

# The Irish Catholic

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# Return Nobel Peace Prize demands Irish missionary

## Columban priest tells of 'genocide' of Rohingya minority

### Mags Gargan

An Irish missionary based in Myanmar has called for Burmese leader, Aung San Suu Kyi to return her Nobel Peace Prize because of her refusal to condemn the "genocide" of Rohingya Muslims in her country.

Columban Fr Neil Magill, who has been teaching in Myanmar for 11 years, described the "brutal persecution against the Rohingya people in Rakhine State and in the Kachin and Shan States" as "genocide".

"Women are raped by the military, shot along with their screaming children. Hundreds of thousands have tried to escape by old boats to places which don't want them. Landmines are placed along their paths and they are

blown up," he told *The Irish Catholic* from Mandalay, the country's second-largest city.

"We must make these atrocious acts known to the world," he said, adding that Aung San Suu Kyi's Nobel Peace Prize "should be revoked as she has not opened her mouth to condemn these brutal atrocities".

### Human rights

The Columbans have a number of Irish missionary priests and sisters working in Myanmar. The congregation's superior general, Fr Kevin O'Neill SSC has urged "an end to the violence and violation of human rights of the Rohingya people" and said he hopes "for their peaceful return to their homes in the Rakhine State".



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Burmese leader Aung San Suu Kyi addressing the nation on Tuesday. Photo: AP

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# To articulate Church teaching, one must know why the Church teaches what it does

**J**acob Rees-Mogg is a colourful if somewhat eccentric member of the British Conservative Party. While still a backbencher and just seven years in the House of Commons, Mr Rees-Mogg is being tipped by some as a potential future Prime Minister. This would be quite something, since he would become Britain's first Catholic Prime Minister. Unlike Tony Blair, who became Catholic after leaving office as Prime Minister, Rees-Mogg was raised Catholic, the son of William Rees-Mogg, the last Catholic to be refused an education in Eton because of his religion.

He's an unlikely media star, but his willingness to be interviewed on any subject and appetite to appear on virtually any programme has made him a favoured guest with both producers and the general public. He was recently interviewed by the firebrand left-wing activist Owen Jones and, despite the men's obvious diametric differences, Mr Jones seemed genuinely charmed by Mr Rees-Mogg.

### Commitment

The Member for North East Somerset – as he is known in the House of Commons – has never shied away from the fact that he is a card-carrying Catholic. And, in fact, he has won praise for his staunch commitment to Catholic values. I say commitment rather than defence or articulation, since Mr Rees-Mogg rarely – if ever – feels the need to give any reason for the religious convictions he holds.

Many Catholic leaders praised him recently after an appearance on a British daytime 'chat show'



## Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

when he said he was both opposed to same-sex marriage and abortion in all circumstances. The Bishop of Shrewsbury Mark Davies opined that "we should all be grateful for the integrity of politicians like Jacob Rees-Mogg who fearlessly speak of those Christian convictions on which our society was built".

No argument with that, and Mr Rees-Mogg faced a fierce and often anti-Catholic backlash from commentators for daring to state what the Catholic Church teaches.

Writing in *The Guardian*, columnist Suzanne Moore called Mr Rees-Mogg a "thoroughly modern, neoconservative bigot" adding that his Catholic views have "no place in public life". And there was much

more in this vein.

Anti-Catholicism, it would seem, is indeed Britain's last acceptable prejudice.

Mr Rees-Mogg deserves much praise for wearing his Catholicism on his sleeve. But, there's sometimes a touch of "because the Church says so" in how he articulates the Faith.

In the ITV interview, for example, when asked about same-sex marriage, he replied: "I'm a Catholic and I take

the teachings of the Church seriously on faith and morals."

When asked directly if he opposed same-sex marriage he replied: "I support the teaching of the Catholic Church."

He was at pains to point out that a core tenet of Christianity is that he does not sit in judgement over others. The presenters were incredulous, as if they were flabbergasted that a Catholic actually believes the teaching of the Church.

### “Anti-Catholicism, it would seem, is indeed Britain's last acceptable prejudice”

It's a pity that Mr Rees-Mogg didn't articulate the 'why' of Catholic opposition to same-sex marriage. There's also the fact that there are perfectly good lay non-religious reasons for opposing both same-sex marriage and abortion.

If Catholics want to occupy the public square, they have to become articulate about the reasons the Church teaches what it does. They also need to be comfortable articulating views on public policy that are drawn from reason as well as faith.

Catholics must, as St Peter writes, always be prepared to give reason for the hope that is within them. "Because the Church says so" might have seemed like an answer for another generation (it wasn't), but it doesn't cut any ice now.

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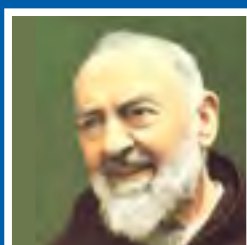
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# Prayerbook apps support busy Catholics on the move – priests

**Greg Daly**

Technology-savvy priests are unlikely to put away their smartphones any time soon, despite advice from the Vatican's liturgy chief.

Speaking in Rome's Angelicum University last week, Guinea's Cardinal Robert Sarah warned that while it may be practical and convenient to pray the daily prayer of the Church on mobile phones or other electronic devices, doing so "desacralises prayer".

"These apparatuses are not instruments consecrated and reserved to God, but we use them for God and also for



profane things," added the cardinal, who heads the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

Such scepticism about electronic aids to prayer are partly a "generational thing", according to Ballyshannon's Fr Ian Fee, who told *The Irish*

*Catholic* that younger people aren't necessarily as wedded to the printed word as their elders might be.

## Traditional way

"There's no point in holding back and saying this is the traditional way in which we've done this, these are the traditional forms of media that we have used in the past so we're going to stand here and wait for people to come to us," he said, adding: "That's not how it works anymore."

While acknowledging that fears about priests using electronic devices in public worship are understandable, Fr Fee said such devices can be used to good effect in the right circumstances.

"Certainly things like Universalis and Sacred Space – I know so many people who use these things.

"It's simply a part of their day and it's the natural way for them to access these things, and I think that if they're using phones, tablets, apps, websites – whatever it is – to access prayer, scripture, and reflections, or as aids to meditation, I think it's only a good thing."

Fr Conor McDonough OP, meanwhile, said while he would always prefer to pray the Office from his breviary rather than an electronic device, "when I'm travelling or just having a really busy day, I've found it helpful to

pray the Divine Office with my Kindle, rather than putting it off".

Maintaining that there's "something special" about praying with a book that's been designated for that purpose, he added: "But not everyone has access to liturgical

books, and if prayer apps help busy Christians sanctify their day, then that's undoubtedly a good thing!"

Pope Benedict XVI's 2009 comments on evangelising the "digital continent" are worth reflecting on in connection with this issue, Nav-

an's Fr Robert McCabe told this newspaper, noting that while he wouldn't use electronic devices in public worship, they can be valuable, especially when travelling.

