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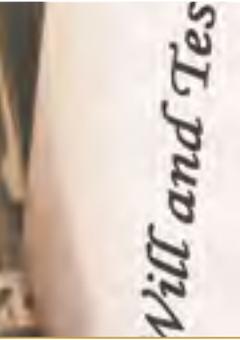
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Thursday, November 2, 2017

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Foreign nuns hailed as bringing new life to Church in Ireland

Missionary spirit has come 'full circle'

Greg Daly

An influx of new religious communities has been hailed as offering new life to the Irish Church, and bringing Ireland's missionary heritage back home.

Over the past year at least four groups of religious women have set up in Ireland from abroad, the most recent being a community of Ursuline Sisters of Mary Immaculate from India who moved into a house in Portlaoise at the weekend.

Portlaoise parish priest Msgr John Byrne told *The Irish Catholic* the Ursuline Sisters from Kerala had been anxious to take on a missionary role, with things moving quickly after contact was made between the parish and the order this summer.

"We embraced the idea, a suitable house in an estate became available, and it all advanced very quickly," he said.

Welcoming the sisters, Kildare and Leighlin's Bishop Denis Nulty said that "in the past religious orders have made tremendous contributions to healthcare and education – maybe their great contribution in the 21st Century is to be a counter-cultural presence."

The first of the current influx of new religious communities to Ireland came in May 2016, with the arrival in Waterford of a group of women from the US-based Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Aware

"They're very aware of the debt that the United States owes to Ireland, but not only the States, internationally the Irish Church has given great service," Bishop Phonsie Cullinan told *The Irish Catholic*, adding, "it's full circle – they are coming back to evangelise us."

The sisters have been warmly received in Waterford, where they are "full of joy and making various natural connections with all sorts of people, being welcomed into schools and parishes, and by older sisters who see the life they bring," he said.

In Limerick, meanwhile, the arrival last year of a group of Nashville, Tennessee's Dominican Sisters of St Cecilia has "really brought a great injection of energy", according to Bishop Brendan Leahy, who praised the sisters' "warm lively joy that speaks to people".

Such injections, Elphin's Bishop Kevin Doran said earlier this year when welcoming a group of Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother from Spain to Roscommon, are "not about going back to 'the way it was'", but about going forward.



Srs Marina, Sibyl, Jasmine and Jooly from Portlaoise's new community of Ursuline Sisters of Mary Immaculate, with – in the rear row – their provincial Sr Vinaya and Sr Jyopsma, both of whom will return to Kerala, India, later this month.

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

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

Printed by The Irish Times

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November: a time for the living and the dead

November is the month during which Christians traditionally pray for and remember in a special way our loved ones who have died. The reality about the human condition is that we will all die some day – Benjamin Franklin captured it well when he said: “in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes”.

Death brings with it tremendous suffering and grief for those who are left behind. Even when someone we love has died after a long and painful illness, there is the heartache of that profound knowledge that things will never again be the same. Of course, for those of us who believe in the world that is to come, there is comfort that we will – please God – be reunited again, but this doesn't take away from the grief and loss.

“There is comfort that we will – please God – be reunited again”

Nor should it: if as Christians we follow Christ's example we need only recall the episode recounted in John's Gospel where Jesus wept at the



Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

death of his friend Lazarus causing onlookers to remark “See how much he loved him!”

Some of the Church's critics have remarked that Catholics have a closeness to the dead that borders on the morbid. This is to misunderstand the fundamental belief that we have that the dead remain with us and as part of us in a new way after their passing. The Church's liturgy captures this beautifully in the preface for Masses for the dead in the Roman Missal:

“In him who rose from the dead, our hope of resurrection dawned. The sadness of death gives way to the bright promise of immortality. Lord, for your faithful people, life is changed, not ended.”

We don't live in a culture that is very comfortable with death. Technological advances have led to a situation where death can increasingly be postponed, but it remains an

inevitable factor.

The month of November – the month of the Holy Souls – is a time that can help us reflect on the reality of death as a passage from one way of being to another way of being.

“Long after the fuss surrounding death and funerals abates, loneliness and grief remain”

A visit to a cemetery or graveyard forms part of the routine of many believers during the month. We should pause to think about those who are left behind, too. Long after the fuss surrounding death and funerals abates, loneliness and grief remain. A quick visit or a few words of concern and encouragement may be just what someone needs to help them keep going in a particular moment.

‘Bright Friday’ gaining momentum

Staff reporter

An initiative to offer people an alternative to the hype of the so-called ‘Black Friday’ shopping frenzy is gaining momentum with well-known priest Fr Brian D'Arcy throwing his weight behind it and a Cork parish adjacent to a shopping centre coming on board.

The brainchild of spirituality publisher Columba Press, Bright Friday will see

musicians, poets and mindfulness practitioners hold a day of calm and reflection in opposition to the increasing dominance of ‘Black Friday’, November 24.

Fr Brian D'Arcy will now join mindfulness practitioners such as Sr Stan Kennedy and Daniel O'Leary as well as monks from Glenstal Abbey and a growing number of musicians and poets who have already signed up to attend the free event in Uni-

versity Church, St Stephen's Green, in the heart of Dublin city on a day which retailers hope will kick-off the busy Christmas spending spree.

Meanwhile, Cork-based Fr Michael O'Leary, whose parish is adjacent to Wilton shopping centre is planning to run the same initiative in his church on the day.

In the United States, ‘Black Friday’ is traditionally the day after the Thanksgiving holiday when many retailers

offer incentives to shoppers. Despite the fact that Thanksgiving is not celebrated in Ireland, ‘Black Friday’ is now a ubiquitous day on the Irish shopping calendar.

Columba Press is asking for more musicians and mindfulness teachers to join the event or if unable to do so, to consider having a ‘Bright Friday’ in your own local community.

i For more details contact garry@columba.ie.

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Bishop defends UCD's impeached Katie Ascough

Chai Brady

Highlighting the importance of freedom of speech and democracy the Bishop of Waterford and Lismore said Katie Ascough, who was impeached as SU President of UCD, was given a "hard time".

At a conference in Waterford this week Bishop Phonsie Cullinan said: "So if you are pro-life and a SU president you will have a hard time in Ireland."

Ms Ascough was impeached last week in lieu of her decision to reprint the SU handbook 'Winging It' without abortion information, which drew fierce criticism from within the union and from students who believed this was a waste of union funds.

Her decision was based on legal advice she received which stated the information could be in breach of the Regulation of Information (Services Outside the State for Termination of Pregnancies) Act of 1995. She was told this could lead to SU members receiving criminal convictions.

Vote

Bishop Cullinan said at the conference 'Crisis of Democracy in Ireland': "I speak to you just two days after students at University College Dublin have voted to impeach Students' Union president Katie Ascough who is unashamedly pro-life and who refused to have printed by the SU clearly pro-abortion material.

The count on Thursday night showed a clear majority in favour of removing the pro-life supporter."

The Bishop quotes Ms Ascough, who said after the result: "I have fought the good fight. I have been open and honest. I have respected the law. I feel confident that I've done all that I could do for the students that I have been elected to represent. This is a sad day for me."

Dr Cullinan asked: "Where is freedom of speech? Where is the freedom to speak one's mind? Is this not a basic element of any democratic society?"

The Bishop continued by saying that repealing Article 40.3.3, or the Eighth Amendment, "would serve no purpose other than to withdraw the right to life from some categories of unborn children".

He said that the State does not concede the right to life to the unborn in the article, but acknowledges that it is a fundamental right.

He added: "Article 40.3.3 does not guarantee, in all circumstances, to be able to defend and vindicate the right to life of the unborn, any more than it can in the case of people who are born and living in our towns and villages. The State does, however, guarantee to respect the right to life of the unborn in its laws, just as it does in the case of other persons."

Fortune favours the Prices in X-Factor win

Seán and Conor Price.



Staff Reporter

Two young buskers from Blessington in Wicklow are the "talk of the town" after getting through to this week's X-Factor audition.

The talented musicians, Seán (17) and Conor (15) Price, impressed judges with their version of 'All Along the Watchtower' by Bob Dylan, which was a fusion of the rock classic and modern pop-rap. Their performance has been viewed over three million times on YouTube.

"Sure it's the talk of the town here. It's not my type of music but

they're very gifted. What I like most is the relationship between the pair of them, it seems lovely," said Fr Richard Behan of Blessington parish.

Great atmosphere

"There's a great atmosphere and well wishes, it's good to see them doing so well, I hope they keep going," said the priest, adding that he wished them the best for the future.

The duo have been together for three years, and "plucked up the courage" and started busking on Grafton Street when they were 11 and 13 according to Seán, who said

they were "small fish in a big pond". Simon Cowell was impressed, saying: "This is probably one of the best auditions we've had. I'm going to say something to you guys - I don't want to change a single thing from what I saw and heard today."

Seán said that Blessington was a small town - "there's not a lot of people around but it's great for us to sing and just belt out our songs". The brothers said that they have a special bond, and no matter what arguments they have, in the morning they easily make-up.



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MQI mental health team gear up for busy Christmas

Chai Brady

Merchants Quay Ireland's mental health team surpassed the total number of clients they worked with in 2016 by September, as the most hectic time for homeless charities approaches.

As their client base grows the head of MQI's mental health group, Derek Parker, said that Christmas is one of their busiest times, where many homeless people they work with present to the clinic in crisis.

"If you're homeless and you're not with your family, you're not with loved ones, you don't have a house, you're dwelling on the things you've lost in your life - we do see a lot of people who become very low. It's a very difficult time, a lot of our clients would be very isolated," said Mr Parker.

Interventions

From 2015 to 2016 the number of clients the team helped increased by 8% to 315. By September this year 331 clients accessed the service, a figure set to rise over the Christmas season.

The team has provided 1,712 interventions from January to September, which can be anything from 5-20min meetings to more substantial services and discussions with clients.

Mr Parker said: "So just

around 10% of our interventions, 174, are what we call crisis interventions where a client has presented to the service in crisis, to us that would mean the client was expressing suicidal ideation, they were acutely psychotic or they were extremely agitated."

Whereas before many

clients in crisis would have been sent to A&E, the relatively new team are trained to help - reducing the number of people accessing Ireland's strained health service.

The staff use a suicide intervention model called STORM (Skills Training on Risk Management), to assess someone to see if their sui-

cidal. They then work towards keeping the person safe and on future plans to deal with their situation.

"A lot of that comes from clients not having the coping skills or strategies maybe that the general public would have, and that can be one of the reasons they fell into homelessness and why they

don't engage with statutory services such as GPs," said Mr Parker.

Feelings of never being able to reconnect with family, regret for past actions or things lost and general hopelessness are what Mr Parker says many homeless people present with, especially around Christmas.

Religious education is for school patrons to decide, minister says

Greg Daly

Religious instruction in Church-owned schools remains the business of school patrons, the Minister for Education has clarified.

Responding to a written request from Ruth Coppinger TD, Richard Bruton reiterated that denominational schools are currently required to allocate 30 minutes per day for religious instruction, but said that unlike other subject areas, the content of schools' religious curricula is not set by the Department of Education.

"The Education Act recognises the rights of the different Church authorities to design curricula in religious education and to supervise their teaching and implementation," Mr Bruton said, explaining that this means that it is up to the patrons of schools to determine the content of their schools' religious education programme.

Break time

The minister's comments coincided with a call from Armagh's Archbishop Eamon Martin for religion to be integral to the lives of Church-owned schools, rather than being "an added extra to be fitted in during break time or twilight hours or during registration".

Speaking at *The Irish Catholic* Education Conference last Thursday, Dr Martin cautioned against relying on schools to be the key drivers in evangelisation in Ireland, but said those tasked with running schools should ensure that Religious Education is prioritised in the curriculum, with this having a strong catechetical element so children can systematically learn and understand the truths of the Catholic Faith.

See Pages 8-9.

Irish EU official honoured to meet Pope



Pope Francis with Mairéad McGuinness when the MEP visited Rome.

The Vice-President of the European Parliament discussed the future of Europe and her responsibility for dialogue with religions with Pope Francis last weekend in the Vatican.

Mairéad McGuinness MEP was in Rome for a conference entitled '(Re)Thinking Europe - A Christian Contribution to the Future of the European Project', organised by the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COMECE).

"It was an honour to meet Pope Francis and to discuss my role with him. We talked about a number of issues and the importance of communication between the generations," Mrs McGuinness said.

The Midlands North West MEP touched on a concern similar to that raised by Pope Francis saying: "The balance between capital and labour has shifted. Today we read of exploitation of workers in the agriculture sector in Europe - those who provide our daily bread," she said, adding that such exploitation is unacceptable in Europe today.

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Hooray for Ireland's population boom!



Mary Kenny

There was great news for Ireland last week: the population of this country is due to increase by more than a million people in the next decade or so. The prediction from the ESRI is that by 2030, the population will have grown by 1.1 million.

Population increase – particularly for countries which are under-populated, as Ireland has been since the great Famine – was traditionally seen as a positive development and a vote of confidence in the future. France looks back with pride on the era of Louis XIV, the 'Sun King', when France was the greatest power in Europe, with the greatest population in Europe.

Affliction

The decline of France as the dominant European power is a story of population decline (while Germany's population grew).

Under-population has been an affliction for Ireland since the 1850s. A century after the

Better the devil you know...

When I was a schoolchild, Irish banks tended to be headed up by a sombre, sober, prudent and upright old Protestant merchant caste, who were inclined to network through the Freemason's Lodges – so the management base was somewhat narrow. But, looking back, were they rather more ethical towards bank customers than the Flash Harrys and 'loadsamoney' casino capitalists who seem to dominate modern banking in a more secular age? Just a thought!

Famine, the population was heading for under three million; emigration was described as a nation's "haemorrhage"; and demographers expressed fears that the Irish would die out in their native land "like the Mayans".

So, population growth is



to be applauded. But was the population boom report greeted with applause? No; it was treated with doom and gloom: described as a "timebomb"; and deplored because it will mean a "ballooning" of people over 65, considered such a "drain" on national resources. Woe, agus ochone!

What a miserabilist attitude! Consider the positive: more people means more manpower,

womanpower and brainpower. More people means there is a wider pool of clever and innovative talent to advance the country – and to bring solutions to social needs such as housing and infrastructures. More older people means more wisdom, experience, and grannies available for childcare.

Don't diss Ireland's population increase – celebrate it!

Isn't redemption open to everyone?

Isn't it a Christian principle to hate the sin, but embrace the sinner? Or has that idea now been abolished?

Myra Hindley was a murderess who carried out the most heinous crimes in torturing and killing helpless children. And yet Lord Longford [pictured] visited her in prison, and supported her towards repentance, because he believed in this Christian principle.



Crime

Tom Humphries was found guilty of a sexual crime against a young girl of 14. He has been sentenced to prison – not long enough for some commentators – and it is certain that his life has been ruined by what he has done.

Doubtless he deserves the penalty, but I can't feel entirely comfortable with the avalanche of unforgiving condemnation against the sinner, not just the sin.

A person who has done a bad thing is still a human being who can be redeemed.

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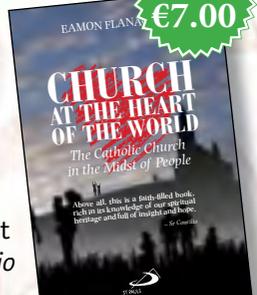
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Kylemore Abbey keeps rebuilding with tourist revenue

Staff reporter

Tourism is continuing to boost revenue in Connemara's Kylemore Abbey, which last year returned profits of over three quarters of a million Euro according to newly released accounts.

The Kylemore Trust of the abbey's Benedictine community announced an excess of income over expenditure of €823,856 for the year ending December 31, 2016, with this being reinvested in conservation and restoration work at the abbey.

The 19th-Century castle and estate, which has been home to a community of Benedictine nuns since 1920, after the sisters abandoned their own abbey in Ypres, Belgium, during the First World War, is the leading tourist destination in the west of Ireland. Last year 320,000 people visited the abbey, which provides employment for 120 people in the area.

Financial position

"The strong financial position will fund conservation work to the historic building at this time," Kylemore Trust spokesman John Madden said, adding: "This work on the Castle building is essential to ensure the long-term viability of Kylemore Abbey as the main source of income for the Benedictine community and its mission at one of Ireland's leading tourist destinations."

The main abbey building is in need of urgent maintenance to prevent decline, Mr Madden said, as well as requiring constant upgrading of visitor amenities and utilities.

The University of Notre Dame opened a new campus in St Joseph's Hall on the abbey grounds last year.

Local commissioners better for North than direct rule – leading Methodist

Greg Daly

Northern Ireland should consider employing a commission of specialists to run the region when the power-sharing executive cannot be established, a prominent Methodist minister has suggested.

"Another election will not produce anything different – it will just produce the same people with the same issues," Rev. Harold Good told *The Irish Catholic* as talks to revive the executive remained deadlocked. The Northern Assembly has been on hiatus since the executive broke down in January following the 'Cash for Ash' scandal.

"Direct rule would not be at all in our best interests at this moment in time for a number of reasons – it's a last resort," the former Methodist Moderator said.

"In our present political set up, particularly with the relationship the DUP have with the government in London, it would send a lot of wrong messages not just to the nationalist community but to the total community," he said, adding that the restoration of direct rule would "play very much into the court of the dissidents on the Republican side".

A better option, he said, would be for the Secretary of State, James Brokenshire MP, in consultation with peo-

ple from across the North's communities to select people to form a commission that would "in essence be an executive".

Rev. Good said precedents for such commissions could be found in the recent history of Belgium and in the English city of Rotherham. He also pointed to the 'Mayo Librarian' case of 1930-31 which saw the Government dissolving the county council in favour of an appointed commissioner.

Proven record

A temporary executive commission for the North could be "made up of honoured and honourable citizens with a proven track record in busi-

ness, health, education, community affairs", Rev. Good said, stressing that such people would have to be "very carefully chosen to be fully representative of the total community".

Emphasising that these commissioners should only temporarily take responsibility for necessary work, Rev. Good said the commission wouldn't be called to "govern for ever and a day", but would merely ensure that the region would function and people would not suffer for lack of policy making, which the North's "elected representatives would be given time and space to appraise themselves".

Campaigners demonstrate on 50th anniversary of abortion



Pro Life Campaigners outside the British Embassy in Dublin to mark the 50th anniversary of abortion being introduced in Britain. Photo: John McElroy

Staff Reporter

On the 50th anniversary of the legalisation of abortion in Britain pro-life campaigners took to the streets outside the British Embassy in Dublin.

Dr Ruth Cullen of the Pro-Life Campaign said that when the law was first introduced "no one envisaged that a law which appeared restrictive would lead to a situation where one in five pregnancies is now aborted", adding that 200,000 abortions take place in Britain every year.

Dr Cullen accused the Oireachtas Committee on the Eighth Amendment of not

considering what an "abortion regime would look like in practice. She referenced one of the largest abortion providers, Marie Stopes, which was recently accused of offering bonuses to staff members who convinced women to get an abortion after they had decided not to.

"There has been evidence for years that abortion clinics operate like conveyor belts, trying to hit daily targets for the number of abortions performed," she said.

"In the debate on abortion in Ireland at present, a noticeable effort is being made to suppress stories about the dark side of abortion," she added.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Church desecration targets all Christians

The vandalism of a Church of Ireland church is "an attack on all Christians", Archbishop Michael Neary has said.

Commenting on the vandalism of Holy Trinity Church in Errislannan, Clifden, Dr Neary pointed to the desecration of churches in Iraq and the Philippines over the past year, saying such actions "are a physical threat to worshipping Christians anywhere in the world".

