic Church and members of a Congregation founded by Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa, dedicated to the service and care of the Aged and Infirm, in the spirit and tradition of the Carmelite Order.

We are women who share a vision that love makes a difference in the world. We are diverse in age, background and training but are united in our belief that life is precious, from the moment of conception to its natural end. Life is full of memories pieced together to form God's handwoven tapestry.

Our story is tied to the story of every man and woman at the autumn of life - their joys and sorrows, their pains and consolations, their love of family, their hopes and dreams, their search for God and their finding Him.

Our life is about holding the hand of an aged person and giving meaning to their lives. It is about being a mother, a sister, a daughter and a friend to someone who is another's mother, sister, friend and loved one.

We are Carmelites who follow the Rule of St Albert and are nourished by the tradition and examples of St



Elias, Mary, St Teresa, St Thérèse and many holy men and women of the Carmelite Order. We follow the example and vision of our foundress, Venerable Mary Angeline Teresa. We minister to Christ in the person of the elderly but always return to the spiritual mount of our prayer and contemplation.

Community life

Our community life is a sharing of common goals in prayer, ministry and service. It is a visible pledge of our relationship with Christ,

with each other and with the whole Church, the People of God. Community living is an expression of faith manifested in the pursuit of a call heard in the silence of a heart, a manifestation of hope in the promise of life and happiness in God, and the struggle of living the life of charity commissioned to us by Jesus amidst human imperfections and limitations. It is a visible sign of how God's grace can triumph over human frailties and accomplish the works of God - works of love, joy, charity - among the Sisters and God's people.

There is unity in diversity... The difference is LOVE.SM

Vocation

A vocation is a call from God to dedicate one's life to Him. Not all calls are to the religious life. That is where the process of discernment or "sorting out" comes in. For some, a time away to be silent and alone, and to engage in serious praying, reveal helpful answers. For many, the help of a spiritual director or pastor, may even be more helpful. The important thing is not to ignore the call.

The question of 'how?'

How do I know if I have a vocation to the Religious life? Ask questions! Attend vocation retreats! Pray and

read the Word of God! Talk to a Sister or Priest! Keep yourself open to God's inspirations!

Even though God speaks uniquely to each person in the depths of one's heart, there are signs of a religious calling that can help you discern if God is inviting you to this state of life.

The question of 'what to do?'

Follow your "instinct" and check out the community and spirituality that attract you.

If you are interested to know more about our religious community, contact us.

For more information, contact:
Sr. Maria Therese Healy, O.Carm.
012806993 | smtjhealy57@gmail.com
www.carmelitesisters.com

Monastery of St Catherine of Siena Dominican Nuns, Drogheda

In his recent Apostolic Constitution to Contemplative women, Pope Francis describes the hallmarks of contemplative life as a **continual seeking of the face of God** in a world which ignores His Presence and **unconditional love for Christ** who "first loved us and gave Himself up for us."

Because the Church counts on the prayers and self-sacrifice of contemplatives, to bring the good news of the Gospel to the people of today, he urges us to be 'torches' to guide people along their journey through the dark night of time. (cf VDQ, Pope Francis, 29th June, 2016)

Ever since St Dominic established the first monastery of nuns (over 800 years ago) and associated them with his preaching through their prayer and penance, women from all walks of life have been inspired to dedicate themselves to the **Monastic Contemplative way of life in the Order of Preachers** (popularly known as Dominicans).

By our life of prayer, centred on the Eucharist with solemn celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, *Lectio Divina*, study, devotion to Mary and her Rosary, supporting each other in our daily work in community, imploring God's mercy for our broken and wounded world, we try to bear witness to the Truth of the Gospel which our Dominican brothers and sisters, who are engaged in an active apostolate, preach.

All who wish to join us in our chapel for Eucharistic Adoration and liturgy are welcome. We provide four self-catering retreat rooms for those who wish to come apart for some quiet time.



An ever deepening friendship with Christ pervades and unifies all the diverse activities of our monastic day. It is this dynamic love which transforms our simple life-style into an adventure—which is ever fresh, ever new!

"The Love of one person compensates for the hatred of millions" Gandhi
Is the Lord calling YOU to a life of love and Adoration?

Our next vocations discernment weekend is:
9th – 11th June 2017

More information on our website:
www.dominicannuns.ie
www.dominicannunsireland.blogspot.com

Contact: Sr Breda OP, siena3@eircom.net
Tel: 041 9838524

Monastery of St Catherine of Siena
The Twenties, Drogheda.



“Leave Everything Behind and Follow Me”

The Vocation Story of Rev Fr Leonard S. Ayuyao, SSS

In the Bible, we learn that some of the major personalities were called by God through a dream or while they were sleeping. In the Old Testament, the one person that I remember that was called by God to serve Him is Samuel. While in the New Testament, I believe St. Joseph, the husband of Mary, would be the best example of God's call through a dream. The reason that I used this as my introduction is because I have the same experience with these people who were called by God in their dreams. In this modern and technological age, believe or not, I had a real encounter with God through a dream.

But, before going further to my religious experience, let me first give you a little background of myself. I am Leonard S. Ayuyao. I am the second child of Mr. Isidoro G. Ayuyao, III and Mila O. Sandoval. We are four in the family. My father died at a young age. He was 36 years old only when he returned to our creator. Thus, my mother practically raised the four of us alone. Although I was born in Makati City (which was only a municipality and part of the Rizal province in the year I was born), I grew up in the little town (now a city) of San Pedro, Laguna. I finished my primary and secondary schooling in Canossa School, a Catholic School administered by the Canossian Sisters. I got my degree in B.S. Industrial Engineering at the University of Santo Tomas, a Dominican administered Catholic university in Manila. Then, I worked as a Manufacturing Engineer in Epson Precision Philippines Inc., a subsidiary of Seiko Epson Corporation, a Japanese manufacturing firm. I stayed there for almost 11 years before I decided to try to leave everything behind and follow God.

Jesus called me

Yes! “Leave everything behind and follow Me,” these were the words that I got from Christ when He appeared to me in my dreams. Honestly, Jesus called me in the lowest point in my life. I was facing a lot of personal issues back in those days. Thus, in that night that the Lord sent His invitation, my answer was these words, “Lord, I cannot do it because I am a sinner.” However, that night became the turning point of my life. I kept that experience in my heart. As the days went by after that night, God kept on knocking on my heart by sending some messages through different things. Like, one night while I was watching the television, I found myself watching a Filipino film about a young man who was just ordained as a deacon. While living his diaconal ministry, he faced some challenges that gave



him some doubts about his vocation. At the end, these challenges did not hinder him to follow God's call. That movie struck me and made me think of my own experience of God's calling. Another experience was during a vigil for the Solemnity of Christ the King in our parish. Our parish priest presented a video about late vocations which gave me an idea that it is not too late for me to enter the seminary.

Discerning time

Almost a year had passed after that religious experience, a friend of mine invited me to join a Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS) sponsored by a Catholic charismatic movement, which I thought was a retreat that I badly needed. During that seminar, I felt that all my sins were washed away by God to the saving power of Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit. Because of this, another religious experience, I stayed with the charismatic group. I honestly told them that I thought I had a calling to become a priest. They helped me to discern while joining their activities, until such a time when I was preparing myself for the Singles Encounter that I discovered all the things that were happening to me were another chance for me to serve Him. Thus, I finally knew that I had a vocation to the priesthood.

Then, on the same weekend, my mother and I went to mass in a mall so that after the mass she could do her shopping. Before the mass ended, the priest introduced his congregation to the people and invited all single males who has an inclination to become a priest to join them. The name of the order was the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament. I did not approach the priest after the mass to inquire because I was a really shy person. As I had the name of his religious order, I figured I would just search it on the internet. Unfortunately, at that time, I couldn't

find any contact number for the congregation, so I gave up and just continued praying that God would give me a congregation or seminary where I could join and eventually become a priest.

Be a sacramentino!

After five months of staying with the charismatic movement, my spiritual adviser in the group, learned about my interest of joining the seminary. So, one night before starting our praise and worship, he approached me and offered to help me find a seminary. He provided me with two religious orders. One is based in Canada, and the other one was here in the Philippines, where he knows two priests and who he happened to be friends with since childhood. The following week, he called me up to tell me that one of his friends would talk to me. Finally, I met the priest who introduced himself as Fr. Froi. He then introduced me to the congregation he belonged to using their Latin name - Societas Santissimi Sacramenti. Afterwards, he handed me a brochure and said, “By the way, this is our English name, Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament.” I replied with an exultant voice, “Father! I was looking for this Congregation for a long time.” I told him where I first heard of the Congregation, and then, he invited me to meet up with Blessed Sacrament Vocation Club in Sta. Cruz Parish in Manila where I would also talk to the Vocation Director. After meeting the Vocation Director, in May 2007, I was accepted as a postulant of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament under the Province of Our Lady of the Assumption. In the Solemnity of Corpus Christi of 2008, I took my religious habit and officially became a novice. I made my first profession of vows on May 1, 2010 and later took my final vows on August 13, 2016. The following day I was received in



the Order of Deacons. Finally, on February 4, 2017, I was ordained in the Order of Presbyters.

My journey as a seminarian wasn't always easy. But, what kept me going was this whole story of God's call to me, and upon looking at it reflectively, it was God who made it all possible. So, when I was faced with challenges in the seminary formation, I kept holding onto what God had done for me, so therefore, any difficulties would be overcome because God's love is so much bigger than these little obstacles in my jour-

ney. It is through God's presence in my life that I was able to accomplish what I thought was impossible – to leave everything behind and follow His Son. Now, that I am a priest, and my first mission will be in Dublin, Ireland I hope that I can bring Christ's presence in the Eucharist, which I believe God is calling me to do – a minister of His presence among His people through a community of brothers dedicated to living the mysteries of the Eucharist fully through the spirituality of Father Eymard, which is summarized in the vow of personality.

Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament
Province of Saints Peter & Paul, Great Britain & Ireland

"Jesus is there in the Blessed Sacrament, everybody to Him."

"Taken, Blessed, Broken, Shared."

Be a Priest! Be a Brother! Be a Sacramentino!

Is God calling you to be a priest or brother - an Apostle of the Eucharist? Enquire here to contact our vocation in-charge.

IRELAND
Fr. Benigno Dely, SSS
Blessed Sacrament Chapel
18 Biscuits Lane
Dublin 15, Ireland
Tel. No. 01551 8714593
Email: benigno@bss.ie

SCOTLAND
Fr. Peter Dowling, SSS
St. Anthony's Church
43 Langlands Road
Glasgow G21 3BD
Tel. No. 020443 141, 4256476
Email: peterdowling@bss.ie

ENGLAND AND WALES
Fr. Nicholas Wright, SSS
Blessed Sacrament Shrine
at St. Vincent's Church
Chorleywood, Herts.
Tel. No. 04541 351, 3996328
Email: nicholas@bss.ie

Disciples of the Divine Master

“Be witnesses of a different way of doing things, acting, living!” (Pope Francis)

Every call is different. Every response is different. Different experiences, personalities, cultures, generations, all woven together as Disciples of the Divine Master by a common call to serve God.

