

# The Irish Catholic

## POPE IN COLOMBIA

Forget revenge,  
Pontiff preaches  
Pages 18-19

## ORTHODOX IN IRELAND

Priest inspired  
by Dostoevsky  
Page 12

## PREPARING FOR A BABY

A guide to help  
expectant parents  
Pages 23 & 25

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# Hopes dashed for revision of Missal translation

### Mags Gargan

Cold water has been poured on the idea that Catholics might have to endure another English translation of the Mass, just six years after the last change, following an amendment to Canon Law by Pope Francis.

The new law, *Magnum Principium*, was issued on Saturday and is seen as an example of the Pope following the reforms started by Vatican II, by returning authority to bishops' conferences over the translation of liturgical texts from Latin into local languages.

### Translation

The Association of Catholic Priests (ACP), who campaigned against the new English translation of the Mass issued in 2011 as "a backward step", have welcomed the announcement, saying it hopes that Irish bishops will "quickly take this matter in hand" to revise the language of the Missal.

However, Bishop John McAreavey, a member of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), the body involved in preparing English translations of Latin liturgical texts, told *The Irish Catholic* this was "unlikely".

Bishop McAreavey said 10 years of work had been put into the last translation of the missal and "it's not an easy thing to pull it and start again".

Fr Tom Whelan CSSp, a prominent specialist in liturgy, echoed the bishop saying: "No matter what happens at this stage, the Missal cost so much to produce that whether people like it or loathe it, it is not going to be printed again in the immediate future."

Fr Whelan said there are a number of liturgical books currently being revised in the new translation, and "from that point of view *Magnum Principium* is and will be of importance to Ireland".

"We are in the middle of a

» Continued on Page 4

### Their faith in their hands



Russian Orthodox believers take part in a religious procession in Nevsky Prospekt Street to mark the 293rd anniversary of the translation of relics of St Alexander Nevsky; the relics were brought from the town of Vladimir to Alexander Nevsky Lavra Monastery in St Petersburg in 1724. Photo: PA Images

### COLM FITZPATRICK

Demystifying the Church for youth

PAGE 26



### MARIA STEEN

Abortion pits women against their babies

PAGE 8



### MICHAEL KELLY

Francis once again shows his collegial approach

PAGE 2



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## Inside this week

**David Quinn**

**What 'spiritual not religious' really means**

Page 9



**Oversharing parents**

**Exposing children on social media**

Page 24



**Mary Kenny**

**Contemporary focus on the issue of 'consent'**

Page 5



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# Francis once again shows his collegial approach

As the Church grew and spread in the years after Christ's death and resurrection, one of the challenges facing the early Church was the need to find a balance between local Christian communities and the universal nature of Christianity. When some of the followers of St Ambrose of Milan visited Rome, they reportedly were slightly disturbed that the liturgical customs there were slightly different than they were used to in the North. St Ambrose is reported to have advised them to adapt to local customs with the now famous maxim "when in Rome, do as the Romans do".

The Church has always had to manage this tension and various Popes have reacted to it in different ways. Pope John Paul II, for example, favoured a centralising view with maximum authority vested in Rome. Benedict XVI as a younger man favoured local bishops' conferences having a lot of authority. He later changed his mind, some say motivated by his real life experiences of the workings of bishops' conferences. Pope Francis tends towards a more collegial approach where he governs the Church with the bishops and favours more localism.

## Translation

At the weekend, the Pope amended Canon Law slightly to emphasise a point made at the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) that local Church leaders rather than the Vatican should supervise the translation of the Mass into local languages.

Prior to Vatican II, of course, Catholics in the west all celebrated Mass in the same fashion and language: Latin. Vatican II changed this and while the bishops present at the deliberations in Rome clearly wanted Latin to play a prominent role in the liturgy in the future, local languages soon became the conventional way the Mass was celebrated in most parts of the world.



## Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

It made sense that local bishops' conferences would supervise the translations before submitting these translations to Rome for final approval - the so-called *recognitio*. The key challenge for translators was to remain true to the original Latin text while rendering it in a way that made sense when spoken in another language.

The Missals that emerged in English sacrificed faithfulness to the text in favour of language that they found more free-flowing. For example, '*Dominus vobiscum*' became 'The Lord be with you' but the response - '*Et cum spiritu tuo*' - became 'and also with you' instead of the more correct translation of 'and with your spirit'. Interestingly, the translation of the Mass into the Irish language was much more faithful to the original text than was the English.

**“People have also got used to the new translations so further changes are – for now at least – unthinkable”**

To carry out the translation work, Ireland teamed up with other English-speaking bishops' conferences and handed the task to ICEL – the International Commission on English in the Liturgy.

While translated Missals were approved by Rome, tensions eventually emerged between ICEL and the Vatican officials responsible for approving the translations. In 2001, Pope John Paul II issued the instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam* insisting that translations had to be absolutely

faithful to the original text. The Vatican also established the so-called *Vox Clara* Commission to directly supervise English translations – the move effectively made ICEL impotent.

The Pope's new change will restore some of the local authority while still ensuring that the final word rests with Rome.

The change won't lead to a new English Roman Missal, at least in the short to medium term. At a very practical level, too much money has been spent on the recently-revised Missal that is now used in Irish parishes. People have also got used to the new translations so further changes are – for now at least – unthinkable. The change is, however, likely to affect other liturgical books that are in preparation.

Could a better job be done with the Missal currently being used in Irish parishes? Probably. For the most part, the people's parts of the Mass are fine – as are the core prayers of the liturgy. Where the Missal is probably deficient is in some of the opening prayers and other parts of the Mass like that which change on a regular basis. Some of these texts are clumsy to say the least.

The challenge for those entrusted with the work of liturgical translations remains the same: provide for a liturgy which is prayerful, uplifting and meaningful while remaining true to the original texts that underline the universality and catholicity of the Church. It's a tall order, but it was ever thus.

The bigger story, of course, is that this change is yet another bold assertion from Francis that he is a faithful disciple of Vatican II and we can expect more localism and shared responsibility with local bishops.

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# Catholics 'horrified' by plans to axe CofI hospital chapel

## Mags Gargan

The Catholic community in Co. Donegal has rallied behind its Protestant neighbours after it was discovered that the HSE plans to axe a CofI hospital chapel.

Fr John Joe Duffy of the Church of Mary the Immaculate in Stranorlar, and chair of 'Save our St Joseph's', told *The Irish Catholic* that his parishioners were "horrified and embarrassed" that the Church of Ireland chapel has been excluded from plans to upgrade St Joseph's Community Hospital, without consultation with the chaplain, Rev. Adam Pullen.

## Stakeholders

A public consultation meeting with the HSE was held on June 22 at the hospital, which was attended by Fr Duffy, Rev. Pullen and a range of other community stakeholders.

"The plans were so small we couldn't see them, but a reference was made to the downsizing of the Roman Catholic chapel within the hospital to about a third of its size," Fr Duffy said. "They had consulted with the parish priest here back over a year ago on that issue and it had also been mentioned at a previous meeting we had with the HSE."

However, when Fr Duffy recently got a full copy of the plans he discovered

that "the Church of Ireland chapel, which also serves the Reformed community, is excluded and the old CofI chapel is being changed into a day room".

Fr Duffy said the Catholic community is "very annoyed and angry that they have not spoken to our friends in other Churches". "It is a horrendous way for a State agency to

behave towards the Protestant Churches. Why consult with one and not the other? Why treat the other as if they are irrelevant?"

Rev. Pullen told *The Irish*

*Catholic* there has been "no communication to us from the HSE" and he has sent letters of complaint to the HSE, the Minister of Health and the Taoiseach.

## Blessing the bags



Some of the many pupils from Gaeilscoil Éanna, St Anne's, St Joseph's, Ard Rí and Scoil Mhuire whose school bags were blessed by Fr Kevin Heery CC in Navan parish, Co. Meath at the start of the new school year.

## Augustinians pull out of St Patrick's, Rome

### Chai Brady

The Augustinians have moved out of St Patrick's Church in Rome, breaking the Irish connection with the historic church.

In a Chapter meeting in June the Augustinians made the decision to leave their Rome ministry, a choice believed to be driven by a shortage of priests. It is now run by the American Paulist Order and is being used by the Catholic American Community after they left the Church of Santa Susanna following a dispute with cloistered Cistercian nuns who wanted them to vacate the premises.

It was the idea of Fr Patrick Glynn, an Augustinian from Limerick, to build the church. The foundation stone was laid in 1888, but it wasn't completed for another 23 years. St Patrick's Church opened in Rome on St Patrick's Day 1911.

This comes after the popular Orlagh retreat centre in Dublin was put up for sale last year. The Augustinians were on the site since 1872.

Last year the order held a 'lay forum' to give consideration to the lack of vocations and the increasing age profile of its members, which on average was 76.

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# Housing crisis sustains drug and alcohol addictions

Chai Brady

There is a vicious cycle between drugs and homelessness said the CEO of Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI), as even those who successfully complete detox are then tempted by drug users in emergency accommodation.

Tony Geoghegan spoke at the launch of MQI's Annual Review for 2016 this week, in which they revealed almost 10,000 people dealing with mental health issues, addiction and homelessness availed of their services.

Mr Geoghegan told *The Irish Catholic* that there is an unprecedented level of homelessness "with over 7,000 people in emergency accommodation", and with so many homeless families, people that are single and face a plethora of issues including addiction "get sifted down to the bottom".

They then end up becoming the visible face of drugs and homelessness that people see on the street. He said there is an interplay between drugs and homelessness as one perpetuates the other.

"For those people who, against the odds, actually do make it into drug treatment they can go right through residential detoxification rehabilitation, maybe be up to six months drug free, and come out of treatment to nothing," Mr Geoghegan said.

"They go back into emergency accommodation, which runs the very real risks of under-

mining all the progress and positive gains that they've made in their life."

He added the biggest call MQI are making to the government is to make sure people that leave drug treatment are not without a home.

MQI provided 117,398 meals in 2016, an increase of 20% compared to 2015, and 2,022 people who would have ended up on the streets used the emergency shelter provided in their Night Café.

Their residential detoxification and drug-free rehabilitation programmes were in strong demand, with 186 admissions across the services in 2016, 114 people completed the rehabilitation programmes, almost half of them were homeless.

Steven went into detoxification on MQI's St Francis Farm after being homeless, and is now drug-free, he is studying Psychology in Trinity College Dublin.

He told the paper that it was the way people responded "as if there was nothing wrong with me" that made such a big difference.

"The idea I had of myself I think was probably driving what I thought how other people perceived me," he said.

"I don't recognise myself today, sometimes I get up and I'm not sure what's happened. Who I was and what I do now; in the space of three years such drastic changes have taken place it's hard to keep up."

## Getting in the right frame at Knock



Young VAKS (Volunteers at Knock Shrine) who assisted at the annual Catholic Grandparents pilgrimage to Knock on Sunday, pictured with Dana who sang at the Mass with Ballina School Choir.

## No new Missal translation

» Continued from Page 1

stream of translations and it is hoped this document will begin to affect anything new that is coming in, that hasn't already got Roman approval."

Bishop McAreavey, who welcomed the

new document as "a very positive development", said that in terms of "effective cooperation between bishops' conferences and the Holy See" he believed that ICEL would "feel what is in this document is what we have actually been doing the last number of years".

## Church work for sick portrayed too negatively

Mags Gargan

The Archbishop of Dublin has hit out at the overly negative portrayal of Church bodies in caring for the sick in the past.

In his homily for a Mass to conclude the Dublin diocesan pilgrimage of over 2,000 people to the Marian shrine at Lourdes, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin acknowledged that "Church organisations made mistakes and Church representatives failed to live up to their vocation". However, he said he was "saddened" when the "work of believers and Church bodies in caring for the sick in the past are portrayed only in a negative light".

### Dedication

He said: "So many anonymous men and women religious also brought dedication and innovation in health care and society owes them a debt of gratitude."

The archbishop stressed that believers have an "essential contribution" to bring to society today and to the future, "especially in bringing support to the sick and the troubled".

"As Christians living in a diverse society we must find new ways of keeping that Christian spirit of gratuitous of dedication alive in a society where commercial and economic values can often dominate," Dr Martin added.

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## Passionists welcome third student

The Passionist order of priests welcomed their third student on Sunday, when Conor Quinn took his first vows in Holy Cross Church, Ardoyne in Belfast.

Conor, aged 27, is from South Armagh, the eldest

son of Sean and Marianna Quinn, and a graduate in IT studies.

After university he worked in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary for Boston Scientific, and worked more recently for Vodafone in Newry dealing with con-

tract clients such as Google. After a few years discerning his vocation he entered the Passionist Novitiate exactly a year ago.

Conor took First Vows in the Passionist Order at the midday Mass on Sunday. His

vows were received by the Rev. Dr James Sweeney CP Provincial of St Patrick's Province.

He will commence his study in Philosophy in St Malachy's Seminary, Belfast in late September.

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# Contemporary focus on the issue of ‘consent’

I didn't hear George Hook's radio comments about rape which have caused such a storm of controversy, so I won't comment on the specifics of what he said. You have to hear something live, pick up voice tone, register and context, to form a judgement on a sensitive subject.

On the general topic, it always needs to be reiterated that rape is an odious crime. But the contemporary discussion about rape is more often about 'consent' than about violent assault. The issue now is often whether the two participants in a sexual act did so by consent – or not.

There's a current drama on British television in which this is the dramatic focus. In ITV's *Liar*, it is established that the two main characters, Andrew and Laura, have had a sexual encounter. In the first episode, Laura (Joanne Froggatt) claims that she was drugged and raped. Andrew (Ioan Gruffudd) maintains that they had consensual relations from which both drew pleasure.

## Evidence

There is no objective evidence to test these competing versions. No witnesses, no forensics, no CCTV. There is just his word against hers. The viewer is inclined to trust Laura's testimony – until doubts creep into the story about her character.

This narrative perceptively illuminates a central argument around rape in our time: the question is not about what actually happened, but whether there was consent to what happened.

## An effervescent alternative to liquor

Coca-Cola has retained its No.1 spot in the Checkout Top Brands in the Irish Grocery markets, and – I am not being bribed to say this – I am pleased to see Coke retain its popularity.

Dentists hate colas because apparently these drinks rot your teeth, but for those of us who don't imbibe alcohol, Coca-Cola is a gift.

At most receptions and soirees these days, there is NEVER enough choice of non-alcoholic drinks. I am quite often reduced to drinking tap water at a party. It's petty to complain, but non-drinkers really do feel left out on these occasions.

But to be offered a cold, sparkling Diet Coke just fills that gap nicely.

It provides that little stimulant of caffeine which cheers.

When the Quakers decided to campaign against alcohol abuse, they marketed chocolate drinks as a harmless substitute. I'm glad that someone invented these cola drinks which bring an effervescent alternative to liquor.

## Goldminers refuse access to Mass rock

A Canadian gold mining firm has turned down a request by the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) to access land in Co. Tyrone where locals say a Mass rock is located.

The AOH says up to 12 bands and several hundred people are expected

to attend a parade in Greencastle on Sunday to mark the 100th anniversary of the Marian apparitions at Fatima.

Dalradian Gold has claimed there is no evidence of a Mass rock on its land but insists it wants to be a "good neighbour"

and have "equal respect for all faith groups".

In a reply to a letter from the AOH, the firm said it wants to "arrange a meeting to discuss the issues" but added that "until we can meet we are unable to facilitate your request".



Mary Kenny



George Hook.

My own inclination is to believe a woman who says she has been raped, since most women would not make such a serious charge unless it was true. But then there is 'the crooked timber of humanity': and nothing is outside the bounds of human possibility.

**“Women are the more vulnerable gender...I would generally tend towards being more sympathetic to the woman's point of view”**

Recently in London, a 25-year-old woman, Jemma Beale, was jailed for 10 years for having made four false charges of rape. In one case, an innocent man had himself served a jail

sentence in consequence of her claims. (Incidentally, Jemma Beale was brilliantly prosecuted by a female lawyer, Madeleine Wolfe.)

Because women are evidently the more vulnerable gender in this sphere, I would generally tend towards being more sympathetic to the woman's point of view. But the complexity of rape claims in a society which accepts that 'anything goes – so long as it is consensual' is analysed with lucidity by Camille Paglia in her most recent book *Free Women, Free Men: Sex, Gender, Feminism*.

"Rape is an outrage that cannot

be tolerated in a civilised society," she writes. "Yet feminism...has put young women in danger by hiding the truth about sex from them."

The sexual urge, she warns, can be something dangerous, and young women should be told that. "Aggression and eroticism are deeply intertwined. Hunt, pursuit and capture are biologically programmed into male sexuality."

Women have to learn to protect themselves from "nature's red flame". A woman "must be prudent and cautious about where she goes and with whom".

And generation after generation, young men must be tamed and civilised to learn restraint and respect.

"When anything goes, it's women who lose," writes this renowned professor of humanities and radical thinker on the state of the gender wars. And she brings to this difficult subject an illumination of its complexity.



George Clooney and his wife Amal.

## Tried and trusted names

The film star George Clooney and his wife Amal have chosen to call their infant twins Alexander and Ella, because they don't want the kids to have "ridiculous Hollywood names".

How wise to stick to the tried and trusted! I encountered an old friend last weekend and we began catching up on family news. It was a bit of a worry, he said, that one of his grandchildren was lumbered with the name 'Isis', after the Egyptian goddess of that moniker. Now, of course, it alludes to Islamic state extremists.