Detailing the "devastation" at the Galway church, he said: "This damage is not just a criminal act, rather it is an act motivated by anti-Christian sentiment and is a challenge to freedom of religious expression in Ireland today."

Road safety is Gospel in action

Gospel values demand that we travel safely on roads today, Killaloe's Bishop Fintan Monahan has said.

Speaking at a 'Blessing of the Roads' ceremony in the Cathedral of Ss Peter and Paul in Ennis, Co. Clare, Dr Monahan said: "Road safety awareness is the parable of the Good Samaritan in action within our communities today."

This applies to all road users who share the responsibility to protect human life on our roads, he said, maintaining that "every one of us has a role in helping others even if we are not known to each other personally".

Belfast Catholic cemetery vandalised

Cemetery gates in Belfast are believed to have been vandalised by a group of youths who are said to have set fire to traffic cones and a wheelie bin right beside them. "Significant damage" was also caused to the surrounding entrance according to the Diocese of Down and Connor.

"This was a dangerous, inexcusable and deliberate act of vandalism which violated the sanctuary of a site of burial," DCO Fr Eddie McGee said.

He said that it "engenders a sense of distress among the local community whose loved ones are buried within this sacred place."

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Breda O'Brien

The View



Irish human rights groups should campaign for the rights of the disabled, not for their termination

In a significant development, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD Committee) has challenged its sister body, the Committee on Human Rights.

Or perhaps the latter should instead be called the Committee on Human Rights for Some, because it has been pushing a 'right' to abortion on the grounds of so-called fatal impairment of the foetus.

The Committee on Human Rights is tacitly saying that these babies with very severe and often terminal disabilities should be excluded from the community of humans entitled to the right to life.

The CRPD Committee disagrees strongly with this exclusion and states bluntly that "laws which explicitly allow for abortion on grounds of impairment violate the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Art. 4,5,8)."

It goes on: "Even if the condition is considered fatal, there is still a decision made on the basis of impairment."

This is exactly what people who oppose abortion on the grounds of alleged fatal impairment have been saying. Furthermore, canvassers seeking to protect the Eighth Amendment have met countless people on the doorsteps who tell them of diagnoses that turned out to be inaccurate.

Assessment

But even if it is an accurate prognosis, as the CRPD Committee states, "the assessment perpetuates notions of stereotyping disability as incompatible with a good life".

It may seem bizarre to speak of a baby with a terminal condition who dies before birth or shortly



after as having a 'good life'. But adults with terminal illness often speak of how sweet life becomes, of cherishing every moment that previously would have been taken heedlessly taken for granted.

“Just look at how often the media report that people are ‘forced’ to travel abroad”

Parents who have continued with pregnancies also speak of cherishing every movement in the womb, of every kick being evidence that their baby is safe right now. They speak also of the kindness and goodness that their little babies evoke in others.

To be fair, it is important to distinguish between those who are actively campaigning for abortion on the grounds of fatal impairment as a wedge issue in order to secure greater and greater availability of abortion, and parents caught up in the nightmare of a poor prognosis.

Such parents have been subjected to a barrage of misinformation long before they ever became pregnant. For example, the media chooses to continue

to use the term 'fatal foetal abnormality' even though hospices use the term 'life-limiting condition'. The media also focus disproportionately on those who have opted for abortion.

Just look at how often the media report that people are 'forced' to travel abroad, as though it were the only possible option. It is not surprising, then, that some parents, unaware of perinatal hospice care, feel that abortion is the only possible route.

I have no desire to stand in judgement on individuals or couples who made the decision to terminate their child's life in situations where they were not even adequately presented with alternatives.

No one presented with this prognosis has an easy route ahead. No one presented with this prognosis will not be devastated. But allowing the child to live out his or her natural span allows parents to discover a different role as advocates for their child and therefore to draw some meaning from a time of seemingly pointless suffering.

Although we do not have enough research in this area, a small-scale pioneering study by Cork University Maternity Hospital with parents who

opted to continue with pregnancies shows how even though devastated by grief, ultimately they were glad that they did so.

However, people who advocate for abortion on the grounds of life-limiting conditions while not personally affected by it need to face head-on that the UN CRPD Committee states that it is an 'ableist' position. This term is used to describe discrimination on the grounds of disability.

The CRPD wants to

preserve human rights for people with disabilities, while the Human Rights Committee wants to remove them. Which has the moral high ground?

Support service

While maternity hospitals tend to be very good when parents opt to continue with a pregnancy, if the baby survives long enough to come home, there is no wraparound support service, even though organisations like LauraLynn

Hospice and Jack and Jill Foundation do their very best to fill this gap.

In an ideal world, we would see Irish human rights organisations begin to agree that abortion on the grounds of impairment, fatal or otherwise, is ableist.

They could then begin to advocate for support services from the moment of diagnosis to long beyond the baby's death, that would give people real help and comfort.

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Articulating a

‘Intentional’ Catholic education is the future for Faith schools in Ireland, **Greg Daly** writes



“Religion,” Armagh’s Archbishop Eamon Martin said at last week’s *The Irish Catholic* Education Conference, is “not an added extra to be fitted in during break time or twilight hours or during registration”.

Far from being something extra bolted on to the school day, the Gospel and Gospel values must be integral to life in Faith schools, the archbishop said. “Everything that happens in the school community is rooted in the Gospel values of Respect for Life, Love, Solidarity, Truth and Justice; the Catholic school seeks to harmonise faith and culture,” he explained, continuing that “in an ‘intentional’ Catholic school, prayer and worship form a natural part of the day; there will be opportunities during the year for Confession and for the celebration and adoration of the Eucharist.”

In speaking of ‘intentional’ Catholic schools, Dr Martin drew on comments he made when he returned to Ireland in 2015 after attending that year’s synod on the family in Rome, inspired by those who had spoke at the synod not merely about the evangelisation of families but evangelisation *by* families.

“It is primarily in the family that prayer, faith and values are nurtured, the choices between right and wrong are evaluated, that connections with parish and diocese are made and sustained,” he said, noting how Pope Francis made these points in *Amoris Laetitia*, and how on returning to Ireland he considered how an ‘intentional’ Catholic family might live, citing their prayer lives, their openness about their Faith, their care for their parish and the poor, their willingness to discuss Faith issues and speak up for the Faith, their support for pro-life causes and for vocations.

Pattern

Intentional schools, then, should follow such a pattern, and should remember their role in supporting parents, called as they are to be the “first educators” of their children in the ways of the Faith, the family being the “first school” for well-rounded per-

sonal and social development of children and young people, and potentially “a Christian initiation and a school of following Christ” in which “all the members evangelise and are evangelised”, he said, harking back to St John Paul II and Blessed Paul VI.

Although parishes and schools are called to support parishes across a broad range of attitudes towards the Faith, Dr Martin said, this is not a straightforward enterprise, and hitherto the Irish Church’s efforts to introduce catechetical projects have been sporadic and disjointed, with a greater attempt to integrate them being needed.

“As others have put it, we are shifting from a culture of convention to one of conviction”

This is all the more important, he observed, given how Ireland’s census figures show that we are moving from a society in which it was virtually impossible not to believe in God, to one in which faith seems to have become one human possibility among others – as others have put it, we are shifting from a culture of convention to one of conviction. The old pastoral strategy, built upon the three interdependent pillars of parish, home and Catholic school, is evidently not working well, with all three pillars having been “rocked by the waves of secularisation which have swept across Ireland”.

The Catholic school remains, nonetheless, embedded in the Church’s evangelical function, with the archbishop wondering if “perhaps in recent years we have come to rely too much on the Catholic school to be the ‘driver’ in this process, rather than affirming, embedding and building links between the family, the school and the local Church community”.

“It is little wonder,” he observed, “that many teachers today speak of finding themselves left quite literally *in loco parentis* as the first teachers of children in the ways of Faith.”

Maintaining that schools are called to support parents



Bishop Eamon Martin speaking at the conference. Photos: Chai Brady



Nuala O'Loan.



David Quinn.

in this role, not to supplant them, the archbishop reiterated that an ‘intentional’ Catholic school should be confident in its Catholic identity, deliberately nurturing its Catholic ethos while naming and demonstrating the Gospel values.

Planning

As part of this, he said, those charged with running such schools would ensure that Religious Education was prioritised in curriculum planning and resourcing, with this having a strong catechetical component so all pupils can systematically learn the truths of the Catholic faith, be instructed in all aspects of the moral life and grasp the essentials of Catholic social teaching. Other subjects, he added, can also help pupils engage in dialogue about the interaction of faith and culture, promote a culture of life, love and respect for creation and develop a sense of wonder through the beauty of religious art and music.

It must be remembered,

he said, that schools are faced with a range of challenges and a temptation to buy into modern cultures of individualism and achievement, “even to the extent of measuring their own success in terms of popularity or in league tables of examination results”, recalling how young people must be prepared to cope with a world that is often harsh and where they will “have to cope as often with failure and disappointment as with success and achievement”.

“Other subjects can also help pupils engage in dialogue about the interaction of faith and culture”

Noting concerns about how current educational policy could dilute the right of parents to have access to a school which unashamedly and intentionally lives by a faith-based ethos, and that schools cannot allow religion to be sidelined from our schools, the archbishop said

it was reasonable for Catholic schools’ boards of management to be concerned about ensuring that children from the local parish – or group of parishes – should be able to access their Catholic school.

Emphasising that inclusion has always been a core value of Catholic schools, the archbishop noted the founders of Ireland’s Catholic schools had tended to stress “a preferential option for the marginalised and poor”, and praised how Catholic schools across Ireland are inclusive and caring communities, often “leading the way in integrating migrants, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, and pupils with special needs”.

Schools, he said, should continue to evaluate their policies to ensure that those who could be marginalised are not neglected or otherwise unfairly disadvantaged, remaining alert especially to those inequalities in our educational system that mean too many of our young people leave schools without meaningful qualifications or

opportunities.

Ethos

Themes pointed to in the archbishop’s keynote address would recur through the day: the nature of ‘ethos’ in a Catholic school, the need for Catholic schools to be ‘intentional’ with deliberate emphases both on the holistic expression of the Faith and the catechetical grounds of that Faith, and the dangers posed to Catholic schools by trends in modern Irish educational policy.

Prof. Eamonn Conway of Limerick’s Mary Immaculate College, for instance, began by cautioning that the decisions that this generation of Catholics parents, teachers and clergy make – or fail to make – “will impact on Christian faith in this country for generations to come”, warning that Ireland is currently on a trajectory that would see the most significant changes to our Constitution in regard to education since the foundation of the state.

There is a real danger, he cautioned, that a state edu-

Catholic ethos



Kathleen Fitzpatrick from the Loreto Education Centre (right) and Eithne Wolfe from the Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious in Ireland.



Maria O'Connell (right) from St Finian's National School in Finglas, Dublin, speaks to Sr Isabelle Smyth of the Medical Missionaries of Mary from Booterstown Parish.



Muirne Lawlor, Sr Anne Ryan, Jonathan Tiernan from ACE, Eanna Johnson and Ciara Whelan enjoy the conference.

cational system could be on the way that would displace parents as children's primary educators, imposing a secular education upon all children except those whose parents are wealthy enough to have their children privately educated.

Maintaining that there is no reason why a genuinely secularist and pluralist state should not fund faith-based education, Prof. Conway recalled how the Constitution obliges the state to "provide for" education, rather than simply to "provide" education, and notes the popularity of state-funded Church-run schools in, for example, the Netherlands.

"My concern," he said, "is that here in Ireland, under the pressure from a well-resourced and highly organised subcultural secularist elite, one that is unrepresentative of the population as a whole, we are allowing ourselves to be persuaded that the privatisation of religion is the only way to go if we wish to be a genuinely democratic country, and therefore there should

be an end to state-funded faith-based education."

“A Catholic school ‘must be free to propose Christian Faith to all its pupils – propose, not impose’”

Despite how it is so often presented, he said, secular liberalism is not a neutral space, but actively holds that religious convictions have no place in public discourse while maintaining that their own convictions and beliefs should go unchallenged in the public square.

Not, he says, that people of Faith are powerless in this situation, stressing that a Catholic school "must be free to propose Christian Faith to all its pupils – propose, not impose". This proposal, he said, should be a joyful invitation and is "proposed primarily and most powerfully by the personal witness of staff", as well as in the timetable, the physical space of the

school, and the curriculum, in which, he said, nothing that contradicts the Christian understanding of human life and dignity should be taught.

Warning against succumbing to what the theologian Romano Guardini used to call "the technological paradigm", Prof. Conway noted how managerialism can drive out beauty in efficiency's name, and cautioned against how truncated and self-serving forms of religiosity, which don't have much room for self-sacrifice can thrive in commodified cultures.

We need, he said, to see Catholic schools as field hospitals for those wounded by the wider culture, places of warmth, caring, and humanity where young people should feel free to show their fragility.

Every school has an ethos, Prof. Conway noted, explaining that "ethos is what you teach while you are teaching" and that schools must attend not merely to what they formally teach, but what they implicitly communicate. Cautioning that it can't

be assumed that even those teachers who have studied at Catholic colleges necessarily know the basics of their Christian faith, he added that proper systems of accountability are needed to ensure teachers at least understand what is expected of them.

Asked about internal secularisation and the quality of textbooks, Prof. Conway said that over the years textbooks could often have been better, but that in truth they matter less than the people teaching them. "Any teacher worth their salt knows they teach who they are," he continued, maintaining that ultimately this comes down to our own Faith conviction.

Policy moves

For the Iona Institute's David Quinn, Richard Bruton's policy moves of late show that "Fine Gael does not need coalition with Labour to attack Faith-based education"; he acknowledged that some enhanced form of pluralism is inevitable in whatever future educational landscape should develop in Ireland, maintaining that there must be fewer Catholic schools, but that these in turn should be more Catholic.

One thing that the recent Forum of Patronage and Pluralism showed clearly, he said, was that there was no huge appetite for divestment of schools but also that a hunger for seriously Catholic schools was also a relatively minor interest.

National debates about divestment and so-called 'baptism bans' are overblown, he added, noting how research by *The Irish Catholic* – he could also have added the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association – has demonstrated that claims of oversubscribed schools are

largely overblown, with most of the few oversubscribed schools being in a small number of affluent Dublin suburbs. These suburbs, he noted, tend to be homes to the kind of 'opinion formers' that dictate the shape of national discourse, making their local issues seem like national priorities.

“Downsizing our Catholic schools network is not – in itself – a vision for the future”

The real issue is, of course, a lack of places, but since it would cost money to tackle this issue, he said, the Government has instead opted to distract attention from the problem by pointing to the relative non-issue of the so-called 'baptism ban'.

At the same time, he said, while census figures might show Ireland becoming less religious, our immigrant profile is largely religious, he noted, arguing that Muslims in England, for example, have tended to prefer Christian schools to state ones, with a general understanding of religious faith being welcomed.

Jonathan Tiernan of the Alliance for Catholic Education later urged that Catholic schools be protected for what they offer children, while maintaining that downsizing

our Catholic schools network is not – in itself – a vision for the future, following Prof. Conway and Dr Martin in maintaining that it is necessary to speak of what a Catholic ethos is, even if it might not seem politically correct to do so, he explained that an intentional Catholic school is one "where the works of mercy permeate the school community's fabric".

For Baroness Nuala O'Loan, parents often have difficulty explaining what ethos is – though they know it when they see it. Stressing that Catholic schools must embrace all children, she cited one school that recognised how one child with Down Syndrome had been the pupil that had given most to the school community.

At the same time, she wondered, how is it, given how most people of influence in Ireland were educated in the Church, that abortion is being argued for in Ireland – what has happened in our generational shifts that has caused people to think that vulnerable unborn children are disposable?

We're in mission territory, she said, and whatever has happened, this is territory where schools can help evangelise families. Our schools may be the last places we have for direct evangelisation, and we shouldn't be ashamed that they are such places.

Recordings of the day are available from eist@eircom.net

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A papal visit to the North can encourage moral ecumenism

Short of some unforeseen development, Pope Francis will be here next August for the World Meeting of Families. Everything he says and does will totally overshadow everything else that takes place at the event. What he will say is extremely unpredictable.

He may say something very strong about the 'ideological colonisation of the family', as he has done elsewhere. He may attack gender ideology (which is the pretence that we can 'choose' our gender). He has done this repeatedly. Notably, none of our bishops has breathed a word about the matter despite Ireland having one of the most radical 'gender recognition' laws in the world.

On the other hand, he may say something that will wrongly lead people to believe he doesn't take these

Many Protestants and Catholics have found common cause in fighting for fundamental rights; the Pope should encourage this, writes **David Quinn**



things all that seriously after all and wants the Church to dial down on talking about them. So, it's hard to know what will happen.

Unstable situation

What almost everyone hopes he will do however, is visit the North. St John Paul II was supposed to visit the North in 1979 but in the end, he could not do so because of the unstable situation there.

By August next year, almost 40 years will have passed since then and

so much has changed both north and south of the border in that time. Relations between North and South, between Britain and Ireland, between the two communities in the North are far better now than in 1979. While it's true that the current political situation in the North is very far from ideal, there is no comparison with how it was four decades ago.

Britain's Queen Elizabeth II visited the Republic in 2011 which alone was a

very big sign of how much has changed. The Pope going North would be the complement to that.

In a way, that is a strange thing to say. Even though Elizabeth II is also head of the Church of England, she is mainly seen as a symbol of Britain itself, especially England. The Pope may be a head of State as well, but he is seen overwhelmingly as head of the Catholic Church. So how does the visit of the head of a religion balance out the visit of the British head of State?

“If we in the South could finally tolerate a visit by a British monarch, it was a sign that our old hostility to England had hugely abated”

I think it is because for us in the South, the religious dimension of the Troubles in the North was always much less important than the political dimension. So, the visit of Queen Elizabeth II as head of State was a sign of how much things had improved politically as a result of the peace process.

If we in the South could finally tolerate a visit by a British monarch, it was a sign that our old hostility to England had hugely abated.

For many unionists, however, the conflict was as much religious as political. This was symbolised in the figure of the Ian Paisley. If unionists can now accept a visit to the North by the head of the Catholic Church, that is a sign that the old hostility to Catholicism has hugely abated, even if it lingers in some circles just as anti-English feeling in the South still persists in some circles, among republican fundamentalists, you might say.

The fact that Jeffrey Donaldson, one of the DUP's most senior members, has said he would welcome a visit by Pope Francis to the North is very significant.

He told this paper last week: "If Pope Francis decides to visit Northern Ireland as part of his visit to the island, I don't think there will be a negative reaction from the Protestant community. There is a recognition that Pope Francis



Queen Elizabeth II during her visit to Ireland.

is the head of the Catholic Church, and that a very substantial portion of our population adheres to the Catholic Church."

He added: "When we look at the moral issues of today, I'm looking forward to what Pope Francis has to say about those because I think that the debate has become very secular."

The 500th anniversary of the start of the Protestant Reformation is currently being marked. The sectarian tensions unleashed by that event lasted longer in Northern Ireland than anywhere else in Europe. Forty years ago, Ian Paisley opposed Pope John Paul visiting the North. Now we have senior DUP figures supporting a visit by the Pope. This is a sign of how much things have changed. A sort of moral ecumenism is underway.

“Many Protestants will be disappointed if he does not address issues like the family and the right to life in a clear, counter-cultural manner”

It is why Jeffrey Donaldson is looking forward to what Pope Francis has to say about some of the big moral questions.