Founded in 1924 by Blessed James Alberione, we pray daily and come in Adoration to carry the needs of the Church and humanity, interceding for the different forms of media and for truth and goodness in their use. We draw strength there for our mission which is expressed in hospitality, support and service, particularly to priests and indeed to all God's people. Our mission ripples out further as we promote liturgical formation and animation. This includes the production and distribution of sacred art which is available through our Liturgical Centres, a new way of evangelization which encourages an appreciation for beauty and dignity in the liturgy. Every gift and talent can be used to serve God.

For more information: *Disciples of the Divine Master*. Newtownpark Avenue, White's Cross, Blackrock, Co. Dublin. Tel: 01 2114949. Email: pddm-dublin@eircom.net. Website: www.pddm.ie. Facebook: PDDM Dublin



Some of the sisters share:

“The Lord has always been near to me. At every stage He says: “Do not be afraid, I am with you.” Jesus says to all those searching: “Do not be afraid. I love you, you are precious in my eyes.” – Sr Mary

“My favourite Scripture is that of from John 20:11-18. Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, calls her by name and then commissions her to go and tell the disciples He is Risen.” – Sr Casmira

“Each day I attempt to re-read my history and my existence in the light of the word of God, to make the exodus from ‘I’ to ‘we’, to become ‘broken’ like the Eucharistic bread so as to be shared.” – Sr M. Louise

“During my time in Adoration I feel very united to the mission of Jesus when I can bring all people to Him knowing that He will take care of them all.” – Sr M. Brid

“People sometimes ask me if religious life is difficult. I reply, “There are moments of struggle. However, I truly believe that in every struggle that I have faced and overcome, I have felt a greater joy in the service of God.” – Sr Kathryn

“I think of the disciples where Jesus said: “Can you not keep watch one hour with me?” (Mt 14,37) and I thought, ‘can I keep watch and pray with Jesus?’” – Sr M. Gregorina

“Community life has much to offer, uniting our talents and energy, all working for the same cause: the spreading of the Kingdom of God on earth.” – Sr Muriel

Just remember:

‘God created you to do amazing things!’

(Ephesians 2:10)

Don't be afraid to try!



Order of St Camillus

We are group of men, followers of Jesus Christ, inspired by the vision of our founder St Camillus, to commit ourselves before all else to serving the sick. The gifts St Camillus brought to the world, and that he wished his brothers to live out were, compassion, empathy and healing. We are called to serve the sick after the example of the Good Samaritan, Jesus Christ Himself and our founder St Camillus. We share the healing ministry of Christ as priests and brothers of St Camillus and we work as Hospital chaplains, nurses, doctors, social workers, carers and in many other health related professions.



St Camillus

St Camillus de Lellis was born at Buccianico, Italy. He then became a mercenary soldier. He fought for the Venetians against the Turks, was addicted to gambling, and by 1574 was penniless in Naples.

He became a Capuchin novice, but was unable to be professed because of a diseased leg he contracted while fighting the Turks. He devoted himself to caring for the sick, and became director of St Giac-



omo Hospital in Rome.

He received permission to be ordained a priest and decided with two companions, to found his own congregation, the Ministers of the Sick (the Camillians), dedicated to the care of the sick. They ministered to the sick at the Holy Ghost Hospital in Rome, enlarged their facilities in 1585, founded a new house in Naples in 1588, and attended the plague-stricken aboard ships in Rome's harbor and in Rome.

In 1591, the Congregation was raised to the status of Order by Pope Gregory XIV, and in 1591 and 1605, Camillus sent members of his order to minister to wounded troops in Hungary and Croatia, the first field medical unit.

Gravely ill for many years, he resigned as superior of the Order in 1607 and died in Rome on July 14, the year after he attended a General Chapter there. He was canonized in 1746, was declared patron of the sick, with St John of God, by Pope Leo XIII, and patron of nurses and nursing groups by Pope Pius XI.



**Still the sick still need us....
Are you thinking to be Priest or Brother?
Could caring be your life-journey...?**

Camillians are priests and brothers who dedicate their entire lives to the care of the sick. Is it possible that you may be called to this special ministry?

We invite you to join us as priests and brothers in our worldwide caring mission to the sick and their families.

If you are interested in more information about **The Order of St Camillus**, please feel free to contact

Fr. Suresh Babu

The Vocation Director

Order of St Camillus,

South Hill Ave, Blackrock,

Co. Dublin.

Telephone

01-283-3380 / 01-830-4635

Email:

vocations@orderofstcamillus.ie

THE CAPUCHINS

A life of Prayer and Service in the footsteps of St Francis of Assisi



OVER 400 YEARS OF SERVICE IN IRELAND

The Capuchin Franciscan Friars were founded in the early 1500's in Italy with the desire to return to a closer living of the rule of St Francis of Assisi. Capuchins arrived in Ireland in 1616 and since then have become an intrinsic part of the Irish story.

Today in Ireland we have Friaries in Cork, Dublin, Donegal, Carlow and Kilkenny as well as Irish Friars serving overseas in Zambia, South Africa, New Zealand, South Korea and California. Wherever we are found our mission is the same, to be an authentic Gospel presence as Brothers of the People.

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I know if I am called to be a Capuchin Friar?

The process of discovering what God is calling you to is called discernment. It oftentimes begins with a feeling or an experience or encounter that invites and compels us to seek deeper relationship with God, others, and all of Creation. This takes time, patience, prayer and guidance. It requires of us that we open our hearts and begin to trust in God in a whole new way. In many ways, it requires a step into the unknown.

Who can help me discern my vocation?

The Irish Province of the Capuchin Franciscans takes the discernment process very seriously. We are committed to helping men discover their call by means of a comprehensive vocation accompaniment programme. This programme enables people explore the questions they have and to discover some new ones. The aim of accompaniment is to walk with you as a brother as you discern, listen and reflect, while offering sound guidance and practical support. Each and every vocation journey is blessed and unique.

Do you wear a habit?

Yes! Capuchins wear a simple brown habit and white cord. The cord has three knots that serve as a reminder of the three vows we profess.

What are the vows that you take?

We take three vows: poverty, chastity and obedience. Poverty allows us to develop a deeper respect for the world around us and for all the good things that God provides. Chastity encourages us to live with hearts centred on God and obedience invites us to listen deeply to God's plan for us.

How long does it take to train as a Capuchin Friar?

Our training is known as formation and usually takes between six to eight years. A Friar in formation will study, work, pray and minister while growing into what it means to be a Capuchin Friar in the world today. Formation is an exciting and deeply meaningful time.

Was Padre Pio a Capuchin Friar?

Yes, the Capuchin Franciscan Order are blessed to have many saints and St Pio is certainly one of the best known, particularly in Ireland. Saints like Pio, all went through a time of discernment, in fact it was something they did throughout their lives. As St John Paul II reminds us 'we are all called to be Saints'.



That's great, what do I do now? I'd like to find out some more.

To arrange a conversation with our Vocation Promoter, simply e-mail: capuchinvocation@gmail.com

You can also visit the vocation page of our website www.capuchinfranciscans.ie



Fr Dehon and
the Sacred
Heart. Painted
by Goyo



SACRED HEART FATHERS

WHO WE ARE: We are priests and brothers inspired by God's love to live together simply, pray together, and to be, especially among the poor, prophets of love and servants of reconciliation.

OUR VOCATION: In living out our vocation, it is our desire to give witness to the primacy of love in the world and to bind ourselves without reserve to achieving a new humanity in the Heart of Christ. We, the Priests of the Sacred Heart, often introduce ourselves as "Dehonians" in affectionate reference to our Founder, the Venerable Fr. Leo Dehon, a genuine apostle of love and reparation to the Heart of Christ. We are committed to living out and sharing Fr Dehon's charisma, spirituality, and works in the church and in the world.

FR DEHON'S IDEAL was to bring the love of Christ to the people and places society neglects, those in greatest need of His healing touch and compassionate care. Today that ideal unites our members worldwide in the great diversity of our works.

Our service is based on a life of prayer and oblation. It is expressed through our various ministries, our missionary activity, and our on-going priestly and religious formation. According to the signs of the times, and in communion with the life of the Church, we want to contribute to establishing the reign of justice and Christian charity in the world.

DO YOU FEEL CALLED to a life of community and ministry based in the Eucharist, joining a group of dedicated men to work with God's people in this country and around the world?

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact: Fr John Kelly SCJ at 66 Inchicore Road, Dublin, D08 VN5C or provghi@outlook.com

Our Congregation's website can be found at www.dehon.it



LITTLE COMPANY of MARY

- Healthcare • Hospice • Counselling • Youth work • Social Work
- Pastoral care • Prison Ministry • Care of the aged • Refugee Support



Mary Potter
1847 - 1913

In searching there is anguish in finding there is joy. Perhaps you are searching – if so hang in there – you are not alone.
One such person – Mary Potter

She spent many years searching. - A Teacher, engaged to be married; yet restless. On reflection it came to her to LET GO of her DREAMS, PLANS and to engage with the question – What's life about?

At this point she felt called to the poor, oppressed, especially the sick and dying. She contemplated the Calvaries of our World and desired to be like Mary and touch/heal the broken World. A group of followers became the future of her dream – Little Company of Mary. Today our communities can be found in five Continents and respect the prevailing cultures as we serve the needs of the poorest of the poor.

Why not engage with us as part of your search by contacting Sr. Una Boland email: unaboland@yahoo.ie

Religious of Jesus and Mary

Journey with St Claudine and celebrate our Bicentenary

October 6, 2017 – October 6, 2018



Journeying with Claudine
1818-2018

The Religious of Jesus and Mary are engaged in Education in Ireland in six Schools – Four Secondary and two Primary at the following locations:

- Secondary School's at Enniscrone, Co Sligo
- Gortnor Abbey, Crossmolina, Co Mayo
- Salerno, Salthill, Galway
- Jesus and Mary College, Dublin

All are under the Patronage of le Cheile Trust.

The two Primary School's are:

- Scoil Ide, salthill, Galway
- Our Lady's Grove, Dublin 14.

"Praised forever be Jesus and Mary." This is our Motto and Claudine's last words were **"How good God is!"**. She died in 1837 in Lyon.



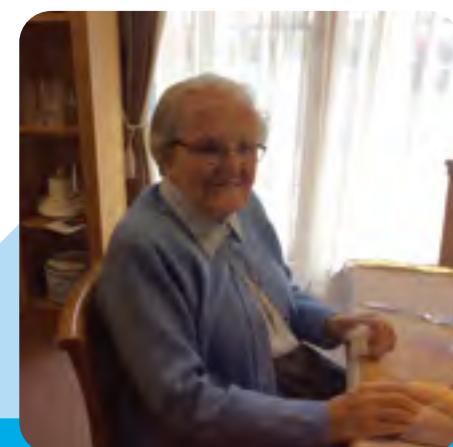
Sr Angela Maughan with leaving cert students from Jesus and Mary Secondary School, Salerno receiving their John Paul II Gold Awards.