Children can be surprisingly conservative. David Bowie named his son Zowie Bowie. The lad later altered his name to the sensible Duncan Jones.

## Seeking Strength - Finding Hope

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Lough Derg is a place of welcome for everyone. The 'Living with Suicide' Day Retreat offers those who have been affected by suicide, either through personal loss or with suicidal ideation and those who minister to the suicide bereaved or working in support services the opportunity for deeper understanding and support to 'make sense of it all'.

Admission €40: includes all services, welcome refreshments, light lunch and boat transfer. Boats available from 9.30am.



'The Living with Suicide Day Retreat is not a conference in the secular sense of the word but rather to invite people to come to a safe place where they might find some sense of healing and peace in this oasis of calm amidst the pain and struggle.'

Fr Cathal Deery, Spiritual Director

Advance booking is essential. For more detailed information about the Day Retreat and the programme contact Sharon or Maureen.

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# Refugees in Ireland are like 'prisoners on day release'

Mags Gargan

Bishop Kevin Doran has condemned the "inhumane" living conditions of asylum seekers in the direct provision system, comparing them to prisoners out on day release.

Bishop Doran, who is a member of the Council for Justice and Peace of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, said the processing of asylum applications "remains unacceptably slow", and the "conditions under which people are expected to live in direct provision centres are inhumane".

## Employment

"While they are technically free to come and go, they are effectively little more than prisoners with day release. Asylum seekers are not allowed to accept any employment, no matter what skills they have," he said.

"In most direct provision

centres, there is no opportunity for parents to even prepare a meal for their children, which would be a basic feature of normal family life. Children grow up with little experience of family and are, therefore, deprived of a model on which to build their own families in the future."

In an opinion column on *TheJournal.ie* the Bishop of Elphin also said he regrets "the slow pace at which Ireland is receiving refugees from the war zones of Syria and Iraq". "I think we could certainly be more proactive in welcoming unaccompanied minors and providing them with their immediate needs in terms of protection, family-type support and education."

## Involvement

Bishop Doran said that the Irish Church is "willing and indeed anxious" to play a part in the welcoming of refugees. "The reception of refugees

clearly has to be managed professionally, but that should not exclude the involvement of properly trained or suitably experienced volunteers."

The bishop added that in

his own experience the children of asylum seekers, while given access to primary and secondary education, are not able to participate in many of the optional programmes

provided by schools, such as swimming, sports outings or special classes, and "this is one way in which local communities could give practical assistance".



Volunteers from the Pro-Life Campaign outside Leinster House to mark the 34th anniversary of the passage of the Eighth Amendment. Photo: John McElroy

## Criticism for Taoiseach who says unborn aren't equal

Chai Brady

The Pro-Life Campaign (PLC) has criticised Leo Varadkar's comments in which he said the unborn should not have the same rights as the mother.

However the PLC welcomed that he does not agree the unborn should have no rights whatsoever.

In an article published in the *New York Times* the Taoiseach is quoted as saying: "And there are people who take the view that human rights only begin after you're born and that a child in the womb with a beating heart, the ability to hear, the ability to feel pain, should have no rights whatsoever. I don't agree with that."

Cora Sherlock, spokesperson for the PLC, said his comments were "encouraging" as he acknowledged the "humanity of the baby in the womb".

However Ms Sherlock said it is "difficult

to understand" how the Taoiseach believes the lives of the mother and unborn are not equal.

"The Eighth Amendment guarantees that equality while at the same time ensuring that women receive whatever treatment they need while pregnant," she said. "...We have not only avoided the human rights abuses caused by abortion in other countries, but we have remained as world leaders in the area of maternal health," she added, saying the Citizens' Assembly recommendations show there's no such thing as 'restrictive abortion'.

"Once particular categories of human beings are singled out as unworthy of legal protection in the womb at any stage, we undermine respect for all human life, born and unborn." The Pro-Life Campaign celebrated the 34th anniversary of the passage of the Eighth Amendment last Thursday.

## Grandparents should intervene in family issues – Archbishop

Grandparents have a responsibility to "step in and say something" to help their children and grandchildren, and bring family together.

Archbishop Eamon Martin, the Primate of Ireland, said in a Mass celebrating the 2017 Grandparents' Pilgrimage to

Knock that it can be difficult to make connections, especially "in a generation which can be so individualistic".

"What's needed of course is opportunities together as a couple and family, to work on our needs, our future, our happiness. It is true heart to

heart communication like this that builds and holds family together," he said.

Archbishop Martin said that sometimes grandparents may wish to say something, to point out what they think is right and wrong.

He quotes Jesus, who says:

"If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him". "This can be difficult nowadays in a generation which would hold up the right to individual choice as being so important – even more important than the right to life itself," he added.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Belfast's oldest church reopens

The oldest Catholic Church in Belfast has reopened for Mass after being closed for almost two months.

Masses were celebrated at St Mary's at the weekend for the first time since mid-July, with Mass having been celebrated at the Living Youth building, beside the church in Chapel Lane.

St Mary's, where Mass was first celebrated in 1784, has been undergoing both external and internal restoration since May, but the work outside the church is not yet complete.

Bishop Noel Treanor is set to attend the official re-opening, expected to be in December at the vigil Mass for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

### Derry bishop to lead JPPI pilgrimage

Bishop Donal McKeown of Derry is leading a special pilgrimage to Rome to celebrate 10 years of the Pope John Paul II Award.

This pilgrimage is aimed at Pope John Paul II Award participants and leaders, any student who has completed the award/left school, or anyone involved in youth ministry/youth work.

Pilgrimage highlights include an audience with Pope Francis, a visit to the tomb of Pope St John Paul II and a half day conference on the subjects of Youth Ministry, World Meeting of Families and World Youth Day.

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## Maria Steen

### The View



# Abortion advocates pit a woman against her baby

**T**he Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are expecting their third child. I was glad to see that even in the hardened atmosphere of news outlets around the world, the impending arrival of a new baby in the royal household is still portrayed as a 'good news' story.

But it also got me thinking about what happens when another girl or woman finds out that she too is expecting, but the circumstances are more difficult. What happens when a woman is not married or in a relationship with the child's father? When she is working? When she has other plans?

For years, women have been indoctrinated by a feminist ideology that tells them that traditional feminine qualities and instincts are bad and indicative of a repressive patriarchal culture.

Vulnerability is bad, therefore motherhood and pregnancy are bad because you allow yourself to be vulnerable – which is to say weak.

What does this attitude tell young women and girls as they contemplate their futures? It tells them that their fertility is a problem that needs to be treated and managed, and that pregnancy and babies are something to be avoided at all costs until you've made it in your career and you're good and ready (without any consideration of the biological reality of women's fertility).

And ultimately, if you do happen to become pregnant

(which genuinely seems to come as a surprise to many women nowadays, such has been the success in separating sex and procreation), that you can (and should) 'take care of it'. Because of course it is irresponsible to have a child before you're absolutely ready and the child is really, really 'wanted'.

Even then the lecturing doesn't stop. The news of the Duchess of Cambridge's pregnancy follows shortly after she and her husband were written an open letter by a group called 'Having Kids', suggesting that they shouldn't have any more children as it would be selfish to do so, given the

carbon footprint that the next little Windsor might leave on the world. When having a baby becomes an environmental offence, it certainly seems that motherhood is no longer sacred.

As Catholics, we celebrated last week the birthday of Mary, Mother of God. While reflecting on her motherhood, I came across a video lecture by YouTube sensation Prof. Jordan Peterson about the importance of the portrayal of Mary in Western civilisation, even in a post-Christian era. Although not Catholic, he describes the image of the Madonna and Child, the beautiful young woman and her baby, as being transcendent and eternal: an archetype.

### Familiar

That image is so familiar to us that perhaps we risk overlooking its significance. Although a Christian icon, it transcends culture and time and even religion. What it depicts is at the heart of the most basic, shared experience of every human being on this Earth: that we all were born into the world through a woman.

The image of a mother and her child expresses the fundamental reality that any human society must give a special place of respect to mothers and babies. When the relationship of mother and child is not protected, everything falls apart.

The bond between mother and infant is the cornerstone of all human life, the foundation of civilisation. When we fail to protect this sacred relationship, we undermine our own society.

An attack on this – the very first inter-personal relationship – is an attack on the beginnings of life: it is fundamentally anti-human. The relationship between

mother and child has never been more under threat in this country, given that our Taoiseach has announced that he will run a referendum on the Eighth Amendment next year.

motherhood is a threat to their independence, success and value as a person.

Advocates of abortion, even those who concede that the baby in the womb is a person, will nonetheless say that a woman's right to

choose trumps any and every right her child may have. They say that the presence of a baby in his mother's womb is a violation of a woman's bodily integrity. This is the saddest argument of all. It pits a woman against her baby and tears the beautiful image of mother and child asunder, turning the child into an aggressor who threatens the mother and thwarts her plans.

### Perspective

Of course, if this is your perspective, you might well believe in a woman's right to choose. We only have to look to our neighbours

to see where this leads: one in every five babies in Britain loses his or her life to 'choice'.

But a child in the womb is not an aggressor, the child does not violate anything – is not capable of doing so, in his or her innocence. The veil that feminists have drawn in front of their eyes prevents them from seeing the child for what he or she really is: an innocent baby, a person at the very beginning of his or her life, listening to his mother's voice, waiting for her embrace.

The question now is this: do we want to strip motherhood of all privilege and respect in society, dismantling the image of mother and child and turning one against the other? Or rather, are we willing to protect the status of motherhood in our country, to defend the relationship between a mother and her baby and to secure the lives of all innocent children before birth? Can't we work together to make our society one in which every new life is welcomed, not just royal ones?



The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and their two children.

Most people can see the terrible injustice and violence that abortion does to a baby; many will acknowledge the suffering that it entails for many women who choose it; but what does it mean for our society, what does it do to the idea of motherhood?

The partnership in humanity that happens during pregnancy between the woman and her baby is essential, not only to the individuals involved but also to society as a whole: all future generations depend on it. For this reason, when this partnership is threatened, it is an attack on society.

**“A child in the womb is not an aggressor, the child does not violate anything”**

Abortion fragments the image of mother and child and in doing so, motherhood is devalued. This has devastating consequences for our society: young women begin to feel that

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# What 'spiritual not religious' really means

People shy away from the word 'religious' because of its negative baggage, writes **David Quinn**

**I**t's fairly fashionable now for people to describe themselves as "spiritual not religious", but what does it mean when they say that? It certainly signifies an aversion to being called 'religious'. To be 'religious' has connotations of being a 'Holy Joe', or of being 'dogmatic', or being regimented and of being unwilling to think for yourself. Who wants to be considered any of these things?

Being 'spiritual' is a way of saying you appreciate there is more to life than the merely material, that there are higher things you should be in touch with, but at the same time you are not hidebound or dogmatic.

I think calling yourself 'spiritual but not religious' is also a product of a highly individualistic age in which people are very reluctant to admit or imply that they have given up any part of their freedom to something bigger than themselves that has rules and expectations – in the case of religion, to a religious community (the Church being the community of the followers of Christ).

This same individualism means that people are much more reluctant to join a political party than in decades past, or even to admit to being a loyal supporter of any given party. The political equivalent of the person who is 'spiritual but not religious' is the floating voter. The equivalent of the person who is neither religious nor spiritual is the person who might not vote at all and who is either uninterested in politics or completely disillusioned with it.

## Totality

I think what I've just written more or less accurately describes what a person is trying to say when they declare themselves to be 'spiritual not religious'. However, it doesn't cover the totality of what they are trying to say because people are complex, what goes on in



their heads is often a product of competing ideas and motivations that are often downright contradictory.

I remember being on a radio show last year with Michael Nugent of Atheist Ireland to discuss how Census 2016 should ask the question about religion and how people should answer it. Myself and Michael both agreed that if a person rejected much of what the Catholic Church believes and only attends Mass for weddings and the like, and they belong to no other religion, then they should tick the 'none' box in the Census form.

One irate woman phoned in to berate me over what I had said. She rejected much of what the Catholic Church teaches, she said, and she almost never attended Mass, but she still considered herself to be a Catholic and I had no right to say otherwise.

**“The number of people saying they are spiritual not religious has increased over the last five years”**

This woman might well describe herself as 'spiritual not religious' while at the same time considering herself to be a Catholic.

A new opinion poll from the Pew Forum in the United States delves more deeply into what is going on in people's head when they describe themselves in this way, and discovers that an awful lot of them say they are not religious, while at the same time calling themselves Protestant or Catholic.

Overall, the poll finds

that the number saying they are spiritual not religious has increased over the last five years from 19% to 27% and the number who say they are neither spiritual nor religious has increased from 16% to 18%. The number who say they are religious and spiritual has gone down from 59% to 48%.

But now things start to get complicated because 35% of those who say they are spiritual not religious nonetheless say they are Protestant, almost the same number as those who say they unaffiliated (37%). Fourteen percent say they are Catholic, 11% 'other' and the rest don't know.

## Baggage

To put it another way, of those who say they are spiritual not religious, 62% still identity with a named religion. So, what is going on in their heads? How can they say they are not religious but still say they belong to a given religion?

Again, I think it is because of the negative baggage the word 'religious' currently carries so these people can think they are Catholic or Protestant without thinking they are religious. I've come across Evangelical Christians who say they are Christian but not religious. They say Jesus Himself wasn't religious, or at least not in the way a lot of people understand that word.

Jesus certainly wasn't hidebound, for example, nor did he seem very ritualistic in his habits, and he stood up to the religious authorities of his day.

Things get more complicated still when we find that even many of those who say they are neither religious nor spiritual still identity with a named

religion. You'd have thought nearly everyone in this group would shy away from calling themselves Catholic or Protestant or Jewish and so on. But it turns out that 44% of this group do still identity with a given religion.

What we also find is that regular attendance at religious service is quite

strong among the 'spiritual not religious' group. Seventeen percent attend a service every week and another 32% do so monthly or yearly. Even among the neither religious nor spiritual group, 8% attend a religious service weekly and 27% do so monthly or yearly. As you would expect, the

group most likely to attend a religious service every week are those who say they are religious and spiritual (55% go at least weekly).

**“Many of those who say they are neither religious nor spiritual still identify with a named religion”**

If we have to sum up these findings, I suppose we would say that when someone says they are not religious, it doesn't mean they have rejected religion *per se*. Far from it. What it seems to mean is that they have rejected or are uncomfortable with a certain form of religiosity.

This describes many Americans and it probably describes many Irish people as well. But let's not read more into it than we should.

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**Martin O'Brien** speaks to the founding director of L'Arche in Belfast

**M**aria Garvey – whose vocation has been to untap and develop the great gifts and possibilities of persons with special needs and to empower them to transform the rest of us – remembers the moment more than 40 years ago as if it was yesterday.

It changed her life forever, just as several dreams which she recalls vividly, have also profoundly altered her course.

She doesn't have a precise date, but it was 1973 or 1974, she was 15 or 16 years of age, in third or fourth year in the Presentation Convent in Mitchelstown, Co. Cork – where she was born, the eldest of five children.

One day she told her careers teacher, a nun, that she “would like to work with people who have disabilities”.

The nun dismissed the idea saying, “we all have great ideals, that will go, you need to do something ordinary like the bank, nursing or primary teaching”.

“I was devastated, it was so arrogant”, she recalls in her comfortable little house in east Belfast, the city this inspirational woman with strong west Kerry roots, has long made her improbable home.

## Transfixed

That evening Maria's parents – Irish speakers from Kerry who brought her up in Mitchelstown where they were teachers – went out for the evening and she turned on the television.

On RTE she saw the late Fr Peter Lemass interview Jean Vanier and she was transfixed by him.

“That was a turning point in my life. I remember saying to myself watching that programme, if Jean Vanier can do it so can I. No nun can tell me no! When Mum came home I told her this man Jean Vanier is amazing and I subsequently read two of his early books, *Followers of Jesus* and *Be Not*

# Do something seemingly impossible with your life



Maria Garvey.

*Afraid*,” she says.

In 1964 in France Vanier founded what was to become the worldwide L'Arche movement, which builds communities with people who have intellectual disabilities and today it has 151 communities in 37 countries in every continent.

Maria Garvey was not to know that more than a quarter of a century later (in 2000) she would, having spent spells with L'Arche in Cork and Kilkenny, become the founding director of L'Arche in Belfast and then leader of L'Arche in Ireland from 2011 until 2014.

She was on the selection panel that had appointed a person who declined the Belfast job and was moved to think that the Lord was calling her to take on the post herself, while listening to a prayer being said over her father at his Requiem Mass.

Today, Vanier is renowned around the world as a living saint. And Maria Garvey, (59), still an active member of L'Arche in Belfast is pictured on their website enthusing a group of young people clowning around in a wardrobe swap.

In recent years Maria has progressed into coaching and facilitating, “enabling people to listen to their hearts”

and leads retreats and other encounters in dioceses around Ireland “to assist men and women in ministry connect with the deepest call of their ministry”.

For as long as Maria can remember she was “fascinated by people who are different” and had a particular interest in people with disabilities.

**“My mantra is that every life matters, no matter”**

“My mother said I was born with it,” she says. “I adored going up to Holy Communion in Mitchelstown behind a man who carried on his shoulders his little boy who had Down Syndrome and making that little boy smile.”

Maria, a bright pupil, proceeded to Mary Immaculate College in Limerick where she told a lecturer “my passion is special education”.