On the conservative side of the Christian house the moral ecumenism centres around issues like the family and the right to life. On the liberal side it centres more on issues like poverty, immigration and

the environment. Successive popes have spoken about all of those things, even if they might have a difference of emphasis. Pope Francis speaks more about immigration than John Paul did. (It's a bigger issue now in any case). John Paul spoke a great deal about the right to life, but Francis speaks about this as well.

“If Pope Francis decides to visit Northern Ireland as part of his visit to the island, I don't think there will be a negative reaction from the Protestant community”

If Francis comes here and goes North, many Protestants will be disappointed if he does not address issues like the family and the right to life in a clear, unmistakable and, if need be, counter-cultural manner.

He will obviously concentrate on the progress made so far in improving relations between the two communities, but one other means by which those relations can be further improved is by encouraging the sort of moral ecumenism currently underway. This moral ecumenism is to be seen especially in the battle for the right of life. It is a struggle in which many Protestants and Catholics have found common cause. Hopefully our own bishops will encourage him to promote this moral ecumenism even more.

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Fáilte Pope Francis! [©]

School Competition

What will Pope Francis' visit to Ireland look like?

To celebrate Ireland hosting the World Meeting of Families next year, *The Irish Catholic* is asking children to write a letter of welcome to Pope Francis, accompanied by a drawing, to win one of these fantastic prizes for their school.



Each winner will also receive an icon of the Holy Family, hand-crafted by Christians in Bethlehem, for their school Christmas tree or Sacred Space.

The competition is open to children aged 6-9 years old. Please include child's name, age, class, school name and contact details. Some entries will be published.

Deadline: **Friday, November 24, 2017.**

Entries to: Fáilte Pope Francis competition, **The Irish Catholic, 23 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.**

Terms and conditions apply.

Out&About

35 years of Westport-Kenya partnership



MAYO: Archbishop Michael Neary, Bishop Christopher Jones and Bishop Cornelius Korir – Bishop of Aror in Kenya – concelebrated a Mass of thanksgiving at St Mary's Church in Westport to mark a 35-year partnership. They were joined by Richard Opembe Ambassador of Kenya, Suzanne Opembe, committee members and friends. Photo: Conor McKeown



◀ **KERRY:** Students from Coláiste Íde attend the Diocese of Kerry's Youth Music Ministry. Young musicians gathered throughout the diocese for prayer and song, and to share ideas.



▶ **VATICAN:** Assistant Garda Commissioner Fintan Fanning and wife Eleanor have their wedding rings blessed by Pope Francis on their 30th wedding anniversary.



◀ **CLARE:** Killaloe's Bishop Fintan Monahan visits Kilrush Leaving Cert students from Kilrush Community School.

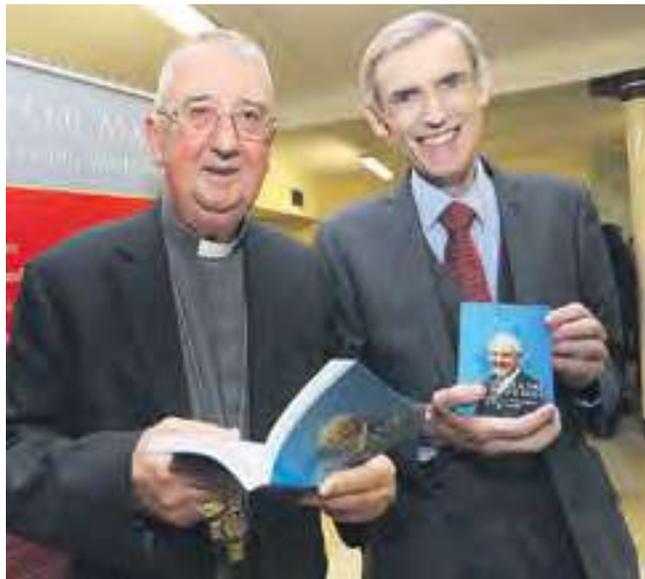
Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



KERRY: Denis Kelleher poses with his wife Aileen and five children, Eoin, Marie, Donagh, Ella and Ruth, and Bishop Ray Browne. Denis was one of three men ordained to the Permanent Diaconate for St John's Church, Tralee. Photo: John Cleary.



DUBLIN: Archbishop Diarmuid Martin launches a new book on Frank Duff, the founder of the Legion of Mary. The book entitled *A Thought a Day with Frank Duff* was compiled by Tommy McCabe.



KERRY: Bill Looney, Chairman of St John's Parish Pastoral Committee and artist Tom Denny at his studio in Dorset, England, where he made a new stained glass window for St John's Church in Tralee unveiled last Friday.

INSHORT

Medjugorje concert reaches Louth

A Medjugorje concert featuring an internationally acclaimed singer and violinist will be held in the Church of the Holy Redeemer Dundalk, in Louth.

On Sunday November 12, Melinda Dumitrescu, who is well known for her performances in Medjugorje, will perform with guitarist and singer Roland Patzleiner and organist and keyboard player Cristian Rosoaga. The group has played in venues around the world.

Doors open at 7.30pm and the concert begins at 8pm, tickets are €20 and can be purchased by contacting the

parish office at 0429334259 or James at 0872202173.

UN Dominican rep promotes SDGs

The representative of the US Dominican Leadership Conference at the UN visited Ireland's Dominicans to highlight the importance of reaching targets set by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Sr Margaret Mayce, who is a Sister of St Dominic in Amityville in New York, focused on the global response to the current refugee and migrant crisis in talks in Swords and Blackrock in Dublin, and the Ennismore Retreat Centre in Cork.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a set of 17 "Global Goals" with 169 targets between them.

Sr Margaret encouraged all to act, saying: "Any one act done with great intention, ripples out and affects the whole." She said that everyone is called to build relationships and collaborate in the mission of preaching the Gospel for the sake of a more just world order.

Free Christian film screening in Belfast

Christians on the Left NI (COTLNI) will hold a free cinema screening of *I, Daniel Blake* in Belfast, a film that

looks at issues of justice through the lens of one man's story.

The film will be screened on Tuesday, December 5 at the Common Grounds Café, 12-14 University Avenue. It challenges Christians to match their Faith with works, and to seek to create a compassionate society that puts the interests of the poor before the interests of the powerful.

Doors open at 6.30pm, the film begins at 7pm and is followed by a discussion. Refreshments are available. For more information contact COTLNI on facebook or by email at christianleftni@gmail.com for more information.

ANTRIM

The First Saturday Devotions will take place each month in St Matthias Church, Glen Road, Belfast. Adoration/Confessions and Consecration to Our Lady at 3pm, Mass at 4pm. All welcome.

ARMAGH

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

Adoration chapel, Edwards St, Lurgan, adoration on week days from 9am-9pm.

CLARE

Matt Talbot Novena will take place in St Senan's Church, Kilrush on Mondays and Ss John & Paul Church, Shannon on Tuesdays at 7.30pm for the months of October and November.

Fatima 1917-2017 Holy Rosary hour marking the centenary of the apparitions at Fatima thanking our lady for her maternal care. Rosary at the square, Ennis. Saturday November 4 at 2.30pm.

Next Mass in the extraordinary form (the Tridentine or 'Latin' rite); Sunday November 5 at 5.30pm in St. Joseph's Church.

Cemetery service and Blessing of Graves on Sunday November 5 at Corrovorran at 2pm and Drumliffe at 3pm, and Sunday November 12 in Clareabbey at 3pm.

CORK

A pro-life Mass is held on the last Friday of every month at the Poor Clares monastery, College Road, at 7.30pm.

The Alliance of the Two Hearts First Friday & First Saturday Vigil of Reparation and Adoration, Church of the Real Presence, Curraheen Road, Bishopstown. Rosary 8pm. Mass 9.30pm. First Saturday Mass at midnight Friday. Vigil ends 3.30am. Come for all or part of the night. All welcome.

DERRY

Dungiven Parish: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Mon-Fri, 8am-noon and 3-9pm.

DUBLIN

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

The Dublin 15 Faith and Justice Group welcomes new members and currently meet on the first Friday of the month in Hartstown Church. Contact Fr Joe 087 6632944.

Divine Mercy Mass and holy hour 7.30pm every Tuesday in St Saviour's Church, Dominick Street. Also daily Divine Mercy prayers at 2.30pm at the shrine with the relic of St Faustina.

The Miscarriage Association of Ireland's Annual Service of Remembrance to honour all babies who sadly died before, during or after birth will take place on Sunday November 12 at 3pm in St Theresa's Church, Donore Ave, South Circular Road, Dublin 8. Refreshments after the service.

Life to the Full (Jn 10:10) book club for young adults meets every Thursday from 7-8:30pm in St Paul's Church, Arran Quay (Smithfield) to meditate, share and discuss

life & faith. Refreshments provided. www.facebook.com/lifetothefullbookclub

FERMANAGH

A Mass to St Peregrine for all the sick is prayed each Wednesday evening in St Patrick's Church, Derrygonnelly at 7.30pm. www.churchservices.tv/derrygonnelly

KERRY

The Alliance of Two Hearst First Saturday vigil of adoration and reparation in Caherciveen parish church at 3pm: Divine Mercy chaplet, adoration, rosaries. Ends with Mass at 7.30pm.

Janice & Moss Carrig will hold a prayer meeting in the Diseart hall in Dingle on Sunday November 5 at 3pm. Diseart hall is at the back of the local Church.

KILDARE

A centering/contemplative prayer group meets in the Old Baptistery of St Michael's parish church in Athy every Thursday at 8pm. For more info ring Dolores at 086-3474679

KILKENNY

The Annual Novena in honour of St Martin De Porres will take place at the Dominican Black Abbey from October 26 – November 3, at 10.30am and 7.30pm daily.

LOUTH

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

MAYO

Holy Souls pilgrimage to Knock, Thursday, November 2, at 1pm, Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Confessions before Mass.

MEATH

Trim – 'Life in the Spirit' seminars continue on Thursday, November 2, at 7.30pm, in the Parish Centre. All welcome.

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

ROSCOMMON

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at St Croan's Church, Ballymoe, every Monday 10-11am and Thursday 8-10pm. Also at St Bride's Church, Ballintubber, every Wednesday 7.30-8.30pm.

SLIGO

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

WATERFORD

Exploring St John's Gospel with Fr Michael Mullins, Tuesdays 8pm-9pm in the Edmund Rice Centre.

WICKLOW

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

Eucharistic adoration, St Mary & Peter Church, Arklow, every Tuesday & Friday 2-7pm & Sunday 2-5pm.

St Patrick's Prayer Meeting on Thursday evenings at 8pm in the De La Salle Pastoral Centre, Wicklow. Come for prayer, scripture, music and a cuppa.

World Report



Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie

IN BRIEF

Catholics condemn Philippines mining ban u-turn

● A plan to lift a ban on open-pit mining in the Philippines has drawn strong opposition from environmental activists, including the country's Catholic bishops.

Fr Edwin Gariguez, executive secretary of Caritas Philippines, said lifting the ban is a "backward step in government policy" to protect the environment.

The government's Mining Industry Coordinating Council announced it will lift the ban but warned mining laws should be strictly enforced.

Philippine Environment Secretary Roy Cimatu said he supports the plan, even expressing hope that the ban will be lifted before the end of the year which would allow the development of some large-scale mining projects including the Tampakan copper and gold mine in the southern Philippines worth over €5 billion.

Even sinners can reach heaven – Pope

● God waits for everyone, even the worst sinner who repents only with his dying breath, Pope Francis said.

"Before God, we present ourselves with empty hands," he said, meaning that all the good works people have or haven't done throughout their lives aren't measured to determine entry into heaven.

"A word of humble repentance was enough to touch Jesus' heart" and to make him promise eternal life in heaven even to a poor criminal, he said during his weekly General Audience in St. Peter's Square.

French priest awarded for genocide research

A French priest has been honoured for two decades of researching and telling the story of current and former genocides.

Fr Patrick Desbois is the founder of Yahad-In Unum in Paris, which is dedicated to identifying and commemorating the sites of mass executions in Eastern Europe during World War II.

He was awarded the 2017 Lantos Human Rights prize in the US for uncovering lost stories of those killed in the Holocaust and placed in mass, unmarked graves, and for collecting evidence of the genocide of the Yazidis – a Kurdish religious minority in Iraq – by the so-called Islamic State.

New Nepal law hinders Christian freedom

● Nepal has enacted a law criminalising religious conversion, joining neighbours India and Pakistan in a regional bloc in which Christian minorities face increasing government threats to their faith.

The bill was signed into law last week by President Bidhya Devi Bhandari and enshrines additional constitutional protection for Hinduism, which 80% of the population follows.

The new law restricts religious conversion, bans the "hurting of religious sentiment" and blasphemy.

Offenders face a punishment of five years imprisonment and penalty of 50,000 rupees (€415).

The "Nepali government has taken a regressive step as this law severely restricts our freedom of expression and our freedom of religion or belief," said Tanka Subedi, chairman of Nepals Religious Liberty Forum.

Priest killed in Kenyan violence

● A Catholic priest in Kenya is believed to have been tortured and killed for voicing opposition to government brutality.

Father Evans Juma Odour spoke out against police killing opposition protestors. He served Nyabondo Parish in Kisumu county, and was found unconscious with severe wounds to his head, face and hands.

Police took Fr Odour to a local hospital where he is said to have died due to severe head injuries hours later.

The priest is believed to have been tortured by unknown assailants who later left him, severely wounded, at a sugar plantation around 30km from his home. His car was later found burnt out in a separate location.

Catholics have 'responsibility' in shaping inclusive EU

Christians have a crucial part to play in revitalising Europe, Pope Francis said, warning against "particular and nationalist agendas".

The Pope pointed to the two World Wars that killed millions in Europe, describing peace as a "fragile good", saying "particular and nationalist agendas risk thwarting the courageous dreams of the founders of Europe".

However, he made no mention of Britain's decision to leave the EU or of Catalan's independence movement which led to the Spanish government's decision to oust the former administration.

The Pope said an EU that, when facing crisis, fails to recover a sense of being a single community that sustains and assists its members, "would miss out not only on one of the greatest challenges in history, but also one of the greatest opportunities for its future".

In relation to refugees and immigrants, he appeared to warn against anti-immigration parties, saying: "Extremist and populist groups are finding fertile ground in many countries. They make protest



Gen. Tullio Del Sette, commander of the Carabinieri, Italy's military police force, presents Pope Francis with a statue of a Carabinieri member at the end of a conference on humanitarian law.

the heart of their political message, without offering the alternative of a constructive political project."

Meeting

The Pope made his comments at a meeting of politicians and Church leaders in the EU. The October 27-29 meeting, organised by the Holy See and the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COM-ECE), was dedicated to how the Church could contribute to the future of Europe.

"To speak of a Christian contribution to the future of

the continent means, before all else, to consider our task as Christians today in these lands which have been so richly shaped by the Faith down the centuries," he said.

Christians must ask: "What is our responsibility at a time when the face of Europe is increasingly distinguished by a plurality of cultures and religions, while for many people Christianity is regarded as a thing of the past, both alien and irrelevant?"

He said that Christians are called to revitalise Europe and to revive its conscience, not by occupying spaces – this

would be proselytising – but by generating processes capable of awakening new energies in society.

In essence, Christians can be the soul, the animating force, within the body of every community.

This force of joyful hope rooted in Faith can help communities understand and promote the basic, critical principles needed to thrive: the dignity of every person; the importance of community; the true place of dialogue; a culture of inclusion; and solidarity, development and peace.

Former Church watchdog rejects criticisms of Pope's marriage teaching

A former head of the Church's doctrinal watchdog has poured cold water on suggestions that Pope Francis' exhortation on marriage on the family is contrary to established Catholic teaching.

Introducing a collection of essays by the Italian philosopher and onetime collaborator of St John Paul II Rocco Buttiglione, Cardinal Gerhard Müller said Prof. Buttiglione offers "a reasoned and not controversial answer" to the five 'dubia' or 'doubts' communicated to the Pope last year by four cardinals, two of whom have

since died.

The cardinal, who was removed by Pope Francis this July from his position as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, also said that in *Friendly Responses to Critics of Amoris Laetitia*, Prof. Buttiglione showed how an attack on the Pontiff that questioned his orthodoxy "does not correspond to the reality of the facts", adding that this thesis is similar to the so-called 'filial correction' which was published in September.

In praising Prof. Buttiglione's analysis, Cardinal Müller follows

Vienna's Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, who Pope Francis has referred to as an 'authoritative interpreter' of *Amoris Laetitia*.

Warning also against boasts that the Pope has dramatically shifted Church teaching on marriage, the cardinal criticised how the question of Communion for the divorced and civilly remarried has been "falsely elevated to the rank of decisive question of Catholicism", and said he had written the introduction in the hope of helping restore peace in the Church.

Healing begins in Marawi as war ends

Christian leaders in Philippines have banded together to help rebuild Marawi, a Muslim-majority city in southern Philippines damaged by five months of occupation by terrorists.

The Christian leaders are calling on smaller Christian groups "and even the monks" to pool their strength toward restoring Marawi, said Jing Henderson,

communications and partnership development coordinator of the Philippine bishops' social justice council and Caritas Philippines. Located on central Mindanao Island, for decades experienced insurgency from Muslim rebel groups seeking autonomy.

"For example, our expertise are in disaster risk reduction, psychosocial

support; others would have expertise in shelter, livelihood," Henderson said.

Resources

"We would like to share these resources so that when we go on the ground, to these affected communities, then we'll know what to do, when to provide the response and also how to provide it."

Five months after Islamic State loyalists began a sustained siege in Marawi, the Philippines declared the war ended late last month. More than 1,100 people, most of them militant fighters, died in the fighting. Nearly all of Marawi's 200,000 residents fled the city, along with hundreds of thousands of citizens from surrounding areas.



Leaving a lasting legacy...

It may seem like a very business-like way to acknowledge your own mortality, but making a will is a grim task that everyone should face up to. The failure to make a clear and valid will can leave a legacy of confusion, discord and uncertainty for your loved ones.

A Co. Kildare solicitor who specialises in wills and probate told *The Irish Catholic*: “You would not believe the emotions that come into play around a will – especially if there’s a farm or family land involved. There can be all sorts of accusations flying around and sometimes brothers and sisters can get stuck in litigation for years, which often only drains everyone’s funds. That’s why a will needs to be crystal clear, to avoid that sort of bitterness, which can tear families apart. I’ve seen it happen.”

It is of course possible to write your own will without legal advice, however there are a number of disadvantages to this. Not least, the will may be invalid, the bequests may be contradictory and complex tax issues may not be adequately addressed. The clear advice is to consult a solicitor.

Criteria

There are a number of strict basic criteria for a will to be valid, including that:

- It must be in writing;
- The testator (person making the will) must be over 18, must be of sound mind and must be acting of their own free will;
- The will must be signed in the presence of two witnesses;
- Neither of these two witnesses nor their

Arranging a legacy is much more straightforward than you might have thought:

Step one

Decide which charity/charities you would like to help. Perhaps there is a cause you have always wanted to support but never had the chance. Now is the time to make a list, and decide who you would like to benefit from your legacy after your death.

Step two

Ask your preferred charity/charities for more information about legacy giving. You

should also be able to arrange a confidential, no-obligations meeting with them to discuss how your legacy can best help the causes you care about most.

Step three

If you already have a solicitor, speak to him or her about changing your existing will to include your favourite charity/charities. If you don’t currently have a solicitor, it’s very easy to find one who’ll draw up a will for

you for a nominal fee.