We are also involved in:

- Parish Pastoral Ministry,
- Family Counselling,
- Chaplaincy in Schools
- Diocesan Advisors
- Language Support in Primary
- One-to-one teaching in Primary
- Canon Law
- Archival Work
- Prayer Ministry

Sr Anna Dyar, celebrating her Golden Jubilee accompanied by Sr Veronica (centre) and Sr Mary Xavier (right).

Sr Loyola, who will be celebrating her 100 birthday on October 8, 2017.



Back Row: Veronica Heffernan rjm, Ena Hannon rjm, Mairin Mc Donagh rjm, Veronica Barrins rjm, Anna Dyar rjm, Grainne Hanley rjm, and Maureen Mc Gowan rjm / Front Row: Mary Mulrooney rjm, Mary Xavier rjm, Eucharua Maguire rjm, Loyola Geraghty rjm, and Pauline Caffrey rjm.

The Three Priorities of our Charism are:

1. Incarnating forgiveness, reconciliation, and pardon in our lives.
2. Looking at the world through the eyes of Claudine and responding to its miseries.
3. Living out peace and justice with integrity for creation Every year we take on one of the priorities in Community and on some Staffs. It forms part of our Community Project for the year.

Forgiveness was a huge part of the founding spirit of the Congregation of the Religious of Jesus and Mary and is to this day. Our Charism is making Jesus and Mary known through a Christian Education in every social milieu.

"Go, and do the same yourself" (Lk. 10, 25-37)

Salesian Sisters Our Story, Our Call



The worldwide Salesian family still seeks to respond through schools of all kinds, adult education, clubs, retreats, missions, parishes, working with children at risk.

The Salesian Sisters were founded in Italy, in 1872, by two saints, Don Bosco and Maria Domenica Mazzarello. Though very different, they shared a great belief in young people and in the power of education. Don Bosco said that there was no such thing as a bad young person and Maria Domenica believed that if a young person is helped to lead a good life

they will usually continue in that way for the rest of their years. They believed in the goodness and potential of youth and wanted them to develop their talents and use their gifts. They offered a personalised education. As Maria Domenica put it, "You have to study individual characters and know how to deal with them. You have to inspire confidence". They believed that young people were

“
They believed that young people were capable of deep involvement with God, in a happy and cheerful spiritual life.”



capable of deep involvement with God, in a happy and cheerful spiritual life. As the 15-year-old pupil, St Dominic Savio summed it up, "Here we make holiness consist in being always happy"

For them the heart was the centre of an education

that was person centred and holistic, joyful and life-giving. They wanted the young people to be good Christians and honest citizens who were hard working in their studies or in their chosen career and also involved in society and peer ministry.

Following in the footsteps of Francis De Sales, from whom the name Salesian came, Don Bosco believed that everyone is called to holiness, and that included young people. The spirituality that he presented was summed up in the phrase 'prayer, work and play', that is, live your daily life to the full, now.

Salesian Family today

Many of the great needs experienced by Don Bosco and Maria Domenica such as homelessness, youth unemployment, migration, family problems, lack of opportunities for girls, are still with us today. The worldwide Salesian family still seeks to

respond through schools of all kinds, adult education, clubs, retreats, missions, parishes, working with children at risk. The Salesian Sisters came to Ireland in 1920 and today they work in Dublin and Limerick.

“Don Bosco believed that everyone is called to holiness, and that included young people.”

Many lay people of all ages and backgrounds respond to the call to give their voluntary service for a time to work alongside the Salesians as signs of love and joy for the young people in today's world.

For further information see:

www.salesiansisters.net

Volunteering at:

www.videsireland.ie

Monastery of St Alphonsus



The Redemptorines are a Contemplative Order of Nuns in Dublin for 158 years. Our life is centred around prayer holding the needs and cares of the world in our heart before God. Our life is centred around the Eucharist, personal prayer and contemplation. There are 15 in our Community, with two new arrivals to our community last October and November and we feel very blessed by their arrival.

Giving Hope

Our Foundress Blessed Maria Celeste Crostarosa was beatified in June 2016. She was above all a mystic and lived in deep communion

with Christ. She invites us to contemplate and to meditate on the Cross as the great mystery of love and communion with God. We are to feel that we are co-responsible together with Christ in giving real hope and genuine human dignity to each other, especially to those who feel oppressed by others.

Our work

We work for our living by producing Altar Breads and have done so for more than 60 years and we continue to carry on this tradition. As Contemplative Religious we offer this service to the Church, but also depend on the sale of the Altar Breads

for the financial upkeep of the Monastery and the continuation of our life. We are grateful to our loyal customers and Parishes.

Our sisters are trained in music and voice and have studied theology at B.A level and M.A in theology to enhance our liturgy and train new members in our life and tradition. Recently four of our sisters graduated along with other contemplatives in Monastic Studies accredited by the Pontifical University, St Patrick's College, Maynooth. We make candles for all occasions, make habits for ourselves and our Redemptorist confreres and write icons and have some fun



Discover more on www.rednuns.com

Franciscans Friars - OFM

Friar Pat Lynch OFM

Our founder, inspiration and guide in following in the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth is Francis of Assisi (Francesco di Bernardone, 1181-1226). Francis was the son of a wealthy merchant and in 1206 he renounced everything in favour of a life dedicated to God and the marginalised of society. Inspired by God he set about re-building the Church.

Though initially rejected by many because of his radical lifestyle and his counter-cultural stance, men and women soon were inspired by him. By 1209, he had 12 brothers and so they approached Pope Innocent III to seek approval of their way of life: 'The Gospel Way'.

That was the beginning of the Order of Lesser Brothers (*ordo fratrum minorum*) – now known as the Order of Friars Minor (OFM). The Rule of the Friars Minor is this, namely, to observe the Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ by living in obedience without anything of one's own and in chastity.

There are three distinct groups within the Franciscan Family, the First Order (The Order of Friars Minor) which includes the OFM's the OFM conv's and the OFM cap's, the Second Order, the Poor Clares, and the Third Order which includes many groups of friars and sisters as well as the Secular Franciscan Order.

Companions

The Poor Clares and Sisters of St Clare were founded by Clare and Francis. Clare, a young noblewoman of Assisi, along with a few companions renounced everything to join Francis's Gospel movement and their life, primarily a life of prayer and contemplation, still continues to inspire as they minister alongside us in Ireland and throughout the world, supporting us and all people by their lives of prayer, good works and penance.

In addition many lay people responded to Francis' 'Gospel Way' and while living in their homes with their families these 'Brothers and Sisters' began being referred to as the 'Third Order of St Francis' and are better known today as the Secular Franciscans or Order of Franciscans Secular.

The Franciscans have been in Ireland for nearly 800 years and our core commitment is as it was at the beginning "to bring the Good News to the Poor." St Francis set out as priorities for his followers, prayer, brotherhood (fraternity/community) and work. These are still our priorities. These basics



A relaxing weekend for a group of our young friars who are at different stages of their Franciscan formation. Vincent Finnigan (Achill Island), Dave Connolly (Cork), Damian Casey (Waterford), Ronan Sharpley (Leitrim), Denis Aherne (Kerry), Tom Robinson (England), Adrian McLoughlin (Galway), Philip McMahon (Meath), Daraigh Quinn (Dublin) and Drew Keeley (Dublin).



Friar Eamonn O'Driscoll ofm with Friar Denis Aherne and three of this year's postulants, Drew, Daraigh and Philip at the Divine Mercy Conference.

do not change. The type of work (or ministry) changes according to the demands of the Gospel in any given place and in any given time but one thing remains certain, that Francis has as much relevance to our world today as he did in the world over 800 years ago.

St Pope John Paul II gave this invitation to young people: "I invite all young people to follow the example of the Little Poor Man of Assisi as you try to discover these human and religious values which fully answer your deepest values."

Our present Pope Francis chose to be called after St Francis of Assisi, "the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation, the same created world with which we don't have such a good relationship." And according to the well known Franciscan author Richard Rohr in his most recent book *Eager to Love – The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi*: "Pope Francis shows us that the Franciscan vision is possible at every level and in every age. Not only did he take the name Francis but he seems eager to proclaim both the 'foolishness' and the wisdom of the Gospel at every level of society. He has the passion, love and urgency of Francis himself, and has moved the papacy from the palace to the streets."

Franciscans today are called to be persons of prayer, living in community and involved in a variety of ministries. For Francis, the Eucharist became the deepest source of support for his desire for peace and reconciliation. Just a year or two before he died, he said: "I implore all you brothers to show all possible reverence and honour to the most holy Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ in whom that which is in Heaven and on Earth has been brought to peace and reconciled to almighty God." (*A letter to the Entire Order*)

“For Francis, the Eucharist became the deepest source of support for his desire for peace and reconciliation”

Those Friars who have chosen or felt called to be ordained priests within the order minister in our service churches (and often support the local clergy) by celebrating the sacraments particularly the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation.

The other friars, (some of them priests), are involved in a variety of ministries. Our chrism is not to any specific task or ministry rather our primary call is to be brothers among ourselves, to all people and to all God's creation. As friars we seek to respond to this call by our willingness to be sent, serve, and proclaim Christ's Gospel of love to all in Ireland and throughout the world.

Franciscans are especially committed to live out the Church's preferential option for the poor.

We are blessed to have men and women continuing to be inspired by St Francis of Assisi and St Clare who come to join us. If you would like to be part of this team of people inspired by both of these great saints why not get in touch with the vocations director?

Check us out at www.franciscans.ie e-mail address is brpatofm@hotmail.com phone number is : 087 1346267. We look forward to hearing from you and having a conversation. God will do the rest!

Irish Missionary Activity



Friars Ronan, Denis and Tom in Athlone.

Our Lord calls us to go and make disciples of all the nations by sharing the Good News in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Church is missionary by its very essence.

St Francis was a man on fire with the desire to tell others of the love of God that Jesus had made known to us. Even when the numbers of his friars were very few, Francis sent them out two by two to preach the Gospel. He himself went to the Middle East and met the Sultan.

Today there are many thousand Franciscans witnessing to Christ in Mission lands.

Irish Franciscans are present in Central America, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe is now the chief

mission area for the Irish Franciscans.

The friars came to Zimbabwe in the 1950s. Some young Zimbabwean men joined the Order and today there are about 40 friars in the Franciscan Custody of Zimbabwe.

The friars are mainly located in the rural areas. There they are involved in working with people in establishing Christian communities.

They have built schools, hospital and clinics. For the mission of the Church is not concerned just with the soul but with the whole person. They are still inspired by the words of St Francis: "God has sent us into the whole world so that by word and deed we may bear witness to Him."

Ministering at the Ploughing Championships in 2016 Friars Gearoid and Niall





"To have this name,
I would give everything,
all that I am."