She obtained a first-class honours degree in education – and a scholarship to TCD which she spurned to follow her heart into teaching those with extreme physical and intellectual challenges, dismissing the advice of some – including some close to her – who felt it was a waste of

her talent.

She secured a teaching post at the Marino Clinic, Bray and within three years was principal there (aged just 24) and recalls successfully rejecting the counsel of a school inspector who judged one pupil, Peter, who had severe disabilities as being “ineducable”.

She even took Peter home at Christmas and he returned to the school “transformed” having himself transformed some members of her family.

\*\*\*\*\*

Maria founded and ran the Happy Wanderers scheme, which over a period of eight years provided Christmas, Easter and summer holidays in Castlegregory, Co. Kerry for up to 90 disabled children from broken homes. “Local people raised money all year and gave us their holiday homes. My motto always is if you are going to do something with your life let it be something that [seems] impossible because if it is possible people are doing it!”

Maria is single and her life reached another turning point in her late twenties when she took an extended career break after a relationship with “the love of my life” didn't work out.

She planned to go to Cal-

cutta (Kolkata) to work with Mother Teresa and when jaundice put paid to that she remembered the RTE interview with Jean Vanier and ended up spending a year in Vanier's founding L'Arche community in Trosly, France, getting to know him personally.

“It was a place where people with disabilities have an opportunity to offer their gifts, where people are not cared for in the traditional way but know they can contribute. I had become part of the movement of God that was planted as a seed in Jean Vanier,” she says.

“My mantra is that every life matters, no matter what. There isn't a single human life that doesn't make a difference and irrespective of the conditions and circumstances of someone's life, irrespective of who they are in the world they will come to do the work they came to do, in their way.”

She adds: “The big thing for me is that God makes no mistakes and my message for everyone in the world is that your life is not a mistake. There is no disability in God's imagination for the world.”

Under-pinning it all is a deep religious faith rooted in Scripture – passages from the Bible roll off her tongue – and in knowing and experiencing divine accompaniment, exemplified in the Emmaus story (Lk 24:13-35) in which Jesus accompanied two disciples along the road and set their hearts on fire.

“All I am in the world is a good companion, I am companion-based. My job is to set peoples' hearts on fire, to rekindle that fire in people's hearts.”

Above all, the God Maria knows is her constant companion. “I would say there isn't a moment in my life that I am not in some sort of conversation with the Jesus who walks beside me. It is very much the Emmaus journey for me,” she says.

## Remarkable

Maria Garvey is a remarkable woman, with so many striking stories to tell that she should write a book.

She confides that she has

Conor Boyle enjoying working in the allotments at L'Arche Belfast.



had “five or six incredible dreams that have changed my life” and one of these relates to how the headquarters of L'Arche in Belfast came to be named as The Ember.

“A very long time ago” she says she had one such dream which she can recount in remarkable detail, more than we have space for here.

She saw an old woman dressed in black whom she recognised as her mother in a garden outside a house in which there were two rooms each with fireplaces. In the dream Maria lights a fire in one room that nearly burns down the house but it quickly burns out.

Her mother then asked her to go into the other room and says to her “let me show you how to light a fire that endures”.

**“All I am in the world is a good companion”**

Her mother kindled the wood and blew on an ember and started “a beautiful fire” and told her: “The only source of the enduring fire is when the ember hidden in yesterday's ashes is ignited by the breath of the unknown.”

Arriving in Belfast for the first time in 2000 to take up her post she told that story to the late Robin Harris, an ordained Church of Ireland minister, former BBC executive in Belfast and founding chair of the L'Arche Committee in the city.

Maria recalls that Robin said to her that “we need to call our L'Arche house The Ember because L'Arche will be an ember hidden in yesterday's ashes and will be the source of an enduring fire in Northern Ireland”.

In recent years, she has offered her companionship to people in the Protestant Sandy Row area of Belfast, having “fallen in love with the people there” and helping them to re-build their sense of community.

Asked if she had any advice for Arlene Foster and Michelle O'Neill of the DUP and Sinn Féin as they attempt to rebuild the Executive in the





Jean Vanier.



Delegates from Belfast to the L'Arche Federation Assembly in Belfast. Photo: Élodie Perriot

North, she says she would love to meet them and appeal to their respective vulnerability and to the common ground of their shared humanity.

"If Arlene Foster and Michelle O'Neill were in this room together, I would say how can we be human together, how can we find the human connection which is a leveller? I would really like to get them together to talk about their children, to talk as mothers, not as politicians and for them to bring up with me what – more than anything – they would love for their children.

"What sort of life do they want outside of politics,

outside of religion, just for a moment to dream beyond the labels and the limits that stop us dreaming here in Northern Ireland? The minute we start to dream here our dreams get filtered through the colour of our flag," she says.

### “I was dying of loneliness in Belfast when I came here”

So, she would invite Ms Foster and Ms O'Neill to "lay down the flag for one moment and open your heart as a parent or a grandparent and say truly, truly, what do we want

for our children to live, what do we want for them?"

Looking ahead to next August's expected visit to Ireland by Pope Francis and the opportunities this may present for renewal she says she has already been asking the Irish Church "to contemplate how can the Church be family for people who long to belong? What is the role of Church in the possibility of a world where everyone has a place to belong?"

She says that because she is very mindful that when she came to Belfast first as a stranger the only place familiar to her was the Catholic Church.

But she recalls going from parish to parish in Belfast and discovering "it is possible to go to Mass without ever connecting with a single human being, which was crazy because we are supposed to be about communion and community".

### “Maria Garvey spent her youth ‘juggling and navigating many identities’”

"I was dying of loneliness in Belfast when I came here and that only changed when in my own parish of St Columille's [in east Belfast] I exchanged the sign of peace with someone and seeing the tears streaming down her face I said to her are you OK and she said she wasn't, and afterwards we went for coffee. Her tears gave me a place that mattered."

That was 17 years ago and notwithstanding the growth of a welcoming ministry in churches in Down and Connor following the listening process a few years ago, she still feels "that our churches are too sanitised of poverty and brokenness".

Asked what she would say

to the Pope if she happened to have 10 minutes with him she would tell him "I agree with you that we have to smell the sheep and can I say to you that our churches are too sanitised. It is like walking into a church that has been sanitised of poverty, of brokenness. The rituals are so clean that there is no room for the mess, there is no room to smell the sheep and I don't mean that in any critical way but you walk in and it's beautiful and that's fine if everyone is OK, but what if they are not? Where is the space where people can connect at a human level?"

To help address this she suggests that if she was in charge of a parish the first thing she would examine would be "what table fellowship looks like".

She would introduce tea and coffee after Mass in every church in Ireland to help lonely people make friends and a monthly Sunday lunch, "and if you provide the lunch for the homeless the lonely will come to serve them because very often the loneliest people in the world don't look lonely at all".

\*\*\*\*\*

Maria says she is no feminist but welcomes the creativ-

ity of some priests in finding ways for the voice of women to be heard in the sanctuary e.g. at the Clonard Novena in Belfast; at the novenas organised by Fr Brian D'Arcy CP at The Graan outside Enniskillen and at the recent Triduum honouring St Benedict Joseph Labre, hosted by Fr Michael McGinnity, in St Malachy's, Belfast, to which she herself was pleased to contribute.

Maria Garvey spent her youth "juggling and navigating many identities" figuring out where she belonged: in the rural idyll of west Kerry under Mount Brandon, the place of her parents and grandparents; Mitchelstown where she was born and raised; or just across the county boundary in Knockadea, Co. Limerick where she went to primary school?

Then she could not have remotely foreseen that 50 years later her home would be in Belfast "a place I have grown to love" where she has long intended to stay for the rest of her life, contributing in her quiet unique way to community building in such a divided yet often uplifting place while also helping to renew the Church in her understated way. She is needed.

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# A vocation inspired by Dostoevsky



Fr Nasonov  
left the army  
behind for  
more holy  
ventures, writes  
**Chai Brady**

**L**eaving behind a life destined for the military, the priest of one of Ireland's most established Orthodox Churches pursued a life of piety despite the odds.

Fr Mikhail Nasonov, of the Russian Orthodox Church, operates in Ireland at a time when Christian Orthodoxy is the fastest growing religion. Between the 2011 and 2016 census the number of Orthodox worshippers in Ireland has risen by 37.5%. This is believed to be due to immigration rather than conversion, as Ireland's communities diversify.

Fr Nasonov was born in 1973 at a time when religion was persecuted in the former Soviet Union, and his father was a communist. His first introduction to Christianity was when he came across the story of Lazarus in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, he told *The Irish Catholic*: "I was very impressed by this story and I started to find out more about Christ."

### Gospel

The first time he read the Gospel was when he was in military school. "I tried to find the Gospel to read because it wasn't easy at that time, I remember I had a friend who asked an artist to find us a Bible," Fr Nasonov said.

"In the army you should be like the others, so you have to confess the same values as other people. I remember we read this Gospel, these small books, on the nights when nobody could see us.

"It wasn't completely illegal, it wasn't a crime, but you can have trouble because in the army there was a special department to control the ideological thinking," he added.

He left military school to



Fr Mikhail Nasonov.



The congregation receiving Communion.

become Christian at the age of 18, and was baptised. Fr Nasonov entered the seminary in St Petersburg and studied Theology and Russian, then studied in Paris at the St Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute, and lectured in Theology in Moscow. He was subsequently sent to serve in Ireland.

The first Orthodox priest in Ireland is thought to have been from the Russian Orthodox Church. Fr Nicholas Couriss, who fled Russia after the country's revolution in 1917 which saw the fall of the Tsar, had a parish in Dublin in 1969.

The Russian Orthodox Church is in full communion with the Eastern Orthodox Churches, such as the Antiochian, Romanian, Georgian, Serbian and Greek Orthodox to name a few. They are all autocephalous, which means the patriarch of each Church (similar to the Pope) does not report to any higher ranking bishop. This is one of the main reasons, aside from minor theological differences, the Catholic and Orthodox Churches split – because the Orthodox did not accept the primacy of the Pope.

After Fr Couriss' parish closed when he died in 1977, the Russian Orthodox shared a Church with the Greek Orthodox. This changed when Fr Nasonov was tasked by the Diocese of Sourozh (which encompasses Britain and Ire-

land) to raise €50,000 to buy a church from the Church of Ireland. He was successful and now they own the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul Church in Harold's Cross, Dublin.

Not only does it provide a place of worship for Russian nationals, but many Eastern Europeans regularly attend as well.

**“Fr Nasonov praised the Catholic Church, and Archbishop of Dublin”**

"We have people from different countries in our parish, it's not just Russians. The thing is there's not many Russians here in Ireland, it's mostly people from the Baltic States," said Fr Nasonov. "There's a lot of people from Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, from Ukraine and from Serbia."

The Russian Orthodox Church in Ireland is a young Church, with many families attending, and there is a parish education centre which is split up into four parts.

There is a Sunday school for children, where they read scripture and do activities relating to faith and religion – such as plays. They also have theological classes for adults and a music school.

A Russian language school is also provided, with Fr

Nasonov saying "it is for our children to keep their language, because it's very easy to lose. When you go to Irish schools you speak English all the time".

The Russian Orthodox would usually try to go to Confession before receiving Communion, with Fr Nasonov saying people would go to Confession more often than in the Catholic Church.

He added: "We give the Communion from the beginning, so after the Baptism even the little babies can take the Communion, but when they're just one month old – just the blood of Christ."

Fr Nasonov is married with children which is common for priests in the Eastern Orthodox Church, but there are also celibate priests, as priests can only have a wife once they are married before they are ordained.

"We can only be married once, the idea is that the priest can be an example for the people, an example in his private life, in his family life as well, theoretically: maybe in reality it is not always the case," Fr Nasonov said.

Fr Nasonov praised the Catholic Church, and Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Diarmuid Martin in particular, for the help many of the Orthodox churches have been given throughout the years, even now some Orthodox worshippers share Catholic churches and facilities.

"We have to keep these Christian values for society, we have the same Christian values, Protestants as well. We have to witness the Gospels together," said Fr Nasonov.

"Especially now when the attitude is not very friendly to Christians so we have to support each other, this is clear," he added.

**i** In the next part of the series we meet the Ethiopian Orthodox.





Fr Robert Colclough of North Wall parish celebrates 'Mass on the Grass'. Photos: Pia Polotto

Chai Brady

A Dublin parish was thrilled to celebrate their annual 'Mass on the Grass' event, which organisers say is a great way for everyone to get involved in the community.

About 100 people enjoyed the live music and high spirits at North Wall parish's annual event, with a Mass led by Fr Robert Colclough.

There were prayers for people who had passed on during the year, for people in the community who are ill, and also for children going back to school.

Parish Secretary and member of the local residents association, Marie O'Reilly, said it was a "fantastic celebration" and is very well supported in the community.

"We would have a lot of young families who are working in some of the businesses around the area who've moved in, and they all come and they bring their children, there's a younger population there now," she said, adding that many of the children did the readings.

She said it is a very diverse community, with people from all nationalities, including South Korea, Italy and France attending, and the event is very well supported and advertised.

"It helps other people understand different communities in different parts of the world. The big thing we feel, and it's very important, is that we're inclusive," Marie O'Reilly said.

There was tea and refreshments, and people were invited to bring things that they had baked or made.

The deacon from East Wall parish, Rev. Paul Kelly, also attended.



Fr Robert Colclough.



Young parishioners wait to say the Prayers of the Faithful.

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# Out&About

## Care of Creation event in Tralee



**KERRY:** Family and friends gather for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, the five-week 'Time for Creation' programme began with a prayer service held in the Town Park Tralee with events being held throughout September.



**CAVAN:** Bishop Leo O'Reilly and Fr Gerry Kearns make a presentation to Fr Martin Gilcreest on the occasion of his leaving Cavan General Hospital after 17 years as Hospital Chaplain there. Photo: Lorraine Teevan

► **CAVAN:** Pictured in Cavan Cathedral where Fr Sean Maguire, Fr Kevin Donohoe and Fr Darragh Connolly have taken new places in the parish: (back from left) Fr Raphael Siwek, Fr John Akain, Fr Ultan McGoochan and Deacon Andy Brady, (front from left) Fr Sean Maguire, Fr Darragh Connolly, Bishop Leo O'Reilly, Fr Kevin Donohoe and Fr Ray Brady. Photo: Lorraine Tevan



**FERMANAGH:** Rev. Sampson Adjuka of Devenish Parish, Fr Jimmy McPhillips of Botha and Canon David Skuce Rector of Innishmacsaint enjoy a flower festival organised by Botha Parish, and supported by Church of Ireland communities, to raise funds for its three local Churches.



**KERRY:** Fr Tadhg Fitzgerald PP, St John's Church Tralee, celebrated Mass for married couples celebrating their wedding anniversary this year. Included are: Sean and Irene Commene, 60th, Teddy and Mary O'Carroll 60th, John and Joan Trant 55th, John and Shelia O'Driscoll 55th, Sean Seosamh and Dawn O'Concubhair 50th, Christy and Breda Browne 50th, Maurice and Carmel Hobbart 50th, Johnny and Kathleen Burrows 45th, Patrick and Eileen Nolan 40th, Kathleen and Jerry Houlihan, 40th, Jerry and Nancy O'Regan 40th, Tommy and Catherine Kelliher 35th, Ger and Rose Coughlan 35th, John and Liz O'Keeffe 30th, Thomas and Cath Griffin 25th, Brian and Máire Caball 25th, Patrick and Anne Hoare 20th, Colm and Caroline Lynch 15th, Martina and Neilus O'Donnell 10th, Brenda and Fred Moriarty 1st. Photo: John Cleary



Edited by Chai Brady  
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Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



**KNOCK:** Friends from Adamstown parish prayer group in Co. Wexford visit Knock.



▲ **KERRY:** Fr Patsy Lynch (holding frame on left) at his farewell get-together in the Meadowlands Hotel, Tralee, before he transfers from St Brendan's Parish after 10 years of service, to South Kerry.

◀ **MAYO:** Bishop Leo O'Reilly (left) and Fr Ultan McGoochan (right) are joined by the Conaty family from Bunnoe and the Mascarenas family from Cavan who represented the Diocese of Kilmore at a Mass in the Basilica of Our Lady of Knock to mark the one year countdown to the WMOF.

## IN SHORT

### Nuns receive national awards for altruistic works

Two Loreto nuns have been honoured with separate prestigious awards for their work as missionaries in Africa.

Sr Orla Treacy, from Wicklow, will receive the 2017 Hugh O'Flaherty International Humanitarian Award for her work teaching in South Sudan, one of the most dangerous countries in the world.

She is the Principal of Loreto Secondary School

in Rumbek, which has 200 students. It is a boarding school as it's too dangerous for the girls to travel long distances.

She said: "I am genuinely very humbled to receive this award. On behalf of Loreto Sisters, our supporters, and all our staff at Loreto Rumbek South Sudan, I graciously accept this honour. The girls and young people we work with fill us with hope for a better future for this country".

Dublin native Sr Mary Owens was presented with a State Recognition Award from Kenya's Ministry of Health for her dedication to the country's Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) programme.

ART provides quality HIV treatment and support, and is part of Kenya's national AIDS and STI control programme.

Highly educated, Sr Mary set up Nyumbani Children's Home in Nairobi in 1992, because orphanages were turning away children with HIV/AIDS. She cares for 4,000 children.

### Pioneer gathering in Munster

A 'Munster Gathering' will be held on October 1 in Limerick with a full day of discussion, reflection, adoration and a

concelebrated Mass with Bishop Brendan Leahy.