It is entirely up to you whether you tell your chosen charity about your legacy.

On the one hand, you may wish to keep this very private matter to yourself. But on the other, charities are extremely grateful for this information because it helps them to plan their services for the future. So simply by letting them know, you can begin the process of supporting the causes you care about most.

spouses may stand to benefit from the will;

- The signature must appear at the end of the will.

Any later amendments to the will must be similarly witnessed in a document known as a codicil. The codicil must meet the same requirements set out above. It is generally simpler to write a new will, revoking the previous one.

Sometimes wills are challenged if there is doubt that the person was of sound mind at the time they made the will. A testator must have ‘understanding and reason’ and – at the time the will is made – not be suffering from any mental illness that would affect their ability to make a will.

If the person making the will does, even occasionally, suffer from such a mental condition, it is advisable that medical evidence, such as a doctor’s certificate, is left with their will, proving that they were lucid at the time the will was made.

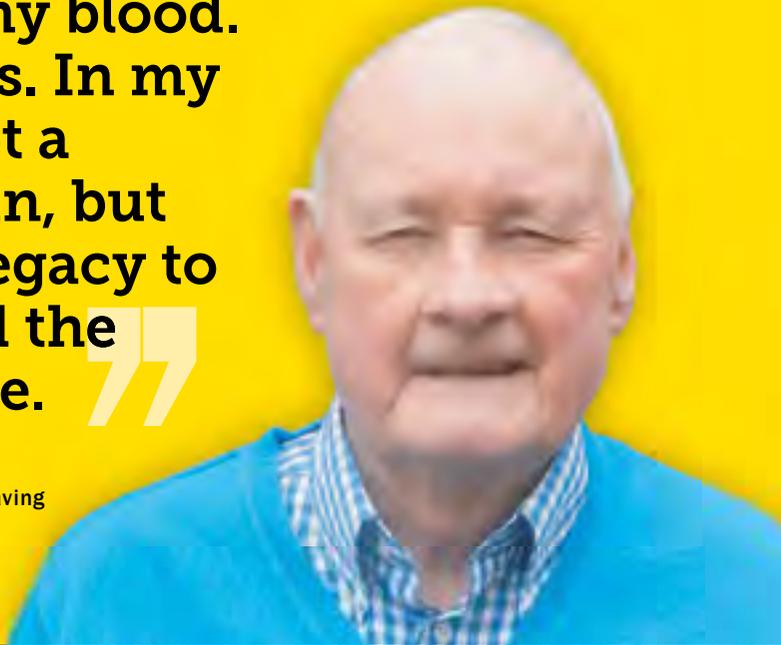
Solicitor

The person best qualified to advise on drafting a will is your solicitor. You can shop around or haggle for the best rates, but you making a will is not as expensive a process as many imagine.

The relatively small investment required to have a properly drafted, clear and valid will is well worth it.

“Cork is in my blood. In my bones. In my soul. I’m not a wealthy man, but this is my legacy to the city and the people I love.”

George O’Regan, Cork Simon Community Supporter who is leaving a gift to Cork Simon in his Will.



Will YOU leave a gift to Cork Simon in your Will too?

For most of us, Cork is the best place in the world to live, work and make a life. Cork is special that way.

But for some, life deals a harsher hand. And sometimes, things fall apart. Mental illness. Unemployment. Relationship breakdown.

Addiction problems. Bereavement of a loved one. Or just a run of bad luck during tough times.

We’ve learned it can happen to almost anyone. But it doesn’t have to be permanent.

We believe in people. If you do too, you can help us turn things round for some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people in Cork, even after you have passed on.

Leaving a gift to Cork Simon in your Will is a far reaching way of helping people who are homeless, and a beautiful way to leave a legacy to Cork city too.

“I get a great sense of satisfaction knowing that what I leave behind will be doing good for people who will be homeless in Cork in the future. George O’Regan”

To find out more about leaving a gift to Cork Simon in your Will, contact Leona Walshtoday on:

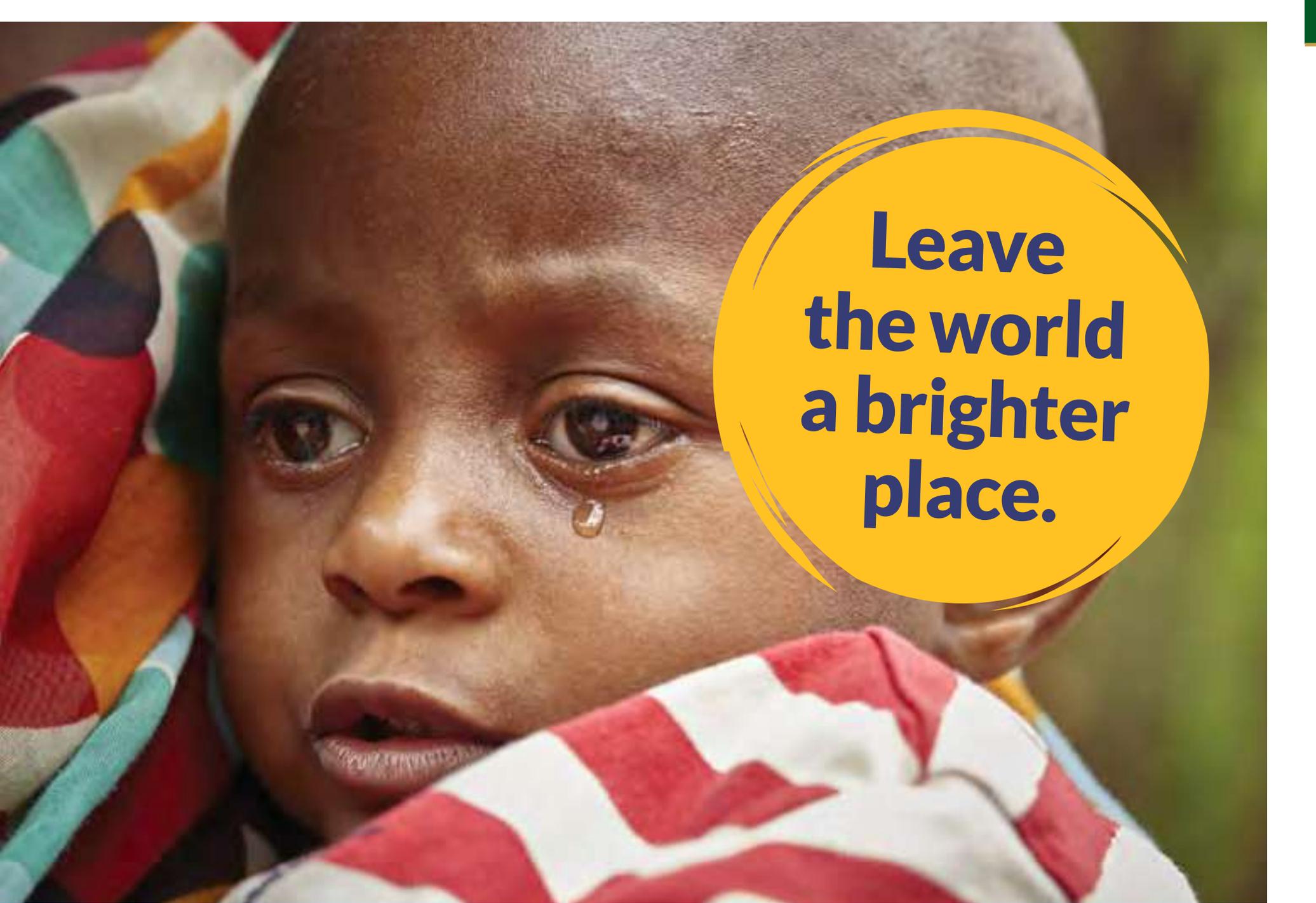
021 4929 418

Email: leona@corksion.ie

www.corksion.ie/legacies

Cork Simon Community
St. Nicholas House
Cove Street
Cork T12 DEH5





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Sightsavers

The Gift of Peace of Mind

People want to live and die in an Ireland where they can prepare for what lies ahead. People want to live and die in an Ireland where they are treated as an individual and their wishes, choices and beliefs are respected.

People want to live in an Ireland where their family and friends are supported during a loved one's illness and after their death.

This is the resounding voice of 2,600 people across the country who responded to The Irish Hospice Foundation's 'Have Your Say' survey last year. Citizens were asked what they feel is needed for a good death and in bereavement and the findings are emotive and inspirational. The strong response shows people want the opportunity to express their end-of-life choices and talk about making a plan. This survey afforded people the opportunity to have their say and think of all eventualities.

The survey was a powerful instrument to garner the voice of the people of Ireland. From this captured information, The Irish Hospice Foundation (IHF) crafted 'The People's Charter on Dying, Death and Bereavement in Ireland' which was launched by the IHF at the biennial 'Forum on End of Life' in Dublin Castle. This is the first charter of its type in Ireland.

Breaking the taboo

Speaking at the Forum, Justice Catherine McGuinness, former Chair of the National Council of the Forum on End of Life in Ireland said: "As citizens and as a society we need to break the taboo that surrounds death. We need to assert clearly that when it comes to end of life we need more rights than the last rites.

“We have the right to have a say in our care at all times of life including end of life. But we also have the responsibility to let other people know our decisions and spare our loved ones and families, who may otherwise have to make important decisions without guidance at what is a very difficult time.”



Pictured are David McCullagh, RTE journalist, Sharon Foley, CEO, Irish Hospice Foundation, Professor Jenny Kitzinger, University of Cardiff and Mrs Justice Catherine McGuinness, at the launch of 'The People's Charter on Dying, Death and Bereavement in Ireland' at Forum 2017, Dublin Castle.

Over the last 30 years, the IHF has campaigned for no-one to face death or bereavement without the care and support they need.

CEO Sharon Foley explained: "This important charter was formed by public opinion and gives us a powerful tool to bring to Government. It has received overwhelming support. The people of Ireland want to have their say about end of life. We believe good dying, good death and good bereavement requires a compassionate society, supportive state and community services, a public willingness to talk more about dying and death as well as excellence in health and palliative care services. This charter helps us work towards this mission.

We will continue to feed and nurture the charter so it grows and is responsive to what people want. There will come a time in our life

when we will all need care through illness, at end of life and in bereavement so it is vital we think, talk and tell our wishes to loved ones today," concluded Ms Foley.

It's never too early to 'Think Ahead'. The IHF's 'Think Ahead' form urges people to Think, Talk and Tell about all aspects of end of life. The form makes it easy for you to record your preferences for emergency or end-of-life care, funeral services, and more. You'll also record key information about your legal and financial affairs. This can give the gift of peace of mind to you and your loved ones."

The form is available online at thinkahead.ie or in hard copy by phoning 01 679 3188 or via our online shop at hospicefoundation.ie. A copy of the charter is also available from our offices or online.



awareness campaign, starts on 30th October and the IHF has joined together with over 50 other charities to appeal to the public to take that first step in writing your will by making an appointment with a solicitor. It is usually a much more straightforward and cost effective process than you might think and your solicitor will discuss what is necessary for drawing up this important personal document when you make your appointment.

Once family and friends have been looked after and all other important personal decisions have been made, leaving a legacy gift to a charity like The Irish Hospice Foundation is a wonderful way to support your favourite cause in the future. Large or small, every legacy is a generous gift of hope and trust for the future.

Leaving a legacy

You can also seek peace of mind and put all your

affairs in order through having a valid will. My Legacy Week, an annual



The Gift Of A Lifetime

Dying is one of the few certainties in life but that doesn't mean we can't be there for others.

When you write a will you can look after your family and loved ones even after you're gone. And if you also include The Irish Hospice Foundation you can reach out to another family you've never met too.

Help us enable people to live well to the end with dignity and respect in a care setting of their choice surrounded by their loved ones.

To find out how you can make a lasting difference

contact Anna Sadler at 01 679 3188 or anna.sadler@hospicefoundation.ie
www.hospicefoundation.ie

'I'm extremely proud of my grand-uncle. His memory lives on'



How you can help...

This year, some of the gifts we received through wills are helping to fund our emergency response to the East Africa Hunger Crisis. Trócaire has expanded its life saving aid programme to the people of Somalia, South Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya, as almost 25 million people face starvation.

The rainy season has failed to arrive in East Africa and temperatures have risen by up to 3 degrees.

As a result, more than half a million children under 5 are now suffering from severe malnutrition in Kenya alone.

In South Sudan 7.5 million people – over 50 per cent of the population – will need emergency aid over the coming months. Trócaire is reaching over 25,000 people with monthly food rations.

Since January 2017, the number of people needing humanitarian aid has risen by 12.5 million people to 141.1 million in 37 countries where natural disaster or conflict has destroyed lives.

Last year, Trócaire, as the Irish Catholic Church's overseas development agency, helped 2.6 million people around the world with contributions from Irish parishes.

Often legacy donations fund long term projects like Packie Lee's gift to

farmers in Ethiopia, sometimes it's about responding to emergencies and saving lives.

Money goes much farther in the developing world, so any gift in a will, even small amounts can make a significant difference.

Pope Francis stated emphatically, in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*: "Today we cannot be satisfied with simply being aware of the problems faced by many of our brothers and sisters". We have to act in response to their cries.

● €144/£130 could pay for two children to attend school in Zimbabwe for a year.

● €252/£226 could provide farmers with improved seeds to plant over 100 acres in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

● €5,000/£4,498 could support 75 farmers in Kenya with two goats each to provide milk and an important source of income.

● €10,800/£9,722 could help secure justice for communities in Guatemala who have suffered abuse and land-grabbing.

● €50,000/£44,996 could provide water to 16,000 households with the installation of 20 wells in communities in North Uganda.

If you would like to find out about including a gift to Trócaire in your will, contact Grace Kelly, at (ROI) 00353 1 629 3333 or in Northern Ireland contact Kevin Donnelly at 0044 28 90808030.



By Margaret Rooney

Patrick (Packie) Lee's family remember him as a man who was always looking out for others, he used to say – 'God gave you two hands, one for yourself and one to help others.'

So when he died in 2010, they were not surprised to find that he had left a gift to Trócaire in his will – a way for his Catholic values and compassion for others to live on.

I had the privilege of travelling to Ethiopia with Packie's grandniece, Carrie, to see the Trócaire's work and to understand the legacy her uncle left after his passing. She saw for herself the incredible changes that donations through legacies are bringing to poor communities.

In Hosanna, four hours south of the capital city, we saw Packie's legacy at work. This is a rural region where climate change has made rainfall less predictable and in turn crops have failed and farming families who previously relied on the land are now starving.

“Deepening inequality, climate change and global conflict are contributing to the unprecedented level of humanitarian needs across the globe”

We met two such farmers, Bizunesh and Aster, neighbours, mothers and crop farmers who welcomed us into their homes. Drought had previously devastated their land and left them without a means to survive. This had a knock on effect as



their hungry children were unable to continue their education.

Trócaire has worked with the community to build irrigation systems that have transformed their once barren plots of land into real working farms, where they produce enough nutritious food for their families and enough left over to make a living and keep their children in education.

Packie was a farmer from Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim, and a committed life long supporter of Trócaire and so it was wonderful to see that his legacy gift is helping farming families in Ethiopia to stay on their land and provide for their children.

At a nearby health clinic we met Sr Celine and her team who provide food programmes to children under the age of five. This essential service means life or death for these infants as their families are struggling to survive in this now uncertain landscape.

Deepening inequality, climate change and global conflict are contributing to the unprecedented level of humanitarian needs across the globe. Packie's gift to Trócaire also helped to fund this work.

There is so much life-changing work being done in Ethiopia and in over 23 countries worldwide because of such generosity from people like Packie.

For his grandniece, the visit to Ethiopia was an emotional and proud journey.

"It was a really special experience to see the projects Packie has helped to support through his will," said Carrie.

"His memory lives on through this work. I saw what Trócaire projects do for families and it's not only supporting them, it's transforming the community around them as well."

"I'm extremely proud of my grand-uncle."

“His memory lives on through this work. I saw what Trócaire projects do for families and it's not only supporting them, it's transforming the community around them”

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

**“MY GRAND-UNCLE LEFT A GIFT
IN HIS WILL THAT IS HELPING
FARMING COMMUNITIES IN
ETHIOPIA TO GROW POTATOES”**

If you would like to know more about leaving
a legacy gift to Trócaire please contact us on
00353 1 629 3333 or visit trocaire.org/legacy

Trócaire Head Office, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland
Irish Charity No. CHY 5883

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Working for a just world.

WILL YOU

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IN YOUR WILL?



With a gift in your Will to the Society of St Vincent de Paul you will help build a better future for people in need and create lasting solutions to tackle poverty. For more information call Nichola on **01 829 9026** or email **legacy@svp.ie**



Society of St Vincent de Paul

St Vincent de Paul is a registered charity: CHY 6892

svp.ie

Leaving a gift in your Will to Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services will live on in your honour, or that of a loved one, through our vital work for this generation and the next.

Our specialist palliative care teams working from our hospices of Harold's Cross and Blackrock, and increasingly within people's own homes, bring comfort, professional support and quality of life to thousands of patients and their families every year.

As a charitable organisation we are determined to be there for as many people as possible to bring peace of mind, comfort, reassurance and dignity to all making the most of their final years. With your support we hope to be able to do so for many years to come.

To find out more about Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services or to discuss the simple steps involved in leaving a gift, big or small, please contact us in complete confidence, and with no obligation.

Thank you.



Eleanor Flew
**Director of Fundraising
and Communications**

Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services,
Harold's Cross & Blackrock

Tel: **(01) 491 1072** Email: **eflew@olh.ie**

Find us on Visit: Olh.ie/legacy

Our
Lady's
**Hospice
& Care
Services**

Respite
Rehabilitation
Reassurance

Harold's Cross
& Blackrock

Your legacy could provide the future they deserve...

Photo: Jennifer Nolan, Malawi, 2016



Manuel Steven, Peter James and Chifindo Kagons pose for a photo in their village of Jambawe in Lilongwe, Malawi, which is supported by Concern's Livelihoods programme.

Concern's work makes the greatest difference when it can support people long-term – and when we have the funds in place to plan properly for the future.

Your generosity can empower people to find their own solutions to hunger, and lift themselves out of poverty. That way, parents can do the most valuable thing – build a more secure future for their children.

Remembering Concern in your Will is your chance to leave a lasting and life-changing legacy for the next generation.



For more information, call Kevin Byrne on **01 417 7709** or visit **concern.net/legacy**

CONCERN
worldwide

Concern Worldwide: Working with the world's poorest people to transform their lives. Place of registration Dublin, Ireland. Registered number 39647. Registered Charity No. CHY5745.

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Learn more about our work at www.specialolympics.ie**

Trump renders language 'meaningless'



Merton treasured the word, writes **Michael W. Higgins**

Pope Francis recognised in the monk-poet Thomas Merton a prophetic and moral genius, ranked along with Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King and Abraham Lincoln. And he did that in Washington, in a powerful address to the Joint Houses of Congress.

Can you imagine that happening now during the presidency of Donald Trump?

President Trump continues to coarsen language, to render it meaningless, a vehicle for limitless self-aggrandisement.

In both his prose writings

and in his poetry Merton will not let us forget what happens when words are held hostage by those who intend more than mischief, when words become drones of discontent, missiles of madness, lethal weapons in the hands of advertisers, spin doctors, political apologists, apparatchiks of industry, state and religion.