FCJ Sisters commit the whole of their lives to Christ. FCJ life is about a personal relationship with Jesus and about allowing that relationship to change you and direct every part of your life.

An International group of Roman Catholic Religious women who live and work in Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa and the Americas, offering Companionship to all they meet along life's way and seeking to find God in everyone and everything.

In Ireland, FCJ's are to be found in Bruff, Co. Limerick, Bunclody, Co. Wexford, Limerick City and Dublin.



Marie Madeleine d'Houet
foundress of the FCJ Sisters



For further information contact: Sr. Geraldine, FCJ Email: geraldinefcj@yahoo.ie

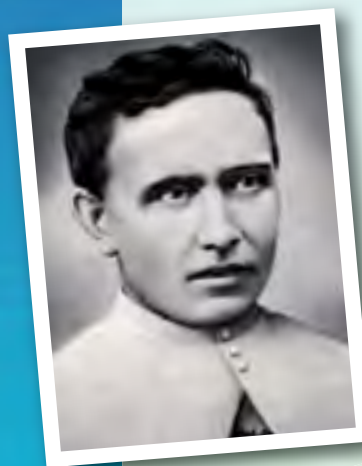
www.fcjsisters.org



CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY

"I HAVE HEARD MY PEOPLE CRY"

The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary was founded in 1800 in France in the aftermath of the French Revolution. It was a time of great disorder and fear. One of God's responses to the cries of the people of that time was to call together a community of men and women who committed themselves to contemplating, living and proclaiming God's compassionate love for all and especially for the most poor and the marginalised.



MORE HEROES NEEDED!

On 10th May, 1873, a young Belgium Missionary priest belonging to the Congregation, having heard the cry of men, woman and children who had been banished to the Island of Molokai due to an outbreak of leprosy (Hansen's Disease), volunteered to go to the Island. His name was Damien De Veuster. He was 33 years of age. From that time until his death in 1889, aged 49, he placed himself at the service of his 'beloved lepers'.

"WHOM SHALL I SEND?"

Today's world is no different. The cries of the poor can still be heard in many places throughout the world. There is a great need for men and women to be messengers of God's compassionate love. Is God calling you?

EUROPE, NORTH & SOUTH AMERICA, AFRICA, JAPAN,
INDIA, INDONESIA, PHILIPPINES, FIJI, TONGA...

WHAT
ABOUT
YOU?

YOU, TOO, CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE AS A SISTER,
BROTHER OR PRIEST OF THE CONGREGATION OF
THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY, WORKING
AT HOME OR ABROAD SPREADING GOD'S LOVE.

For more information contact:
Congregation of the Sacred Hearts (SS.CC) Ireland
27 Northbrook Road, Ranelagh, Dublin 6
ssccdublin@eircom.net | www.sacred-hearts.net | www.sscpcipus.com

Letters

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

Letter of the week

Citizens' Assembly was not a uniquely well-informed body of citizens

Dear Editor, Greg Daly's article on the so-called 'Citizens' Assembly' – 'Unrepresentative advice from an unrepresentative body' (IC 27/04/2017) – is illustrated by a picture of the gathered group of citizens and a sheet showing the result of one of the ballots conducted by the assembly.

The ballot, considering the question of whether abortion should be allowed in cases where doing otherwise posed a "serious risk to the mental health of the woman", was passed by 74% of the handful of citizens gathered in Malahide to consider such things.

Even leaving aside moral issues this

flies in the face of the best available evidence and clinical advice.

In 2011, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists published *The Care of Women Requesting Induced Abortion*, a 145-page set of guidelines rooted firmly in extensive and up-to-date evidence, which considers the psychological impact of abortion.

Based on the best existing research, the guidelines advise doctors that "Women with an unintended pregnancy should be informed that the evidence suggests that they are no more or less likely to suffer adverse psychological sequelae whether they

have an abortion or continue with the pregnancy and have the baby."

In other words, there is no evidential basis for arguing that pregnancy ever poses a psychological danger that can be ended by ending a pregnancy prematurely. The assembly's decision to vote as if the opposite were the case, demonstrates the absurdity of the notion that it was a uniquely well-informed body of citizens.

Yours etc.,

Louise O'Donnell,
Belfast,
Co. Antrim.

We would be collectively responsible for abortion

Dear Editor, In the USA, a jury in the case of a crime carrying the death penalty know that, if they decide on a guilty verdict, the accused is likely to have his human right to life set aside as he is sentenced to death. If there is a referendum on the Eighth Amendment following the Citizens' Assembly recommendations, voters will be collectively responsible, like American juries, to make decisions with long-lasting life-and-death

implications.

These decisions affect not just one or a few, but very many innocent fellow human beings, whose humanity is not suddenly somehow acquired at birth, but is there throughout the stages of pregnancy. It's been calculated that probably over 100,000 Irish people are alive in Ireland because of the Eighth Amendment, so a possible upcoming referendum vote could impact on tens of thousands

of people who are yet to be born - or who will instead be sentenced to death before birth.

A national vote to remove the current text of the Eighth Amendment in the constitution, which protects each unborn child's human right to life throughout pregnancy, would open the way for doctors to set aside this basic human right and legally end a child's life for having a disability, being the child of a criminal, or simply

not being wanted.

The needs of pregnant mothers in sometimes very difficult situations have no easy answers, and it is vital that they have support, compassion, good medical care and practical help available, but yet ultimately respecting the unique worth of each unborn child and his or her right to life.

Yours etc.,
Ruth Foley,
Clondalkin,
Dublin 22.

A process of 'deliberative democracy'?

Dear Editor, Any lingering doubts there might have been among those of us who believe that the outcome of the Citizens' Assembly was pre-ordained were completely removed by the farce of the votes on abortion.

The assembly initially voted against retaining the Eighth Amendment.

A subsequent vote to recommend repealing the Eighth Amendment would have meant that any abortion legislation would have been placed solely in the hands of the Oireachtas, with no explicit protection for the rights of any unborn human beings remaining in the constitution.

This is something which liberal pro-choice activists have been seeking for

years.

Somewhat surprisingly perhaps, and much to the tweeted annoyance of champions of a more liberal abortion regime like Amnesty International Ireland's CEO Colm O'Gorman, the assembly rejected the option to repeal the Eighth in favour of instead amending it.

But the drafters of the motions being put to the assembly had an alternative motion up their sleeves to be deployed in the event that a repeal vote was lost.

And so, in a scene reminiscent of *Groundhog Day*, shortly after the assembly had voted to reject the repeal of the Eighth Amendment, they voted, by almost the exact same margin, in

favour of a 'different' motion, the effect of which would be to repeal the existing pro-life article from the constitution and replace it with one which would explicitly give the Oireachtas the power to legislate for abortion.

So in the space of a few noisy, confused hours on the floor of the assembly, the citizens representing us voted both against and for a repeal of the Eighth Amendment.

The Citizens' Assembly calls this process 'deliberative democracy', magicians call it the 'forced choice'.

Yours etc.,
Brendan Conroy,
Windy Arbour,
Dublin 14.

Citizens' Assembly was unrepresentative

Dear Editor, On Mercy Sunday, 91 "representatives" of the citizenry of this country voted to recommend that the Government hold a referendum to replace the Eighth Amendment to the constitution to allow it to legislate for abortion on grounds which constitute abortion on demand.

The Sunday Times (Irish edition) reported this on the front page. On page three it reported "Lobsters 'feel pain' when boiled alive".

Presumably the 91 members

of the Citizens' Assembly (a statistically unrepresentative group) are unaware that the dismemberment of a live unborn baby in the womb causes pain? But of course they will not have to do the necessary. That will be left to doctors and nurses, who will have no jobs if they disagree.

Yours etc.,
Loretto Browne,
Ashbourne,
Co. Meath.

Cherish all the children

Dear Editor, The controversial recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly that abortion, the direct taking of an innocent human life, should be allowed without restrictions up to the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, and that, amongst other things, it should be permitted up to birth where the child has life limiting conditions, are horrific proposals, which are a blatant denial of the most basic human right, the right to life.

The fact that the assembly made its deadly recommendations virtually 101 years to the day after the Easter Proclamation's promise to cherish all the children of the nation equally adds irony to the horror.

Yours etc.,
Nicola Gleeson, Athenry, Co. Galway.

From out of the mouth of babes

Dear Editor, I was principal at a school for pupils who had physical disabilities in 1983, when the Eighth Amendment became part of our constitution. One young precocious boy took a keen interest in the debate and continually cross-questioned both his parents and his teacher about its meaning; until he was satisfied that he understood its significance, for himself and possibly others with a disability.

Personalising the issue, he finally declared in class: "So when I was in my Mammy's tummy, she and Daddy, and may be others, like doctors or nurses, were talking about me and what should happen to me; whether I was to live or to die. And the only thing that would have been on my side if it was in force then, was this thing they have just voted for now, the Eighth Amendment. I'm for it."

Yours etc.,
Tony Jordan,
Sandymount,
Dublin 4.

We need a papal visit now more than ever before

Dear Editor, Your front page last week (27/04/2017) made for sober reading. I can understand that organisers would not want the Pope's visit to Ireland to be overshadowed by an abortion referendum, but I would appeal to the Irish bishops to lobby for the visit to go ahead. We need Pope Francis here now more than ever to boost the Catholic populace as we face our biggest challenge – the protection of the right to life.

Yours etc.,
Maureen Hanley,
Swords,
Co. 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.

Children's Corner

ERIN FOX



Explore and record your local area

May is here and it's a wonderful month for celebrating many different occasions. It's the month of Mary Our Lady, the month of the Bealtine Festival and it's also Local and Community History month.

The Bealtine Festival celebrates arts and creativity as we age. And Local Community and History month encourages communities to explore their history, while promoting historical awareness of your local area.

In the spirit of Local and Community History month, ask yourself: how well do you know your hometown? You may think you know the place you grew up in pretty well but every place is rich in history. So, for this month, make it your mission to get to know the history of your local community.



If you have moved from another town or country, you may be spoilt for choice over which home area to explore. But you can learn a bit about both to widen your horizons.

As it's also the month of the Bealtine Festival, you can celebrate both, by asking your grandparents and other elderly relatives to share their stories with you.

Pick something creative to do together to explore and discover the stories in your local area.

This can be anything from painting and other crafts, to making a journal. Learn how to do a craft or skill your grandparent learned when they were your age.

For the journal, document your historical journey with your grandparents with a homemade scrapbook.

Choose an area you will both explore together – such as a local building, a local sports team, a local business, or a cherished landmark – and document your findings in the book.

Your grandparents will have written differently to the way that you write now. Learn the style of writing they learned when they were at the same level in school, and use that style to write in the journal. Take photos of your findings too and disperse them throughout the journal.

While you're on your adventures, pack a picnic of your grandparents' favourite food and sweets from their own childhood.