The Pioneer Gathering and Spirituality Day takes place in Woodlands House Hotel, Adare, with registration at 10.30am and Mass at 4pm.

Organisers "appeal to Pioneers in each centre throughout the province to support this event and we welcome all Pioneers in Clare, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford, as we go about revitalising the organisation in Munster".

Tickets for the event cost €30 each and are available from the Secretary of local Pioneer Councils, closing date for purchase is September 25.

## NATIONAL

Powerful Catholic Bible study and healing through scripture with world renowned Johnson Sequa at various locations nationwide including Knock, Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny, Monaghan, Offaly, Tipperary, Wicklow, between September 26-October 10. Contact: Chris 085-2392207 or Eileen 087-2454697.

## CAVAN

The Diocese of Kilmore will celebrate the countdown to the World Meeting of Families at a ceremony in the Cathedral of Ss Patrick & Felim, Cavan, at 7.30pm on Monday, September 25. This will coincide with the beginning of the fourth annual diocesan Novena to Mary.

## CORK

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

## DONEGAL

Solemn Novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help in St Patrick's Church, Ballyshannon from September 11-19 with Redemptorist novena team, Fr Johnny Doherty and Fr Peter Burns, based on Pope Francis's *Joy of Love* and WMOF preparation.

## DUBLIN

Solemn Novena in Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Ballyfermot from Friday, September 22-30 with a variety of speakers at each novena Mass at 7pm every evening. Theme: "The Church is a family of families..."

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.

Free four-week course called 'The Practice of being in His Presence' is taking place in The Conference Room of The Divine Master Convent, Newtown Park Avenue, Blackrock from Friday, September 15 at 8pm. For more information ring 086 6050 344.

The Dublin 15 Faith and Justice Group welcomes new members and currently meet on the first Friday of the month in Hartstown Church. For information 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.

Life to the Full Book Club for young adults (20's & 30's) to reflect and discuss a chosen spiritual book over a few weeks. Every Thursday from 7-8.30pm in St Paul's Church Arran Quay (Smithfield). Email: michelle.manley@dublindiocese

Annual Mass and Anointing of the Sick on Sunday, September 24 at 12.00 Noon in Sacred Heart Church, Sru-leen Parish, Clondalkin.

Holy Hour in St John the Baptist

Church, Clontarf Road on Sunday, September 17 from 7.30-8.30pm. Leader: Fr Martin Hogan.

## FERMANAGH

Mass to St Peregrine for all the sick every Wednesday evening in St Patrick's Church, Derrygonnelly at 7.30pm.

## GALWAY

Padre Pio Feast Day Celebration at Emmanuel House, Clonfert, led by Eddie Stones. Wednesday, September 20 at 12pm. Please bring a packed lunch.

The Poor Clares in Galway are hosting a Cloister day on Saturday, September 16 from 10am-5pm. The day is designed to help young women (aged 21-40) to explore the Poor Clare way of life with a view to vocation discernment. To book a place contact: poorclaresgalwayvocations@gmail.com

## KERRY

Cookery demonstration with Mark Doe called 'Being Creative with Leftovers' in Our Lady and St Brendan's Pastoral Centre, Tralee, September 28 at 8pm.

## LIMERICK

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

Maranatha Healing Retreat on Sunday, September 17 at 2.30pm at St Pauls Church, Dooradoyle, Limerick through the Ministry of Fr Robin Thomas, Limerick and Heidi Gilroy, Kildare. Blessing with relic of St Faustina. Tea after in hall.

## MAYO

A weekend of 'prayer for our land' conference in Knock on October 20-22. Speakers: Fr John Keane, Noel Byrne, Aidan Byrne, Fr Lawrence CFR, of Moyross. Contact: Patricia 087-9130909 or Theresa 086-3241269.

The National Legion of Mary Pilgrimage to Knock takes place on Sunday, September 24 with Bishop Fintan Monahan as chief celebrant and homilist.

## OFFALY

Clonmacnois Prayer Vigil in Cluain Chiarain Prayer Centre every third Friday. Mass at 9pm. Adoration and Prayers follow until 2.10am. Enquiries: Dave 085-7746763.

## 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.

## WICKLOW

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

## IN BRIEF

### Outrage as judge appointee questioned about faith

● A US senator in California spurred outrage when she questioned a Catholic judicial nominee about what impact her faith would have on her interpretation of the law. Reaction from Catholic leaders to the hearing for Amy Coney Barrett, nominee for a seat on the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals was swift, with a leading archbishop calling the Senate hearing “deeply disappointing”.

In the hearing, Senator Dianne Feinstein made specific reference to whether judges of faith were able to remain impartial in death penalty cases.

Archbishop William Lori said the senators failed to “simply consider the professional achievements of a nominee for the federal judiciary” and instead “challenged her fitness to serve due to her Catholic faith”.

### Kenyan bishops defend supreme court decision to nullify election result

Kenya's bishops have called for an end to threats against Supreme Court authorities after they nullified President Uhuru Kenyatta's win in their recent election. The Supreme Court found that President Kenyatta's success in August's election was invalid, after his main opposition Raila Odinga filed a petition claiming the electronic voting system had been hacked in favour of President Kenyatta.

The Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops said: “We call upon the Jubilee party (President Kenyatta's party) and other leaders to accept the ruling and stop the threats.”

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## Aid workers scramble as Rohingya Muslims flee

As the plight of the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar (Burma) worsens Catholic aid workers are helping hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people escaping deadly violence.

Bangladesh is bracing for a massive humanitarian crisis because of a lack of food, sanitation, medicines and even basic housing following the exodus of as many as 350,000 Rohingya into the country. At least 1,000 Rohingya have been killed in just two weeks.

The border between Myanmar's Rakhine State and Bangladesh has become swollen with refugees who have set up makeshift camps with bamboos and polythene sheets to brave monsoon rains. Many are women, children and old people who face an uncertain future without citizenship of any nation or even bare essentials.

### Generous

Some aid groups and generous local people have sporadically provided relief materials to refugees on the Bangladesh side of the border; while in Myanmar, aid has been stopped by the government.

Aid trucks arriving at the makeshift camps quickly ran



Rohingya refugees walk to a Bangladeshi border guard post in Shah Porir Dwp.

out of food as thousands of hungry people enveloped them when they stopped.

In Chittagong, Bangladesh, James Gomes, regional director of Caritas, the Church's charitable agency said: “The situation is so pathetic – people living under an open sky, without food, clothes and medicines, getting wet in the rain.”

He predicted an epidemic due to unhealthy conditions if people did not get help soon.

Caritas is planning to distribute food and other essentials to the Rohingya and

will begin delivering it once donors secure necessary funds.

The UN Refugee Agency reports at least 300,000 Rohingya Muslims entered Bangladesh within two weeks of a military crackdown in Myanmar's northern Rakhine state, triggered by an August 25 Rohingya militant attack on security checkpoints.

Abdul Wahab, 30, reached Bangladesh with his five-member family this week following a seven-day journey. He now resides in a roadside camp in Ukhiya.

“I cannot remember when we ate last in Myanmar before entering Bangladesh. We received some parched rice and molasses from a food truck,” Wahab told ucanews.com on Tuesday.

He said military had bombed their village using a helicopter and their home was destroyed.

“My five-year-old daughter had a nosebleed due to smoke from bombing; she is still sick and she needs medical support. We need a place to live and food for survival,” he added.

## Church responds to Philippines' ‘brutal’ anti-drug campaign

A cardinal has ordered church bells to be rung in one of the Philippines' dioceses every evening to remember the thousands of people killed in the government's campaign against drug dealers and addicts.

The Manila archdiocese joined a long list of dioceses across the country that started commemorating the deaths by tolling church bells nightly.

Manila Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle called attention to the sustained killings of mostly poor people, either in police anti-drug operations or unexplained

deaths that human rights groups have called vigilante murders. The Manila diocese will start ringing its bells on September 14.

“With pain and horror, we continue to get daily news of the killings around the country,” said Cardinal Tagle. “We cannot allow the destruction of lives to become normal. We cannot govern the nation by killing. We cannot foster a humane and decent Filipino culture by killing.”

Since he took office in June last year, Philippine President Rodrigo

Duterte has ordered law enforcement to eliminate what he calls the country's “drug problem,” ordering officers to kill drug offenders and users.

Before being elected, Duterte ran a campaign claiming he would clean up crime, and has encouraged the public to take matters into their own hands if they see any wrongdoing. Rights groups say more than 7,000 people have been killed since then. Local news outlets place the deaths between 10,000 and 13,000.

## India law on conversions targets missionaries

India's Catholic bishops have rejected a bill they believe is designed to retain a Hindu-only state.

India now has seven states with a law against religious conversions, after the governor of Jharkhand signed into effect the controversial bill.

Governor Draupadi Murmu signed her approval

despite protests from Christian groups and opposition parties, who said that such a law was needless and targets Christian missionaries.

The Jharkhand Freedom of Religion Act 2017 criminalises religious conversion from one religion to another by use of force or allurement or by fraudulent

means.

It also stipulates that those wanting to convert should seek government permission.

Violators face jail terms and fines.

All seven Catholic bishops in the state, led by Cardinal Telesphore Toppo of Ranchi, had met Murmu last month urging her to reject the bill.

Catholic leaders such as Prabhaakr Tirkey said the state government run by the pro-Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party pushed for the law to provide hard-line Hindus with a tool to work against Christian missionaries as they work to make India a Hindu-only state.





Edited by Chai Brady  
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## After the deluge



A man signals to police officers from a flooded house after Hurricane Irma passed through Daytona Beach in Florida.  
Photo: CNS

## Catholics bash US former chief strategist after migrant comments

US Catholics have condemned comments made by Donald's Trump's ex-Chief Strategist Steve Bannon [pictured] who said the Church only supports migrants to fill churches, with a New York cardinal dubbing them "preposterous".

Mr Bannon criticised the Church's decision to oppose ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (Daca) programme, saying they are "unable to come to grips with the problems in the Church, they need illegal aliens. They need illegal aliens to fill the churches. It's obvious on the face of it".



The Daca programme protects children that are brought to the country illegally from being deported.

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York said on US radio: "I don't really care to go into what I think is a preposterous and rather insulting statement, that the only reason we bishops care for immigrants is for the economic because we want to fill our churches and

get more money.

"The Bible is so clear, so clear, that to treat the immigrant with dignity and respect, to make sure that society is just in its treatment of the immigrant is Biblical mandate."

The Daca programme was introduced in 2012 by the Obama administration.

Fr Sean McManus of the Irish National Caucus, the Irish human rights lobby on Capitol Hill, described Bannon's comments as "crass and vicious". "No anti-Catholic outburst could possibly be more offensive to lay Catholics, priests and bishops," he said.

## China's control over religions tightens

China has signed off on revised religious regulations which will lead to greater government control of religions in the communist-run country.

The State Administration for Religious Affairs announced that the leading Chinese Communist Party (CCP) signed the State Coun-

cil order for the newly revised Regulations for Religious Affairs (RRA) which will be implemented on February 1, 2018.

### Revisions

The revisions include the financial management of religious circles and the regulation of religious information

services on the internet.

There are "two clarifications" which explain the legal liability of religious venues and religious property rights, and to clarify measures to curb religious commercialisation.

The RRA was formally implemented in 2005 with the aim to promote the pro-

cess of legalisation of religious work, protecting the right to freedom of religious belief and managing religious affairs according to the law.

The CCP pointed out that due to rapid changes, internationally and domestically, new circumstances have surfaced in the religious field.

## Vatican roundup

### Pope increases liturgical translation powers of bishops

In changes to the Code of Canon Law regarding translations of the Mass and other liturgical texts, Pope Francis has shifted more responsibility to local bishops' conferences.

The document released by the Vatican, *Magnum Principium*, noted the sometimes tense relationship between bishops' conferences and the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments over translations of texts from Latin to the bishops' local languages.

The heart of the document, which applies only to the Latin rite of the Catholic Church, changes two clauses in Canon 838 of the Code of Canon Law. The Vatican no longer will "review" translations submitted by bishops' conferences, but will "recognise" them. And rather than being called to "prepare and publish" the translations, the bishops are to "approve and publish" them.

Archbishop Arthur Roche, secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship, said under the new rules, the Vatican's "confirmation" of a translation is "ordinarily granted based on trust and confidence", and "supposes a positive evaluation of the faithfulness and congruence of the texts produced with respect to the typical Latin text".

Pope Francis made no announcement of immediate changes to the translations currently in use.

### Teach children peace to stop war says Holy See

Building a culture of peace requires fighting injustice and tackling the root causes that lead to war and violence, according to the Holy See at a UN conference.

At the forum entitled a 'Culture of Peace', Archbishop Bernadito Auza, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, said that promoting a culture of peace among children is crucial for future peace.

"Key to instilling this value in children is to educate them in a 'culture of encounter', which involves an authentic atmosphere of respect,

esteem, sincere listening and solidarity, without the need to blur or lessen one's identity," he told the UN.

"Such a culture would enable children to respond actively and constructively to the many forms of violence, poverty, exploitation, discrimination, marginalisation and other indignities."

Archbishop Auza added that fostering a culture of peace also means efforts towards disarmament and the reduction in the reliance on armed forces to deal with international conflict.

### Catholic scholar and theologian dies aged 81

The Vatican announced over the weekend that Cardinal Velasio De Paolis CS, prefect emeritus of the Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See and a distinguished professor and scholar of canon law, has died in Rome.

Cardinal De Paolis (81) died on September 9. He taught moral theology and canon law in Rome for nearly 40 years, publishing more than 200 books and articles on scientific topics, spirituality and canon law. Most recently, in 2014, he was a contributor to the book, *Remaining in the Truth of Christ: Marriage and Communion in the Catholic Church*. Edited by Fr Robert Dodaro OSA, it was written in response to Cardinal Walter Kasper's suggestion that the Church allow those who are divorced and civilly remarried without an annulment to receive the Eucharist.

Cardinal De Paolis was born in Sonnino, Italy on September 19, 1935. He became a professed member of the Congregation of the Missionaries of Saint Charles Borromeo (Scalabrinians) in 1958 and was ordained a priest of the order in 1961. He was ordained a bishop in 2004 and elevated to a cardinal in 2010.





Pope Francis greets a sick child near the Talitha Qum homeless shelter.



Indigenous people attend Pope Francis' celebration of Mass in Villavicencio and, right, people celebrate before the Mass. Photos: CNS



Francis celebrates Mass at Contecar terminal in Cartagena.



Dancers perform during the national reconciliation prayer meeting in Villavicencio.



# Forget revenge, focus on the marginalised

Pope Francis urges Colombians to summon courage to make peace, writes **Chai Brady**

**P**ope Francis returned from his trip to Colombia this week after a busy schedule covering five days. During his South American trip millions of people arrived to witness his prayers of peace and unity.

There was a welcoming ceremony on the day of his arrival in the late afternoon of Wednesday, September 6, followed by several meetings on Thursday with the President of Colombia and the bishops.

The Pontiff arrived in Colombia as the country pursues peace after five decades of armed conflict, which has claimed 220,000 lives and left millions more victimised and displaced.

Colombia's government and a Marxist guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), reached a peace accord last year. The FARC is demobilising and recently formed a political party.

Speaking alongside President Juan Manuel Santos on September 7, the Pope called



Young women in Cartagena celebrate the feast of St Peter Claver during the papal visit.

on Colombians to recognise that "real wealth is diversity" and to pursue a "culture of encounter", in which people are at the centre of all political, social and economic activity. Promoting such a culture would "help us flee from the temptation of revenge and the satisfaction of short-term partisan interests".

## Cast aside

"I encourage you to look to all those who today are excluded and marginalised by society, those who have no value in the eyes of the majority, who are held back, cast aside."

"Everyone is needed in the work of creating and shaping society. This is not achieved simply with those of 'pure blood', but by all," the Pope told Santos and government officials outside the Casa de Narino, Colombia's presiden-

tial palace.

The speech was Pope Francis' first official event on his five-day visit to the South American country.

The peace accord with the FARC has proved divisive; some in Colombia disapprove of FARC leaders receiving reduced punishments for committing atrocities and fear the presence of former guerrillas in the country's political process.

The following day, in a prayer service, where both victims and perpetrators of violence stood under the gaze of a bomb-damaged crucifix, Pope Francis urged Colombians to summon the courage to make peace.

Symbolically presiding over the event was what remained of a crucifix from the church in Bojaya, an image of Jesus whose arms





Children at Hogar Jose children's home wait for Pope Francis in Medellin and, left, the Pope – who suffered a wound to his face when he fell during his visit to Colombia – answers questions from reporters



Pope Francis is seen during a visit to the Cross of Reconciliation at Los Fundadores Park in Villavicencio.



The Pontiff answers questions from his Jesuit confreres.



and legs were blown off in 2002 when an improvised homemade mortar launched by rebels crashed through the roof of a church and exploded.

The United Nations was unable to verify the exact number of people killed; some reports say 79 people died, others say 119 people died. All agree that almost half the victims were children.

"I am standing on sacred ground," Pope Francis said at the prayer service, "a land watered by the blood of thousands of innocent victims and by the heart-breaking sorrow of their families and friends".

In 2016 FARC apologised for the massacre in the Bojaya church. The rebels had been engaged in a firefight with members of a paramilitary group and the church was between their positions.