But there is not a lot to laugh about when, as journalist Stephen Marche reflects in *This American Carnage* on the new reality: "Writing itself, the attempt to make sense, is now a political act. Science, the attempt to describe the world, is now a political act. Whether we want it or not, anyone who observes, and reports is now an agent. Fact-checking and peer review are no longer abstruse functions of professional castes; they are sacred obligations. To check a fact is to preserve a white dove in the heart of the temple."

Facts are foundational, truth is not a commodity and words must represent not misshape reality.

Merton was a model "dove in the heart of the temple". He treasured the word, he didn't



US President Donald Trump seen at the White House in Washington. Photo: CNS

message it; he chose the right word because he knew that by so doing he revered it.

Merton had little stomach for the master manipulators of language. Think of his prose poems 'Original Child Bomb' and 'Chant to Be Used in Processions Around a Site with Furnaces'. These parodies of justification are Swiftian in their impact. We reel at the monstrous end to which language has been corralled to serve.

Merton scorned the agents of promotion, the advertisers who sell us the pap of false-

hood, in such works as his anti-poetic epic *Cables to the Ace*.

But perhaps his most sustained and apposite work, given our current zeitgeist, is his less playful and more lyrical 1957 radio play *The Tower of Babel*.

Appearance

David Remnick, editor of *The New Yorker*, echoes Merton's spiritual and intellectual dismay half a century after the appearance of *The Tower of Babel* when he observes:

"On Inauguration Day, at

the Capitol, Trump no longer affected any awe of the task before him or respect for his predecessors. He furiously rebuked the elected officials sitting behind him and the international order that they served."

Using the language of populist demagogues, from Huey Long to George Wallace to Silvio Berlusconi, the new President implied that he was in perfect communion with the people, and that together they would repair the landscape of "American carnage" and return it to its prelapsar-

ian state of grace.

Those gathered to hear the 'Leader' in Merton's play willingly give him his one word: "Fear! Fear!"

Merton's *The Tower of Babel* is about the betrayal of language and the consequences of that betrayal.

His witness as poet sentinel in a tremulous time gives us hope that a language restored to integrity is the only antidote to *New York Times* columnist Frank Bruni's melancholy observation that "when something no longer provokes remark, it becomes unremarkable, and the road from there to acceptances is a short one". We easily acclimate to the 'new normal'.

President Trump would be well advised to read *The Tower of Babel* to discover that a true disruptor (as he likes to define himself) is one who knows what he is disrupting, why, and to what end. In that is the message and the judgment.

Michael W. Higgins is Distinguished Professor of Catholic Thought at Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, Connecticut.

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Letter from Rome



John L. Allen Jr

Marshall McLuhan famously said “the medium is the message”. In the same vein, one might add that equally often, “the messenger is the message”. When you’re trying to put a human face on something, in other words, the best strategy is usually to have a genuinely decent person making the pitch.

For almost the last decade, that’s precisely what’s made Bishop Paul Tighe such an effective public emissary on behalf of the headquarters of the Catholic Church, because among many other qualities, the 59-year-old Irish prelate is regarded as quite possibly the Vatican’s nicest guy.

On Saturday, Pope Francis elevated Bishop Tighe’s standing, naming him the Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Culture, meaning the No.2 official in the department led by Italian Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, as opposed to the *ad hoc* role of ‘Adjunct Secretary’ he’s held since December 2015.

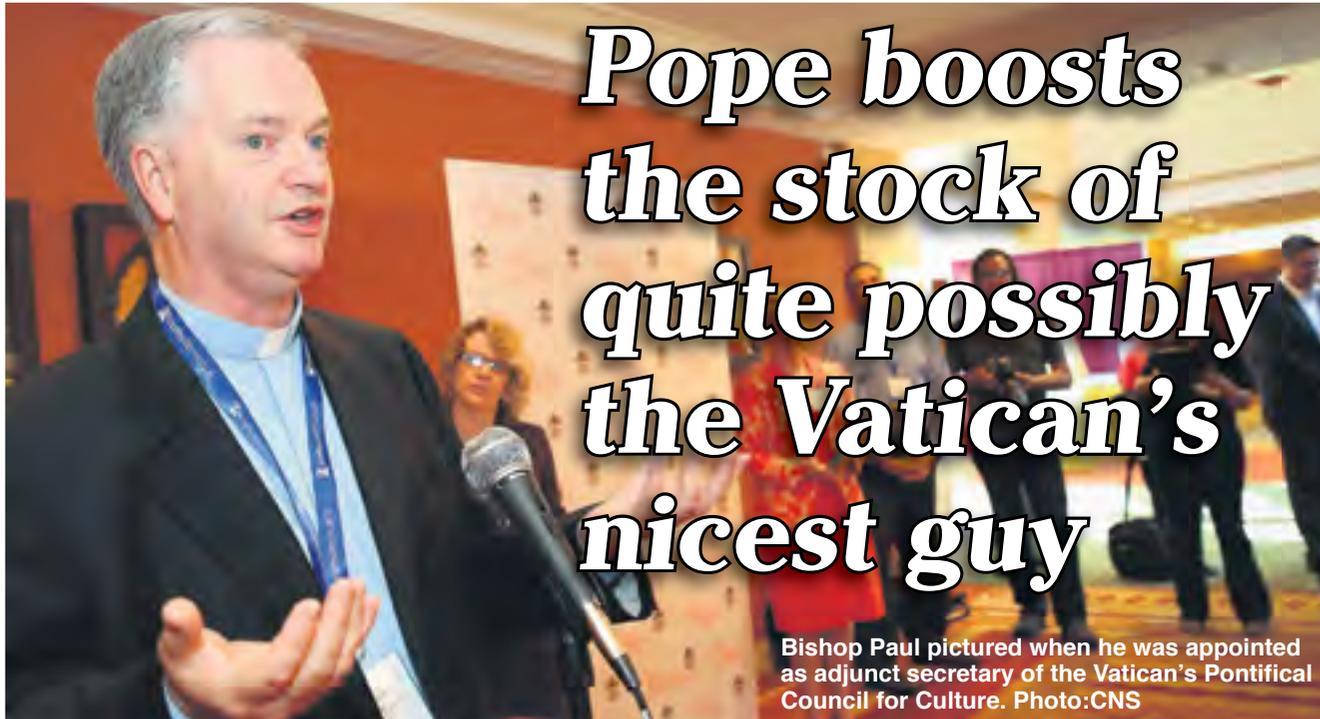
Prior to that, Bishop Tighe had served as Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications since 2007. In that role, he quickly became a precious resource for journalists everywhere, especially in the English-speaking world.

Accessible

For one thing, Tighe was remarkably accessible, always happy to take a phone call no matter how swamped he was in a particular moment. For another, he’s unflinchingly honest. He’ll tell you what he knows and what he doesn’t, he doesn’t sugar-coat situations, and there’s never any sense that he’s just trying to make himself or “the system” look better.

For another, Tighe is just a deeply real person. He’s genuinely humble, never taking himself too seriously, and he looked on journalists he dealt with not just as members of the press but as friends, taking a sincere interest in their lives as well as their careers.

When it became clear in late 2015 that the Council for Social Communications was going the way of all flesh, dissolved as part of a



Pope boosts the stock of quite possibly the Vatican’s nicest guy

Bishop Paul pictured when he was appointed as adjunct secretary of the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for Culture. Photo:CNS

broader reorganisation of Vatican communications, Tighe was shifted to Culture. At the time, some Vatican-watchers suspected his adjunct secretary gig might be little more than what the Italians call a *parcheggio*, meaning a place to park him while figuring out his long-term future.

Instead, Tighe and Ravasi developed a rapport, and now Francis has cemented the Irish prelate’s status as a key part of the Church’s outreach to the worlds of culture.

“The secretary is the person who’s supposed to figure out the cardinal’s vision”

For those familiar with the Vatican, the Pontifical Council for Culture long has been an outlier. Unlike other departments, such as the Congregation for Bishops or the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts, it doesn’t really come with clearly delineated areas of responsibility. In effect, it’s a bit of a blank slate, waiting for a creative leadership team to dream something up.

Launched in 1982 under St Pope John Paul II, the Council for Culture subsumed the older Council for Dialogue with Non-Believers founded by Blessed Paul VI in 1965. Basically, the idea is that it’s supposed to be the Vatican’s beachhead for engaging people who don’t necessarily share the Church’s values or worldview. One expression of that is the ‘Courtyard of the Gentiles’ project launched by Ravasi in 2011.

It’s an endeavour about which Francis is especially keen. Bishop Tighe told me on Saturday that when Francis first named him to the Council for Culture in 2015, his marching orders were, “get out there” – meaning, Bishop Tighe said, to start conversations “in very different places and environments”.

Like Francis, Bishop Tighe takes a decentralised and collegial view of how the Vatican ought to work, or at least his piece of it.

“I think the Vatican’s at its best when it acts like a hub,” he said. “The idea is to learn what’s already happening out there, identify good, effective ‘best practices,’ and then try to leverage them throughout the Church.”

When asked to explain his own role, Bishop Tighe said that to some extent it’s no different than the job description of the secretary in any other Vatican office.

“In general, the secretary is the person who’s supposed to figure out the cardinal’s vision and then make sure it’s put into action, serving as a bridge between him and the rest of the staff,” he said. “Part of that is making sure that the staff has the resources to do their work, and so on.”

Tighe also has assumed personal responsibility for two areas: digital culture, and developing the council’s relationships with the English-speaking world.

How does he spend his days? Well, right now Tighe is hip-deep in organising the Council for Culture’s upcoming November 15-18 plenary assembly, which is poised to take up the minor matter of “the future of humanity.”

Specifically, participants will ponder the latest

developments in genetics, neuroscience and artificial intelligence. Initially, they’ll hear briefings from leading scientists and researchers in those areas, and then try to begin making moral sense of what’s already happened and what’s reasonable to expect in the future.

“Bishop Tighe’s assignment to the Council for Culture looks more akin to a missione”

Among Vatican-watchers, Tighe’s boss is known as a deeply original figure. Now 75, Ravasi is a biblical exegete by training and a former prefect of the Ambrosian Library in Milan. He’s maybe the most voracious reader you’ll ever meet, once telling me that he’s gifted with the ability to get by with very little sleep, so he can spend the wee hours of every night lost in a book.

Here’s a typical Ravasi moment: back in December 2015, I asked for his reaction to Francis’ now-legendary speech to the Roman Curia, in which he decried a set of 15 “spiritual diseases” from which he said the place often suffers.

“I have to say, the first thing that came to mind was Constantin Noica, who wrote a book called *Six Maladies of the Contemporary Spirit*,” Ravasi said, in utter earnestness.

Care to lay odds on any other Vatican bureaucrat at that moment flashing on an obscure 1978 title by a Romanian philosopher?

Despite having turned 75 earlier this month, Ravasi could still be around a while, and Bishop Tighe obviously

something like the Masses he’ll say for the staff in the office, I always find at least three things in his sermons that help, that make me think.”

In a different key, one might say the same thing about Tighe. He’s deceptively smart, yet he has a strong common touch – driven, no doubt, by the fact that he genuinely cares not only about what he’s saying, but what you’re hearing.

All that helps explain why, three years later, Bishop Tighe’s assignment to the Council for Culture no longer looks like a *parcheggio*, but more akin to a *missione* – not a parking place, but a mission.

Stay tuned, because with Ravasi and Tighe free to follow their noses and see where it leads, it’s hard to say what’ll come next, but it definitely won’t be dull.

John L. Allen Jr is Editor of CruxNow.com

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Letters

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Letter of the week

Reformation is a live debate

Dear Editor, Your special Reformation issue of *The Irish Catholic* (IC 26/10/2017) was remarkable for its breadth and depth, but its real value may lie in its relevance to current Church debates.

Take, for example, the piece on the Catholic Counter-Reformation by UCD's Prof. Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin in which he says that what was decided at the Council of Trent was in many respects less important than what Trent was believed to represent.

We hear a lot nowadays about the differences between what was decided at Vatican II and the so-called 'Spirit of Vatican II' – is it possible that those who oppose developments in the Church over recent decades aren't upholding the teachings of Trent so

much as a caricature of Tridentine Catholicism?

The piece on how the current rapprochement towards Lutherans and Lutheranism, as well as what could be described as a rehabilitation of Luther himself, builds on the work and thought of Benedict XVI, forms a useful riposte to those who would challenge Pope Francis for his recognition that Luther's heart was – at least at first – in the right place. If the Holy Father believes this, he is simply developing the insights of his predecessors.

Indeed, the introduction to the 'Reformation 500' special reveals the extent to which much current opposition to the Pope owes as much to early Protestantism as it does to

Catholicism.

Luther, we're told, said that even if some of his writings seemed inappropriately harsh, he could not recant them since doing, when consciences were tortured by the Pope's teachings, would have bolstered 'tyranny'. Furthermore, he said, those who challenged him on some issues were only doing so because they knew his case was watertight on others.

Given how their writings can echo such claims, the authors of the so-called 'filial correction' of Pope Francis should take note!

*Yours etc.,
Gabriel Kelly,
Drogheda,
Co. Louth.*

Single people are not lesser beings

Dear Editor, As a single person I would like to respond to your editorial of September 28 (There's no such thing as a 'vocation' to the single life'). I found the tone of the article quite worrying.

You seem to imply that single people are 'lesser beings' who are afraid of commitment, live unnatural lives and further are not really part of the "long tradition of God's plan for his people". You soften the blow in your exhortation that in spite of our flaws we should still be regarded as full members of the Church. I think the Lord who sees into all our hearts and histories will himself render us welcome without anyone else asking that it be so.

Many single people give gifts of themselves and do not need marriage or religious life to show them how to truly flourish in a human way. Some chose not to marry for very valid reasons. Others who are pressurised into thinking they have to be married at all costs have often chosen abusive partners, but that is deemed better than not to marry at all! It might be kinder when making a laudable case for religious life, not to do so at the expense of another group of people whose lives are no less worthy.

*Yours etc.,
Marie-Thérèse Cryan,
Ballygall, Dublin 11.*

Lack of clarity in WMOF resources

Dear Editor, I was very much looking forward to the release of the official catechesis programme for the World Meeting of Families 2018. As a teacher, I'm always on the lookout for resources that I can use in the classroom. I must say I was disappointed with the programme. While there is a lot of good material in it, there is also a lot of ambiguity on the issue of "alternative" family types and what the Church teaches regarding same-sex relationships.

I would be hesitant to use anything in the classroom that is not clear or that would create a misconception about what the Church teaches. I believe clarity is very important in teaching people about the Faith. As such, I'm sorry to say I will not be making use of this programme. I feel that the authors of the programme have missed a valuable opportunity to deliver authentic Church teaching on these issues in a clear manner.

*Yours etc.,
Adam Conroy,
Newbridge, Co. Kildare.*

'Love both' can't offend anyone

Dear Editor, The pro-life motto 'love both' surely cannot offend anyone and if all of us pro-life people were to display the stickers on our cars, it would surely send a very positive message and help to counteract the biased media reporting on the referendum issue.

*Yours etc.,
Brigid Lavery,
Raheny,
Dublin 5.*

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.

Jesus was not born on December 25

Dear Editor, The advertisements for Christmas-themed merchandise being penetrating the media a good three months before the actual event. Obviously the emphasis is more on making a healthy profit from the season than actually remembering it as the birth of Christ.

A growing number of Bible scholars are concluding that Jesus Christ, or Yeshua to give him his original Hebrew name, could not have been born in the "deep mid-winter", or December 25, as it would have been too cold in the hills of Judea,

where Bethlehem is situated, to have shepherds out in the fields at night as the Gospel story recounts. A September or October birth would seem more plausible, as a milder time of year.

There are clues in the Bible which help to verify these claims, including the birth date of John the Baptist who was Yeshua's cousin, and who was born six months before him. In I Chronicles 24:10 in the Old Testament (or Jewish 'Tanach') John's father's priestly cycle of Abijah is listed as being on the eighth

week of the Hebrew year, and from this point we can calculate nine months which will arrive at Passover, an 'appointed' feast. Both the special births of John and Jesus were predicted in Scripture to be at the 'appointed time', which in Hebrew is the word 'moed' meaning an appointed feast or holy day.

It would appear that John was born "at the appointed time" on the first day of Passover and circumcised, as a Jew, on the eighth day of the week-long feast, the eighth day also being a

'moed' or appointed feast day, an annual Sabbath or rest day. Exactly six months later Jesus would have been born in September/October time on the Feast of Tabernacles, or 'Sukkot' in Hebrew, on the first day of the festival, an 'appointed time', and circumcised, as a Jew, on the eighth day, the last day of the festival, also an appointed time or annual Sabbath.

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

Opting out of certain classes

Dear Editor, The Minister for Education, Richard Bruton, wishes to have alternative tuition options available for pupils who opt out of religion classes in secondary schools. I hope that the same service will be provided for primary school students who do not wish to attend such courses as the "Different Families; Same Love" programme, which many parents regard as being harmful.

*Yours etc.,
Eamon Fitzpatrick,
Sligo.*



Protection for life reflects a civilised society

Dear Editor, The right to life is the primary most fundamental right from which all other rights follow. Human life is at its most vulnerable at the beginning and end of life. The principle of protecting all human life including

those who have life limiting illnesses should apply regardless of their stage in life. Thankfully palliative care provides the very necessary care and support for patients and their families in these very difficult

situations. Our Constitution presently recognises that the developing baby and its mother share a right in common, a right qualified by the words as far as is practicable. These rights do not give the developing baby precedence

when the mother's life is in danger. Respect and protection for all human life reflects a civilised society.

*Yours etc.,
Dr Frank Hassett,
Hospice Jinja,
Uganda.*

📷 Around the world



PUERTO RICO: Maria Santiago works with her pre-kindergarten students at Good Heart of Mary Catholic School in San Juan, over a month after Hurricane Maria devastated the island.



VATICAN: A child reacts as he stands in front of Pope Francis during his visit at the Scholas Occurrentes foundation last week. Photos: CNS



USA: Youth attend the Holy Fire event at the UIC Pavilion in Chicago. It drew 4,200 middle school students from several states. Organisers say its mission is "to set young people ablaze with the love of Christ".



ITALY: People harvest grapes near Pompeii last week. Pope Francis said on October 26 that economic growth based on increased consumption without concern for creating dignified jobs and protecting the environment is "dangerous".



VATICAN: Pope Francis speaks to astronauts aboard the International Space Station. The Pope connected for about 25 minutes to astronauts 400 km above the earth.



PAKISTAN: A soldier in North Waziristan stands guard along the border fence with Afghanistan. Bishop Oscar Cantu of New Mexico offered President Donald Trump's administration a set of principles to help guide US actions in the troubled country.

A plea for the soul



Fr. Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

It's hard to find your soulmate in someone who doesn't believe you have a soul.

Recently on *The Moth Radio Hour*, a young woman shared the story of her breakup with her boyfriend, a young man for whom she had deep feelings. The problem was that she, a person with a deep faith, a Mormon, struggled with the radical materialism of her boyfriend.

For him, there were no souls; the physical world was real, and nothing else. She kept asking him if he believed he had a soul. He couldn't make himself believe that. Eventually, not without a lot of heartache, they broke up. Why? In her words: it's hard to find your soulmate in someone who doesn't believe you have a soul.

“It is not surprising that for most pop singers today the mantra is: I want your body!”

Her frustration is becoming more universal. More and more our world is ignoring and denying the existence of soul, becoming soulless. It wasn't always like this. Up until modern times, often it was the physical and the body that weren't properly honored. But things have changed, radically.