When you go exploring with your grandparents this month, you might run out of days in the month to document everything. But don't just save your project for the month of May. Continue to keep it going as it's something you will really cherish in years to come.

Our job isn't done when children are older



My 17-year-old daughter got her first part time job recently and will be 18 years old soon. In many ways I'm still back a decade ago remembering a daughter who followed me everywhere, thought her mother was the best thing since sliced bread and loved jumping into my bed for a chat and cuddle.

Before the birth of my third daughter, I'd started reading her a book called *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit* by Judith Kerr. It's a bit of an old joke now that I never got to finish it. Life took over, I was busy with the baby and, while I read many other stories to her, I never managed to get back to that one. I always experience a tinge of regret every time it crosses my mind. It seems to represent the passing of time and how quickly weeks and months turn into seasons and years leaving us struggling to catch up with the rapid changes.

One of the hardest things for parents to deal with is their children's growing independence. Teenagers are transitioning and maturing at breakneck speed. There are a few obvious steps in this process.

Effort

My youngest daughter is almost 11 years old and I can see the writing on the wall. Just a year ago, shopping for clothes was very much a joint effort with us both favouring very similar items and having a laugh in the changing rooms while she modelled different options. This year, I'm banished to the waiting area outside and my preferences for floral or frilly elicits exaggerated eye rolls. Within the period of a few months I've been demoted from



A parent's perspective Maria Byrne

commander-in-chief to a mere foot soldier.

We are well used to hearing about how adolescence is confusing and challenging for children. Not as much is written about how anxious parents negotiate the difficulties as they learn to anticipate the rapidly shifting currents of their children's emotions.

One minute your growing child is off to save the world and speaks excitedly about how great it'll be to move out and get their own place. The next minute they're grumbling about having to make a slice of toast or the terrible injustice of having to tidy their own room.

Children start to break away from the cosy comfort of the family circle to build up confidence and get used to ever increasing challenges and responsibilities. As parents, we can feel a bit abandoned during this process.

With our toddlers and small children, we were the centre of their universe, the superheroes who could do anything and who knew everything. Now, our children are looking further afield for heroes and we're left with conflicting emotions of our own.

Does parenting older children mean our job is almost done and that it's time to step aside? Definitely not. In a changing world, the structure, direction and guidance received at home provides the safe haven children

desperately need. Parenting skills evolve as we discover that what worked for small children just doesn't cut it with teenagers.

“Talking to our teenagers is another great way to bond. They open up when they know someone is really listening”

This doesn't mean that all the fun of earlier years is over. Saturday mornings in our home often find me, my younger children and teenagers having impromptu dance sessions with us all clamouring for our choice of song. I know all their favourite artists and I've introduced them to all the hits that I loved as a teenager. There's plenty of good-natured banter and teasing but music is a great way to connect across the generations.

Talking to our teenagers is another great way to bond. They open up when they know someone is really listening and are quick to detect when we aren't giving them our full attention.

The topics can range from the trivial happenings of the day to in depth discussions about the state of the world. It's important to broaden these opportunities for communication particularly around a teenager's faith life;

young people need other adults in their lives who they can discuss their faith with. In the book, *Young Catholic America*, Christian Smith outlines factors which were connected to teenagers remaining active Catholics as adults. One of these is engaging the young person in many religious experiences.

Opportunity

This is another opportunity for family bonding. Families can create great beautiful yearly traditions with parents passing the practices on to their children.

I love the custom of the May altar, a small altar created during the month of May to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Knock Shrine website, www.knockshrine.ie has some great tips about how to do this. It's amazing to see how all age groups can get involved. Don't make the mistake of thinking that your teenager is too old to enjoy these rituals.

Try delegating the organisation of these efforts to him or her. There's great scope for them to use their artistic or musical skills to create an impressive display and, who knows, they might even post the results on Facebook.

I suppose all parents have a bit of unfinished business from the past that they feel a bit sad about. Instead of looking back with regret, a child moving on to a new stage of development is something to celebrate. After stretching their wings and seeking out new horizons, we can be confident that they'll always touch base again.

As knowledgeable advisors, or even grandparents, we'll suddenly recapture our former key role in their lives.



Mags Gargan talks to the new chief executive of the Irish Chaplaincy in London

Sixty years ago, the Irish Bishops' Conference sent nine Columbanus to England to minister to the thousands of Irish emigrants there, mainly to those working in the construction and catering industries. This was how the Irish Chaplaincy in London began and it is particularly poignant for the new chief executive, Eddie Gilmore, because his father was an emigrant from Galway working on the building sites in Coventry at the time and his mother, from Newry, was working in a local café. "So they were just the type the chaplaincy was set up to minister to."

Six decades later, Eddie says the work is as relevant now as ever, but also "very different". "For many years it was made up of priests and some nuns. Those numbers dwindled and now we have one priest on paid staff and one on the board," Eddie says, but the "kind of people we are serving has also changed."

The Irish Chaplaincy is one of the oldest Irish welfare charities in the UK. It offers culturally sensitive support for Irish immigrants and other people of Irish heritage throughout England and Wales, and deals with the most vulnerable and marginalised Irish people in Britain. It provides services in four categories: prisoners, Travellers, seniors and new immigrants.

Adverse effect

"The Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas (ICPO) was set up in response to the large amount of Irish prisoners in British jails and the adverse effect it was having on families back in Ireland, with the lack of access to their loved ones. That is the major service that we are engaged in," Eddie explains. "There was quite a bit of contact with members of the Travelling community, especially those in the criminal justice system, so that became a specific project in recent years."

"In 2005 our seniors project was set up in response to the quite large amount of Irish people who had fallen on hard times in their senior years and were living alone in London in quite poor and squalid conditions, and often with mental health issues as well. We are in touch with 110 elderly Irish people for pastoral outreach, befriending and advocacy," he says.

In the last year the chaplaincy supported 782 Irish prisoners in prison in England and Wales, and 300 families back in Ireland. In addition to that they were in touch with 359 Irish Travellers in prison

Gone but not FORGOTTEN



Eddie Gilmore in the offices of the Irish Chaplaincy in London.

via face-to-face visits and organising Traveller groups in prisons and responding to 30 letters a week. "The Traveller Equality project also provides culturally relevant resources to Irish Travellers in prison," Eddie says. "It provides advice and resources to another charity called the Shannon Trust which does great work in raising literacy levels among prisoners. We provide grants for £10 for prisoners. In the last year we gave over £10,000 in prisoner aid for phone credit and other basics. We do a lot of work around advocacy and any way people need our help," Eddie says.

There are horrendous levels of reoffending in Britain

The chaplaincy is also looking into expanding their work with prisoners with a resettlement project to support prisoners on their release. "At the moment we only support people inside prison we would like to be there to help their transition afterwards. There are horrendous levels of reoffending in Britain and we would like to be able to reduce that."

It is a huge amount of work undertaken by a small team and it goes largely unknown. There is just nine paid staff – seven full time and two part-time – and 18 volunteers. Eddie says he was surprised "by how few volunteers there were with the amount of people in London with Irish connections", but even though he came from an Irish background himself, he hadn't heard of the chaplaincy until he saw the job advertised last year.

"The organisation has had a very low profile," Eddie agrees. Just three months into his new role, one of Eddie's aims is to raise the profile of the charity and on the day of our interview he had just sent out the charity's first newsletter in 60 years.

The chaplaincy also has a number of events coming up to celebrate its 60th anniversary. "We will have a celebration Mass on September 24 in Sacred Heart Kilburn, where many Irish settled when they first

came over," Eddie says. "We'll have Bishop John Kirby of Clonfert, who chairs the Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants and Bishop Paul McAleenan of Westminster diocese who has oversight for ethnic chaplaincies."

Website

"We are planning an evening of music and theatre in July in the London Irish Centre. We are also planning a pilgrimage walk in the summer which will finish with Mass in Westminster Cathedral."

The chaplaincy also plans to relaunch its website, launch an overall social media strategy and a number of newspapers serving the Irish community in the UK have agreed to publish articles on its work. "I think we are doing great work and we need to do more and more people need to be made aware of it," Eddie says.

"We are a small charity with not a very high income. About two thirds of our funding is from the Irish Government's Emigrant Support Programme and we receive some from the Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants and from one or two trust funds. Money has been very tight in recent years and one of my big tasks is to make a long-term fundraising strategy so we can carry on what we are doing but ideally expand and I am confident we can do that."

Eddie also hopes to get more of the younger Irish people who emigrated in the last few years to get involved in the chaplaincy, particularly visiting the elderly Irish. "Potentially there is a lot of young Irish in London who are lonely and it would be of mutual benefit," he says. "I'd like to think that is at the heart of what we do, that mutuality. It is at the heart of all our work. Each person has something to give and to receive. It is important to build relationships with people, whether that is a prisoner or elderly person or young person recently arrived."

For more information contact 0044 207 482 5528 or info@irishchaplaincy.org.uk or see www.irishchaplaincy.org.uk

Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



A succession of buses, ferries, trains and planes had led us to the promised land of Cork. At last, we had arrived home from England for the Easter holidays. A blast of unmistakably brisk Atlantic air greeted us as we stepped off the airplane. The breeze that comes in off the English channel at our Isle of Wight home is gentle and, frankly quite effeminate, compared to Cork's bracing, Atlantic air – its salty fragrance was mixed, as is customary, with just a hint of agricultural slurry.

Driving from the airport, I felt instantly at home, as we sped down long-familiar country lanes, admiring the playful antics of the cheerfully erratic Cork drivers. For Cork is a mysterious land, full of roundabouts, but populated by a people who do not fully understand roundabouts.

The children did not feel properly at home until they saw my mother. Unfortunately, she was not in her rightful place at home with granddad, enthroned in her armchair by the fireplace. Instead, she was in Cork University Hospital, in the midst of an epic hip-replacement operation, its various convoluted stages spanning many weeks. The children's evening prayer had long been that granny's leg would get better soon.

Traffic

Our first task, therefore, was to brave the capricious Cork traffic and go to see nana in hospital. En route, I quickly readjusted to the Cork custom of using the fast lane as the slow lane, and vice versa, which tradition gives the city's dual carriageways a pleasantly continental air. I marveled afresh at the strong local commitment to environmentalism – an admirably green refusal to waste good electricity by using indicator lights.