The following day, September 9, the Pope's visit to Medellin began with heavy rain and fog that forced him to travel 30 miles from Rionegro airport by car rather than helicopter. The change in plans meant the Mass began 45 minutes later than scheduled.

**“True faith means going deeper, experiencing God's love, changing one's life”**

Before the opening prayer, Pope Francis apologised for the wait and thanked the estimated 1.3 million people for their patience.

The bishops of Latin America met in Medellin in 1968 and formally committed

themselves to a “preferential option for the poor”, to the support of small Christian communities and to a Gospel-based reading of their social and economic realities.

In his homily in Medellin, Pope Francis said that when Jesus' disciples first began following him, they had to go through a process of conversion and purification, changing the way they saw the relationship between Jewish law and faith in God.

“Some of the precepts, prohibitions and mandates made them feel secure,” the Pope said. “Fulfilling certain practices and rites dispensed them from the uncomfortable question: ‘What would God like us to do?’”

Following Jesus and sharing the Good News of Salvation in him, he said, means leaving one's comfort zone

and going out, encountering others and concretely showing them God's love.

### Practices

“It is of the greatest importance that we who call ourselves disciples not cling to a certain style or to particular practices that cause us to be more like some Pharisees than like Jesus,” he said.

The law is meant to guide people in doing good, and it is not to be ignored, the Pope said. But true faith means going deeper, experiencing God's love, changing one's life and getting involved in what can improve the lives of others, especially the poor and vulnerable.

On September 10, the last day of his visit, the Pontiff visited the Church of St Peter Claver, a saint venerated throughout the Americas as

a champion of human rights, Pope Francis offered special prayers for Venezuela and its people suffering in the midst of a huge political and economic crisis.

“From this place, I want to assure my prayers for each of the countries of Latin America, especially for nearby Venezuela. I expressed my closeness to each of the sons and daughters of this beloved nation, as well as for those who have found in Colombia a place of welcome,” he said in Cartagena.

Venezuela has been torn by violence and stricken with severe shortages of food and medicine as its political crisis drags on. More than 100 people have died in protests as President Nicolas Maduro has attempted to install a constituent assembly to rewrite the nation's constitution and

consolidate his power.

“From this city, the seat of human rights, I call for the cessation of every kind of violence in political life,” the Pope said. He expressed hope for a peaceful solution to the “grave crisis”.

Driving through the streets of the Caribbean coastal city, the Popemobile braked suddenly, and Pope Francis hit his head. A big bump appeared quickly on his left cheekbone and a few specks of blood from his scratched eyebrow stained his white soutane.

After a quick treatment with ice, according to the Vatican, the Pope was back in the Popemobile making his way to the Church of St Peter Claver, the Jesuit who devoted the last 40 years of his life to caring for and ministering to African slaves.

**“A big bump appeared quickly on his left cheekbone”**

Arriving from Bogota for the last day of his five-day visit, Pope Francis went to one of Cartagena's poorest neighbourhoods, where he blessed the cornerstone for a series of houses for particularly vulnerable people: the homeless and victims of trafficking.

The homes are sponsored by Talitha Kum, an international network to fight trafficking; the network is sponsored by the women's and men's international unions of superiors general. The Pope also visited the home of Lorenza Perez, 77, who has worked for decades as a volunteer cook at a church-run soup kitchen.

Pope Francis told the crowd outside St Peter Claver Church that the two stops “have done me much good because they demonstrate how the love of God is made visible each day”.

The Pontiff departed for Rome airport in the evening of September 10, arriving back in Rome the following morning.



# Letters

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

## Letter of the week

### Eighth Amendment has most ethical approach

**Dear Editor,** David Mullins' article on the interview that Dr Rhona Mahony gave to Newstalk was very revealing (IC 07/09/2017). Time and again we see the media accepting the idea that women's lives are being put in danger in this country because doctors are not allowed to perform abortions.

Yet, whenever you look more closely at the examples being cited, such as Dr Mahony's example of a pregnant woman at 14 weeks presenting with ruptured membranes, we see that the Eighth Amendment

does not prevent doctors from responding appropriately.

The tragic death of Savita Halappanavar is still being cited as an example of how Ireland's abortion legislation is putting women at risk, even though subsequent investigations have shown that the actual cause of her death was infection and a series of systems failures that had delayed the realisation by her medical team of the gravity of her condition.

Under Irish law doctors can

give pregnant women life-saving treatment, even at the expense of the life of their unborn child. That is a very different scenario to the deliberate targeting of the life of a child in an abortion procedure.

Our Constitution protects the life of both mother and child, and from that point of view I think it is actually the most ethical approach to the situation.

*Yours etc.,  
Maureen Kelly,  
Bray,  
Co. Wicklow.*

### There is no positive element to the First World War

**Dear Editor,** I disagreed totally with a recent article "Divided by tradition – united in a common cause" (IC 24/08/2017) which attempted to paint a positive picture of Christian involvement in World War I.

Whatever the common "cause" of this mass slaughter of Christians by Christians, it can have nothing to do with the will of God as revealed by Jesus Christ and the

New Testament. I speak specifically of: "You shall not kill" (Matt 19:18); "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy'. But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in Heaven" (Matt 5:43-45).

Furthermore this war was condemned by Pope Benedict XV. In his exhortation to European

leaders he said: "In the holy name of God, in the name of our heavenly Father and Lord, by the precious blood of Jesus, the price of man's redemption, we adjure you, whom Divine Providence has placed in authority over the nations now at war, to put a final end to this horrible butchery which has been disgracing Europe for a whole year. It is the blood of brothers that is being poured out on land and sea..."

The Act of Contrition that we teach children in schools ends with the words: "Help me to live like Jesus and not to sin again."

If Jesus is really Lord of our lives, we need to see the utter inconsistency of Christians partaking in such "horrible butchery" to quote Pope Benedict XV.

*Yours etc.,  
Máire Mhic Fhearghusa,  
Walkinstown,  
Dublin 12.*

### Deserving and undeserving poor

**Dear Editor,** I see that the vigil organised for the homeless man found dead on Dublin's Suffolk Street has been cancelled after it was revealed he was convicted of sex abuse. The general attitude has changed from his death being a tragedy to being thoroughly deserved. The crime of sexual abuse is absolutely abhorrent, but we are taught to believe all life is sacred.

*Yours etc.,  
Michael Mooney,  
Clontarf,  
Dublin 3.*



### Favouring the wealthy

**Dear Editor,** Mary Kenny is right in stating that "Catholic education is still the gold standard" (IC 31/08/2017), but sadly her naming of certain schools as top schools arises from a misunderstanding of the Irish *Sunday Times* tables. What they show is that the greatest percentages going on to Irish universities are from schools that are fee-paying, in more prosperous areas, are Irish-speaking, etc. Deeper analysis would

show that in respect of disadvantaged DEIS area schools fewer students go on to university.

How sad it is that successive Irish Education Ministers have done nothing to introduce value-added measures and help raise the spirits of teachers and students in Ireland's less economically favoured areas.

*Yours etc.,  
Alan Whelan,  
Killarney, Co. Kerry.*

### Traditional versus inclusive

**Dear Editor,** Bríd Ní Rinn asks "Where have all the Catholic men gone?" (Letters IC 07/09/2017). Has she asked herself why men outnumber women at the papal-approved Extraordinary Form of the Mass, instead of women outnumbering men "by at least seven to one"?

She mentions altar servers. Has she asked herself why the other eastern-rite Catholic Churches (or the Orthodox) have always done without girl altar servers? Does she wonder why young boys no

longer serve on the altar? She also refers to "inclusive language". Has she considered why priests who use 'inclusive language' so often refer to "sisters and brothers", rather than "brothers and sisters", and frequently use the outdated word 'all' – instead of 'many' – at the consecration of the chalice?

Do priests know better than Jesus Christ at the Last Supper?

*Yours etc.,  
Kieron Wood,  
Rathfarnham,  
Dublin 16.*

### Comments on Fatima prayer

**Dear Editor,** I write in answer to Fr Joe McVeigh's letter (IC 24/08/2017) entitled "Be careful of wording of old prayers". Would it be helpful and perhaps interesting for Fr Joe to learn that the prayer he mentioned recited after each decade of the Rosary was in fact first spoken by Our Lady to the three children in Fatima July 13, 1917?

*Yours etc.,  
Fr Pat O'Donovan,  
Glounthaune, Co. Cork.*

### Disappointing advice

**Dear Editor,** How very disappointing to read of a priest who recommends the faithful should stop offering a prayer given to us by Our Lady of Fatima.

And what spirit has revealed this new teaching to Fr Joe McVeigh that particular prayers belong to a particular time and era? Is Fr Joe telling the faithful that we misunderstood Jesus, the Gospels and the Magisterium when they speak of Hell? What should we be careful about in relation to the Fatima prayer? Why should any prayer belong to a different time and era? What is the bad theology concerning Hell? Why should we stop using a beautiful prayer given to us by the Mother of God at Fatima?

It is indeed a sad day when a Catholic priest advocates the ceasing of prayer. Regardless of its wording, prayer is always a genuine effort to make oneself present to God, who is always present to us.

*Yours etc.,  
Noel McKervey,  
Athlone, Co. Westmeath.*

### The Church is as it is

**Dear Editor,** The Catholic Church is 2,000 years old, the foundations of which are the Bible, tradition and divine revelation. It was instituted by Jesus Christ and is led by the Holy Spirit. It spans all centuries and is for all people. The Church is not an institution that must keep up with the times we live in. It is there to lead us to Heaven and provides all with the necessary graces from God, to help people live good lives and avoid evil.

*Yours etc.,  
V. O'Hara,  
Ballinteer, Dublin 16.*

### A prayer worthy of belief

**Dear Editor,** In response to a letter to the editor by Fr Joe McVeigh (IC 24/08/2017), I would like to make the following points: This prayer was given by Our Lady to the three visionaries on July 13, 1917; Our Lady asked for this prayer to be said at the end of each decade of the Rosary; This vision has been recognised by the Catholic Church on October 13, 1930; Two of the visionaries Francisco (9) and Jacinta (7) Marto have since been beatified at a Mass in 2000 by Pope John Paul II; The two were solemnly canonised by Pope Francis at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima, in Portugal on May 13, 2017 – the first centennial of the first Apparition of Our Lady of Fatima.

This prayer is worthy of belief and has been recited by Catholics for the last hundred years and to state that it should be abolished forever is a grave inaccuracy.

*Yours etc.,  
Michael Cregg,  
Athlone, Co. Roscommon.*

### Letters to the Editor

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

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

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



# 📷 Around the world



**MEXICO:** Volunteers in Mexico City organise donations that are to be delivered to people affected by an earthquake.



**INDIA:** People protest the killing of Gauri Lankesh in Kolkata. The Indian journalist was shot dead outside her home last week. Photos: CNS



**USA:** A sign is displayed outside a home in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Harvey in Dickinson, Texas.



**BANGLADESH:** Rohingya refugees walk to shore in Teknaf, Bangladesh, with their belongings after crossing the Bangladesh-Myanmar border through the Bay of Bengal.



**CUBA:** Waves caused by Hurricane Irma crash against seawalls in Havana.



**USA:** Flames from the Ponderosa Fire burn near Oroville, California.



# God's command to **kill** the Canaanites

In his autobiography, Eric Clapton, the famed rock and blues artist, shares very candidly about his long struggle with an addiction to alcohol. At one point in his life, he admitted his addiction and entered a rehab clinic, but he didn't take his problem as seriously as was warranted.

Returning to England after his stint in the clinic he decided that he could still drink light spirits, beer and wine, but would give up hard liquor. You can guess the result. Before long he was again enslaved inside his addiction. He returned to the clinic, to appease friends, but convinced that he was still strong enough to handle his problems on his own.

But grace intervened. Just before his second rehab stint ended, he had a powerful experience within which he was shaken to his very soul by the recognition of his own helplessness and the mortal danger he faced from his addiction.

## Grace

On the basis of that grace, he finally gave himself over to the programme with his whole heart, accepting that he could never touch alcohol again. He has retained his sobriety since.

His story can be helpful in understanding the meaning of certain texts in scripture which, when read literally, can give us the impression that God is arbitrary, cruel and murderous.



## Fr Rolheiser

[www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com)

We see such texts, for example, in the Book of Exodus and the Book of Joshua where, before entering the Promised Land, God instructs Israel to kill all the people and all the animals who at that time inhabit that land. Why such a command to exterminate others simply because they're living in a certain place?

**“These texts, though divinely inspired and rich in meaning, clearly should not be taken literally”**

Obviously we need to ask ourselves: is this really the word of God? What kind of God would give this kind of command? And what about the people being killed, aren't they too God's people? Does God play favourites? What about the Canaanites whom Joshua is asked to exterminate, don't they count? What can be behind this kind of command?

These texts, though divinely inspired and rich in meaning, clearly should not be taken literally. This command, while not exactly metaphorical, is archetypal, meaning that it's not meant to be taken literally as a command to kill what's foreign to us, but rather as a counsel teaching that when we're

trying to enter a new way of living we must take all the necessary measures to ensure that we can properly enter that life and sustain it.

Metaphorically, we need to 'kill' off every element inside us and around us which, if left unaddressed, might eventually compromise and choke off the new life we're trying to live. Jesus, in fact, gives us the identical command, except he employs a softer metaphor: Don't put new wine into old wineskins.

People in recovery programmes such as Alcoholics Anonymous tend to more quickly understand what's asked of us in these texts. Like Eric Clapton, they've learned from experience that to enter the promised land of sobriety demands that one kill off all of 'the Canaanites', that is, accepting that all half-measures won't work but that some brute, raw, bitter renunciations have to be made.

This biblical image, the command from God to kill the 'Canaanites', can serve us well too in other areas of our lives, particularly, I believe,

in our struggles with making commitments and being faithful to them.

For example, consider someone entering a marriage. Like Israel they're entering the 'promised land', but for them to establish this new life and remain faithful to it, they need to kill off a good number of things, namely, former romances, old relational habits of promiscuity and infidelity, the propensity to flirt with attractive temptations, the belief that one can have one's cake and eat it too and the long standing habit of putting one's own needs first and worrying mainly about taking care of oneself.

Every choice is a series of renunciations. To have a life-giving marriage means renouncing a lot

of old habits, otherwise these old habits will eventually sabotage the marriage. There are things one must do before entering a marriage or any serious commitment.

But what about those 'Canaanites' that already inhabit the land we're entering? Who might they be today?

**“To live lives of sobriety, commitment and fidelity demands more than half-measures”**

In terms of threatening to contaminate a marriage, I would submit that what must be killed off today in order to have a life-long, life-giving marriage is our present cultural ethos about sex, namely, the belief that sex need not be confined to monogamy, permanent commitment and marriage. If we don't kill off that ethos as we enter a marriage, we will not sustain ourselves life-long in that Promised Land.

To live lives of sobriety, commitment and fidelity demands more than half-measures. An alcoholic in recovery knows that he or she cannot have it both ways. The same is true in terms of sustaining ourselves in any life-giving commitment.

New wine must be put into new wineskins and this demands some bitter renunciations.

God's commands, properly understood, aren't harsh and arbitrary. They're wise and universal.



Eric Clapton.



# Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, September 14, 2017

**Youth Space**  
Demystifying  
the Church for  
young people  
Page 26



## Preparing for your baby's arrival



**W**elcoming a new baby into the world is a wonderful and exciting time. However, the challenges of impending parenthood can turn the lives couples lead upside down, especially first-time parents who don't really know what to expect. The good news is that you have nine months to read, research, make decisions, prepare and stock up your house so that you are ready when the little one arrives. Having a baby comes with a lot of expense, so planning ahead and buying the necessities over a period of time can help ease the financial burden.

Your baby's impending arrival also heralds a host of decisions



**Mags Gargan** offers a guide to help expectant parents to get the essentials organised for their baby's birth

you might not have given thought to before, like making out a will, choosing life insurance and starting a college fund. But for now let's concentrate on the immediate essentials:

### **NAPPIES**

Stock up on newborn nappies, cotton wool balls (dipped in warm water they are easier on sensitive newborn skin than wipes), nappy bags, anti-bacterial

gel bottles and a changing mat. Disposable nappies are convenient, especially when you're out and about, but they are expensive and not very good for the environment. Washable nappies are cheaper and more environmentally friendly, but obviously they are less convenient, especially when you're out and more time-consuming for laundry.

The safest place to change

your baby's nappy is on a mat on the floor. But to save you backache, the next best thing is a changing table at waist height. If you use a table, have everything you need within reach and never leave your baby unattended.

### **FEEDING**

If you choose to breastfeed, which is recommended, buy some cotton nursing bras which have detachable cups. Get fitted by a specialist around weeks 36 to 38 of your pregnancy as they should be the right size.

Nursing tops are also good, as they are very discreet, and H&M stock them at a reasonable price. Otherwise you can just wear layers (i.e. a vest under a t-shirt), which means you are fully

covered while feeding. Nipple cream containing lanolin is very soothing for those initial days when you are getting the hang of breastfeeding and breast pads cover up any leakage.

If you're going to bottle-feed, you need to stock up on bottles, a steriliser and a bottle brush with a long neck. The bottles need to be washed in warm water and sterilised after each use. Don't buy infant formula milk too far in advance and remember to check the use-by-date.

### **BATHING**

In the first few weeks you can wash your baby in a large plastic bowl or baby bath with warm water and cotton balls.

» Continued on Page 25



## Family News

### AND EVENTS

### Breast milk donations needed

The Western Trust Milk Bank is located in Irvinestown, Co. Fermanagh, and is the only human milk bank in the country. It has provided help for hundreds of premature and sick babies both north and south in Ireland, since it opened in 2000.