"Rather than just being a people of the book, we're a people of the Word," he said.

## Derry bishops on the road



Derry's Bishop Donal McKeown and his Church of Ireland counterpart, Bishop Ken Good, on a walk from Claudy to Strabane – one of a series of joint pilgrimages the bishops are undertaking this year. Their latest walk began with prayers in St Patrick's Catholic Church and then at the CofI Cumber Upper Parish Church.

## Third Loreto missionary sister awarded

A Loreto sister originally from Co. Antrim has received the highest honour granted by the Peruvian state in recognition of her contribution to education.

Sr Patricia McLaughlin, who has been ministering in Peru since 2000, has been presented with the 2017 Palmas Magisteriales Award on behalf of the Fe y Alegria School where she is the founding principal. "If our work can make a difference to the life of one child, then, it is worthwhile," she said.

"I think we got that award because we had shown that poor children can achieve as much as any others if they are given the chance."

## Recognition

This comes after Dublin native Sr Mary Owens was presented with a State Recognition Award in Kenya for her dedication to the country's Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) programme.

Sr Orla Tracey from Wicklow – who is principal of the Loreto Secondary School in Rumbek, South Sudan – was also announced as the 2017 recipient of the Hugh O'Flaherty International Award.

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Irish priest  
tells of  
Rohingya  
“genocide”  
in Myanmar

» Continued from Page 1

An estimated 1.1 million Rohingya based in Rakhine state have endured decades of persecution in Buddhist-dominated Myanmar. Over 800,000 had fled to Bangladesh before the latest crackdown began on August 25, following an alleged attack by Rohingya militants on police targets, bringing the overall figure of refugees to over 700,000.

### Shootings

The UN Human High Commissioner for Refugees has received reports that security forces and militia are burning Rohingya towns and shooting fleeing civilians. The United Nations’ human rights chief described that the situation as “a textbook example of ethnic cleansing”.

Aung San Suu Kyi, who was a political prisoner for years before coming to power, gave her first public address on Tuesday since the bloody army crackdown began, saying her government has to make sure allegations “are based on solid evidence before we take action”.

Pope Francis, who has spoken out repeatedly in support of the Rohingya Muslims, is due to visit Myanmar in November, the first ever papal visit to the country.

# No more Catholic primary schools – INTO chief

Staff Reporter

Ireland has enough Catholic schools and doesn't need more, the head of Ireland's largest teaching union has said. Mr John Boyle, president of the INTO, later said he was referring only to Catholic primary schools.

Mr Boyle also said that despite what the Archbishop of Dublin has said about divestment he doesn't believe a large number of Catholic schools should be closed. “I don't see the need to close denominational schools,” he said.

Speaking as part of a discussion panel on Catholic education held on Monday in Notre Dame – Newman Centre for Faith and Reason at University Church in Dublin,



The panel of speakers at a discussion on Catholic education held in Notre Dame – Newman Centre for Faith and Reason at University Church in Dublin.

Mr Boyle said he hoped that the Catholic school sector would become more inclusive and look after children living nearer the school, no matter

what their denomination.

The CEO of the second-level schools trust CEIST, Dr Marie Griffin, said that there is a negative media agenda

around faith schools, but that parents want a Catholic education and there is evidence for this, with parents choosing Catholic schools where

there is a choice.

She added: “Twenty one years after Ruairi Quinn declared this a post-religious secular society, the Census shows we are a predominantly Catholic country. So we should be confident about our schools.”

Dr Griffin revealed that there are no Catholic second level schools in Co. Leitrim and some parts of Cork and “we need to retain our schools or diversity will suffer”.

Other contributors included Dr Anne Looney, Executive Dean of DCU's Institute of Education, and Seamus Mulconry, General Secretary of the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association. The panel was chaired by Deacon Dermot McCarthy.

## Call to end stigma for children conceived in rape

Mags Gargan

Women affected by rape are due to share their stories at public meetings next week, to explain why they believe abortion is not the answer when a child is conceived in rape.

Unbroken Ireland, an initiative which gives a voice to those impacted by pregnancy after rape, is hosting the

events in Dublin and Cork. “Our voices are never heard, and our children are stigmatised, but we will no longer be silenced,” said spokesperson Laura Ní Chonghaile.

“We hear all-too-often that rape victims need the Eighth Amendment repealed, but we hear nothing from women like us who have been directly impacted by pregnancy from rape, and who want a better answer than abortion.”

The meetings ‘Ending the Silence: women impacted by pregnancy from rape speak out’ will take place in The Gibson Hotel, Point Village, Dublin on Thursday, September 28 at 8pm and in the Silver Springs Hotel, Tivoli, Cork City on Sunday, October 1 at 4pm.

## All-Ireland champs visit children's hospital



Dublin All-Ireland Senior Football Champions Evan Comerford, Brian Howard, Eoin Murchan, Philip McMahon, Michael Fitzsimons, Mark Schutte and Cillian O'Shea pictured with Mayo supporter Cathal Downey, aged 4, from Co. Kildare and the Sam Maguire Cup during the team's visit to Our Lady's Children's Hospital in Crumlin, Dublin. Photo: David Fitzgerald/Sportsfile



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# Chancellor Angela Merkel – poster girl of the pastors' kids

As Angela Merkel [pictured] faces a virtual coronation as sovereign of Europe, the biographies of the lady are coming thick and fast. Five new tomes have been published in recent weeks – two in German, one each in English, French and Dutch. Her background as a Lutheran pastor's daughter is highlighted in all these Merkel studies.

It is indeed an interesting coincidence that both Angela Merkel in Germany and Theresa May in Britain are the daughters of clergymen. There is a category in America for these sons and daughters of the manse: PKs – pastors' kids.

PKs tend to be serious-minded and conscientious, as both Mrs May and Frau Merkel are. Some commentators can't figure out if Theresa May is a "left-wing" Tory since she often speaks about the poor and the needs of working-class people. They don't grasp the fact that Theresa's values are drawn straight from the vicarage,



## Mary Kenny



where her father – who veered towards the Anglo-Catholic – would have had a sense of conscience towards the needy of the parish.

Angela Merkel's Lutheran background also played a decisive part in her formation,

and she retains many of the values of being that PK. When the German parliament voted to introduce same-sex marriage recently, Angela dissented – in her usual quiet but firm manner.

She announced that she was brought up to believe that marriage is between a man and a woman and she adhered to that belief. Although one gay parliamentarian called out sarcastically "Thanks a lot!", overall her view was respected. Maybe because of her PK status.

### Background

I believe that her PK background also influenced her in her compassion for migrants, when she went against the popular grain and welcomed refugees to Germany. But much weight is also given to her experience of growing up in East Germany under Communist rule, where

freedom of movement was controlled by the state. In consequence, she values the right of anyone to move anywhere. She was horrified by Hungary's actions in building a fence to keep migrants out of the EU.