Arriving unscathed, we walked down the hospital corridors, while the children scampered ahead, hoping to be the first to find nana. Once we arrived in her ward, they rushed to embrace her. Sean

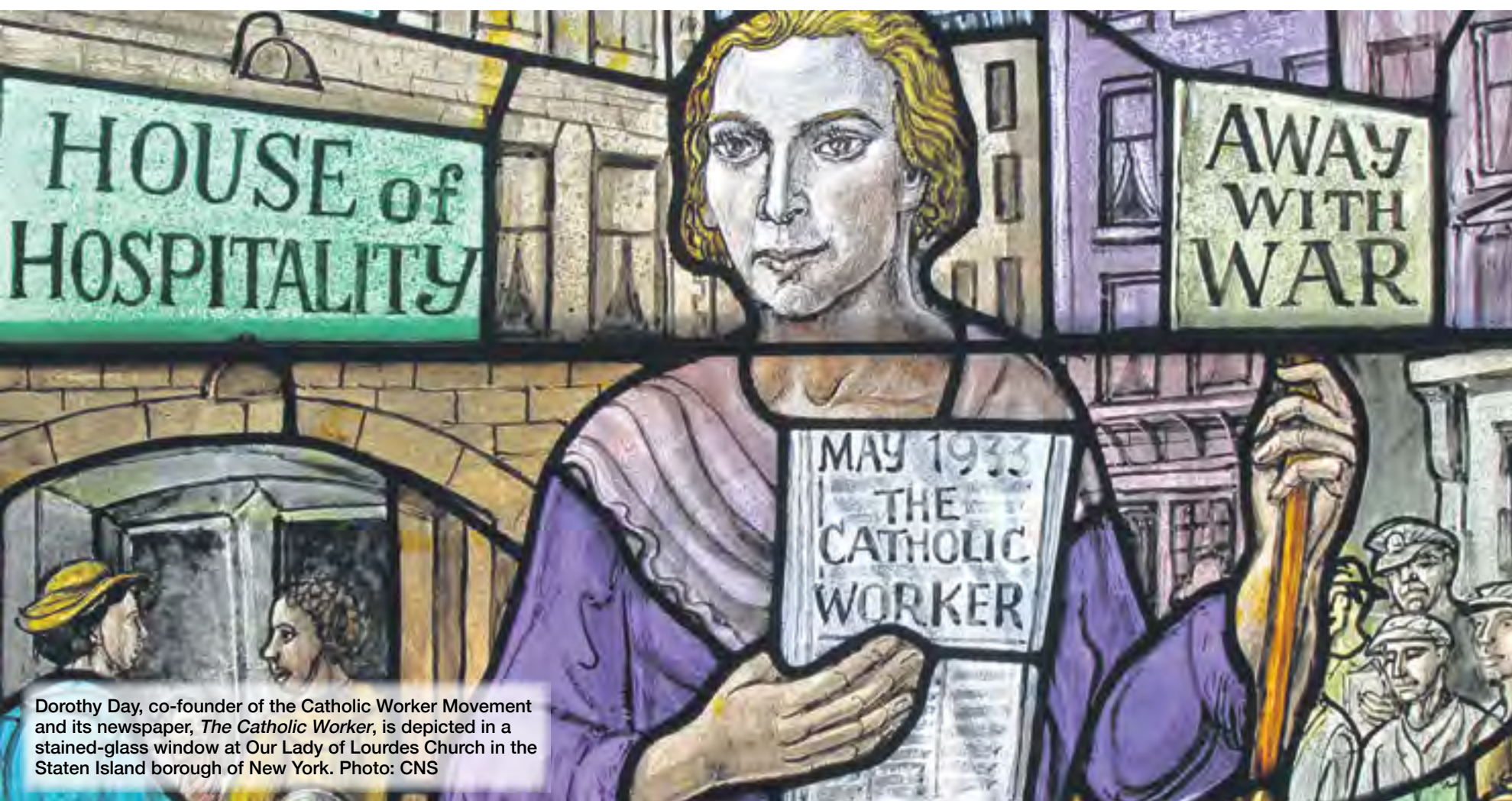
had brought flowers from the garden and a celebratory pack of Jelly Tots. I'll never cease to be amazed by the close bond between grandparents and grandchildren.

More amazing still, was mum's never-ending cheerfulness in the face of adversity. After weeks immobilised, most people would be feeling a bit sorry for themselves. Not my mother. Instead, she was cheerful as ever, enjoying catching up with her steady stream of visitors, keeping abreast of current affairs and engaging with the various characters coming and going from her ward, which was akin to living in a sort of interactive soap opera. I'm only surprised that Channel 4 didn't have hidden cameras on the ward for a new reality show.

Her new morning routine involved being wheeled to the hospital café for coffee and a scone with visitors in slightly less medical surroundings. She is now only a few weeks away from being back on her feet and, given the force of her positive mental attitude, I won't be surprised if she is climbing Kilimanjaro by the end of summer.

I'll never cease to be amazed by the close bond between grandparents and grandchildren

Over Easter, we revisited old haunts, and caught up with friends and family. Leaving Cork a few years ago, the recession was starkly visible everywhere. Nowadays, once empty shops and ghost estates are bustling, while the city is colourful and thriving, with new modern buildings, and cranes reaching skyward as new technology companies expand in the city. This beautiful old port city, is merrily embracing its high tech future. When driverless cars become commonplace, I only hope they are reprogrammed especially for Cork, to occasionally go the wrong way around roundabouts and to randomly change lanes without warning. It would be shame if, in our rush to embrace technology, the city's wonderful old motoring traditions were lost.



Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement and its newspaper, *The Catholic Worker*, is depicted in a stained-glass window at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in the Staten Island borough of New York. Photo: CNS

An extraordinary book

Dorothy Day is alleged to have said: "Don't call me a saint; I don't want to be dismissed that easily!" A new biography on her by her granddaughter, Kate Hennessy, *Dorothy Day – The World will be saved by Beauty: An Intimate Portrait of my Grandmother*, will, I believe, go a long way in preventing anyone from turning Dorothy Day, soon to be officially canonised by the Church, into what she feared, a plaster-saint who can be piously doted-upon and then not taken seriously.

We're all, I'm sure, familiar with who Dorothy Day was and what her life's work was about. Indeed, Pope Francis in addressing the US Congress, singled out four Americans who, he suggests, connected spirituality to a life of service in an extraordinary way: Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Thomas Merton and Dorothy Day. This new biography gives us an honest picture of who this remarkable woman actually was.

This book is extraordinary for a number of reasons: Kate Hennessy is a very good writer, the book is the product of years of research, she's Dorothy's granddaughter and had a very close and special relationship with her, and she manages in telling Dorothy's story to keep both a healthy critical and aesthetic distance. Her insight is both privileged and rare, privileged because of her



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

intimate relationship with Dorothy and rare because most authors who are that intimately tied to their subject cannot maintain a balanced critical distance.

No easy task

Hennessy admits that doing this was no easy task: "That is the danger of holiness on your own doorstep, in your own family. Either you cannot see it for the view is too close, or if you do, you feel you haven't a chance of being the person she was. You feel it is a sad mistake that you are related."

And that combination makes for an extraordinary book that lets us see a side of Dorothy Day we

would never see otherwise. Beyond this being a close-up of Dorothy Day, Hennessy shares stories about some of the key people surrounding Dorothy: her relationship to the man who fathered her child, Forster Battenham, with whom she maintained a life-long friendship. Hennessy's biography shatters the myth that upon her conversion Dorothy coldly and forever turned her back upon this man. Not true.

They remained close their whole lives and Forster, until her death, remained an intimate companion and a faithful supporter.

Central too to this biography is the story of Dorothy's daughter, Tamar, who, while vitally important

in Dorothy's life, is unfairly absent in virtually everything that's known about Dorothy in the popular mind. Tamar's story, which holds its own richness and is not incidental to the history of the Catholic worker, is a critical to understanding Dorothy Day.

There's no understanding of Dorothy without understanding her daughter's story and that of her grandchildren. To understand Dorothy Day you also have to see her as a mother and grandmother.

“What Dorothy never doubted was what faith calls us to: hospitality, non-violence and service to the poor”

Hennessy shares how, when her diaries were opened some years after Dorothy's death, Tamar initially was bitterly resistant to having them released for publication and how that resistance was only lifted when, thanks to the man who transcribed them, Robert Ellsberg, the family and Tamar herself realised that her resistance was rooted in the fact that Dorothy's diaries themselves were unfair in their neglect of Tamar's story and the role of her story within the bigger narrative of Dorothy's life, work and legacy.

The book is a story too of some of the people who played key roles in founding the *Catholic Worker*: Peter Maurin, Stanley Vishnewski, and Ade Bethune.

This isn't a story that follows the classical genre for the lives of the saints, where form is often exaggerated to highlight essence and the result is an over-idealisation that paints the saint into an icon. Hennessy highlights that Dorothy's faith wasn't a faith that never doubted and which walked on water.

What Dorothy never doubted was what faith calls us to: hospitality, non-violence and service to the poor. In these things, Dorothy was single-minded enough to be a saint and that manifested itself in her dogged perseverance so that at end she could say: "The older I get the more I feel that faithfulness and perseverance are the greatest virtues – accepting the sense of failure we all must have in our work, in the work of others around us, since Christ was the world's greatest failure."

That being said, her life was messy, many of her projects were often in crisis, she was forever over-extended, and, in her granddaughter's words: "She was fierce, dictatorial, controlling, judgmental, and often angry, and she knew it. It took the *Catholic Worker*, her own creation, to teach her her lessons."

This is hagiography as it should be written. It tells the story of how a very human person, caught-up in the foibles, weaknesses and mess that beset us all, can, like St Brigid, cast her cloak upon a sunbeam and see it spread until it brings abundance and beauty to the entire countryside.



Dorothy Day.

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



High drama and heated debates

It was a week of high drama, in reality and in fiction. The absorbing crime drama **Line of Duty** came to the end of its fourth series on BBC 1 last Sunday night and what an impact! This show has been consistently the best crime drama that I've seen on TV in the last few years – best for intricate plotting, engaging characterisation and a winning combination of consistency and unpredictability.

Filmed in Northern Ireland, it centres on an anti-corruption unit investigating 'bent coppers', but it rarely goes smoothly and the twists and turns are enthralling. It's adult material but rarely if ever graphic or prurient. That final episode contained startling revelations, some of which, I must admit, I didn't see coming.

Less engaging is clerical crime drama **Grantchester**, back on ITV Sunday nights and be3 on Mondays. Now in its third season, it's creaking more than a tad.

The friendship between Rev. Sidney and the copper Georgie is interesting but unlikely – would the policeman really take the Rev on all his murder cases, and really, aren't there too many murders in such an otherwise idyllic town?

His crusty housekeeper is softening, his gay curate is gaining in maturity and common sense, but there must



Some of the cast of *Line of Duty*.

be something weird in the water. At least there was in the beer in last Sunday's episode which featured a mass poisoning at a cricket match, some ugly racism, pertinent reflections on male-female relationships and a gratuitous sex scene.

Meanwhile, the hospital and abortion dramas continued. On **Liveline** (RTÉ Radio 1), Tuesday of last week, presenter Joe Duffy featured soft interviews with members of the Citizens' Assembly, one very positive about it and one fairly positive but who felt at times intimidated and rushed during its deliberations.

However I thought he was, relatively, overly challenging to those who questioned whether that body was representative. My predecessor

in this slot, Brendan Conroy, raised this issue but was outed, shock horror, as "also involved in various groups", and good grief, the husband of Breda O'Brien.