It began with Darwin, who rooted our origins more in the history of our bodies than in the origins of our souls; it took more shape in the mechanistic philosophies of the last century, which understood both our universe and ourselves as physical machines; it became more firm as modern medicine and experimental psychology began more and more to explain the brain primarily in terms of carbon complexification and biochemical interactions; it seeped into our higher educational systems as we produced more and more technical schools rather than universities in the deeper sense; and it culminated in popular culture where love and sex are spoken of more in terms of chemistry than in terms of soul.

It is not surprising that for most pop singers today the mantra is: 'I want your body! I want your body!' We're a long ways from Shakespeare's marriage of true minds and Yeats' love of the pilgrim soul in you.

Protests

Religion of course has always lodged its protests against this but often its understanding of the soul was itself too narrow to have much

power to lure a materialistic culture back into wanting to rediscover and listen to the soul. Ironically, it took a non-religious figure, Carl Jung, to speak of soul again in a way that is intellectually intriguing.



Carl Jung.

And it was in the sick, the insane, the suicidal, and others whose lives were broken that Jung began to hear the cry of the soul (whose demands are sometimes very different from those of the body and whose needs

are for much more than simple comfort and the prolonging of life).

Much of Jung's teaching and that of his followers can be seen as a protest for the soul. We see this, for example, in the writing of James Hillman. It's ironic that as an agnostic he was able to speak about the soul in ways that we, who are religious, might envy and emulate.

Like Jung, he also drew many of his insights from listening to the soul cry out its meaning and pain through the voices of the sick, the insane, the broken, and the suicidal. Religion, medicine and psychology, he believes, are not hearing the soul's cry.

They're forever trying to fix the soul, cure the soul or save the soul, rather than listening to the soul which wants and needs neither to be fixed nor saved. It's already eternal. The soul needs to be heard, and heard in all its godly goodness and earthy complexes. And sometimes what it tells us goes against all common sense, medical practice, and the over-simplistic spiritualities we often present as religion.

To be more in touch with our souls we might examine an older language, the language that religion, poets, mythologists, and lovers used before today's dominant materialism turned our language about the soul into the language of chemistry and mechanism. We cannot understand the soul through any scientific description but only by looking at its behavior, its insatiability,

its dissatisfactions, and its protests. A soul isn't explained, it's experienced, and soul experience always comes soaked in depth, in longing, in eros, in limit, in the feeling of being pilgrim in need of a soulmate.

Happily, even today, we still do spontaneously connect the soul to things beyond chemistry and mechanism. As Hillman points out: "We associate the word 'soul' with: mind, spirit, heart, life, warmth, humanness, personality, individuality, intentionality, essence, innermost, purpose, emotion, quality, virtue, morality, sin, wisdom, death, God.

“They're forever trying to fix the soul, cure the soul or save the soul”

As well, we speak of a soul as 'troubled', 'old', 'disembodied', 'immortal', 'lost', 'innocent', 'inspired'. Eyes are said to be 'soulful', for the eyes are 'the mirror of the soul'; and one can be 'soulless' by showing no mercy."

Soullessness: We understand the make-up of something best when we see it broken. So perhaps today we can best understand our soullessness in the growing acceptance of pornography and hook-up sex, where the soul is intentionally and necessarily excluded from what is meant to be the epitome of all soulful experience.

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, November 2, 2017

Youth Space
How to tackle objections to the Faith

Page 30



Perfect parents DON'T exist



One of the most widely abused clichés you hear when you become a mum is some variation of ‘Ah, parenthood! If only it came with a handbook!’ Guess what...it does. And it has done quite possibly forever.

Some of the most rudimentary prehistoric cave drawings included tips for successful baby-led weaning (this is entirely made up but who knows).

But yes, there are thousands of handbooks – walk into any bookshop and you will see the Parenting/Child/Baby section is probably taking over a significant percentage of the building – not quite as sizeable as Cookery, but thankfully now eclipsing Celebrity Autobiography. Not



Parents are inundated with ‘expert’ advice and judgement, but ultimately you must trust your instincts, writes **Maia Dunphy**

unlike picking up a travel brochure or joining a cult, it’s up to you to decide what direction you want to take. If you don’t want to buy one of these mothering manuals, you can walk straight to fiction and buy a nice holiday read, but if it’s a handbook you want, then no one can say they don’t exist. The trouble with advice books of any kind is finding the right one for you. There’s no point in trying to

work out what’s wrong with your dishwasher by reading the clock radio instructions, and equally, it’s futile applying a set of rules to a baby who isn’t responding to them or who needs a different approach.

What does parenting mean? A hundred years ago it meant ‘keeping your children alive’, and even a couple of generations ago, it just meant ‘raising your kids’, albeit within your own

parameters, abilities and means.

Sometime over the last while (I have to be vague as I have genuinely no idea when it happened) people stopped just raising kids and began ‘parenting’. It became a verb with wildly varying connotations. Now we have a string of adverbs that can precede it: tiger, hothouse, snowplough, attachment, helicopter...every time I open a magazine, a new term seems to have been coined.

Fear

Nothing strikes fear into the heart of a mother like the thought of any harm befalling her baby. This isn’t a new concept; we all know that fear sells like hot cakes. Hot cakes that should be kept away

from babies in case they burn themselves (you see? Fear is EVERYWHERE).

Google ‘19th-Century parenting manuals’ and prepare to guffaw at the hilarious and ludicrously archaic suggestions and advice. But then remember that in a hundred years’ time, mothers may be chatting incredulously on their hover boards (they’ll have to become a reality eventually, right?) about the things we do now: “Those idiots let them drink from plastic cups? So toxic!” “They let them play on mobile phones to keep them quiet! Did they not KNOW what radiation was?!” “Can you believe they put them to sleep on their fronts/back/sides?!”

» Continued on Page 29

Family News

AND EVENTS

Wild Lights at Dublin Zoo

Dublin Zoo is launching an after-dark event tomorrow (November 3) which will run until January 7, 2018. Wild Lights is a trail



around illuminated animal sculptures including a pride of lions, orangutans, tigers, giraffes and monkeys.

Other highlights include a 16-metre high porcelain elephant tower and a 30-metre long Chinese dragon. Visitors will also be entertained by Chinese performers before browsing at the Chinese craft market and there will be a selection of Chinese foods and warm drinks available for purchase.

Admission is from 5-9pm and tickets are €20 per adult and €15 per child, booking essential. www.dublinozoo.ie

HAND HYGIENE: Children aged 0-4 are more vulnerable to certain forms of food poisoning and all the evidence points to poor hygiene being the major cause.

While wipes and hand sanitisers are really handy, they are not soap and water and just don't work the same way. Just rinsing their hands under the tap will not get rid of dangerous germs. And if they don't dry their hands either, germs will breed in the moisture and spread easily onto whatever your children touch next. So Safefood advises we teach them to wash their hands the only way that works:

- Wet their hands with water. Add soap and show them how to rub their hands until lather forms.
- Rubbing their hands' palms, back, wrists, fingers, nails and in between their fingers helps remove dirt and germs.
- Rinse soap off completely with running water and show them how to dry their hands thoroughly with a towel.

Dogs reduce anxiety in children

Children who have a pet dog are less likely to suffer from anxiety, according to a new study published in the journal *Preventing Chronic Disease*.

Researchers from Bassett Medical Centre in Cooperstown, New York found that just 12% of children with pet dogs tested positive for clinical anxiety, compared to 21% of children without a dog.

"From a mental health standpoint, children aged 7 to 8 often ranked pets higher than

humans as providers of comfort and self-esteem and as confidants," wrote Dr Anne Gadomski and her team.

"Because dogs follow human communicative cues, they may be particularly effective agents for children's emotional development."

Other studies have also shown that playing or cuddling with a dog can release the bonding hormone oxytocin, and lower the stress hormone cortisol, they noted.

The team choose to study the effects of dogs because there's so much research about them, but Dr Gadomski said that "doesn't mean that cats can't do the same thing".

Falls and fractures a major risk for older adults



Falls and fractures are common in older adults and contribute to a significant morbidity and mortality. Falls are associated with social isolation and depression due to fear of further falls and indeed recurrent falls is one of the leading reasons for nursing home admission.

One third of those aged over 65 fall at least once or more per year, rising to 50% in those aged over 80. Furthermore of those who fall, about 30% have recurrent falls and overall between 1-10% of falls result in serious injury including fracture.

Whilst falls and related injuries are not something that may be at the fore of our minds, many of us have older family members who are at risk of falling or have fallen with serious consequences. Many falls are classified as mechanical which often belies a more complex genesis with most occurring due to multi-factorial reasons.

Overall, in 80% of cases gait imbalance is the predominant feature but other intrinsic factors often ultimately precipitate falls. Unfortunately, from the age of 40 muscle shrinkage can begin to occur and indeed by 65 there is an approximate 20-30% loss of muscle mass which can affect how we maintain our equilibrium.

Osteoarthritis

Unsteady gait is often due to osteoarthritis, silent mini-stroke disease and poor posture as a result of spinal wear and tear and even fractures.

But there are other important causes of falls that shouldn't be missed. Blood pressure drops on standing often results in falls and is common with advancing age occurring in about 30% of those over 65. It is due to a blunting or loss of the normal

Medical Matters

Dr Kevin McCarroll



reflex that makes the heart beat faster and blood vessels tighten to counteract the effects of gravity on blood flow. This often occurs in the morning and especially after getting up from lying flat after a long period, but is exacerbated by dehydration and blood pressure tablets. It often gives rise to transient dizziness or simply unsteadiness or staggering that resolves after a brief period.

It can be diagnosed by measuring lying and standing blood pressures. Some blood pressure tablets are more likely to cause such drops in which case they may need to be



stopped or the dose reduced. Other tablets can also have the same affect including antidepressants and those used to treat prostatism. Ensuring adequate hydration and graduated postural changes like sitting on the edge of the bed for a few minutes before standing

can be very helpful. In addition, medications can be used.

Drop attacks or falls that happen without warning (especially if recurrent) may indicate the heart going too slow or pausing and may warrant cardiac rhythm monitoring and occasionally a pacemaker insertion.

Simple measures like ensuring correct foot wear and glasses, appropriate mobility aids and assessing factors like flooring, steps and hazards in the home are crucial in any approach to preventing falls.

“All males over 70 and females over 65 should consider getting a DXA scan to check for brittle bones”

Since zimmer frames were first developed in the 1950's several other types of walking aids are now available including three and four wheel devices particularly suited for outdoors. However, sometimes aids can actually increase the risk of falls if not measured for the individual or if used incorrectly. Unfortunately, mobility aids including the simple walking stick are a visible sign of physical disability which often leads to an aversion to their use.

One of the biggest fears from falling is sustaining a hip fracture, the incidence of which rises exponentially with age. When older adults fall they tend not to react as quickly with their outstretched hand and the hip is more likely to receive impact, especially with falls sideways. In addition, about 50% of adults over 65 have some degree of brittle bones and indeed in severe osteoporosis fracture can

occur prior to hip impact.

Your chances of hip fracture are greater if you are taller, have a parent with hip fracture (genetic factors) and fall on a hard surface. If you have a fat pad around the hip due to being overweight, it may be protective by absorbing the impact and appears to reduce your risk of fracture!

Protectors

On a similar vein, hip protectors (specially padded underwear) which are commercially available and have been extensively tested appear to reduce the risk of fracture and are suitable for some with severe osteoporosis.

Crucial to preventing fractures is also maintaining good bone health. All males over 70 and females over 65 should consider getting a DXA scan to check for brittle bones. If you are at risk of falls, vitamin D supplementation may also be beneficial both for bone health but also in reducing falls by improving muscle strength. Regular exercise, physiotherapy with gait training and even Tai Chi have all been shown to reduce falls.

Falls can have a serious impact and it is always important to look for secondary causes. When frequent there should be an assessment by a geriatrician and multidisciplinary team including physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Remember too, that if you're at risk of falling, take great care this winter to avoid any slippery conditions.

i Dr Kevin McCarroll is a Consultant Physician in Geriatric Medicine, St James's Hospital, Dublin.

» Continued from Page 27



(This seems to triangulate with every generation so it's only a matter of time before we're told to suspend our babies from coat hooks to be safe.)

This gem from the book *Searchlights on Health: The Science of Eugenics* by B. G. Jefferis and J. L. Nichols published in the 1920s isn't quite what you might find in the 1980s bestseller *What to Expect When You're Expecting*: "Pregnant mothers should avoid thinking of ugly people, or those marked by any deformity or disease; avoid injury, fright and disease of any kind." Fair enough, lads. Sounds like something a certain Führer might have said...

Advisors

Most of the early advisors on maternity and motherhood were men. In fact, I think they all were. The rules were simple and often similar: cuddling was bad, leaving babies to cry until their faces inverted was normal, smacking was essential, and raising children was generally not dissimilar to raising animals in a Victorian circus.

Parenting was all about detachment and discipline – there were even 19th-Century 'baby cages', a handy device for apartment dwellers that could be suspended out the window to ensure your baby was sufficiently 'aired'. Maybe that's where David Blaine got the idea.

Things moved on, and in the 1950s the idea of the 'good enough' mother was popularised by psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott, who made a connection between poor parenting and essentially every other single problem in the known world (no pressure, eh, mums?).

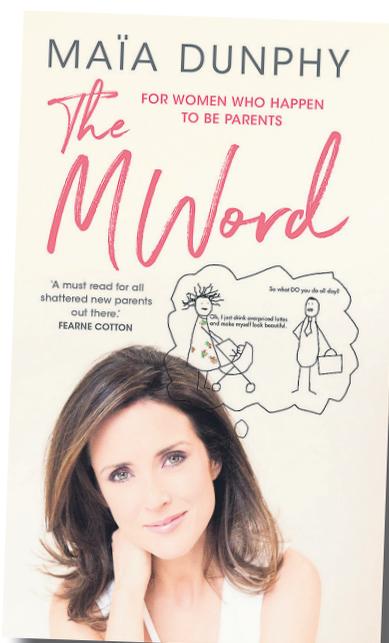
“There is no longer one guru, one attitude or one food pyramid”

According to Winnicott, fascism, violence, social injustice (and no doubt reality TV stars had they been a thing then) could all be directly attributed to bad parenting. So he believed that the path to a better society begins in the nursery – and he may have had a point. Most importantly, he stressed that parents didn't have to be perfect, but just had to do their best.

Then came Dr Benjamin Spock in the 1970s (that paragon of parental guidance who most of us born in the '70s were ostensibly raised by) and his more gentle approach of trusting

a mother's instincts. Basically, he made millions from telling people to use their own common sense: nice work, Spock. And then followed the female experts: from Penelope Leach in the '80s and her child-centric views – you had the baby, you make the sacrifices – (tell us something we don't know, Penny), to militant maternity nurse Gina Ford and Generation X's Supernanny Jo Frost, whose 'naughty step' revolutionised attitudes to disciplining kids (and presumably, carpeting) in the early 2000s.

Recently the 21st Century has seen parenting move into a whole new realm. There is no longer one guru, one attitude or one food pyramid. More than ever before, mothers are educated women who have built careers before having children and approach parenting as they would a job. Their attitude



is 'It has to be done well'. They are parents who are better read and have access to more information than any generation before; parents who know they only have one shot at getting it right, and are determined they'll be the ones who raise the next well-balanced internet millionaire with a sense of humour and a social conscience. Or maybe just a decent human being.

Either way, as parents, we are all looking for answers when sometimes we're not sure what the questions should be. Every century and every generation think they have parenting sussed, but

we are always evolving based on new knowledge and technology. Parenthood is no different, and in our pursuit of perfection, we too will get things wrong, make mistakes and at some point our children will tell us that they didn't ask to be born (this is always a good time to take out an image of the baby cages and remind them how good they have it).

“The truth is, I just want my son to be happy, independent, funny, smart, compassionate and kind”

Based on all this, you might think that I have a tiny clue what I'm on about. Well, you'd be wrong, I don't. I didn't read a single book whilst pregnant (for the record, I don't recommend this approach; you don't have to read the entire library, but please read something), and only know any of this because I looked it up so I could make some cross references that weren't just my own whimsical musings.

When it comes to what sort of parent I am, I have no idea.

I know occasionally I want to wrap my little boy up in a cocoon and protect him from anything even remotely negative until he's 50, and then I realise that makes me sound nuts (but it would make for a pretty amusing surprise 50th birthday party).

The truth is, I just want him to be happy, independent, funny, smart, compassionate and kind, and for that to happen, he'll have to learn some things the hard way. The most important things we can do for our kids are to give them the best education within our means, teach them that being horrible never works out well for anyone, and remind them that fussy eaters are irritating.

If I can get those three things right, 'you'll be a man, my son!' (Although as a pitch for a parenting book, it may need work.)

i Maia Dunphy is a blogger, author, broadcaster and television producer. This is an edited extract from her new book *The M Word*, based on her blog and published by Gill Books, €14.99.

Faith — IN THE — family



Bairbre Cahill

I have been doing some evenings with parents whose children are preparing for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. I was struck last night by one mum who talked about the importance of praying with her children. She spoke of the strength and security it gave her children.

Cuddling up to pray with children at the end of the day creates a space for conversation about what has gone on during the day. It means that when children talk about rows that may have happened at school or things that have gone wrong during the day, there is an opportunity to gently encourage respect, forgiveness and compassion.

Faith is nurtured in these moments. We do not sit our children down with the announcement "I'm now going to teach you about faith". It happens bit by bit in the course of our daily lives, particularly when we build in those moments of reflection, prayer and conversation.

These moments also give our children the strength and security of knowing that they are part of something bigger than just themselves. For us, prayer at night, whether together as a family or tucking the kids in to bed was usually something warm, loving and special. I say 'usually' because we also had times when it was more fraught and a question of getting through it and getting the kids to bed quickly! But I am convinced that it was an important part of building the foundations of the faith our children have today.

“Faith nurtured in prayer and lived out in daily life really does give a sense of security and strength”

Thanking God for the blessings of the day, asking God's help with the challenges, praying for those people and situations we are concerned about all help us to know that God is part of our ordinary, everyday lives and we are never alone.

I read a message on Facebook this week on a parenting page where a mum was asking if any other mums had tried using 'a fairy worry

board' beside the bed to help an anxious child to sleep at night. It is the first time I had heard of this, but I presume the idea is that any anxieties are written on the board so that the child can let go of them and go to sleep.

I have heard of something similar with 'dream catchers' – the idea, taken from native American people that a dream catcher placed beside the bed will take away any bad dreams and leave only good ones. It is clear to me that people are searching for something but leaves me wondering if they have thought of praying with their little ones before bed at night?

An anxiety written on a fairy board will still be there in the



morning. Putting our anxieties and concerns in God's hands and asking for his help does not mean that our worries vanish but at least we feel we have God's help in dealing with them. The gifts of the Holy Spirit – wisdom, courage, right judgment, understanding – can all help us here.

When I ask parents why they made the choice to have their child baptised one of the answers that comes up is "to protect our child". I think faith nurtured in prayer and lived out in daily life really does give a sense of security and strength. I believe faith supports and protects our wellbeing – mental, emotional and spiritual. However, religion is not a magical thing and we need to be careful that we are not slipping into superstition thinking that baptising a child means nothing bad will happen to them, as if God owes us a guarantee.

The reality is that life can throw us some serious challenges and as people of faith we are as likely as the next person to face those. Faith can support and strengthen us to deal with the challenges. Faith can assure us that we are not alone. In faith we believe that the darkest night ends with dawn.