All Merkel biographers admit that she's a very, very canny politician, operating by stealth. Like Margaret Thatcher, she was trained as a scientist – she's a wizard at integral calculus – and she was appalled to discover that economists, unlike scientists, seldom provide exact, or even accurate, information. It's all inspired speculation!

Another characteristic of PKs is that they are often very ambitious – they've been well educated and have watched their father dominate a pulpit – but they begin life with little money, since inheritance is usually forbidden in church families. This makes them strive all the harder.

If and when we have married Catholic priests – which most people support – it will be interesting to observe the pattern of CPKs....

## No fan of Ginger Man

I wasn't a great fan of *The Ginger Man*, written by J.P. Donleavy [pictured], who has just died aged 91. His hero – "feckless, unwashed, penurious Sebastian Dangerfield" – seemed less than compelling. The 45 publishers who turned it down, initially, evidently felt similarly.

I also thought the text rather misogynistic – certainly incorrigibly blokey. An early line proclaims: "These English wives are great. Know their place!"

Even so, as Archbishop of Dublin, Dr McQuaid made an error of judgement in closing down a dramatised version in 1959. There was no theatre censorship in Ireland, so his action was, really, illegal – he simply took the law into his own hands, which was wrong. And the theatre management at the Gaiety should have stood by their legal rights.

John Charles McQuaid did reputational damage to the Church with this high-handedness.



## Ultra-orthodox Jews leading the demographics

I sometimes have occasion to drive through an area of North London called Stamford Hill. This is a neighbourhood strongly associated with ultra-Orthodox Jews, with their quaint 19th Century costumes, and the ringlets and large hats (some in fur) that are favoured by the men.

The women are modestly attired and are often with their children, as Haradi and Hassidic Jews are forbidden birth control and encouraged to have large families. There is something picturesque about seeing so many people dressed in such old-fashioned styles – almost like being in a movie about past times.

The lives of the ultra-orthodox are governed by strict religious practices,



and you cannot but admire the way they adhere to their traditions, which must be hard to reconcile with the modern world. Liberal and even mainstream Jewish groups are often fiercely critical of the ultra-orthodox, whom they regard as extremists.

However, the ultra-orthodox are winning the battle of the demographics

– even in Israel – simply because they have more children and more descendants. How long Israel can remain, in theory, a secular state, is now in question – because of these demographics.

This being *Rosh Hashanah* (Jewish New Year, of the calendar year 5778) Stamford Hill will surely be *en fete*.

## Derry bishop offers support to vandalised Cofl church

Bishop Donal McKeown has pledged support for a neighbouring Protestant church in Derry, after a shocking attack by vandals.

Christ Church, which is just 50 metres from the city's St Eugene's Cathedral, suffered an appalling break-in last week where extensive damage was caused. The vandals attacked the church organ, smashed windows, knocked over vases of flowers and even defecated and urinated in the church.

Bishop McKeown said: "We will do what we can to help the Church of Ireland congregation get their beautiful church back to its original state, so that their regular worship of our common Lord can be resumed."

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## Sr Stan blasts hostels as youth homelessness escalates

Chai Brady

Many young people are en-route to "tragedy" owing to homelessness, according to Focus Ireland, highlighting a 98% increase since 2014 of homeless people aged 18-24.

Sr Stan Kennedy opened the 'Youth Homelessness in Limerick today' event in Thomond Park Conference Centre and called for greater action to be taken in order to support the 826 young adults who are now homeless, saying they have paid a high price for austerity.

Sr Stan said that department figures don't accurately reflect the true number of homeless young people "as this figure does not include young people who live in unstable and temporary arrangements such as staying on friend's couches".

In collaboration with Tusla and Limerick City and County Council, Focus Ireland have provided the youth housing project which aims to prevent young people becoming homeless.

Sr Stan said: "We are providing homes for vulnerable young people, along with vital support to help them sustain their tenancies as they make the transition into adulthood."

### Employment

The programme is independently evaluated and has provided youth housing in Waterford, Cork, Clare and North Tipperary.

Tackling homelessness isn't just about housing, but about facilitating access to training, education, mental health services and employment Focus Ireland stated. Without these supports many young people become marginalised, never reaching their potential.

Sr Stan added that the hostel accommodation provided for young people is "anything but appropriate", and the State should provide housing "that gives young people respect, dignity and privacy and the support they need to become mature adults".

## Catholic RUC officer speaks of plot to kill at Mass

Staff Reporter

A policeman who was the most senior Catholic in the RUC has spoken of an IRA plot to kill him during Mass. Former high ranking RUC, subsequently PSNI, policeman Peter Sheridan said he was told by gardaí during the height of the Troubles that his life was in

serious danger.

"I use to attend Mass in Grey-steel (Derry) and the guards had intercepted somebody in Co. Donegal who had my details, my kids' details, what time we went to Mass on a Sunday. Obviously the intention was to carry out some form of attack, so I had that warning," he said on RTÉ Radio 1.

He questioned who was to

blame if there was an attack, saying: "Is it the person who was going to put the bomb under the car? Is the guy who made the bomb? Is it the guy who drove the getaway car? Or is it the guy, or girl, instead of saying their prayers on a Sunday were taking notes and passing them on?"

In many of the violent events he witnessed he said there could

have been 15-20 people involved, saying "and people talk about justice as if there was only one person involved".

Mr Sheridan is now CEO of Co-operation Ireland, an organisation that works towards reconciliation after the Troubles, after leaving his post as assistant chief constable in the PSNI in 2008 following more than three decades of service.



**MEATH IN LOURDES:** Bishop Michael Smith and Fr Joe Campbell pictured with Sr Veronica and Sr Kelly Francis along some of the Meath Youth Pilgrims from St Mary's Parish Drogheda, Eureka School Kells and Belvedere College on the Meath Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes.

## Manchester funeral mourners call could be first of many, chaplaincy warns

Greg Daly

A call for mourners to attend the funeral of an Irish man who died in Manchester last month could be the first of many such appeals, the head of the Irish Chaplaincy in Britain has warned.

John Joseph O'Brien, 73, died in the Hulme area of the city on August 9, and has no known relatives. The city council scheduled his funeral to take place this week, but with no mourners expected to attend, the Council of Irish Associations in Manchester appealed for a presence from the city's Irish communities "to help give your fellow country man a decent well attended funeral".

Although such events are

rare, according to Eddie Gilmore, CEO of Irish Chaplaincy in Britain, they are likely to become more common. "There are an awful lot of Irish people living on their own – probably up to 40,000 elderly Irish living on their own in London," he told *The Irish Catholic*, explaining that while most people would have contacts, many are housebound and have become cut off from family and other networks.

### Outreaches

"It's possibly sadly going to be more prominent," he said, adding that "in theory it's something which we might be seeing more and more, sadly".