Controversy

On Tuesday's **Prime Time** Dr Peter Boylan said that a "substantial" amount of the work at the National Maternity Hospital fell into the controversial category where there would be issues with Catholic teaching. And there was I thinking that the work mostly involved bringing babies into the world and saving the lives of mothers and babies where there were medical difficulties.

By the Thursday morning, when interviewed on **The Pat Kenny Show** (Newstalk)

"substantial" had changed to "significant". Dr Boylan spoke of it being a tragedy if the new hospital is "given away", but there was no sense of the tragedy if the new hospital carries out abortions in the event of a change in the law.

On **The Late Debate** (RTÉ Radio 1) on the Tuesday night, Mick Barry TD (AAA & Socialist Party) spoke about women being "forced" to go abroad for an abortion, but thankfully panellist Keith Mills interjected that they didn't have to go – they chose to go.

On the same show on the Wednesday night, Colm O'Gorman of Amnesty International was bemused that he found himself agreeing with David Quinn on some aspects of the hospital issue, but the expected sparks between

PICK OF THE WEEK

MASS

RTÉ One, Sunday, May 7, 11am

Fr Willie Purcell delivers today's Mass with a congregation and singing from The National Vocations Council, Co. Kilkenny.

WHO RUNS OUR SCHOOLS? A WOULD YOU BELIEVE? SPECIAL

RTÉ One, Sunday, May 7, 10.35pm

How the changing face of belief in Ireland is affecting our predominantly Catholic primary school system.

CATHOLIC VIEW FOR WOMEN

EWTN, Monday, May 8, 8am, also Wednesday, 2.30pm and 10.30pm

Radical feminist Sue Ellen Browder shares how her traumatic abortion and a merciful encounter with the Catholic Church changed her mindset.

them came instead from panellist Elaine Byrne, who went so far over the top in her fulminating against mess-ups over so many infrastructure projects in Ireland and against parish pump politics that presenter Cormac Ó hEadhra threatened to throw her out of the studio if she didn't pipe down! I did like her comment that we suffer from "reportitis".

If you wanted a positive example of Catholic-ethos health care, **Tonight With Vincent Browne** (TV3), also on the Tuesday night, was the one to watch. First off there was an engaging interview with Sr Consilio about her work with those suffering from addiction. When the topic moved on to current controversies Krysia

Lynch, of The Association for Improvements in the Maternity Services, started with an unwarranted assumption – "I represent the women of Ireland" and when Browne challenged negative characterisations of Catholic-ethos healthcare she responded with an anecdote about symphysiotomy!

Sr Consilio thought it was not advisable for people with different values to be involved in such a serious matter as a maternity hospital. She valued the gift of life, and said it was "unthinkable" that any child should be deprived of their right to life.

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Aubrey Malone

Film

Unremitting evil in 19th-Century England

Lady Macbeth (18)

People usually talk about Shakespeare's 'Big Four' – *Hamlet*, *Lear*, *Othello* and *Macbeth* – as his pre-eminent works. I wouldn't argue with that. If the first three have a fault it's that few members of their casts can hold a candle to the main character.

Not so with *Macbeth*. Lady Macbeth matches her husband pound for pound in all the scenes they share together. Indeed, it's she who's primarily responsible for turning him into the monster he becomes.

I went to this film imagining it to be a revisionist ver-



Good
★★★

Florence Pugh in *Lady Macbeth*.

sion of Shakespeare's play. A few minutes into it, I realised it bore no relation to Shakespeare at all.

It's based on an 1865 novella from a Russian author, Nikolai Leskov. So why did he call it *Lady Macbeth*? I still

don't know. The main character doesn't even go by that name.

Florence Pugh plays Katherine, a young woman bought auction-style by a cruel mine owner called Boris (Christopher Fairbank) as a bride for

his equally cold middle-aged son Alexander (Paul Hilton).

The marriage is a disaster from the word go. It isn't long before Katherine finds herself in a tempestuous affair with one of Boris' servants, Sebastian (Cosmo Jarvis).

The film is directed in minimalist style by William Oldroyd. Its scenes of sex and violence shock one even more because of such minimalism.

The manner in which Katherine turns from an apparently normal lass to one of the most horrific creatures in contemporary cinema is enough to take your breath away. One reviewer cleverly dubbed the film as "*Wuthering Heights* directed by Alfred Hitchcock".

If I describe it as a success I do so in the way Philip Larkin once said a 'good' poem about failure is a success. Oldroyd has succeeded in portraying a woman so utterly devoid of virtue, so lacking in compassion, as to be perversely rivetting.

Maybe this is where the comparison to Shakespeare's anti-heroine comes in. But if *Macbeth*'s wife was monstrous in many respects, she also had a sensitive side. "All the perfumes of Arabia cannot sweeten this little hand," she says at one point as her guilt starts to gnaw at her. (Was she literature's first OCD sufferer?)

Katherine has no such pangs of conscience. Whether

dispensing with her husband or killing a horse she maintains a froideur that's utterly revolting. At first I thought Pugh looked too modern for the role but as the film went on I felt she was ideal for it.

Lady Macbeth, needless to say, isn't for general consumption. It's been a hit on the art circuit but won't be to the taste of those who look for redeeming features in their leading characters.

Oldroyd takes us on an odyssey through venality and doesn't stop half way. He's as unflinching in his resolve as is his main character, showing us the smothering of an innocent child with the same nonchalance as he films a cat slinking across a room.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



Faith in the march of time

Living Stream of Catholicism: View of the Catholic Church Through the Centuries
by Eamon Flanagan
(St Pauls, £7.95)

J. A. Gaughan

The author sets out to highlight the living stream of Catholicism throughout the centuries and this he achieves in prose and poetry. At the outset he divides world history into a number of segments which will be familiar to students of ecclesiastical history.

The first segment from AD 30 to the conversion of Constantine is dominated by the missionary journeys of St Paul and accounts of the thousands of courageous martyrs from diverse persecutions.

With the emperor's conversion Christianity rapidly spread across the Roman empire. Apologists and theologians availed of the opportunity to clarify and defend the teaching of the nascent Church. The author describes the next segment as the 'Patristic Age'. It featured those who were most influential in the development of Christian doctrine, including the peerless St Augustine.

It was also the period when St Patrick conducted his successful mission to Ireland and witnessed the subsequent extraordinary missionary activity of Ss Patrick, Columba, Columban, and Ita.

The author next focuses his attention on the much-maligned Middle Ages. The



reign of Charlemagne epitomised the recovery of Europe following the collapse of the Roman empire. In concert with the Church he established political unity, stability and civilised living.

Church reform was achieved under the inspiring leadership of Pope Gregory the Great and St Catherine of Siena.

“There are topics on which the author is silent. The first is the Great Schism”

The author points to the rarely mentioned positives arising out of the Crusades. The wondrous splendour of the cathedrals of Europe dates from this period, as does some incomparable religious art.

It saw the rise of the most prestigious universities and was graced by scholars such as Sts Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure. Many religious orders with their specific charisms were



founded at this time. And here, on this island, St Malachy, Archbishop of Armagh and friend of St Bernard of Clairvaux, reformed the Irish Church.

Naturally taking a positive view of the Church, there are topics on which the author is silent. The first is the Great Schism, the final break between the Greek and Latin Churches, a rupture which is now slowly resolving itself, for which many admirers of the rich ancient liturgies preserved in the East, not to mention the intrinsic doctrines of the earliest centuries of Christianity held so firmly by the Greeks, will be grateful.

He also passes over the matter of the far shorter Western schism (1378-1417), an outcome of the exile of the Popes in Avignon. But it could be said that that was a matter of worldly politics: the interference of the state in the affairs of the Church from which little good has ever come, rather than a division over religious essentials. These schisms are for many a troubling matter, but sadly cannot be ignored. Yet how miraculous it is (many would think) that the Church survived them. Later division have been less easily overcome.

The upheaval in Christi-

anity in the 16th Century is described in terms of the Reformation and Counter Reformation. Struggles for political power again prompted religious wars. The period saw its own complement of martyrs on both sides of the great religious divide.

Humanist

Among those was the chancellor of Henry VIII, the exemplary Christian humanist Sir Thomas More. The fission in the unity of Christianity, led to Ireland's Catholics being oppressed by the notorious Penal Laws. In due course the Irish Church recovered and the author describes Ire-

land's remarkable missionary activity in the 19th Century and 20th Century.

In his commentary on the Church in the modern world Flanagan ranges across the five continents. He discusses the up-dating of the Church by the Second Vatican Council. In his concluding segment his comments on the current condition of the Church in Ireland and its prospects for the future are over optimistic.

“History shows that from time to time, religious fervour tends to wax and wane”

For whatever reason, there seems to be far less of the altruism and idealism, which inspires religious vocations, in Ireland today than in earlier centuries. Hence the collapse in vocations, which is little short of catastrophic. Perhaps one can take some consolation from his observation that history shows that from time to time, both inside and outside the Church, religious fervour tends to wax and wane. Be assured the curve will rise again.

In this focused and concentrated book the author provides us with many reasons to be proud of our Faith and our Church. The book is a treasury of information on the Christian Churches. Moreover, there are very few persons who will not find it most useful in fact-checking the march of time.

Felons of our land

Inside the Monkey House: My Time as an Irish Prison Officer

by John Cuffe
(Collins Press, € 12.99)

Peter Hegarty

John Cuffe dealt with some of the most depraved and violent people in this country during his 30 years as a prison officer, between 1978 and 2007.

During his long years in Arbour Hill, where the worst offenders are concentrated for their own protection, he did his duty and treated all inmates equally, whatever their crime. But what a struggle it was. He felt only hatred for Brendan O'Donnell, a triple-killer: '...what I despised about O'Donnell most was his slaying of three-year-old Liam Riney with a bullet through his little head: his ear, to be precise.'

Did this revolting individual really deserve the same respect from him as another prisoner, Dean Lyons, the inoffensive young man everyone knew was innocent of the murder of two women in Grangegorman?

Earlier postings to Mountjoy and Spike Island in the 1980s had fully immersed Cuffe in the realities of the Irish penal system. Both institutions were seriously overcrowded; violent attacks were quotidian; and many of the prisoners were 'different' from those he had come across in his early years: addicted to drugs, they were unpredictable, hard to read. Their weapons included novelties such as blood-filled syringes, as well as knives and blades.

In Cuffe's experience most prisoners are cooperative and quiet. The violent few often direct their violence at themselves. The 'cutters'

mutilate themselves to draw attention to a need or want such as a transfer to a prison closer to home. The quiet, inconspicuous inmates are more likely to be the ones found hanging from the bars of a cell window.