The service operates in a similar way to a blood bank. Breastfeeding mothers who have excess milk and wish to donate, express their milk and send it in insulated containers to the milk bank. Upon arrival in Fermanagh, the milk is checked for bacteria and pasteurised. It is then stored at the bank until it is sent to neonatal units around the country as required.

All babies benefit from breastmilk but for premature babies it can be the difference between life and death. It provides nutrients, hormones and growth factors which are essential for healthy development, and strengthens their immunity for fighting viruses and bacteria.

To contact the Milk Bank, visit [www.westerntrust.hscni.net](http://www.westerntrust.hscni.net) or call 048 6862 8333.



**MELANOMA AT RECORD HIGH:** Incidences of melanoma in Ireland have reached record highs, but advances in treatment provide hope to patients of this often aggressive form of skin cancer, according to the Irish Cancer Society.

At the charity's Decoding Cancer event: 'Getting Under the Skin – Modern Melanoma Treatments', Dr Derek Power, a Consultant Medical Oncologist at the Mercy and Cork University Hospitals, said: "Melanoma cases are rising, but thanks to research advances, there are more ways to treat this form of cancer than ever."

Cases of melanoma have almost trebled in the last 20 years. While cases have increased, so have survival rates; now, almost nine in ten (89.3%) of patients survive for at least five years after their diagnosis.

### ADHD being missed in girls

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is being missed in girls because they may not display the same challenging behaviour as boys, according to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice).

New guidelines warn that some groups with ADHD are being overlooked and calls for more scrutiny to ensure people get the right help.

Up to 5% of school-age children are thought to suffer from ADHD – a condition characterised by a group of behavioural symptoms including hyperactivity, difficulty concentrating and impulsiveness.

Dr Gillian Baird, professor of children's neurodisability at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and chairwoman of the Nice guideline committee, said girls are thought to be under-diagnosed with the condition, while some are given an incorrect diagnosis.



# Are we oversharing our children on social media?

Most of us love sharing pictures on social media whether it's a family party, a child's first day at school, a First Communion or some other memorable occasion. I love photography and, since I was a little girl, I was fascinated by the idea of capturing moments in time that you could look back on and savour.

Facebook has been the perfect platform for me to share my favourite pictures with close family and friends. I view it as a sort of social diary where I can store all my photographs, ideas and general impressions of life. I really like the memories feature where Facebook posts events and status updates from former years. It's a real trip down memory lane; looking back at fond moments, happy and sad times, and pondering on how our lives are constantly changing.

Parents sometimes wonder if they are overdoing it with their Facebook posts and pictures. The topic of oversharing on social media is one that always provokes heated discussion and disagreement. In 2016, a photograph of a father, sitting in a shower, with his very-ill toddler in his arms was shared tens of thousands of times on Facebook and removed many times before being reinstated on each occasion. Both were naked and there were very strong views about whether it was a wise move to post it online.

### Tender moment

To some, it was a tender moment showing the loving care of a devoted father while others posted negatively about the invasion of the child's privacy, the post being inappropriate and the fact that a young child couldn't consent to such a picture being posted online. The little boy's

### A parent's perspective



**Maria Byrne**

mother, photographer Heather Whitten from Arizona in the US, had posted the picture and was taken aback by the reaction to what she viewed as a lovely moment. She spoke afterwards of feeling compelled to capture on camera her husband's patience and obvious love for their child as he lay cradled in his dad's strong arms. The majority of people who commented on the picture didn't take the view that the father's behaviour was strange or unusual. Where the opinions seemed divided was on the subject of whether a very private family moment should be shared online or not.

Some of the concerns re social media sharing seem

their pictures. My own view is that this approach can lead to a dilution of the parental role.

Most sensible parents have their child's best interests at heart and I don't believe that a very small child should have the final say as to whether a family shot can be shared with trusted social media friends and family. I'm uncomfortable with any image of vacuous parents who are viewed as less discerning than their young children.

### “Social networks can facilitate relationships and promote the good of society”

It is important to educate ourselves about how best to protect our online information. It's vital to take the time to understand and activate the various privacy settings.

I think the Facebook groups feature is very useful as it enables friends or family to guard their privacy while still sharing family photos and stories.

The website, [www.parenting.com](http://www.parenting.com), suggests keeping certain types of photograph totally private: bath time pictures, pictures of sick or injured children, pictures showing a child being shamed, on the potty shots, private identifying details, group pictures with other people's children, bullying fodder which may expose a child's weaknesses or silly nickname, and unsafe activities.

### Differences

Even with this list there will be differences of opinion; many parents of children with chronic illnesses turn to online forums to find vital support and to seek out other parents who

are facing similar challenges. Online networks can often act as powerful parenting tools.

A recent survey by the website 'Today's Parent' found that 60% of parents use online platforms to find parenting information and advice, 82% said that social media helped them to stay connected with grandparents and 24% used social media to seek emotional support for parenting issues.

Some reported that social media had boosted their confidence as parents and one respondent, who's a stay-at-home mother, said that the social media interaction was an important source of understanding and encouragement for her.

### Opportunity

For Christian parents, social media is more than just a way to interact with other parents; it's also an opportunity to share Gospel values.

Fr Thomas Rosica, of Salt and Light Television, describes social media as something that we don't need to be afraid of or to shy away from.

From my own experience, once we are sensible and careful, educating ourselves on some obvious risks, social media has a lot more positives than negatives.

In the words of Pope Francis, "Social networks can facilitate relationships and promote the good of society...." He emphasises the "hefty responsibility" but the important message is that technology doesn't determine how authentic our communication is.

That, says Pope Francis, comes from the human heart and our capacity to use wisely the means at our disposal. Words to remember each time we post on social media.



to focus on the issue of a child giving their consent to photos being posted online. Stacey Steinberg, a legal skills professor at the University of Florida, believes that, if possible, children should have a voice about what information is shared about them. Some go as far as suggesting that children as young as three or four years old should be able to veto a parent's decision about posting



» Continued from Page 23

(For dry skin or cradle cap you can dissolve Silcocks Base cream in the water). Always make sure you have everything to hand and buy a couple of soft towels with hoods to keep the baby's head warm when you take them out of the bath.

BEDTIME

Whether you choose a crib, cot or Moses basket, it's essential you buy a brand new, firm mattress that fits properly with no spaces at the edges. You'll also need four sheets and several light cellular blankets (so baby can breathe if the blanket goes over the face).

Never use pillows or duvets in their first year, as they can cause overheating and suffocation. Don't leave any toys in your baby's bed as they can get caught around your baby's neck.

The baby should always be put down in the bed 'feet to foot', which means their feet are at the end of the bed and cannot wriggle down under the covers. Babies whose heads are covered with bedding are at an increased risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

OUT AND ABOUT

Just a baby sling is enough for short walks, but if you're going out for a couple of hours you'll need nappies, wipes, milk, cloths, so a pram or pushchair is essential. There is no need to buy an expensive nappy bag, a large handbag will do.

It's a good idea to get a baby car seat well before your due date, so you'll be familiar with fitting it by the time your baby arrives. It should be rear facing and brand new (you cannot guarantee a second-hand car seat is undamaged and they are considered expired after six years). Shop staff should demonstrate fitting them or the Road Safety Authority offers a 'Check it Fits' service nationwide ([www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie)).

CLOTHES

Your baby will be growing pretty fast, so in the first few weeks all you need are about seven bodysuits (vests) and seven sleepsuits (babygros). Natural fabrics like cotton and wool are best to let your baby's delicate skin breathe. It is advised to wash anything new before dressing your baby in it and always use non-biological detergent.

Muslin cloths are always handy to have to mop up spills and spit ups.

THE BIG DAY

Even if you're normally a last-minute packer, from about 30 weeks into your pregnancy you should be starting to gather essential items to bring with you to the hospital for the delivery, with the aim of having your hospital bag ready to go by 36 weeks. If you are expecting twins or triplets, this should be done by 30 weeks.

You'll need two hospital bags – a small one for the labour ward and a larger one for the post-delivery ward. There is often not a lot of storage space in hospitals and big cases can easily become a safety hazard so only bring the minimum. Anything you forget can always be brought in later. The small bag should have new night wear for you and toiletry essentials, along with an outfit for baby, nappy



changing essentials, and if you're bottle feeding, bottles and formula. You may want to include a birth plan in your labour ward bag to give to the mid-wife. This is a document that lets your medical team know your preferences from simple things like how you prefer to be addressed to how you would like them to manage labour pain. Keep in mind that you can't control every aspect of labour and delivery, and you'll need to stay flexible in case something comes up that requires your mid-wife to depart from your plan.

Make sure your partner knows where the hospital bags are kept in the house

Language like, "If possible....," "unless medically necessary....," "I prefer....," tells the staff that you know that a change in plans is sometimes needed. At the same time, make sure your partner is

familiar with your preferences so that they can speak up on your behalf if you are not in a position to. If it feels like you are packing too much in your hospital bags, maybe leave some items at home – such as your going home outfit – and you can have your partner or a family member bring them to you as you need them. This way, you won't feel like you are bringing a case suitable for a two-week holiday. Make sure your partner knows where the hospital bags are kept in the house. As labour can be a slow process, your partner might want to pack a bag too. Things they should consider packing are their toothbrush and toothpaste, a change of clothes, deodorant, some snacks to keep them going, a camera, a book or magazine and a mobile phone and charger. The final weeks of pregnancy can feel like an eternity, but packing your hospital bag is actually a nice experience, because it means you are that little bit closer to the big day.

Hospital bag checklist



FOR MUM

- 3 light cotton pyjamas or nighties (front-opening for breastfeeding)
- Old/cheap comfortable underwear
- 2 maternity/nursing bras
- Socks, slippers and flip flops
- Going home outfit
- Nipple cream and breast pads
- Maternity pads
- Towel & toiletries
- Mobile phone and charger
- Magazines/books
- Money for snacks

- A pillow from home can be comforting.

FOR BABY

- 4 vests
- 4 babygros
- 1-2 cardigans
- Scratch mitts
- Hat
- Nappies & nappy bags
- Cotton wool balls
- Soft hooded towel
- Cellular blanket
- Car seat (only to be brought in when you're leaving).

Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



The summer holidays are gone too soon. Our freshly scrubbed children, in their brand-new oversized school jumpers, have been packed off back to school, proud to be elevated a year higher in the pecking order. Gone are the languorous days of summer, where time flows easy.

The kids are happy to be back to school. One of the great achievements of modern education is that most children nowadays really enjoy school.

When I was a boy, as summer waned, there arose in children's hearts a sense of dread at the prospect of sitting still in starched collars and itchy jumpers for long hours each day, as interminable lessons droned on. Nowadays, uniforms are more comfortable and children get to move about the classroom. They way they are taught brings interest and life to each subject. Children learn in groups, with work tailored to each child's ability, and teachers nowadays tend to have a genuine vocation to the profession.

There is a sense of melancholy as we grieve for another summer. At its beginning I sat down with the children and we wrote a list of what we hoped to do this summer.

Amongst the many things proudly ticked off our list by summer's end were: going fishing, making blackberry jam, going camping, making campfires, growing tomatoes, snorkeling and seeing shooting stars. Such simple pleasures seem to bring the greatest joy to kids. Many nights were spent under canvas, and our summer holiday involved camping across England, France and Belgium. There's a great sense of togetherness about a family camping holiday. We pitch the tent together, sleep together and cook simple meals over a stove. Above all, we are outdoors from dawn to dusk. As Seán said: "What I love about camping is nobody can tell us to stop playing and come indoors, because there is no indoors!" On our last night on the continent, we booked a lovely hotel in Bruges as a treat, but the children were disgusted at the "boring old hotel" and loudly proclaimed that they would have much preferred a tent. As you get older, you realise that we only have so

many summers. Childhood summers are fewer still, and so more precious. I hope the kids will keep some magical memories of the few fleeting months just gone. Apart from these memories, we do have something tangible to show for all our fooling around this summer, in the form of a tree house, which we constructed out of old bits of timber that were lying around the place. The kids were so enchanted with it that they insisted on having every meal in it for days. Early August saw them breakfasting merrily in the rain in the damp heights of our willow tree. Time moves past us like a river. It passes too quickly, and we cannot slow it. If I could, I would pause time, and spend a century or two in the warm dusk of a single summer's evening, just as the stars appear over the sea. Still, the sublime comforts of autumn are now upon us. We can only relish what each season brings.





## Youth Space



## Colm Fitzpatrick suggests five ways the Church can engage with young people

As the most recent census indicates, the number of young people today attending Church is in serious decline. Although many still identify as "spiritual", the Church and its message is one that has been rejected by much of the youth in Ireland. There are, however, various ways in which young people can be drawn back to it.

1. An important problem which needs to be addressed today is the sheer lack of religious and philosophical literacy among the youth. These two subjects have been the cornerstone of Western intellectual thought, and the youth need to be taught that our laws, institutions and art owe their existence to these two subjects.

In my school, we studied early Irish religious history such as monasticism, and also analysed Luke's Gospel. While both of these topics were interesting, there should be a focus on ethics, objections to Christianity, and existential questions which provoke eager responses such as "Does God exist?", or "Does life have meaning or do we create it?"

I certainly remember that when questions like these were brought up spontaneously in class, everyone chimed in regardless of their religious convictions. If students don't know why they're studying the subject, or if they consider it irrelevant then it will only push them away from it.

2. Another helpful way the Church

can draw more young people towards it is by having a bigger presence in schools. Priests shouldn't just be present in the lives of students at ceremonial occasions but, time permitting, drop in and speak to them.

**Attraction towards the Church would also be heightened by introducing more retreats into schools"**

Personal relationships need to be developed where students see the school chaplain as a friend rather than a distant figure. They have to

show children that they're human, while still showing the glory of the vocation.

One idea I've heard before which I think is useful is a question and answer hour, where students sit in a circle and write anonymous questions to the priest who sits in the centre of the group. The questions concern topics about religion such as "What if I don't believe in God?" or "Why can't you get married?". This will educate students on religious matters and allow a more personal bond with the priest to be developed.

3. Attraction towards the Church would also be heightened by introducing more retreats into schools which are peppered with religious

themes. Why not let a group of children stay over-night in a monastery or go to religious pilgrimages like Taizé?

These types of initiatives will make a transformative difference for young people, and will also allow priests and vocational directors to discern suitable candidates for the priesthood.

4. If the Church wants to connect with more young people, they have to make their presence more known and available. The Church above all is a community and so should not be identified by the four walls of a parish church.

There should be more free family fun days which parents can bring

their children to and so be taught implicitly that the Church has a positive role to play in society. This doesn't just benefit the children but also parents who will have an integral influence on the values and ideas that children will have.

If parents are ensured that the Church is there to support them and offer help for any worries they may have, then their children are more likely to imbibe that perspective.

5. Another way that the youth could be drawn towards the Church is by making their local church more familiar to them.

**"We should be creating frameworks through education and a more personal presence"**

One memory which stands out for me in school is when our class went on a tour of our chapel and the parish priest explained the meaning behind the various objects and artefacts.

He even took us to the sacristy, which at our age was a mysterious place where only priests dwelt, akin to the staffroom in schools where students were forbidden.

These are the five main ways I think that the Church can have a more personal presence in the lives of young people which could hopefully bring about rejuvenation.

As Pope Francis said, echoing the example of St Thérèse of Lisieux, the Church should be drawing people to Jesus through attraction and not proselytisation.

We should be creating frameworks through education and a more personal presence so that this attraction is made possible, rather than drilling in Sunday Mass attendance with no further substance.

*Colm Fitzpatrick is a fourth year theology student at the Loyola Institute in Trinity College Dublin.*

Bishop Frank Caggiano of Bridgeport, Connecticut, speaking to young people at World Youth Day in Poland. Photo: CNS



## Green Fingers

Paul Gargan

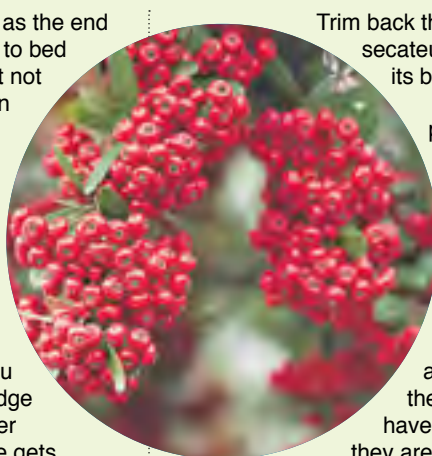
## The plant growing season is not over yet

In times past September was seen as the end of the growing season. It was time to bed the garden down for the winter, but not anymore. Milder weather in autumn has stretched the growing season on into the year.

Clip hedges such as beech and hornbeam now to keep them tidy until spring. By cutting them at the very start of autumn, instead of dropping their leaves they will change colour and stay on the plant, hence the name copper beech.

As with all hedges, when clipping you should aim to make the sides of the hedge slope in very slightly so the base is wider than the top. This is so the whole hedge gets sunlight to avoid shade killing the bottom of it.

Pyracantha berries have ripened and are glowing, trouble is they will be hidden as the plant has put on a lot of growth since the berries set earlier in the year. The berries are now hidden.



Trim back this new growth with secateurs to show the plant at its best.