Manchester-based Dubliner Fr Pat Deegan, whose parish includes part of Hulme, told *The Irish Catholic* that he had not known Mr O'Brien, despite Church outreaches in the area.

"What we have in the parish here are the Vincent de Paul and the Legion of Mary, who go knocking on doors and visiting the elderly, and a lot of those are Irish and are on their own," he said, pointing out that even in areas with good community spirit people can fall through cracks. "Sometimes if a person is in, but doesn't open the door and is a bit of a recluse, there's very little you can do," he said.

Part of the problem, he says, is that the character of traditionally Irish neighbourhoods have changed as people have grown older and moved away.

"And then if somebody's on their own in a house, living alone, as time moves on and parish priests move and people move on, every so often you find that these people do become isolated because the neighbours are no longer there," he said.

## Capuchins build on historic past to look to future vocations

The Irish Capuchins' Year of Vocation, launched last weekend at Knock, is a "natural progression" from how the order was in the national spotlight last year in connection with their 400th anniversary in Ireland and the centenary of the Easter Rising, the order's vocations promoter has said.

"It's a year to actively promote the Capuchin way of life," Bro. Martin Bennett told *The Irish Catholic*, explaining that the year is directed towards both new vocations and helping current friars "tune back

in to their own Capuchin vocations" to share their own vocation stories, looking outwards as well as inwards.

Commenting on how elderly members of the congregation in Knock responded with delight when asked to help pray for vocations, he said: "When people get old they're often times left out of the loop – they're not asked. We believe in our Capuchin tradition that our older friars are a source of wisdom, so we're tuning into that so we can re-energise and re-focus ourselves."

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# THE GOSPEL OF THE FAMILY: JOY FOR THE WORLD

THE FUTURE OF THE FAMILY IN IRELAND

## Speakers



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Maria Steen



Mary Kenny



Prof. Patricia Casey



Bairbre Cahill



Patrick Treacy

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**SATURDAY 30TH**

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# JRS offers new safe space for asylum seekers

Mags Gargan

The Jesuit Refugee Service has opened a new multi-purpose resource centre designed to create a safe space to support asylum seekers in adapting to their new surroundings in Ireland.

Seomra Fáilte was opened in the Baleskin Reception Centre in Dublin in July and offers a range of activities to newly arrived refugees and long-term residents in Baleskin to promote their mental health and well-being, ranging from a yoga class to a befriending service and volunteering opportunities. A tranquility garden has been installed and a community garden is also planned.

## Pilot project

David Moriarty, Assistant Director of JRS Ireland said the pilot project will also facilitate residents "to run their own projects, which

so far has included teaching Arabic and self-defence classes", to allow residents to share their skillsets.

"It is about providing the right information and right tools to enable them to adapt to living in direct provision and hopefully integrate into society as and when that will happen," he said.

"We are providing information packs to show them what to expect in Ireland, both from the asylum process itself and also beyond that, the culture of Ireland, so that they don't feel as isolated when they move on to other direct provision centres.

"We want to give them that initial grounding and a little bit of security, which will help them to be more resilient as they go through the system and deal with all the challenges that lie ahead of them."

## Killaloe Youth Faith Fest



Bishop Fintan Monahan poses for a selfie with young volunteers organising the Killaloe Diocesan Youth Forum on Saturday, September 30 in St Flannan's College, Ennis, Co. Clare. The day is geared towards young people from Transition Year to Leaving Cert and will be jam-packed with workshops, information stands and fun-filled events. Contact Cora on 087-2400135 or see Killaloe Diocesan Youth Faith Fest on Facebook.

## 50 homeless families helped as Mater Dei opens its doors

Chai Brady

With space for 50 families, the new Crosscare centre at the Mater Dei Institute in Dublin has opened and is beginning to house vulnerable people.

This follows the move of DCU students to St Patrick's College, leaving the space open to be used as emergency temporary accommodation run by the Catholic charity.

The project is part of a Government initiative to move homeless families into nine 'family hubs' across Dublin, in an effort to minimise the reliance on hotels.

Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin said: "In the past few weeks, Crosscare's family hub on the former Mater Dei campus has begun providing new dignified emergency accommodation for families.

"This is still temporary accommodation, but in a short space of time, Crosscare has already helped a significant number of these families to move out into homes of their own."

Archbishop Martin said that for 75 years Crosscare has "mirrored the loving kindness of Jesus Christ".

The annual collection for Crosscare took the place of the Share collection at all Masses in the Archdiocese of Dublin last weekend.

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# Challenging the liberal narrative of ever more progress



Massive changes to Irish family life don't get highlighted by the media, writes **David Quinn**

Those of a liberal persuasion tend to congratulate themselves on the changes that have taken place in Irish society over the last few decades as we have become more 'tolerant', more 'compassionate', more 'open-minded' and more 'mature'. They like to remind us of 'how far we have come' compared with the Ireland of say, the 1950s, or even the 1990s, and then invite us to go further still along the road to 'progress'.

RTÉ's *Prime Time* has been on air now for 25 years and to mark the occasion, the show has been running a series of 'retrospectives' about the major debates that have taken place in that time. Half of the show that aired on Thursday evening of last week was about the social debates, including abortion, divorce and same-sex marriage. I took part in the studio discussion following the report which looked back on the last 25 years.

## Detrimental

The report was what you would expect, that is to say, it mostly invited the audience to celebrate the social changes that have taken place since 1992.

In fact, *Prime Time* presenter, David McCullagh (one of the station's fairest presenters, by the way), asked me straight up following the report which of the changes outlined in it have really been detrimental to Irish society, another way of asking, haven't we traditionalists got it all wrong? David put it to me that despite the introduction of divorce, the marriage rate in Ireland is actually higher now than it was in 1995, the year of the divorce referendum.

I didn't challenge that particular point. I've looked



it up in the meantime. The marriage rate in 1995 was unusually low. It was an atypical year. But overall the marriage rate in Ireland was low then and remains low. It is in or around the EU average, which is far lower than it was in the 1960s. Marriage is not as popular as it was once and that's a symptom of our highly individualistic societies.

I did, point out, however, that the number of people in Ireland who have suffered a broken marriage has soared over the years. In 1986, according to Census data, 40,000 people had separated. By the Census of last year, the number was closing in on 300,000. That's a huge increase, although it should be admitted that our marital breakdown rate is still low by Western standards.

**“*Prime Time* has been on air now for 25 years and to mark the occasion, it has been running ‘retrospectives’ about the major debates that have taken place”**

By the way, during the divorce referendum of 1995, newspapers like the *Irish Times* predicted that introducing divorce would decrease levels of cohabitation and births outside marriage. The exact opposite has happened, as we shall see.

Challenging the liberal narrative of ever more progress is difficult because liberals control what gets talked about, to a large

extent. What confirms their narrative of progress gets highlighted. The worst episodes from our past history get similarly highlighted. What is inconvenient, tends to be ignored.