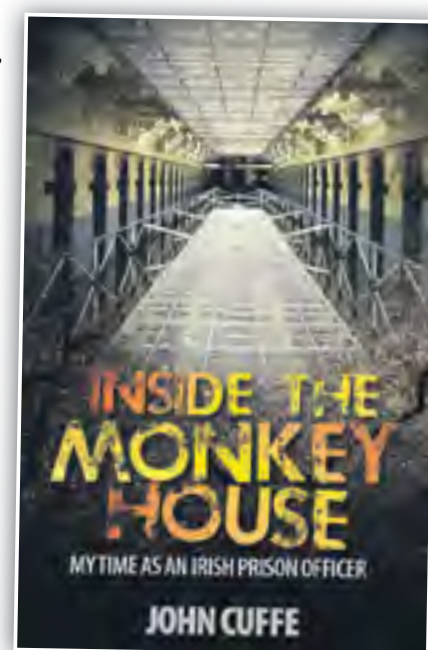
“Their weapons included novelties such as blood-filled syringes, as well as knives and blades”

Cuffe does not tell us whether counselling was available to the officers who had to take down the corpses and face down the thugs. He had no-one to go to after a prisoner attacked him one day with boiling water. His quick reactions saved him from the facial disfigurement which is a common sight in

our gaols.

Cuffe castigates Michael Noonan, the Justice Minister at the time, for opening Spike Island as a prison in 1985, then refusing to co-operate with the parliamentary committee that enquired into the riots there – the worst in Irish penal history – in the summer of that year: Noonan owed it to the country to explain why he had sent violent and disordered young men to a 'matchbox' prison.

But Cuffe reserves his most severe criticism for the Department of Justice, which makes a difficult profession even more challenging by imposing long periods of overtime on officers. More recruitment and standard shifts would greatly improve the lives of prison officers and their families. This angry, revealing book deserves all the attention it gets.



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.

Varied visions of Irish life since 1916

Ireland: The Autobiography – One hundred years in the life of the nation, told by its people
ed. by John Bowman
(Penguin Ireland, €25/£20)

Felix M. Larkin

Shakespeare's stage Irishman in *Henry V*, Captain Macmorris, famously asks "What ish my nation?" He answers his own question with these words: "Ish a villain, and a bastard, and a knave, and a rascal". This anthology is another attempt to answer that question – by setting before us what the editor, John Bowman, one of our most distinguished broadcasters, calls "glimpses" of "the life of the nation" gleaned from books, journals, newspapers, parliamentary debates, private letters and diaries.

Bowman limits his selection to the century since 1916, and this runs the risk of giving the misleading impression that the Irish nation is coterminous with the independent Irish state – the 1916 Easter Rising being generally regarded as the foundational event of the state. The notion of an Irish nation has, however, a much longer pedigree – back at least to Young Ireland in the 1840s, and perhaps as far back as Shakespeare's time.

“There are 166 separate texts in this anthology, and many refer to the Catholic Church in Ireland”

Subject to this caveat, Bowman's selection of material is eclectic and illuminating. It is bookended by pieces on the 1916 Rising.

The first item in the anthology is a contemporary and not unsympathetic view of the Rising by Monsignor Michael Curran, secretary to Archbishop Walsh of Dublin; the last, a sober assessment by Professor John A. Murphy of the state's centenary commemoration of the Rising last year.

Murphy concludes his article with the observation that “we are moving away from the fantasy

world of ‘the Republic as in 1916 established’” and with the hope that “as further anniversaries pass, the magic (sometimes black) of the Easter Rising will be less seductive”.

“Researching this book involved some surprises for me”

There are 166 separate texts in this anthology, and many refer – both positively and negatively – to the Catholic Church in Ireland. Most notable are Bishop Fogarty's letter in support of Sinn Féin in 1918, in which he rails against “the national degradation of Partition” (then in prospect); two eye-witness accounts in the *Capuchin Annual* of the 1932 Eucharistic Congress, one of which evokes John McCormack's rendition of *Panis Angelicus* as “a triumph of voice and art, but above all it was a prayer”.

Visit

Also included are Kate O'Brien's affectionate portrait of her Aunt Fan, a Presentation nun; Louis McRedmond's report for *The Tablet* of Pope John Paul II's visit to Ireland, in which he states that the visit highlighted “the real Ireland of hospitality and good cheer and simple commitment to religious practice”; and T.K.

Whitaker's acknowledgement, in *Economic Development*, that that seminal work was inspired in part by Bishop Philbin's critique of post-independence Ireland.

Bishop Philbin had written in *Studies* that “freedom is useful in proportion to the use we make of it... Although our enterprise in purely spiritual fields has never been greater, we have shown little initiative or organizational ability in agriculture and industry and commerce.”

Equally memorable, though more uncomfortable for Catholic readers, are Peter Tyrrell's memoir of a bleak Christmas at Letterfrack Industrial School run by the Christian Brothers, Enda Kenny's speech in the Dáil in 2013 on the Magdalen laundries and Kitty Holland's story of trying to secure a primary-school place for her unbaptised son.

“The notion of an Irish nation has, however, a much longer pedigree”

Also included in the anthology is an essay by Maeve Binchy about her loss of faith; she wrote – more in sorrow than in anger – that she “would love to believe it all again, the same way I would like a Tooth Fairy and Santa Claus”.

Bowman says in his



introduction that “researching this book involved some surprises for me”. It will involve surprises also for those who read it.

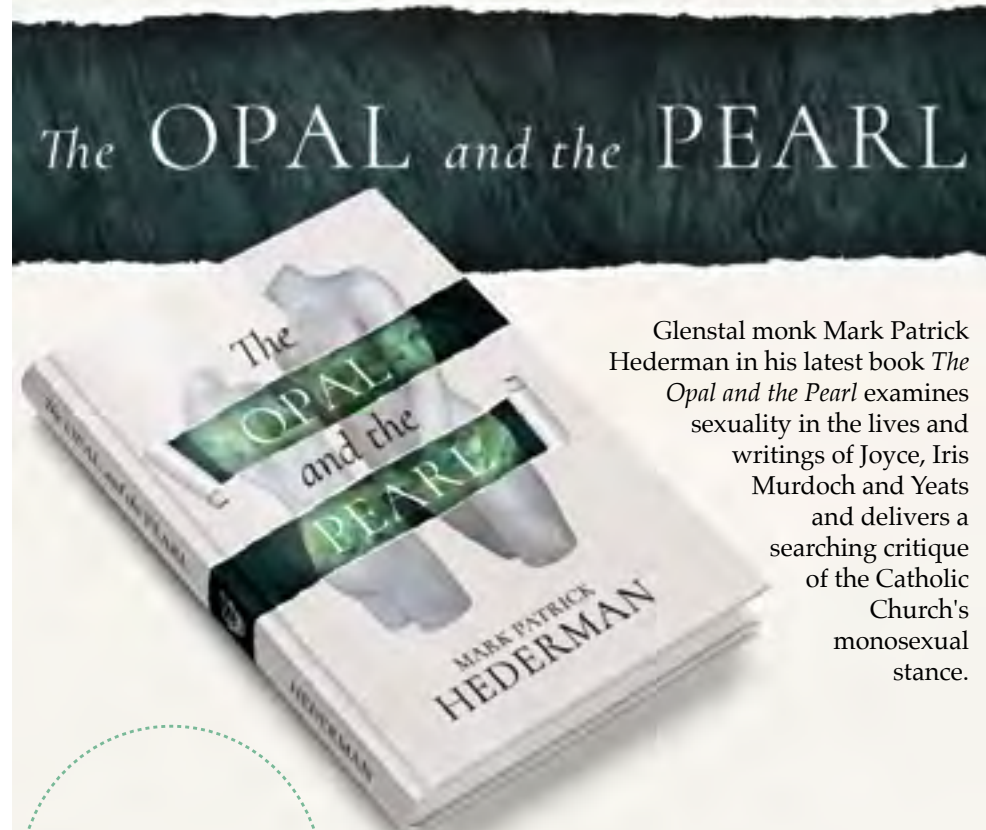
The selection of material is necessarily subjective – Bowman admits that “no such gathering could ever claim to be comprehensive”

– but it is an impressive and balanced gathering, reflecting the deep learning and wide interests of the editor.

Pope John Paul II welcomed to Ireland.



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Notebook

Fr Vincent Sherlock



Finding a place for values that last

NOBODY WAS as surprised as myself. Ed Sheeran was playing his second concert in Croke Park and the reviews of the first concert were incredible. I thought about what a positive influence Ed had been in the lives of 160,000 plus people over two nights.

My being there, I thought, had some link with the wedding reception I'd been at that weekend. I sat at a table with a good priest friend (some 20 years older than myself) and he commented that the group at the table with us was "very young". I said I'd noticed, and that I felt very old! Then the killer line: "I can't imagine what it must feel like for you!" We both laughed but knew somewhere there was a truth in it. I think that's what put Ed in my mind. I imagined what an effect his speaking positively about faith would have. The potential difference he could make to the lives of so many was a consoling prospect.

As I stood in line, I realised Ed was moving towards me. He was meeting fans, joining freely in 'selfies' and sharing the enthusiasm of all gathered. I felt a bit out of place but figured it must be intended I'd be there just at that moment. I wondered what I'd say



Ed Sheeran poses for a selfie with a fan.

to him. To be honest, I don't know his songs very well but heard him sing *The West Coast of Clare* and I knew he did a mean version of

The Parting Glass. Maybe I'd get away with mentioning them but somewhere I thought I should use the moment better.

LEONARD COHEN'S *Come Healing* is a wonderful song, well worth a listen. I'd see it having its place in any form of penitential service. It calls for healing of the body and of the mind: either one on its own is telling only half the story. My favourite lines speak to the lived reality of carrying chips on burdened shoulders and the pain these undoubtedly cause: "The splinters that you carry, the cross you left behind; come healing of the body, come healing of the mind." Have a listen, I'm convinced it has a message.



I decided to tell him that I'm a priest and that I'd love to think he might use his gift and his presence to so many to encourage people to seek lasting values, to enjoy life, its music and opportunities. Of course I knew I'd not have much time but maybe that would be enough. Chances are he'd just move on but maybe, just maybe, he might think sometime about what I'd said and think 'do you know what, he's not wrong!' I didn't expect him to change dramatically but hoped that he might, from time to time, give favourable mention to something so important.

Arm's length

Ed was an arm's length and handshake away. There was a noise somewhere that didn't have its place in this moment but I had to see what it was...

I woke up and – no line, no Ed, no Croke Park, only darkness and a clock that said 4am!

So Ed, maybe we'll have a chance sometime to have this conversation but in the meantime, keep singing, entertaining, encouraging and rejoicing in the fact you can be a powerful influence. I'm sorry we didn't get to meet.

Prayer of a photographer

Oh God, as I bring my subject into focus, let me remember that I'm creating treasures for some family. Make me sensitive to the qualities and virtues of others, that I may draw out into the light the beautiful radiant belongings of their hearts.

Help me to be an artist, collecting the beauty of every soul, the glow of youth, the laughter or tears of each life that is precious in your sight.

Between the lights and shadows, keep me from getting out of focus, so that my life and work may be framed with dignity and coloured with contentment. Amen (Adapted from 'A Photographer's Prayer', Author Unknown).



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