Youth Space



Colm Fitzpatrick reports from a conference for Catholic young adults

In 1 Peter 3:15, all Christians are taught: "Always have your answer ready for the hope that you all have." This was the key theme at a recent Catholic apologetics conference in Belfast which celebrated both faith and reason.

The Legion of Mary's 3rd Annual Conference for Young Adults took place in the vibrant Catholic chaplaincy at Queen's University, with the topic of answering objections to the Faith at the forefront. This year's conference responded to the relativism of the modern world where the Catholic faith is perennially being called into question, ridiculed or rejected, usually due to confusion or misunderstanding. The conference reaffirmed the strong foundation that is needed for personal faith and how that should be shared to others.

"We've been doing this conference for three years now," said Cormac McCool, compere of the event.

"The initial idea was to try and get young people back into their faith and to fortify them by answering difficult questions. It's about trying to arm people with answers to questions. It's difficult to be a young person, especially in the university environment. Young people need help."

Discussion

The first topic of discussion, which was led by Fr Andrew Black, pertained to the Eucharist and particularly common objections to

transubstantiation. He responded to Luther, Zwingli and Calvin, and explained the theological limitations to their understandings of the Eucharist.

He also argued that going to Mass isn't about becoming a good person, a reason often cited for non-attendance. Rather, "Mass is about union with God, a state of holiness", and that the Eucharist, quoting St Ignatius of Antioch, is the "medicine of immortality". A piece of advice he offers to all Catholics is never to refer to the Eucharist as holy bread but either 'the Body of Christ', 'the Host' or 'the Precious Blood'.

Following this invigorating talk,

Sr Beatrice Clarke, an American Dominican, spoke on the topic of 'Speaking publicly about the Faith'. Her smile and warming attitude would be enough alone to proselytise anyone. Her main message was that debate about the Faith today isn't just about winning arguments but is ultimately about salvation.

"It's a matter of winning a soul. This battle isn't about getting the last word, but being a vessel of grace," she said. As Catholics, we should all be submitting our intellect to God, and trying "to live in imitation of an incarnate God".

Chances for more personal discussions about difficult issues

within the Church today were carried out in workshops. Fr Andrew Black spoke about modern gender ideology and its roots in the theological heresy of dualism.

“We should all be submitting our intellect to God, and trying ‘to live in imitation of an incarnate God’”

By affirming that there is a demarcation of the body and mind/soul, Fr Black maintained that the thinking which supports gender theory today is in part, gnostic. Catholicism on the other hand

teaches that a person is the perfect unity of both body and spirit.

Other workshops included 'The Blessed Virgin Mary', with Fr Martin Graham and 'Pro-Life Issues' with Dr Norella Broderick, which were followed by Mass and personal testimonies.

Enthusiastic about the conference, Fr James O'Reilly, of the Diocese of Down and Connor, said, "It's important for young people to come together to celebrate their faith and become evangelists today".

This is one of the goals of the Legion of Mary which is a lay apostolic association of Catholics who serve the Church and their neighbour on a voluntary basis in about 170 countries. The first meeting took place in Dublin in 1921, and since then the members have been participating in their parishes through the visitation of families and the sick, both in their homes and in hospitals, in the spirit of faith and in union with Mary.

The final talk by John Lacken addressed the topic of 'Family, Marriage and Chastity', and how these realities have become diluted in our contemporary times. He maintained that these sacraments and virtues must be upheld, and should not be compromised because of the emptying reasoning of today, which is no longer private but public. His final thoughts that the Catholic youth should be marrying in their late-teens or early-20's certainly perked some heads.

Along with the talks and workshops Fr Gerard Magee carried out Confession, Adoration and Benediction, meaning there was something for everyone at the conference.

One young Catholic said that, "what brought me here today is that this conference is at a deeper level. It caters for people who already have faith – at other retreats you just hit a level." A teacher also added that he attended the event to make sure that was he was teaching "what was in line with Catholic teaching".

For more information about the Legion of Mary, see www.legionofmary.ie



Pine cone crafts ideas following a forest forage

If you venture into the woods this time of the year, you'll find the forest floor scattered with pine cones. So, bring a big bag with you to collect them for making some pine cone-based crafts this month. Don't worry if your pine cones haven't fully opened, as you can open them yourself at home. There are several ways to open pine cones yourself. 'Baking' them in the oven is a popular method and the fastest. But it's also quite messy and can be risky. Air drying them, although very slow, is the safest way.

First sterilise the pine cones to get rid of any creepy crawlies and debris. Soak them in a basin of water and vinegar for 30 minutes and then leave them to dry overnight. Transfer to a basket and leave them for a few days in a warm place to allow them to open up. When they're ready, get crafting.

PINE CONE ACORNS

Acorns are one of the most prized treasures when

it comes autumn foraging. They're beautifully dainty and can be crafted into tiny teacups for fairies. But they're terribly hard to gather as they're usually all taken before they've turned brown. If you missed out on collecting acorns this year, you can create your own version.

Cut a piece of burlap and cover three quarters of the pine cone. Check that you don't have too much material before you glue in place. Trim the edges of the burlap if you need to before tucking into the crevices and gluing in place.

YARN PINE CONES

With a clean paint brush, dab some glue into the crevices of the pine cone. Cut some strips

of wool and wind these around the crevices in the pinecone. Use bright colours to contrast against the brown. Use red, green and gold for Christmas decorations, or just plain white to make them look like they're sprinkled with snow.

Pine cone fairies /elves /angels

Take a pipe cleaner and glue this to the base of the pine cone. Glue a wooden ball on top of this, then bend the pipe cleaner to shape the arms.

Take another pipe cleaner, bend this in half and then glue to the pointy part of the pine cone for the legs.

For the wings, take two coloured leaves and glue these to the back of the pine cone. For the hair, stick some dried moss on top of the head. Leave the faces blank or paint on the features with a thin brush.



Children's Corner

Erin Fox

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Prime time coverage for monastic retreats

I once went on a retreat but found out only on arrival that it was a silent one! I survived the shock, and at the final meal, when everyone could talk, it felt rather grating.

That memory returned as I was watching **Retreat: Meditations from a Monastery**, last week on BBC Four, a separate episode on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday night. Fair play to the BBC for giving over three prime time hours to such a counter cultural programme. It was sparse and minimalistic as the monks in the three abbeys in question went about their daily routine, tough going for modern attention spans.

On Tuesday night the location was Downside Abbey, a Benedictine monastery in Somerset. There was no narration, just some occasional paragraphs onscreen to highlight the monastic rules of St Benedict.

There was no dialogue and no music apart from the chant of the monks during prayer. It wasn't a silent order though there were specific periods of silence and the programme seemed to focus almost exclusively on these.

The Wednesday night featured another Benedictine monastery, Pluscarden Abbey in Scotland, the only medieval British monastery still active. This was a livelier episode (relatively!), there was more singing, and everything



Director Luke Korzun Martin with Fr Benedict in BBC Four's *Retreat: Meditations from a Monastery*.

seemed somehow brighter. Maybe it was partly because the monks dressed in white, to symbolise strict adherence to the rule of St Benedict.

I thought they might include a convent, but on the Thursday night it was yet another Benedictine Monastery, this time Belmont Abbey in Hereford. I liked this episode most of all – we got an insight into the less well known aspects of monastic life.

Watching a visiting iconographer at work was fascinating (“every brush stroke is a prayer”), and watching another monk at work I think was the first time I've seen anyone on TV making rosary beads.

It's hard to make a judge-

ment on the show. It wasn't entertaining, but probably wasn't intended to be. I struggled to find it inspiring, but maybe that's more a problem with me than with the programme.

Being on retreat can be a meaningful experience, but watching others on retreat, especially a silent one, isn't the same. Being immersed in the daily life of the monastery must be a strongly spiritual experience, but just watching it leaves something to be desired. That being said, after the third show I found it grew on me, and found a touch of the monastic ritual creeping in to my own daily routine, having more appreciation for moments of calm and silence.

Reflection

The series was accompanied by a parallel and more accessible series on BBC Radio 3 – short nightly reflections, ‘soundcapes’ featuring meditations from the monks, interspersed with chant and the sounds of nature. Last Friday night's episode, **Love: Meditations from a Monastery**,

had insight into how being with God is like a human couple in love, and the concept of being ‘enveloped in God's embrace’. These radio shows are available on the BBC Radio iPlayer and as podcasts.

Back in less serene territory, last week saw the impeachment of Katie Ascoug as Students' Union President in UCD. So, you might think, what corruption was going on here? Well it seems she was principled, following her conscience, refusing to break the law in relation to publishing illegal abortion information (which could get her a criminal record). So, impeached for NOT breaking the law? The student body in UCD must want low standards in high places, as if we hadn't enough of that.

Ascoug defended herself articulately and cheerfully on **The Pat Kenny Show** (Newstalk) last Friday. It was a robust but courteous interview, with Kenny challenging her on several fronts, suggesting at one stage that it was disingenuous of her not to put her pro-life stance into her election literature – but why would she if she was running on practical student issues?

When questioned during the campaign she was upfront about her principles. I don't object to the tough questioning, but it was in stark contrast to the soft interview Kenny gave to Dr Peter Boylan recently, also on abortion-

PICK OF THE WEEK

A FORCE FOR GOOD
EWTN Monday, November 6, 8 pm, and Tues 2.30 pm
Sam Gregg of the Acton Institute on minimum wage laws and the Church's teaching on a just wage.

THE VIETNAM WAR
RTE 1 Monday, November 6, 11.35 pm
American men of draft age face difficult decisions and wrenching moral choices.

HOTEL FOR REFUGEES
BBC 1, Tuesday, November 7, 10.45 pm
The stories of Syrian refugees in a town in Ireland, discovering the role that faith has played in their journey and in the reception they receive.

related matters.

The one issue raised that jarred, prompted by a texter, was her father's involvement in the Iona Institute. This was too much like an attempt to stereotype, to label, to put Ascoug in a neat box for the listener. I've heard this strategy used before on young pro-lifers, but never ever on pro-choice advocates.

boregan@hotmail.com



Katie Ascoug featured on *The Pat Kenny Show* (Newstalk).

Music

Pat O'Kelly



National Concert Hall welcomes *La Traviata*

As Wexford Festival aficionados will be enjoying the final performances of unfamiliar works by Cherubini, Foroni and Alfano at the National Opera House this weekend, the National Concert Hall is the setting, on Saturday, Sunday and Tuesday next, for something less esoteric – Lyric Opera's production of Verdi's *La Traviata*.

Through its ever-resourceful artistic director Vivian Coates, Lyric Opera manages to function on a veritable shoestring budget.

With limited box office receipts, the company relies on whatever commercial and private sponsorship it can accrue with the Italian Cultural Institute contributing

a welcome input this time round.

Directed and designed by Coates, Lyric Opera's cast is being led by Dublin-born soprano Claudia Boyle as the consumptive courtesan Violetta Valery.

Ms Boyle has recently sung the role in Klagenfurt and will do so again in a new production at London's Coliseum later in the season.

She is being joined here by English tenor Alexander James Edwards as man-about-town and despicable cad Alfredo Germont and baritone Charles Johnston as his more honourable father Giorgio.

The opera, which has the benefit of the RTÉ Concert

Orchestra, brings young English conductor Timothy Burke as music director.

La Traviata is based on the play *La Dame aux Camélias*, derived from a novel by Alexandre Dumas, fils. Seeing and liking it in Paris in 1852, Verdi considered it an operatic possibility. Following the success of his *Rigoletto* in Venice in March 1851, and while working on *Il Trovatore* for Rome, the Venetian company asked him for something new. The result was the Dumas adaptation in which Verdi collaborated with librettist Francisco Maria Piave.

Fiasco

Whatever about the opera's current and past popular-

ity, the *première* at Teatro La Fenice on March 6, 1853 was a fiasco. Upset and disappointed but believing in the merits of his score, Verdi blamed both singers and audience.

It seems the Alfredo was hoarse; the baritone singing Germont Père considered his role beneath him and the rather overweight Violetta – Fanny Salvini-Donatelli – was totally miscast as the frail *demimonde*.

The audience jeered and hissed. However, when revived at La Fenice a year later with a change of cast, *La Traviata* was a total success and, 164 years on, its star still shines brightly throughout the operatic firmament.

● Congratulations to Dublin-born composer/pianist Philip Martin who returns to the National Concert Hall over the coming weekend to celebrate his 70th birthday. His Sunday afternoon programme includes music by himself, Fauré, Debussy, Barber and Brahms' exhilarating *Handel Variations*.

A pupil here of the late Mabel Swainson, he continued his studies in London's Royal Academy, of which he is now a fellow. A period in the United States developed his interest in American music, particularly that of the colourful 19th Century figure Louis Moreau Gottschalk. This led to his highly acclaimed eight-volume CD set of the



Philip Martin.

latter's piano music.

A senior professor at Birmingham's Conservatoire and a long-standing member of Aosdána, Philip Martin's prolific compositions include orchestral, choral and chamber works as well as over 300 songs.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



The real creator of our long lasting constitution

John Hearne: Architect of the 1937 Constitution of Ireland

by Eugene Broderick
(Irish Academic Press, €29.99)

John Bruton

A study of all constitutions promulgated since the French Revolution in 1789, by the Chicago Law School, found that the average constitution lasted a mere 17 years, before it was replaced. By that measure, the Irish Constitution, which will be 80 years old in December, has been a remarkably durable document. Indeed, it is now one of the world's oldest written constitutions.

Eugene Broderick, the author of this book, attributes the durability of the Irish constitutions to the fact that it can be amended by referendum, and reinterpreted through court judgements. In that sense, the present constitution lives up to the standard set for a constitution by Eamon de Valera, in 1933 before he started preparing it, that it should be "not a cast iron constitution, but a flexible constitution".

According to Broderick, most of the actual drafting of the articles of the constitution was done by the then legal advisor to the Department of External Affairs, John Hearne.



Hearne is an unusual character. A native of Waterford City, he was a strong supporter of John Redmond, and helped his son, William Archer Redmond to defeat the Sinn Fein candidate at the Bye and General Elections of 1918.

Hearne was a prominent public speaker in the campaigns, and earned a name as "the boy orator" of the Irish Party. He was one of a generation of young men, who would have risen to prominence in a Home Rule Ireland, but who had to find another way forward when Home Rule was buried by the violence initiated in Easter Week of 1916.

Barrister

Hearne's way forward was initially as a barrister, and then as a legal officer in the Free State army. In 1924, he joined the civil service and remained a civil servant until

he retired in 1960. His first post was as Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman in the Office of the Attorney General. He became an expert in international constitutional law, and helped Free State Ministers, like Paddy McGilligan and Kevin O'Higgins, to loosen the bonds set in the Treaty and thereby move Ireland towards full independence, by exclusively constitutional methods.

Many of the issues Hearne dealt with in the 1920's, like the court that should decide final appeals, are coming up again, as the UK tries to unravel its 40 years of legal commitments with its EU partners.

When de Valera won power in the 1932 Election, he admitted that he was surprised by the amount of progress he found had already been made by his predecessors

in enhancing the sovereignty of the Irish state.

But he still adhered to his Civil War opinion, that the Free State Constitution, under which he had come to office, was something imposed on Ireland by the threat of force.

Therefore he saw a new constitution, freely adopted by the Irish people in a referendum, as the ultimate expression of sovereignty.

When de Valera sat down to prepare a draft constitution, he did so within a very narrow circle of advisors, and the principal one was John Hearne.

This is surprising given Hearne's political antecedents. But Hearne had unequalled expertise in the constitutions of other countries, and fully accepted de Valera's goal of shaking off the remnants of British influence. De Valera and Hearne worked into the late hours, often in Hearne's home, drafting and redrafting the articles of the proposed constitution.

Broderick deals with the external influences brought to bear on the draft.

Religious thinking about social matters influenced the constitution for the simple reason that it influenced the Irish people in their daily lives.

In the 1930's, Ireland was a very religious country. In the destructive and nihilistic aftermath of War of Independence, the Catholic

Faith was seen by many as a better expression of the people's distinctive identity. That is why it influenced the constitution. Fianna Fail, and all the other parties in the 1930's, were profoundly influenced by Catholic Social teaching, so it is not surprising at all that this teaching would have been taken into account.

“One fault with this book is that it tells us little or nothing about John Hearne's subsequent career”

As a practical politician, de Valera did not want the Catholic Church to oppose the proposed constitution.

This explains the constitution's acknowledgement of the Catholic Church's special position. Some Catholic Church leaders wanted the constitution to say that the Catholic Church was "the one true church", but de Valera resisted this.

Broderick says the ban on divorce was not controversial with other Christian churches at the time.

John Charles McQuaid, not yet a bishop but still at the time the Headmaster of De Valera's old school in Blackrock, played little part in drafting the constitution.

This was a constitution written for the 26 counties which de Valera actually governed. It was not designed for a 32 county Ireland.

As Broderick puts it "Sovereignty took precedence over reunification". This was realistic, and therefore right, in the circumstances.

Unrealistic aspirations, like reunification and the restoration of the Irish language, were included in the constitution in order to garner support for it in the referendum. The difficulties with these aspirations were ignored and this inevitably led to disappointment and cynicism.

One fault with this book is that it tells us little or nothing about John Hearne's subsequent career, as Irish Ambassador to Canada, and then the US, and his time as legal advisor to the new Nigerian government in the 1960's. Apart from the fact that his wife provided sandwiches for Dev for the late night drafting sessions, Hearne's marriage is hardly mentioned. It is almost as if his life stopped, once the constitution was adopted.

That criticism aside, anyone who wants to understand the genesis of our durable constitution, should read this important and well written book.

The memory of the dead

Centenary / Comoradh Cead Bliain: Ireland remembers 1916 / Tugann Eire 1916 chun cuimhne

edited by Ronan McGreevy
(Government Publications, €25)

Felix M. Larkin

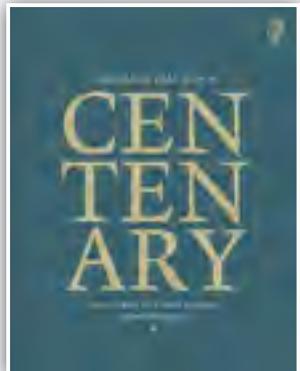
Most people take the view that the centenary commemoration of the 1916 Rising was a "Goldilocks moment". Whereas the 50th anniversary events in 1966 were too hot, and those for the 75th anniversary in 1981 too cold, 2016 was just right.

It was not, in any event, as bad as it might have been – or as some feared it would be. Credit must be given for that to the government's 'Decade of Commemorations' advisory committee, under the chairmanship of Maurice Manning, and to Minister Heather Humphreys T.D, for heeding the committee's advice.

Now the government has published this lavish record of the commemoration, edited by journalist Ronan McGreevy who covered the events of the commemoration as they happened with authority and aplomb.

Testimonies

The volume is a miscellany of reportage, photographs and testimonies from those who were involved. It follows the events chronologically, beginning with the ceremony in Glasnevin cemetery to recall the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa in 1915 and ending with the launch of the Creative



Ireland Programme in December 2016.

This programme is designed to harness for future cultural and other projects what Minister Humphreys describes as "the genuine energy and remarkable level of citizen engagement generated by the centenary programme".

The most poignant image in the volume

is undoubtedly that of former Taoiseach the late Liam Cosgrave at An Post's Witness History exhibition lost in thought in front of the photograph of his father, W.T. Cosgrave, formally opening the restored GPO in 1929.