Thus, the *Prime Time* report did not tell viewers about the seven-fold increase in the number of broken marriages since 1986.

The report could have looked at other changes in the patterns of family life, for example, at the fact that more than a third of children are now born outside of marriage compared with only 5% in the early 1980s and about 15% in 1990, slightly before *Prime Time* first aired.

There has also been an enormous increase in the rate of cohabitation. Why do liberals never highlight, never mind, raise the alarm at figures like these? It's because they don't think they are very important, or else they see them as manifestations of personal freedom. If family patterns are changing, they tend to think, then that it is a good thing because people have more choices than they did when society was stricter and more traditionalist.

They do not care to consider the sometimes detrimental consequences of these changes for the adults involved, for society as a whole, and particularly for children. As I pointed out on the show, when marriage goes into decline via a low marriage rate, a growing incidence of divorce and separation, through a growing rate of births outside marriage and a growing incidence of

cohabitation, more and more children end up being raised without the presence of a father.

Looked at objectively, it is very hard to see how this is a good thing, a mark of

'progress'.

Liberals rarely worry about rates of abortion either. They really only worry about a lack of access to abortion. Thus, when you point out that one in five pregnancies in the UK end in abortion every year, amounting to almost 200,000 abortions annually, they tend simply to ignore the fact. Like rising marital breakdown, it is, for them, simply another manifestation of personal freedom.

Would a future *Prime Time* be alarmed if our abortion rate rises to British levels? It seems doubtful when the massive changes to Irish family life don't get highlighted, never mind raise alarm bells.

This is why it is so hard to challenge the liberal narrative. It has huge blind spots that prevent it from seeing certain facts, or, when they are presented, seeing those facts as

particularly significant. This wouldn't matter so much if conservatives had the same chance as liberals to present their case to the public, but they don't, not even close. In all seriousness, how many members of the public are remotely familiar with the sort of figures I have presented above, let alone have heard a full debate about them?

## Changes

Thus, we are inclined instead to think the changes of the last few decades have, for the most part, been an unalloyed good when the picture is far more mixed than that. Maybe one day our media will get around to presenting the public with a more nuanced picture of what is really happening in our society, a more rounded picture that better enables the public to assess whether the social changes have been good or bad, or a mixture of both, which is what I believe.

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# Music, fasts and exorcism with the Ethiopian Orthodox

A three-hour Mass probably wouldn't go down well in the average Irish parish, but according to a priest from the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Ireland, his congregation can't get enough.

It's not only the length of Mass that makes Ethiopian Orthodoxy different. Almost all the liturgy is musical and has copious singing between the priest and worshippers.

With Christian Orthodoxy being the fastest growing religion in Ireland, according to the latest census, *The Irish Catholic* spoke to the first and only Ethiopian Orthodox priest in Ireland, Abba (Father) Yohannes Amsalu, to learn more about his congregation and faith.

"Almost all our liturgy is in music, for example the priest

**Oriental Orthodox strongly influenced by Old Testament, writes Chai Brady**



says something and the congregation responds. Almost half our prayers they respond to. There's a lot of singing," Abba Yohannes said.

He admitted that "if all those three hours the priest is only praying it would be boring", but because they are part of the liturgy they "feel comforted".

Not eating meat on Fridays seems easy compared to the intense 265 days of fasting throughout the year that Abba Yohannes observes. No

other Church has as many fast days as the Ethiopian Orthodox (Tewahedo) Church.

The fasting periods are Lent, Ninevah, Gehad, the Fast of the Apostles, Advent and the Assumption which vary with regard to length and what can be consumed.

Wednesday and Friday are always fast days as well, and generally Ethiopian Orthodox would fast from all animal products and live on a strictly vegan diet.

Not all fast days are mandatory, with Abba Yohannes saying: "There are exceptions for pregnant women, if you are sick you are allowed to eat, young children are allowed to eat. After the age of 7 they do a little bit of fasting maybe two or three hours until they are 10 or 12. If the family are fasting, they would like to fast as a family all together."

## Penances

He added that the congregation are happy to fast, and don't complain, but sometimes it's difficult to get food that has no animal products in Ireland, whereas in Ethiopia it's very easy.

It's also very rare for people to take Communion at Mass, commonly teenagers and children would, but generally not adults.

Abba Yohannes said: "We, as Church leaders, encourage the congregation to receive the Eucharist every Sunday, but they say they are not worthy enough to receive it every Sunday because you have to go to Confession, they have to talk to a priest before they receive it and their penances. If they receive the Holy Communion they give honour and respect, they are not allowed to work on a Sunday."

Abba Yohannes graduated with a BA in Divinity from St Patrick's College Maynooth last year. Before that he spent eight years in the oldest and largest monastery in Ethiopia, called Waldeba, which has 150km of land and is in the middle of the desert.

The culture shock was tough for the Ethiopian priest, who was given little to no information about the climate



Abba Yohannes Amsalu stands outside St Mary's Church on Haddington Road, Dublin. Photos: Chai Brady

or culture he was entering.

It didn't help that he arrived in the winter of 2010, when Ireland and Britain were covered in heavy snow, and temperatures plummeted to record breaking lows, generally around -10C. In Mayo temperature dropped to -17C, and Ballyhaise had the coldest day on record at -9.4C according to Met Éireann.

**“They trained me how to preach and celebrate Mass, and give penance... but not about the weather”**

"When I came to Ireland in the end of 2010 there was really really heavy snow on that day. I had no information about the snow because we have no snow in Ethiopia, it was my first time," said Abba Yohannes.

"Everything was white, I didn't have warm clothes because I have no information about weather, and my God I

was feeling cold."

He said before he was sent to Ireland "they trained me how to preach and celebrate Mass, and give penance – everything spiritual – but not about the weather or the culture".

Sayings like 'thanks a million' baffled the priest, who mentioned to his archbishop that anyone doing pastoral work abroad should be fully prepared for the trip.

However he said there are also similarities, as people go out of their way to help strangers in both countries, and there is also a lot of respect for priests.

"When I came to Ireland I found people so welcoming, helping us and even the younger people, I think most people complain 'they're young they have no faith', but they have good ethics. I have never met a violent young person here," he added.

Ethiopian Orthodoxy is the largest of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and is not in communion with the Eastern Orthodox Churches which include the Russian Ortho-

dox – covered last week in the series – as well as several others.

They are in communion with the Coptic Christians, mainly based in Egypt as well as several others including the Armenian Apostolic and Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Churches. They do not accept the primacy of the Pope; the Ethiopian Orthodox's patriarch is Abune Mathias. However they have six autocephalous Churches in the Oriental Orthodox Church, and each have their own patriarch, but Pope Tawadros II is known as the 'first among equals' and acts as president when there are gatherings of the Oriental Orthodox.