It's time to buy and plant bulbs for your spring bulb display. Most can be planted now, but with tulips and hyacinths wait until Oct/Nov to plant. Keep them in a paper bag indoors in a cool, dry place. If planted now and conditions get wet, they may rot before they have a chance to take root, as they are late starters.

### General guide

When planting bulbs it is important to plant them deep. A general guide is to plant a bulb three times its own depth, so the bottom of the planting hole

must be four times the height of the bulb measured top to bottom. If planted too shallow they may not flower in succeeding years.

To achieve a natural-looking effect when planting bulbs, scatter them in handfuls in the area to be planted and plant them where they fall. This is to avoid straight lines.

Keep deadheading summer bedding, roses, dahlias etc. to prolong their flowering season. They will keep going until first frost. If earwigs are eating the petals of your dahlias, stuff a ball of scrunched up newspaper into a small flower pot. Push small canes into the ground in between your plants and put the flowerpot upside down on the canes.

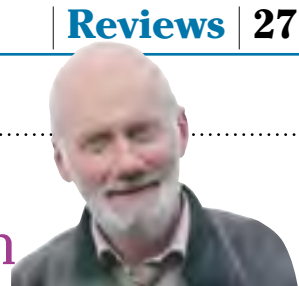
At sunrise the earwigs will crawl inside the pot to hide and you can release them to another part of your garden. Don't kill them as they are an important part of greenfly control.

Turn your compost heap now to keep it in tip top condition for all the garden waste that is soon to come its way. Turning it now to mix it will be easier than when it is full.



# TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



## No women in Newstalk's prime time slots

**S**o, Newstalk has shuffled around some of its presenters, though to what effect or purpose I'm not really sure.

*Drive* has been replaced by **The Hard Shoulder**, and while I'll miss Sarah McInerney from the evening show I'm not too enamoured of Ivan Yates taking over the slot. He is too laddish for my liking and is lowering the tone of the programme.

Even on his first show he was dwelling too much on the immodest attire found in the aftermath of Electric Picnic, though it was guest George Hook that raised it, critically, in the first instance. The 'grumpy old men' slot was as tired and cringe inducing as Hook's own slot 'Here Come the Girls' on his *High Noon* show. I did however like Yates' interview with Brendan Courtney who spoke movingly about the death of his father and the value of hospice care.

Critics were of the opinion that it was more a case of 'there go the girls' as there are now no female presenters on prime weekday slots at all. Laddish indeed. Well, they weren't committed to gender balance in marriage either, so I suppose it's a pattern.

That latter observation was confirmed by Yates' interview with gay rights campaigner Rory O'Neill (aka Panti Bliss) on the Wednesday. O'Neill presented a lopsided view of



Newstalk presenters Ivan Yates and Bobby Kerr.

the same sex marriage debate in Australia, calling the current postal plebiscite a waste of time and money, and "a stupid idea". It was a bit of a love-in as Yates didn't ask any challenging questions and in regards to O'Neill's hopes for the legalisation of same-sex marriage in Australia, finished with "and so say all of us". Who was he presuming to speak for?

He followed this with an item on gender neutral clothing for children (diversity through sameness?), but this time he seemed very doubtful about where all this is heading, though in a way he was feeding the fad. Often it seems more like a lifestyle

show than news and current affairs, with items on the content of lunchboxes, veganism and coffee shops in Dublin. And again there was more crude innuendo when he was discussing tech issues with Jessica Kelly.

Yates does best when

dealing with hard political issues – having been an insider he knows his stuff. This was evident as he dealt during week with the latest manifestation of the Garda crisis, mostly the issue of the hugely exaggerated number of breathalyser tests. His disbelief was expressed in a particularly apt phrase – "You couldn't make it up". But of course the problem was that they did!

### Forum

On Thursday there was a welcome forum on homelessness, with representatives of the Peter McVerry Trust and Barnardos among others, and on Friday Yates was particularly scathing about the Government's latest initiative on the housing crisis. If only he would stick to serious matters like this.

In the promo material for his shows he stressed that his opinions would be a crucial part of the show, which worries me. I'd prefer broadcasters in news and current affairs to be impartial rather than opinionated – let them be even-handed to all sides.

Sarah McInerney now has her own



Sarah McInerney.

Newstalk show, **Between the Lines**, early on Saturdays but that has displaced Sarah Carey, which is a pity, as hers was one of the few shows where you might get a perspective different to the liberal consensus.

On last weekend's edition McInerney had an interesting discussion on transport infrastructure, with Green Party leader Eamon Ryan, a chat with Jim O'Callaghan TD of Fianna Fáil about the Garda crises, and finally in her media and culture slot played a bizarre bust up between Piers Morgan and transgender model Munroe Bergdorf after the latter had lambasted white people as being racist and violent. Inevitably you can find the exchange on YouTube.

Meanwhile Chris Donoghue, former programme partner of both McInerney and Yates, now has his own show, **On the Record**, on Sunday mornings. It's a tough gig being in direct competition with the far more relaxed Marian Finucane.

This new show just follows the familiar model – review of the newspapers, current events (the Florida hurricane was prominent last weekend) and various topical issues discussed by a panel, with a big helping of sport in the second hour. It could surely be more imaginative.

[boregan@hotmail.com](mailto:boregan@hotmail.com)

### PICK OF THE WEEK

**LATE LATE MOVIE: LINCOLN**  
RTÉ One, Saturday, September 16, 11.25pm

(2012) Daniel Day-Lewis [pictured]. America's president struggles with his cabinet on the decision to emancipate the slaves.

**MASS**  
RTÉ One, Sunday, September 17, 11am  
Mass for Sunday for the Harvest Festival of Thanksgiving during the National Ploughing Championships.

**CATHOLIC ENLIGHTENMENT: GIFTS OF CATHOLICISM TO CIVILISATION**  
EWTN, Tuesday, September 19, 9pm, also Wednesday, 8am

Fr Marcus Holden and Fr Andrew Pinsent show how Catholic teachings fostered creativity in the arts, architecture, foundation of hospitals and turned marriage from a contract to a sacrament.



# Film

Aubrey Malone

## Heartwarming tale of singer seeking fame

### Patti Cakes (15A)

Ever since January, when this independent film about a struggling rap singer premiered at Sundance – 'indie' works tend to shine there – it's been the talk of the industry. It was taken up by the distributor Fox Searchlight and the rest is history.

Not being a great lover of rap music – I've never seen it as much more than doggerel spoken in a frantic monotone – I went to it with some misgivings.

The plot is old hat. Young girl from the wrong side of the tracks argues with mother, who used to be a singer her-



Danielle Macdonald and Siddharth Dhananjay in *Patti Cakes*. self back in the day. They have money problems. Haven't we been here before? More than once?

There's also the problem of vulgarity. It's part and parcel of rap music. I mean vulgarity that's unnecessary and ubiquitous.

So how does the film work then? Probably because of its energy, its consummate belief in itself. Almost without trying it wins you over. It crawls out of the genre contours that threaten to engulf it time and again. Its wit and humour save it every time it seems

to be running into the brick walls of convention.

23-year-old New Jersey girl Patti Dombrowski (Danielle Macdonald) looks to be going nowhere in life. She lives with her alcoholic mother Barbara (Bridget Everett) in grim circumstances. Both of them are overweight. Barbara's mother (Nana) is also in poor health.

Things don't look very promising for the hip-hop wannabe but with the help of Siddharth Dhananjay and Mamoudou Athie – an ebullient friend and mysterious sound mixer – she somehow manages to get her career out of neutral.

The charm of the piece isn't obvious. These are rough diamonds struggling against

many types of odds. At first Barbara isn't supportive. She doesn't like rap and seems obsessed by money. Broken by life herself, we sense a touch of 'the green-eyed monster' in her feelings about Patti. Things look headed for ruin more than once.

### Fringe cinema

Written and directed by an unknown (Jeremy Jasper) and featuring another unknown in the lead role – Macdonald is an Australian actress who'd never sung rap before – this looked for all the world like one of those films that might play a week or two in some fringe cinema and then disappear without trace. It seemed to have about

as much chance of success as Patti's singing career. But word of mouth has made it into something of a cult film.

It's a slow burner with a hypnotic appeal. It doesn't have a fairytale ending which is also refreshing. Patti's climb to the top isn't any more dramatic than her improving relationship with her mother. Jasper doesn't patronise us with rags-to-riches clichés. And Cathy Moriarty – who made her debut in *Raging Bull* all those years ago – is great as Nana.

At the end of the day I thought 'Barb' had a much better voice than her daughter but today's youth would probably shoot me for saying that.

Good  
★★★★



# BookReviews

Peter Costello



## Another hidden Ireland



Playwright Criostóir Ó Floinn today.

**An Underground Theatre: Major Playwrights in the Irish Language 1930-1980**  
by Philip O'Leary  
(University College Dublin Press, €50.00)

**Anthony Roche**

**T**his important book is not a history of Irish language drama; that already exists in Pádraig Ó Siadhail's 1993 *Stair Dhrámaíocht na Gaeilge 1900-1970*. Rather, Philip O'Leary critically highlights five significant playwrighting careers in Irish: Mairéad Ní Ghráda; Séamus Ó Néill; Eoghan Ó Tuairisc; Seán Ó Tuama and Criostóir Ó Floinn. No one-off plays in Irish, such as Brendan Behan's 1956 play, *An Giall* [*The Hostage*], are dealt with. Rather, O'Leary wants to show that a sustained career as an Irish language playwright is possible, despite all of the forces ranged against it.

The three greatest and most recurrent obstacles are: small audiences, with variable knowledge of Irish; the dearth of original plays in the Irish language and the preference of theatre managements for translations of already well-known plays into Irish; the lack of theatres.

For all of the difficulties outlined here, I was struck by the fact that many of the plays discussed in the book did receive initial productions.

### Maligned policy

There were three main sources of support during the period covered: Ernest Blythe's often unjustly maligned policy of promoting plays in the first official lan-

guage at the Abbey and Peacock and the arrival of Tomás Mac Anna in 1947 as producer of new plays; the sustained support by Gael Linn for Irish language plays at the Damer Hall from 1956 until 1970, which saw a championing of more radical plays than those often favoured by the more conservative Abbey. And Taidhbhearch na Gaillimhe where, from its founding in 1928 on, there was a sustained commitment to plays in Irish.

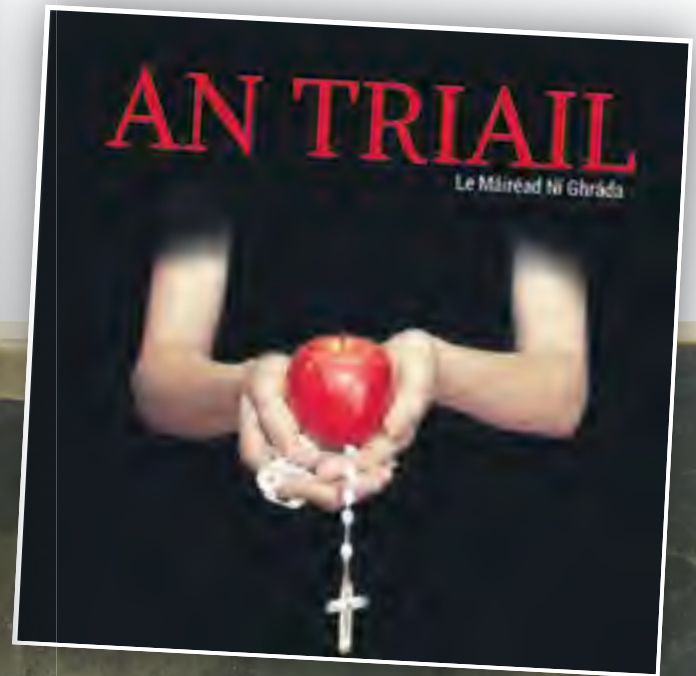
The first chapter is on Mairéad Ní Ghráda, the only woman of the five playwrights and the greatest of them.

**“The expressionistic aspects of *An Triail* receive sustained attention, as you would expect”**

Her 1964 play *An Triail* [*The Trial*] is one of the few Irish language plays to have achieved widespread prominence (I hope it can survive being put on the Leaving Cert. Irish course).

*An Triail* is still vibrant and contemporary over 50 years after its premiere at the Damer, where it was directed by Tomás Mac Anna and starred first Caitlín Maude and then Fionnuala Flanagan in the lead role. I had always wondered what came earlier in Ó Gráda's career, and O'Leary's wonderful chapter on her answers that question fully.

Working closely with Mac Anna, she was never anything but experimental, working



against the narrow realism of the English language Irish stage to open up new areas of expression. I was struck by how many of the more experimental features of more recent English language Irish playwrights were first anticipated by Ó Gráda.

In 1945's *Giolla an tSolais* [*Messenger of Light*], for example, where the devil appears in modern guise and there is “only one character who knows just who this visitor is”, Conor McPherson's 2005 play, *The Seafarer*, came to mind.

The expressionistic aspects of *An Triail* receive sustained attention, as you would expect, though O'Leary concludes that finally Ní Gráda and Mac Anna wanted the play to be entertaining. I'm not sure Bertolt Brecht didn't feel the same – as witness his championing of Charlie Chaplin's physical mime as a model of great acting.

The remaining four playwrights in the book break

along the central divide of all writing in Irish: between native speakers from the Gaeltacht and urbanites who have acquired Irish educationally.

**“Ó Néill is at his most interesting when he makes his protagonists Protestant”**

Séamus Ó Néill and Seán Ó Tuama fall into the first category. Ó Néill, a Catholic from the North, is at his most interesting when he makes his protagonists Protestant; his plays also sound an ambitious note that is heard throughout the book.

Ó Tuama's first play, *Gunna Cam agus Slabhra Óir* [*Broken Gun and Golden Chain*] is described by O'Leary as “his masterpiece, the finest history play ever written in Irish”. He likens the play

to Brian Friel's *Translations* but, in its account of a Gaelic chieftain in the 1550s submitting to Queen Elizabeth, I was even more minded of Friel's 1988 play about Hugh O'Neill, *Making History*.

The other two playwrights write in both Irish and English. One of them not only adopts different names when he does so, Eoghan Ó Tuairisc and Eugene Watters, but this in turn informs the characteristic dualism of his plays: “body/spirit, concrete/abstract, death/life, materialism/idealism, convention/freedom, individualism/universality, terror/beauty, and more”.

Ó Floinn (the only playwright still living) is the most radical, witty and iconoclastic. Both Ó Tuairisc and Ó Floinn are anything but respectful to the Irish language, playing with its possibilities and opening it up to outside influence.

The book concludes with a seven-page ‘afterword’, which

can hardly do justice to the important work of Amharclann de hÍde in the 1990s and to the plays of such writers as Antaine Ó Flatharta and Celia da Fréine. But that's my only criticism.

### Achievements

For the most part, Philip O'Leary takes the time and care to bring us deep into the heart of the plays he discusses, honoring their ambitions and achievements while not shrinking from discussing shortcomings.

With the emphasis on women playwrights now taking hold at the Abbey Theatre, it would be wonderful to think that the rich body of Ó Gráda's plays might be explored in production (and with English sub-titles).

Writing in Irish has never been popular nor profitable, but it still manages to persist and continue against all the odds, buíochas le Dia. Long may it do so.



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.



## A great patriot remembered

**I Die in a Good Cause: Thomas Ashe: A Biography** by Seán Ó Luíng (Mercier Press, €14.99)

**J. Anthony Gaughan**

In his introduction to this new edition of Seán Ó Luíng's biography of the patriot Thomas Ashe, Prof. Joe Lee speculates on the kind of influence Thomas Ashe would have exerted on the independence movement had he not died so prematurely.

Austin Stack, Ashe's close friend, claimed that he would have rejected the terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty. But Lee suggests that Ashe would have become a pragmatist as did Michael Collins. He points to the fact that Ashe alone of the leading Sinn Féin prisoners in Lewes Jail proposed that Joe McGuinness contest the by-election in South Longford in April 1917.

### Strikes

However, Ashe's interventions on the Coiste Gnótha (Executive Committee) of the Gaelic League and in organising strikes in prison would indicate that he would never be other than "a diehard republican".

Thomas Ashe was born on January 12, 1885 at Kinard, Lispole, near Dingle. He was educated locally and qualified as a teacher at the De La Salle Training College in Waterford.

His first appointment

was to the national school at Minard Castle, near his home, thereafter he was principal in a two-teacher school at Corduff, near Lusk, in north Co. Dublin from 1908 to 1916. Gregarious and talented he was soon popular with the native Fingalians.

### “Ashe joined the Irish Volunteers at the inaugural meeting in November 1913”

He had a love for all things Irish – the language, gaelic games, music, dance and traditional lore. Soon after arriving in North Dublin he was providing classes in Irish, playing football and hurling for the local club, organising céilidhes and in 1909 he co-founded the Black Raven Pipe Band.

He was a member of the INTO, was sympathetic to the labour movement, was a friend of James Connolly and wrote an incomplete novel about the life and plight of agricultural labourers in Co. Dublin.

Ashe joined the Irish Volunteers at the inaugural meeting in November 1913. After the Volunteers split in September 1914 he was to the fore in bringing military exercises and manoeuvres to those who remained loyal to

Eoin MacNeill.

Between October 1915 and the Rising he became commandant of the 5th (Fingal) battalion of the Dublin Brigade of the Irish Volunteers which was comprised of the various companies in North County Dublin. It mobilised on the Monday of Easter Week.