Perhaps the most uplifting item is an account of the 12-year-old great-granddaughter of Seán Connolly, the first rebel to die in

the Rising, laying flowers at the gates of Dublin Castle in memory of Constable James O'Brien, the unarmed policeman whom Connolly shot dead at that location on Easter Monday 1916.

“It is too early to assess the enduring impact, if any, of the centenary commemoration”

The volume includes an extract from the homily delivered by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin at the State ceremony in Arbour Hill on 24 April 2016, in which he spoke about the Capuchin priest, Fr Columbus Murphy, visiting Pearse when he was in detention in Arbour Hill prison after the Rising. Fr Murphy remembered Pearse saying: "Oh Father, the loss of life and the

destruction, but please God it will not be in vain".

On the other hand, in an extract from a talk given by Roy Foster at the conference on the Rising in NUI Galway in November 2016, we are reminded that "the emphasis on historical victimhood and oppression which was so marked in the rhetoric of the [Irish] revolution obscures the fact that in Edwardian Ireland the obvious forms of oppression by England were in the past".

It is too early to assess the enduring impact, if any, of the centenary commemoration. Wisely, this volume does not attempt to do that. When, however, in times to come historians look back on these events, this volume will be an indispensable source of information. In the meantime, we can enjoy it as a beautifully-produced memento of events in which many of us participated.

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.

Memento Mori: The real message of halloween



Jakub Schikaneder's *All Souls' Day*.

Mors Britannica: Lifestyle & Death-Style in Britain Today

by Douglas J. Davies
(Oxford University Press, £30.00)

Death: The Graveside Companion, edited by Joanna Ebenstein
(Thames & Hudson, £29.95)

Peter Costello

Halloween, or rather the Eve of All Saints, has passed once again, and again with perhaps less religious observance than in past centuries. Halloween seems to date only from 1745 according to the internet, though the OED says it goes back to at least 1556. In point of fact, when one considers that the Feast of All Saints, was celebrated as an early Christian holy day, the idea that Halloween is "new" makes no sense.

“The ghosts and pumpkins imported from New England have almost smothered the simpler fun”

Today is the feast of All Souls, a day on which it has long been traditional to visit family graves and to recall the faithful departed. This and All Saints day commemorate in reality

the communion of saints in the widest sense, melding familial love with religious devotion.

Expression

The Eve of All Saints came to be seen as a day when the graves might open, and “the dead awake and speak to many,” as the Irish expression has it. But the feasts are only in the Latin and Protestant traditions. They are not universal. Among the Orthodox and Oriental Christian different days were selected. Other traditions are also involved, as in Mexico, where Día de Muertos has elements of Aztec culture mixed into it.

Halloween as we now have it is a purely commercial phenomenon. The ghosts and pumpkins imported from New England have almost smothered the simpler fun, such as bob apple, that were once the norm in Ireland. New notions are being imposed over the earliest traditions of our cultures.

These two books explore in their different ways aspects of death, burial, mourning and communication with the dead.

Dr Davies explores attitudes to death, to the belief in the afterlife, and the burial customs, which in some ways are becoming more elaborate as religion

declines. Oddly though surveys suggest that the belief in an afterlife as declined for British men since the 1950s, among women it has improved from 56% to 57%.

Joanna Ebenstein's book is an extraordinary visual feast of images of the dead, of ghosts and the afterlife generally. Here truly is what the Middle Ages called “the dance of death”.

“Among the Orthodox and Oriental Christian different days were selected”

It features materials from the Richard Harris art collection, and presents a vast array of attitudes to the horrors and glories of life and death, the too often inhuman side of the human imagination.

The feasts of All Hallows, All Saints, and All Souls, are a time for all to reflect on the reality of the cycle of life. It may all seem fun. But our ancestors did not always think so, as these books, in their different and starkly revealing ways, allow us to explore. The real message of these darkening days as winter approaches is an ancient one: *Memento mori*.

WebWatch

Greg Daly

Who guards the guardians?

It's a common observation among informed Christians – regardless of their branch of the Christian family – that when it comes to covering religion, the mass media is embarrassingly out of its depth. Genuine mastery of the subject is rare, which is one reason why John Allen being hired by *The Boston Globe* in 2014 to run what we now know as **Cruxnow.com** was greeted with such widespread delight, and why Elizabeth Dias's work at **Time.com** has been so refreshing.

All the more depressing, then, to read Andrew Brown's 'long read' at **theguardian.com**, 'The war against Pope Francis', a lurid and slipshod survey of the problems the Pontiff is having with a tiny but vociferous Catholic fringe.

Given how Brown has written intelligent and informed things elsewhere, it's disappointing to see him deploy over 5,000 words in a way that Brisbane's Archbishop Mark Coleridge described from his **@archbishopmark** Twitter account as marked by “too little nuance in so ambitious a piece...it sounds too apocalyptic”.

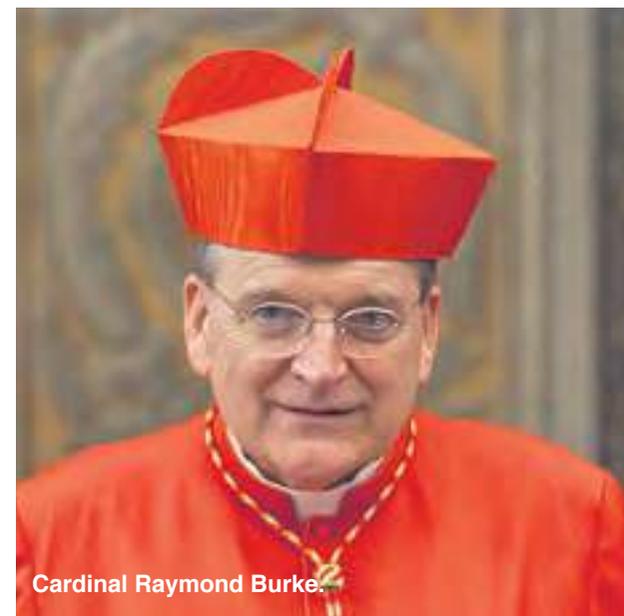
It's difficult to know where to start with the piece's errors, though the sloppiness around dates is an obvious issue.

Brown writes that the synods on the family took place in 2015 and 2016, when they took place in 2014 and 2015, and claims Cardinal Robert Sarah's 'apocalyptic beasts' intervention was at a Vatican gathering last year, rather than at the 2015 synod.

Sacking

A document issued 12 years into St John Paul's papacy is described as issued “early in the pontificate”, a famous address to the papal curia is dated to December 2015 rather than 2014, and the sacking of a prominent knight of Malta last December is, to Brown, something that happened in autumn.

Said knight was, Brown says, the order's head, dismissed by Cardinal



Cardinal Raymond Burke.

Raymond Burke, whereas in reality he was the second-in-command and dismissed by his superior, though apparently with the cardinal's encouragement.

Whatever one might think of Cardinal Burke, it's strange to see him so misrepresented here, accused of having with three other cardinals submitted four 'dubia' – rather than five – to the Pope for his clarification, raised the possibility of formally declaring the Pope a heretic, and allegedly saying that he was prepared to declare the Pope a heretic.

“It's good that the article identifies the vicious nature of opposition to the Holy Father”

Cardinal Burke has never done this, saying rather that the Pontiff could perhaps be corrected for being in error, which is a far cry from heresy, defined as the obstinate denial of or doubt about something all Catholics are obliged to believe.

Brown thinks there's significance too in the Pope having in 2013 bypassed the Apostolic Signatura, the Roman court the cardinal then headed, when taking action against a group of friars, although that is basically an appeals court and the action was taken

through the normal curial department for such things.

The errors keep coming: Guinea is mistaken for Ghana while an exhortation is mistaken for an encyclical; an exhortation that devotes a quarter of just one chapter to global economics is described as a major policy statement condemning how global markets work; *Amoris Laetitia* is supposedly a summary of the debate on divorce despite divorce being mentioned just 22 times in its over 260 pages; the Second Vatican Council effectively abolished the Latin Mass, when it confirmed the importance of Latin in the liturgy...

All this just scratches the surface.

It's good that the article identifies the vicious nature of opposition to the Holy Father – it quotes an unnamed but prominent English priest claiming that priests “can't wait for him to die” – and identifies how tiny the opposition is, pointing out that it could be the most serious crisis in the Church since the miniscule Lefebvrist split that gave birth to the schismatic Society of St Pius X.

None of which touches on what the article leaves out, not least Francis' continuity with his predecessors, but that would double the length of this piece. Suffice to say that even a quick overview shows that online paper doesn't refuse digital ink.

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If you would like to contact me, please feel free to do so.
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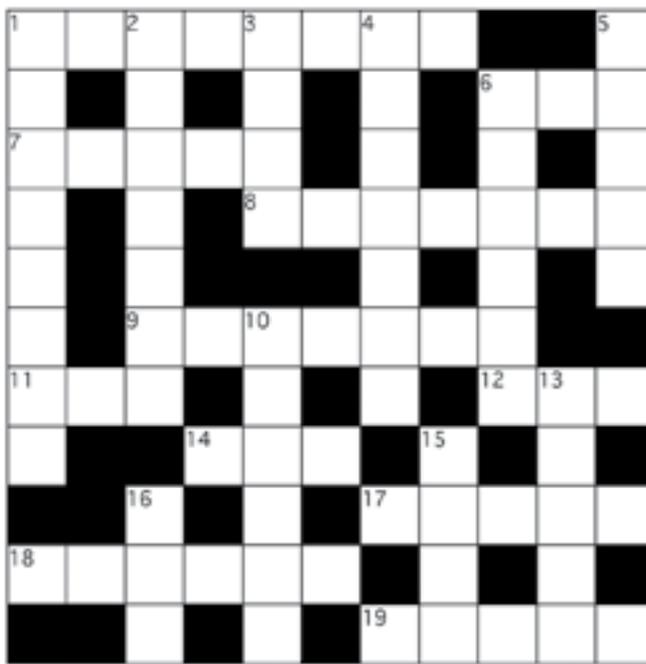
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Crossword Junior

Gordius 206



ACROSS

- 1 Into this, you put a snack to eat at school (5-3)
- 6 Tart, cake (3)
- 7 A small creature, or what you use to move a computer cursor (5)
- 8 Spotted cat (7)
- 9 Goes on a journey (7)
- 11 Not wet (3)
- 12 A hen lays it (3)
- 14 A pig lives here (3)
- 17 Unable to see (5)
- 18 Removes dirt (6)
- 19 Say "Yes" to (5)

DOWN

- 1 Fizzy drink (8)

- 2 Bold (7)

- 3 The back of the foot (4)
- 4 The tenth month of the year (7)
- 5 Fixes, repairs (5)
- 6 Speak highly about (6)
- 10 Playing a part in a movie or play (6)
- 13 Aladdin's helper, who lived in a lamp (5)
- 15 You put it into a socket to make an electric item work (4)
- 16 Use it to put a garment on the clothesline (3)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

GORDIUS No.322

Across - 1 Car 3 Genealogist 8 Lively 9 Air rifle 10 Inlet 11 Sprig 13 Flunk 15 Cornice 16 Glances 20 Deals 21 Dress 23 Decor 24 Clear the decks 27 Nut

Down - Calling card 2 Revolver 3 Gilet 4 Erasmus 5 Ogres 6 Infirm 7 The Acts of the Apostles 12 Gross profit 13 Faced 14 Kills 17 Checks in 18 Fan belt 19 Red-eye 22 Scrap 24 Cat

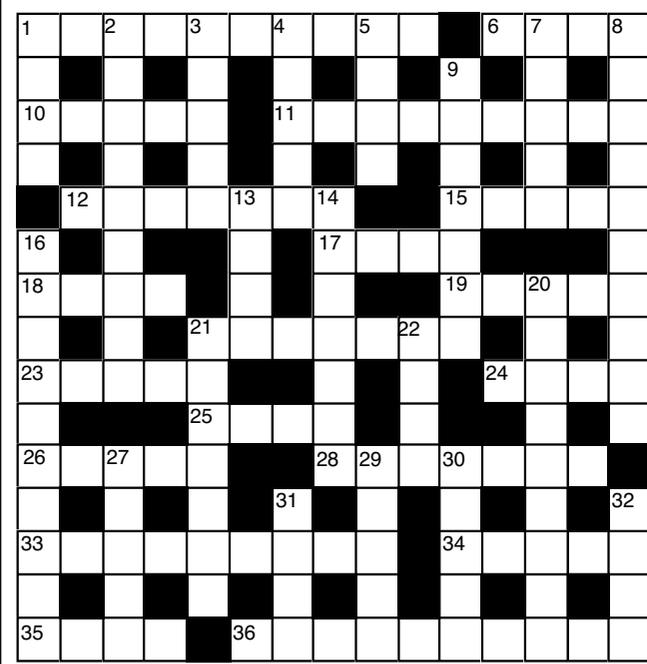
CHILDREN'S No.205

Across - 1 Chewing-gum 6 Orange 7 Castle 9 Nettle 13 Cue 14 Pebbles 15 Couch 16 Baker 17 Inn 18 Adds 19 Keen

Down - Crown 2 Exact 3 Niece 4 Grass 5 Mill 8 Elephant 10 Emerald 11 Tablets 12 Escape 13 Cousin

Crossword

Gordius 323



ACROSS

- 1 Where sick people get given out to! (10)
- 6 Sketch (4)
- 10 See 13 down
- 11 His curate is involved in the Mass (9)
- 12 Disintegrate (7)
- 15 Completely smooth (5)
- 17 Earnest entreaty (4)
- 18 Initially, it requests speedy action, as Father returns (1.1.1.1.)
- 19 Type of lizard (5)
- 21 The era of 11 across? There's the rub! (7)
- 23 Puccini opera (5)
- 24 The jetty is quiet? That is right (4)
- 25 See 16 down
- 26 Holy artefact found in the barrel I cleaned (5)
- 28 The aristocrat got a decoration for part of the body (7)
- 33 Milt aches to transform one who tries to transform metals (9)
- 34 Historic German submarine (1-4)
- 35 & 36 Stay positive - about what a facelift can do for you? (4,4,4,2)

DOWN

- 1 Silly (4)
- 2 How Sis adored such minor routes! (4,5)
- 3 The English Derby is run here (5)
- 4 Explosive found on the beach? (5)
- 5 Boulder (4)
- 7 Major European river (5)
- 8 It must be torture for this utility organization! (5,5)
- 9 A guess; a mixture; a banger (7)
- 13 & 10a How one based info on someone's good name (4,5)
- 14 One part of a story; an incident (7)
- 16 & 25a Distinctive amphibian (10,4)
- 20 Get up on feathers to complete retraction (5-4)
- 21 Sporting contests with fiery potential (7)
- 22 Select the correct one to help you drive the car more efficiently (4)
- 27 Would such money irritate one's ulcer? (5)
- 29 Subsequent; following (5)
- 30 Chuckle (5)
- 31 Ballpoint pen (4)
- 32 Put and end to street-work (4)

Sudoku Corner

206

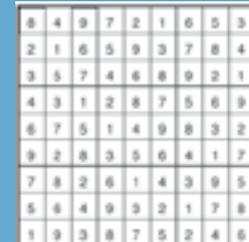
Easy



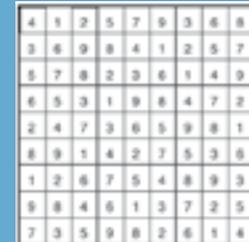
Hard



Last week's Easy 205



Last week's Hard 205





Fr Bernard Healy

Notebook

Hunting clues to the way we once lived

I WAS IN DUBLIN a few weeks back for the launch of the 'Photo Detectives' exhibition at the National Photographic Archive in Meeting House Square, Temple Bar. The exhibition celebrates the work of a project launched by the National Library of Ireland back in June 2011.

Every weekday a photo from the National Library's collection is posted on the Flickr website and an international community of amateur researchers works on establishing the who, where, when and why of the picture – often leading to valuable corrections and additions to the Library's own catalogue listing.

Challenge

As someone who loves the challenge of a good puzzle, this photo detective work is something I get a great kick out of. With such resources as the 1901 and 1911 censuses, old parish registers, old civil birth, marriage and death records, OSI maps, *Griffith's Valuation and Tithe Applotment* books being available on-line, the amount of research one can do for free from one's own home is astonishing. Work which took hours of poring over registers



The Prodigal Son as depicted in the new Reconciliation Window at St John's Church, Tralee.

and records a mere decade ago, can now be done on the internet in a few minutes. A trip to the local library opens up even more resources with old newspapers from all over Ireland capable of being digitally searched.

As most of the photos date from the 1870s into the first half of the 20th Century, they give an insight into a period of great change in Irish society.

Oldest photos

Some of the oldest photos are eviction scenes showing the plight of families who have been ejected from their homes. Other photos show scenes of rural and urban poverty and include people who lived through the Great Famine.

The formal portraits put online also tell a story. Some of them turn out to be of Ascendancy families who were powerful in their time, but are nowadays no longer found in Ireland. Others show a rising Catholic middle class whose economic prosperity and success in various professions would bring them into prominence in the late

19th and early 20th Centuries.

Pictures of various 'big houses' often testify to the homes of a departing gentry becoming religious houses or boarding schools, before going back into private hands in more recent years as religious orders adapt to their changing circumstances. Photos also show the churches, religious houses, schools, hospitals and other institutions that an assertive Church constructed during a time when both its infrastructure and influence was growing.

Anyone interested in this kind of photo detective work should drop by the National Photographic Archive to see the exhibition, or check out the National Library of Ireland Flickr stream at www.flickr.com/photos/nlireland/ for a daily helping of our country's social history in photographic form.

Story of change

That social history of our Church and country was in evidence last Friday with the blessing of our new Reconciliation Window in St John's Church, Tralee.

The first new piece of stained glass in the church in 60 years, it is the work of Tom Denny whose windows can be found in several of England's Cathedrals. His family were prominent landlords and members of the Anglican community in the Tralee area before the changes that came with Independence.

The collaboration between the community in Tralee, the Denny family and the parish in bringing this window into being tells its own story about the historical changes of recent decades.

● The parish of St John's also recently celebrated the 60th anniversary of our 'Gregorian Choir'. The choir, under the leadership of Mike O'Shea, sings a fine selection of both traditional and contemporary liturgical

music at our Vigil Mass and at special liturgies throughout the year. The choir was founded by Msgr Pat Ahern who is himself a noted composer of liturgical music and founder of Siam Tire, Ireland's National Folk Theatre.

In addition to celebrating this anniversary, Fr Pat was recently awarded an honorary doctorate by UCC.

All of us in St John's are delighted to recognise Fr Pat's gift for inspiring excellence in liturgical

music and drama, and acknowledge his ongoing cultural and pastoral work with people of all ages. Kudos too to all involved in the choir for their hard work and generosity with their time and talent. Rath Dé ar an obair.



THE CHURCH IN MEXICO NEEDS YOUR HELP AFTER THE EARTHQUAKES



"True glory is that which will last eternally, and to reach it, it isn't necessary to perform striking works but to hide oneself and practice virtue in such a way that the left hand knows not what the right is doing." - St Therese

The Church is helping the survivors of the recent earthquakes in Mexico, and **THE LITTLE WAY ASSOCIATION** is in touch with bishops, priests and religious in Chiapas, Oaxaca and Tabasco, the most badly affected eastern provinces of Mexico. The quakes have caused deaths, destruction of property and displacement of families. Tens of thousands of homes - typically made from wood and clay tiles - have been destroyed.

Hurricane Katia also hit the country's east coast, causing more destruction. As in the case of many natural disasters, the church is well placed to help the victims.

Please pray for Mexico to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

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