## Stone tablets

In the Ethiopian Orthodox Church the priest can't celebrate Mass without a Tabot. It is a copy of the Ark of Covenant which is described in the Book of Exodus as containing the two original stone tablets where the Ten Commandments were written.

Tabot is a Ge'ez word, which is an ancient language

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not used in Ethiopia anymore except during liturgies.

A church can't exist without a Tabot, and when it is consecrated it is kept in the Qeddest Qeddusan, or Holy of Holies, where only the clergy can enter. The Tabot is only brought outside during festivals, and is covered by vestments and carried on the priest's head in a procession

around the church. The Tabot is generally made from wood or alabaster.

### Fasting

While the Catholic Church recognises 73 canonical books, the Ethiopian Orthodox recognise 81, some of which they recognise almost exclusively – such as the Book of Enoch.

Abba Yohannes told the paper that fasting and the food they eat is influenced by the Old Testament, and they focus more heavily on Trinitarian teaching: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Exorcism is highly practiced in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, with many people travelling to Holy places to have rituals per-

formed on them.

"It is common in our Church especially in Ethiopia where we have Holy Water in the monasteries and in holy places. In the churches we have stream water flowing from the relics of the Saints," said Abba Yohannes, adding that he has witnessed successful exorcisms.

Ethiopian Orthodox are

Judeo-Christians, as they received Judaism before the coming of Christ, they still have Jewish links such as the practice of not eating pork. They also rest on both Saturday (Sabbath) and Sunday.

### “The support of the Irish Catholic Church helped our community since the beginning”

Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin allows the Ethiopian Orthodox to share St Mary's Catholic Church on Haddington Road as they don't have a Church of their own.

Abba Yohannes expressed his great appreciation and thanks to Archbishop Martin, saying: "We have a dialogue towards unity".

"The Catholic Church here in Ireland are so positive towards us, we couldn't survive or worship here without their help. For example Archbishop Martin allowed us to worship every Sunday for free, and I live with the parish priests," he said.

We live peacefully and help each other in tolerance, I think this encourages us to

work more closely with the Catholic Church."

He added that in Ethiopia at his monastery there was "no transportation access, no light because it's a desert and so no radio, no TV, no internet access even, so imagine how it's different from Ireland".

"But when I came here it was difficult to find a place to worship, but the support of the Irish Catholic Church helped our community since the beginning. They granted me a place to stay in the presbytery, and other supports."

Abba Yohannes added that his congregation is growing with about 50 people attending his Dublin service every Sunday, and this rises to over 100 people on a feast day.

He travels all over Ireland to minister to his faithful, where over 30-40 people attend his Saturday Mass.

"The parish is growing and there are many reasons for that. We have students, university staff, qualified people working in Ireland and asylum seekers as well," adding: "as a priest I am very happy to work here in a Christian country".

**I** In the next part of the series we meet the Georgian Orthodox.

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# Hook has been put on trial for questioning the maxims of a permissive society

It's hard to avoid the conclusion that what is primarily at stake is not so much young women's safety as contemporary sexual politics and the ideological battles surrounding them, writes **Fr Andrew McMahon**

**F**or those aware of the recent storm engulfing Newstalk radio's George Hook, but unfamiliar with its origins, let's recall the basic facts: at the start of his *High Noon* programme on September 8, the broadcaster was drawing attention to stories in the news. One was a British court case in which a former Commonwealth Games swimmer faced charges of raping a 19-year-old student in Wales.

The young woman had met a fellow swimmer and best friend of the accused at a Cardiff nightclub and later that evening had consensual sex with him. She alleges that this man subsequently left her company while his friend came into the room and raped her.

The student believed she had been "passed around" and, 16 months later, approached police. The second swimmer was subsequently charged, but acquitted of one count of rape. He may yet face retrial on a second charge, about which the jury in the case had been undecided.

## Commentary

Having summarised this story, Hook went on to comment upon it. His commentary included the following, widely quoted remarks: "But when you then look deeper into the story you have to ask certain questions: why does a girl who just meets a fella in a bar go back to a hotel room? She's only just barely met him. She has no idea of his health conditions, she has no idea who he is, she has no idea what dangers he might pose."

Having thus outlined what he saw as the risks involved, Hook proposed that "modern-day social activity means she goes

back with him". Focusing on the alleged actions of the second swimmer, Hook remarked: "Should she be raped? Of course, she shouldn't. Is she entitled to say no? Absolutely. Is the guy who came in a scumbag? Certainly. Should he go to jail? Of course. All of those things." Hook then asked: "But is there no blame now to the person who puts themselves in danger?"

He continued: "But there is a point of responsibility," and concluded: "The real issue nowadays, and increasingly, is the question of the personal responsibility that young girls are taking for their own safety."

A tornado of condemnation followed these remarks, encompassing Government ministers, political leaders, women's organisations, victims' support groups and media commentators. His critics appeared to unite in alleging that, by using the terms 'blame' and 'responsibility' in such a context, Hook was attributing to the alleged victim a share of the blame for the rape – if a rape had indeed happened – and was, consequently, diminishing the responsibility of her attacker for the crime he had committed.

In the furore which followed, Hook was given no quarter. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre's chief executive, Noeline Blackwell, described his comments as "problematic,

wrong and entirely irresponsible."

The National Women's Council of Ireland declared them to be "dangerous and a perfect encapsulation of rape culture".

Minister for Justice Charlie Flanagan found someone in Hook's position expressing such views to be "a matter of real concern". For Labour leader Brendan Howlin it was "depressing and unacceptable".

**“He nowhere suggests that the young woman invited a rape upon herself”**

Third-level education minister, Mary Mitchell O'Connor described the comments as "a disgrace" and believed they were "representative of a deeply embedded culture in Ireland of misogyny, of sexism, of double standards and victim blaming".

And there was much, much more.

But let's return, for a moment, to the facts: Hook at no point suggested that if a rape had taken place, its perpetrator should not face the full rigour of the law. He at no point suggested that the teenager, because she had already had sex with his friend, deserved to be subjected to the alleged sexual designs of the second swimmer. He at no point suggested that she was not fully enti-

tled to say 'no' to any such unwanted advances. Hook, in fact, dismissed each one of these inferences and – as the text above clearly verifies – dismissed them forcefully. So why the uproar?

In the eyes of his detractors, Hook's offence appeared to be his critiquing the young woman's activities earlier that evening, in the light of the ordeal she claims she later suffered, and his raising questions as to how responsible her overall approach had been when viewed against its alleged outcome.

He nowhere suggests that the young woman invited a rape upon herself, but he does clearly infer that she was somewhat reckless in her behaviour, exposing herself needlessly to danger. Hook reaches the conclusion, therefore, that while rape is abhorrent and its perpetrators should be jailed, young women should avoid leaving themselves in vulnerable situations and need to take appropriate responsibility for their personal safety.