Ashe and his battalion set about disrupting the communications between Dublin and Belfast. They attacked the RIC barracks at Ashbourne. Just after its defenders had surrendered a large party of the RIC arrived on the scene. With an astute re-positioning of his battalion Ashe was, after a five-hour engagement, able to force the RIC to surrender.

The encounter claimed the lives of 11 members of the RIC and two of Ashe's battalion. As the number of his comrades was less than half that of his adversaries the incident enhanced his military reputation. When information on the general surrender reached him on the Sunday after Easter week Ashe stood down the battalion.

For his part in the Rising, Ashe was given a life-sentence. He was incarcerated in Dartmoor and later in Lewes prison, near Brighton. With the rest of the Sinn Féin prisoners, he was released in June 1917.

An exceptional orator,

he was in brisk demand for addressing political rallies. For seditious language at one such rally at Ballinalee, Co. Longford, on 25 July he once more found himself in prison. With other Sinn Féin prisoners in Mountjoy Jail he went on hunger-strike. While being forcibly fed he became gravely ill and was transferred to the Mater Hospital, where he died on September 25, 1917.

### “His funeral was even more impressive than that of Parnell”

A life-long member of the IRB, at the time of his death he was president of its Supreme Council and the organisation carefully choreographed his funeral. It was the largest ever seen in Ireland and was even more impressive than that of Parnell. At that time Ian MacPherson, chief secretary for Ireland, stated that Ashe's death did "more to stimulate Sinn Féinism and disorder than anything I know!".

This re-print of Seán Ó Luíng's important biography of Thomas Ashe is to be welcomed. It reminds us of the significant contribution which Seán made with this and other studies to Irish historiography.

## The World of Books

By the books editor

# Are local legends always all they seem to be?

**I**rish people, as we all know, have a great grá for local legends, indeed any kind of local lore.

In the poetry of W. B. Yeats [pictured], Queen Maeve, though supposedly buried on the frowning peak of Knocknarea, might be still a living person. Yeats deep interiorisation of old traditions of a locality is not unique.

When Thomas Kinsella published his translation of the Táin, enhanced as it was by some of the best illustrative work of Louis Le Broquay in 1969, he was also able to produce a map, of the events of the epic as they played out on the Cooley peninsula.

It was a striking example of the integration of tradition and landscape. It was striking too that the nearest parallel culture in modern times to the Gaelic Irish was not so much with ancient Greece, as Prof. Ridgeway and so many others claimed, but with the Amazulus of South Africa, their kingdom also being dominated by the violence of a warrior class, insane personal pride, and by cattle raids.

All over Ireland local legends have become attached, for instance, to neolithic megalithic monuments, the 'Beds of Diarmuid and Grainne', built many thousands of years before there were any Gaels in Ireland. These ancient monuments were simply appropriated.

But this may happen more often than we think. We tend to associate King Arthur and the Arthurian mythos with the English West Country and parts of Wales. Whoever he may have been in history, King Arthur belongs in some mysterious way to Tintagel and Glastonbury.

### Surprise

It is something of a surprise then on travelling round Brittany to find large parts of the tales of Arthur, Merlin, Morgana Le Fey, and Tristan moved bodily to that country and to be associated with landmarks and districts there.

Merlin, for instance, is now associated with the Forest of Brocéliande, and King Mark and his court, not with Castle Dor near Fowey, but with the Penmarch peninsula. Again an entire saga has been appropriated, or rather simply carried into the landscape of America by the Britons who fled from the Anglo-Saxons and soon became the Bretons.

Nearer home, however, we can catch the same sort of things happening today.

In 1860, in a moment of professional crisis, Dion Boucicault fell under the spell of Gerald Griffins' novel *The Collegians* (1829), based on the murder of Ellen O'Hanlon in 1819 – he had reported the trial of the murderer. But Boucicault not only moved the scene of the action

to Killarney (then becoming popular with tourists), and sentimentalised the plot. Julius Benedict, in adapting the play for his opera *The Lily of Killarney* (1862) further changed the plot.

On a visit to Killarney a while ago, my wife and I inquired in the tourist office about the more unusual things to be seen in

the neighbourhood. The young lady dealing with us was anxious to please. Among the things she suggested was a visit to the 'Colleen Bawn rock and caves' (as seen in Act II, scene 5).

Natural pedant that I am, I replied that the tragic tale of the murder of Ellen O'Hanlon had nothing to do with Killarney. But as far as she was concerned, the Colleen Bawn was an historical person who truly belonged to Killarney.

A guide book of 1861 makes no reference to the play; though by that time photographs of the Colleen Bawn Caves under the Coleen Bawn Rock were on sale. However, another guide of 1926 finds the Coleen Bawn well to the fore as Killarney's appeal. And Danny Mann's, an eatery named for the murderous henchman of the villainous Creggan in the play, still thrives in the town.

But our encounter with the lady in the tourist office suggests the plot of the play and opera has now become itself an accepted local legend, a sort of modern version of the Beds of Diarmuid and Grainne.

All this makes one wonder though about Queen Maeve and the Brown Bull of Cooley. Were they too originally brought from elsewhere by the Gaelic invaders who carried continental Celtic culture to Ireland?

Was their home originally to be found in cattle pastures of Celtic Switzerland about 500 years before Christ? Now there is food for thought!





# Classifieds

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E-mail: [info@hospicefoundation.ie](mailto:info@hospicefoundation.ie)

[www.hospicefoundation.ie](http://www.hospicefoundation.ie)



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**Contact Danny 90245547 / 07514908666**

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## The Miracle Prayer

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

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

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

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

*Say this prayer for three days.*

M.M.

## BÓTHAR

**PLEASE REMEMBER BÓTHAR IN YOUR WILL.** €1,800 will allow us to give an Irish, in-calf, dairy heifer to a struggling family in Rwanda, completely transforming their lives. Your gift will live on for generations. Phone the office on 061 414142 or [info@bothar.ie](mailto:info@bothar.ie)



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The programme presents the Church's teaching in a clear and accessible way. It is a six-month programme by distance learning, consisting of two modules. The first Study Day will be held in the Pastoral Centre, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath on Saturday, Sept 30th, 2017. This would be an ideal preparation for the World Meeting of Families in 2018.

For further information contact 087-9868125  
or go to the Maryvale website [www.maryvale.ac.uk](http://www.maryvale.ac.uk)

*Triduum*  
in honour of **St. Pio**

Triduum in honour of St Pio will take place at 9.30am mass in

**St John the Evangelist Church,**  
Ballinteer, Dublin 16  
on **Wednesday 20th, Thursday 21st and Friday 22nd** of September.

On Friday 22nd, the Vigil of St Pio's Feast, we will have a special mass at 7.30pm.

**Celebrant Fr Martin Bennett OFM Cap.**  
Blessing with Padre Pio Glove.  
All welcome.

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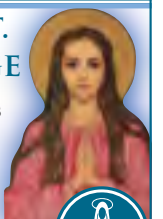
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# Leisure time

**Crossword Junior**

Gordius 199



- ACROSS**

1 Lemony Snicket wrote 'A Series of \_\_\_\_\_ Events' (11)  
5 Lovely to look at (6)  
7 Run at top speed (6)  
9 Boulders (5)  
11 Stumble (4)  
13 Took a seat (3)  
15 Trophy (3)  
16 Creature from another planet (5)  
17 Backbone (5)  
18 Good for nothing (7)
- in this language (6)  
3 You play with them (4)  
4 The fourth month of the year (5)  
6 An injured player may be carried off the pitch on this (9)  
8 Royal daughter (7)  
10 Weird (7)  
12 Vegetable that grows in a pod (3)  
13 Madrid and Barcelona are in this country (5)  
14 Drink made from grapes (4)

**LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS**

**GORDIUS No.315**

**Across** – 1 Greenhouse 6 Jump 10 Guild 11 The Flight into Egypt 12 Bisects 15 Radii 17 Chai 18 Ream 19 Tempt 21 Blotchy 23 Arena 24 Urns 25 Nail 26 Pages 28 Emotion 34 Maori 35 Tusk 36 Loch Lomond

**Down** – 1 Gags 2 Eliminate 3 Nudge 4 Octet 5 Slew 7 Urged 8 Patriotism 9 Clarity 13 Coal scuttle 16 Break point 20 Marco Polo 21 Banshee 22 Hero 27 Gates 29 Match 30 Tempo 31 Typo 32 Bind

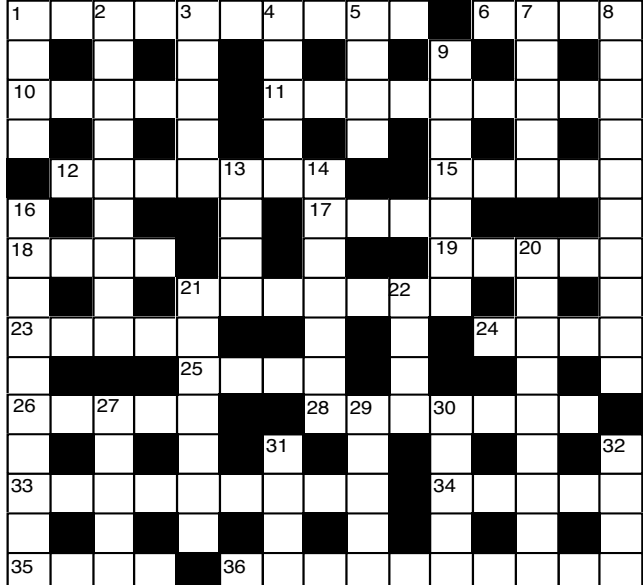
**CHILDREN'S No.198**

**Across** – 1 Schoolmates 6 Angry 8 Entered 11 Plays 12 Sweden 13 Later 15 Party 16 Monday 17 Truck

**Down** – 1 Stamp album 2 Hogwarts 3 Mast 4 Tear 5 Seed 7 Yes 9 Elevator 10 Electric 14 Royal

**Crossword**

Gordius 316



- ACROSS**

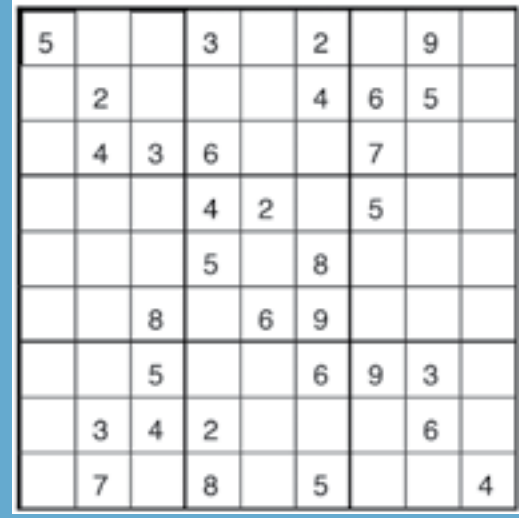
1 Does this city in Arkansas aspire to become Boulder, Colorado when it grows up? (6,4)  
6 The largest continent (4)  
10 Cease-fire agreement (5)  
11 Marching style (5,4)  
12 Characters in this part of Wales might be hard, Don! (7)  
15 This girl's name can be found in Brittany, always (5)  
17 A Muslim mystic stands up for infidels, initially (4)  
18 Surmounting the first sixteen letters (4)  
19 What a material has done to be lacking in colour (5)  
21 Insurance assessor (7)  
23 Organs of respiration (5)  
24 Religious song (4)  
25 Quaint (4)  
26 Put money into a Home for Animals (5)  
28 Surgical instrument (7)  
33 & 34 There's no solid basis for such miraculous pedestrian activity! (7,2,5)  
35 Gathering implement (4)  
36 Deign to make little Conor go down (10)
- DOWN**

1 What items may one bid for? Plenty! (4)  
2 A score in American football (9)  
3 A late morning makes an alternative fact popular (3-2)  
4 Stiff, inflexible (5)  
5 Prepare food (4)  
7 Occupation of a location by protesters (3-2)  
8 Clapping a clergyman giving praise (10)  
9 Give evidence in court (7)  
13 The 'D' of CD (4)  
14 Takes for granted (7)  
16 Breaking the law, few roll for Bloom (10)  
20 A welcoming and helpful venue - for noon, presumably! (3,6)  
21 Cast ice around a stoic type (7)  
22 English playschool! (1.1.1.1.)  
27 Enemy of Dr Who (5)  
29 Beaten with a bamboo (5)  
30 Find a cardinal swathed in garlands in a Scottish island (5)  
31 Would an American soldier love an exchange fee? (4)  
32 Father Edward Flintstone? (4)

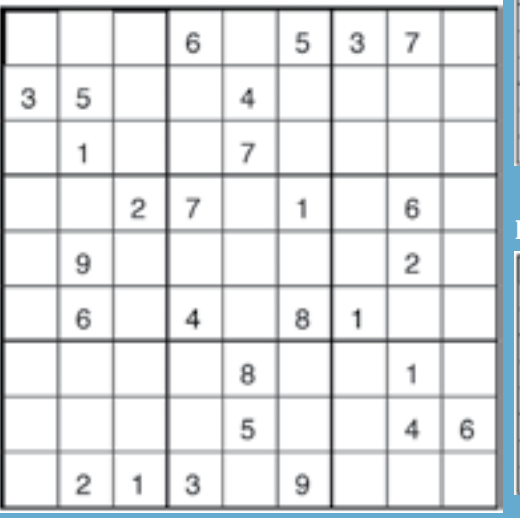
**Sudoku Corner**

199

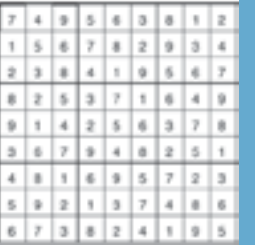
**Easy**



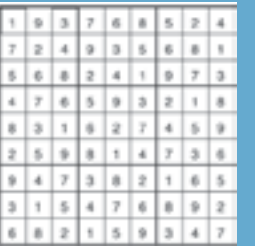
**Hard**



**Last week's Easy** 198



**Last week's Hard** 198





# Notebook

Fr Bernard Cotter



## Inflation affects all walks of life

**IT'S THE QUESTION** priests most like to hear: "How much is a Mass, Father?" Most priests have a standard explanation for reply, about Mass being a pearl of great price, an event of inestimable value, that the Mass can't be bought or sold (and that attempts to trade in religious things have gotten the Church into terrible trouble in the past), etc. All of this is true and wholesome and must be stated, though it doesn't really answer the question asked. The explanation usually gives rise to more questions.

Priests may then add that people usually give an offering to the priest who undertakes to celebrate a Mass for them. This offering, they will explain, is usually a certain sum of money, freely given – and they will quickly add that there is no problem in having Mass offered for people who cannot afford this.

The next question is inevitable: "And how much is that?"

So we journey back to where we started. The quiet rumbling noise to be heard in the background is of Martin Luther spinning in his grave. He who was so outraged at the buying and selling of religious objects is a constant background



presence in such discussions.

When people pursue such a question with me, I usually explain that, as I understand it, when a priest says a Mass for your intentions, you feed and look after him for the day (or you give him the amount of money that will

see him fed and found). As to how much that comes to, it's a sum people can fairly easily calculate – the cost of eating breakfast, lunch and tea, with fuel for the car thrown in.

I gather that the offering for Mass is set at an official level by

the bishops of a province. In my part of Ireland, the offering for Mass was fixed at five punts up in the last century (that's IR£5). Then, when the euro came into force on New Year's Day 2002, the usual offering went to €10 – and there it has remained ever since. And yet prices generally have risen quite a bit in the meantime. For instance, your *Irish Times* cost you €1.30 in 2002 –today it's €2. So maybe people who arrange Mass should take this kind of inflation into account (while always being aware that priests will never turn away someone who cannot afford to pay).

### Fortunate

I am fortunate that, in the parish to which I am assigned, the standard agreed offering had been set at €20 long before I arrived, and people give that much and more whenever they ask me to sign a Mass card or when they 'book' a Sunday or weekday Mass. Because I cannot offer all the Masses that come my way, I forward the excess to a colleague in Africa who is very happy to be supported in such a generous way.

I hope that all my colleagues are being supported equally well.

## Stories from parish life

I asked a colleague about a couple I came across who seemed happily married. He replied by means of this anecdote...

A man once went to a priest and claimed his wife was poisoning him. The priest investigated, did all sorts of tests, interviewed both parties. The complainant returned for the verdict: "My advice to you," said the priest "is that the best thing you can do is take the poison!"

Happy marriages may not always be as they seem. Every door in the parish leads to a secret story, often sad, sometimes happy.



## PLEASE HELP NEEDY ORPHANS IN INDIA

The Salesians in Tamil Nadu, India, have asked The Little Way Association for help with a project to benefit children orphaned because of HIV/AIDS. Fr Antony Joseph SDB, provincial, writes that many of the children are child-labourers, have become socially stigmatised, and are at risk from the drug culture. He says: "These children often lack hope for the future and have low self-esteem." He wants the children to be able to "live peacefully, and receive education, care and guidance for their future employment."

The scheme involves running an orphanage for 60 street-children at Namakkal and providing support for a further 100 children living nearby with grandparents or foster-families. All the children (aged 10 to 18 and not themselves HIV/AIDS sufferers) will receive healthcare and education. Those at home will receive visits from counsellors, while those in the orphanage will need to be fed and clothed.

Please help give these children and teenagers practical help and hope for the future. Donations to our children fund will support the Salesians' work in Namakkal, and similar projects.

**EVERY EURO YOU SEND WILL BE VERY GRATEFULLY RECEIVED AND SENT WITHOUT DEDUCTION.**



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