## Concerns

It remains difficult to see what a Dublin Rape Crisis Centre could find so "wrong and entirely irresponsible" about Hook's concerns, or why a National Women's Council would find his conclusions so "dangerous". Or what causes a minister responsible for third level students, and presumably

sensitive to the dangers facing young people, to consider Hook's remarks "a disgrace".

What could be possibly so objectionable as to merit such outright denunciations?

Regrettable though it is to have to say it, it's hard to avoid the conclusion that what Noeline Blackwell believes is primarily at stake here is not so much young women's safety as contemporary sexual politics and the ideological battles surrounding them.

George Hook did not face a furore in recent times because he proposed anything which might endanger the safety of any young woman. He faced a furore because he had the temerity to interrogate – in observing the experiences of this Welsh 19-year-old – the values underpinning a pseudo-liberal sexual culture so prevalent in our western world. He was effectively asking if a culture which had insisted, within a matter of years, upon throwing the rules overboard could easily evolve into any kind of safe place for its participants.

He wondered if a teenager whose behaviour appeared to embody its 'liberal' ethos did not, in turn, suffer from its largely unacknowledged underbelly. His concerns challenged the – now ascendant – assumption that sexual fulfilment and personal well-being are to be nurtured through a culture free from any meaningful restraints, save those resulting from individual choice.

If there's anything that such a self-referential and self-indulgent culture despises, however, it is the

notion of being challenged from beyond itself. And George Hook was taught this lesson, mercilessly, in the days following his utterances.

*Irish Daily Mail* columnist Mary Carr captured the spirit of much of the vitriol visited upon him. Hook's "appalling comments", she told readers, were "laced with anti-woman prejudice", of which she provided an illustration: "They are based on the unspoken assumption that a woman who drinks her head off, is scantily-clad, behaves flirtatiously, or goes to bed with a man who she hardly knows, is somehow 'asking for it'."

**“Everybody has the right to enjoy themselves without fear of being attacked”**

Outraged at this example of regressive thinking, Carr went on to locate its origins within Irish Catholicism: "Hook is an old fogey," she explained, "a throwback to the dark ages when Church-sanctioned sexual repression kept women in their place and encouraged men to see them as their property or vassals."

*The Irish Times'* Social Affairs correspondent Kitty Holland feared, moreover, that Hook was no rarity but had spoken "unfortunately, for many". His views, claimed Holland, were underpinned by a society actively seeking to disadvantage women in a variety of arenas, not least the Constitution which



George Hook; inset from left, Brendan Howlin, Kitty Holland and Noeline Blackwell.



"denies us the right to decide what happens to and in our bodies". Holland's allusion to abortion here is hardly surprising. It should serve to remind us, in this context, that so many of the unwanted pregnancies which feed the abortion industry in places like Britain result from a permissive sexual culture, especially among the young.

Hook was ritually put on trial, in recent times, for essentially questioning the maxims of that permissive society. Trying him was especially easy in an Irish Republic where politicians, police, public and voluntary bodies can be guaranteed to play along once an aggressive media whip is cracked. They all performed on cue in this case and, before long, Hook was apologising profusely for having dared to think outside the box.

Kitty Holland noted the "glee on social media" that Hook had been rounded upon by his colleagues at Newstalk radio, while the *Irish Daily Mail*, which had devoted much space to savaging him, appeared triumphant in reporting Hook's "humiliating apology". In this, at least, they were right. Hook's apology was not just humiliating, it was - to borrow a Brendan Howlin word - depressing.

### Duty of care

A voice which had, on a Friday, bravely called to account a culture which may yet be proven to have been party to a teenager's rape, found itself, by the Monday, mouthing an apology which politically correct masters had clearly drafted: "Everybody has the right to enjoy themselves without fear of being attacked," declared Hook, "and as a society we have a duty to our daughters and granddaughters to protect that right. On Friday, I failed in that duty of care, a failure I deeply regret and for which I am truly sorry."

Hook's tone of "both remorse and shame", as he apologised, appeared to genuinely please Kitty Holland. "He sounded like he got it," she concluded.

His fiercer critics proved more difficult to placate and, by Friday, RTÉ had got the Taoiseach involved. Leo Varadkar told *Morning Ireland* that the comments of the veteran broadcaster had been "indicative of attitudes that still exist in Irish society that need to change".

Within minutes of this particular contribution, Newstalk announced they were suspending Hook.

**Fr Andrew McMahon** is a priest of the Dromore diocese.

# Are young Catholics drawn towards the Latin Mass?

Even if it is not growing as rapidly as some advocates claim, the extraordinary form Mass is growing in strength among those who continue to practice Catholicism, writes **Peadar Laighléis**

As long as I can remember, attracting young people to the Church has been a hot topic. There have been many trials: folk Masses, youth festivals and Taizé evenings, for example. None have proved to be a magic bullet. I don't believe there is a single answer to this problem, but we could begin by looking at what causes the young to stay away.

Those concerned with youth faith formation since the 1970s will tell you the present culture goes against religious practice. So it does, but what is to be done? The first hurdle is that the vast majority of Catholics under 50 have little more than a shallow knowledge of Catholicism.

As time goes on, younger Catholics are further removed from the religious society that sustained their elders. This deficit has been pointed out since the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), and it seems reality hasn't sunk in. Those Catholics who have overcome what was lacking in school did so through much personal study and reflection, though this is rarely appreciated.

## The traditional Latin Mass has won many converts to the Faith over centuries

The traditional Latin Mass, known as the extraordinary form, is one outlet for the young thinking Catholic. I think the most striking difference seen in the extraordinary form Mass is that men attend in a higher proportion than normal and the second is the fact that that most attendees are too young to remember when the Latin Mass was the norm.

The traditional Latin Mass has won many converts to the Faith over centuries, but here and now reverent celebration and fellowship with like-minded worshippers



are powerful draws (some young people attend Eastern Catholic liturgies for similar reasons). Nonetheless, if some young Catholics are going to the trouble to attend the Latin Mass, when most of their friends go nowhere at all, there is an energy there which could be harvested for the good.

### Statistics

France is given as a country in which the extraordinary form of the Mass flourishes. This is true, but the cited statistics are not always borne out. I have heard time and time again that one third of all Catholics attending Mass in France went to the extraordinary form, later this became half and finally a majority of French practicing Catholics allegedly chose the extraordinary form. None of the sources quoting these figures were French and when I put this to French lay activists, they told me that these numbers were exaggerated.

When I read an article in a reputable Catholic journal asserting that a majority of French priests would be celebrating the extraordinary form exclusively in 20 years' time, I resolved to check the data available. In 2016, 121 priests were ordained in France; 73 were diocesan and 48 were members of religious orders or institutes. Twenty four of the religious belonged to societies which typically celebrate the extraordinary form.

This two dozen includes seven Society of St Pius X priests, whose canonical status remains unresolved. The 24 make up 21% of priests

ordained in France last year and this is an impressive figure as only 3% of French parishes offer the extraordinary form. But it is a long way from the conclusion projected above.

2015 saw 60 diocesan ordinations and 50 in religious institutes, and though there were 76 ordinations in the orders to 75 in the dioceses in 2014, it must be remembered that the congregations include established orders such as the Dominicans and Cistercians and newer groups such as the Emmanuel Community which draw their inspiration from the Charismatic Renewal movement.

One can make a case on the last point that the Charismatic experience in France is very different from that in Ireland. The same is true of the traditional movement.

## The celebration of the extraordinary form Mass in Ireland and the English-speaking world tends to be silent low Mass or choir-sung Mass

As a rule, the celebration of the extraordinary form Mass in Ireland and the English-speaking world tends to be silent low Mass or choir-sung Mass. In French-, German- and Dutch-speaking countries, the low Mass tends to be a dialogue Mass and the sung Mass is sung by the congregation.

This betokens a more active engagement by the worshippers with the Mass

than here. Commentators correctly cite Pope Benedict XVI's advocacy of the extraordinary form Mass, but they should remember that he is doing so from the French and German experience of the extraordinary form rather than what has become the norm here since the extraordinary form was reinstated.

It should be said that France and Italy incorporate many Baroque-era frills in the extraordinary form which are traditionally missing here and in this respect, Ireland is more in line with ideas of the liturgical movement before Vatican II by leaving them out. Pope Benedict was seriously influenced by this movement, so it deserves closer study.

The extraordinary form Mass is a response to the worldwide crisis of decline in Catholic practice. It is

not the only one - there are many more. Nor is it a unified answer in its own right.

Even if it is not growing as rapidly as some advocates claim, it is growing in strength among those who continue to practice Catholicism. It is secondary to the need for clarity of doctrine, but it is strongly supportive of that belief.

It is true that goodness will win more over than beauty or truth, but to advance the Church's mission, truth and beauty need to be harnessed in the service of goodness to provide a wholly Catholic alternative to the world's woes. This option must be based on love of both God and neighbour, as exclusion of either is not a Catholic option.

**Peadar Laighléis** is a past president of the Latin Mass Society of Ireland.

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# Out&About

## Our Lady's well & Grotto in Ballyheigue



◀ **KERRY:** The O'Carroll and Harrington families from Ballyheigue, Co Kerry, came in force to hear Mass at 'Our Lady's Well and Grotto' Ballyheigue for Our Lady's birthday, by the Bishop of Kerry Dr Ray Browne and priests. The annual Mass brings two thousand people to this celebration every year. Photo: John Cleary

▼ **FERMANAGH:** Botha parish serves up cake in celebration of the 140 years of service four people have given to the Church. Sr Edel Bannon, Sisters of Mercy (50 years), Fr Jimmy McPhillips of Botha parish (25 years), missionary Fr Niall Martin (40 years) and Fr Seamus Quinn of Cleenish parish (25).



**LIMERICK:** Pins and certs were handed out to Pioneers by Fr Seán Ó Longaigh at Askeaton Church. Back row: Fr Seán, Michael Sheahan and James O'Regan (Golden Jubilarians), Helen Nestor (Diamond Jubilarian). Front Row: Breda Kelly, secretary of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association (PTAA), Nellie Crowe (Diamond Jubilarian) and PTAA President Brigid Costello.



**CORK:** Rev. Frank McKevitt and Rev. David Lane pictured following their ordination to the permanent diaconate by Bishop John Buckley at the North Cathedral with their wives, Rena and Siobhan, Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Cllr Tony and Georgina Fitzgerald and Canon Bertie O'Mahony PP, Diocesan Director of Permanent Diaconate. Photo: Mike English



**USA:** Marianist Fr Michael Reaume celebrates 60 years of service to the Church with friends and family at a jubilee in Dayton, Ohio.



Edited by Chai Brady  
chai@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



**TIPPERARY:** Music ministers from all corners of Ireland were made welcome for the third Music Ministry Together summer course held in Cistercian College Roscrea. This year's theme was 'Holy is Your Name'.



**LEITRIM:** Nuns celebrate Sr Clare O'Donovan making her Solemn Profession of Vows at the Poor Clare Monastery of Perpetual Adoration, Drumshanbo. Front row: Mother Angela, Sr Clare, Bishop Francis Duffy, Sr Judith, Sr Dominic. Back row: Sr Jemma, Fr Frankie Murray and Sr Paul.



**WESTMEATH:** Bro. Vincent Finnegan OFM, from Achill Island, with his brothers Paul and Eoin. He made his Solemn Profession at Multyfarnham Friary.



**LIMERICK:** Staff of Doon CBS Primary School with the All-Ireland Under 21 Hurling trophy on a visit to the school, pictured are Elizabeth Doherty, principle Joanne O'Connell, hurlers Barry Murphy and Eoghan McNamara, Donal O'Connell and Bro. James Dormer.

## IN SHORT

### 60 years of faithful service to Church

Fr Michael Reaume of the Society of Mary (Marianists) celebrated his 60th jubilee of his first profession in Dayton, Ohio.

Fr Reaume was born in Illinois and raised in Ohio, he has spent decades serving the Church in Dublin in roles such as: vocations and formations director; religious instructor, chaplain and IT programme developer at St Laurence College and community director at St Columba College from 1980-2004. He holds bachelor degrees in education and theology, and has a

Master's degree in biblical languages and literature, he studied in both the US and Switzerland.

He returned to Ireland from travels and working in the US in 2008, and is now a gardener and chaplain at the Killiney County Dublin Marianist Community, where he lives in retirement.

Fr Reaume also assists with campus ministry in St Laurence College.

### Music and fun for young and old

Five days of music and liturgy brought families, religious and lay people young

and old to the third Music Ministry Together summer course held in Cistercian College Roscrea.

The theme this year was 'Holy is Your Name' and throughout the week various names for God from scripture were explored through music and liturgies.

Participants took part in a free concert, in which they showcase some of the music learned during the course. They were joined by Fr Ray Kelly as special guest.

This course has a particular emphasis on contemporary Church music and prayerful liturgies, and Music Ministry Together 2018 is already at the planning stage.

## 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.

The fourth annual novena to Mary, Untier of Knots, take places from September 25 to October 3 in the Cathedral of Ss Patrick & Felim, Cavan with a Mass each evening at 7:30pm except Sunday October 1, when there will be Novena Devotions at 7:30pm. The theme is 'We are Family', in preparation for WMoF.

## 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.

## DUBLIN

International Mass on Sunday October 1 at 6pm (Folk Mass) in Rathmines. Bring a small flag, wear your National Costume.

Scripture study on Thursday October 5 and Thursday October 12 with Fr Martin Hogan, and with Sean Goan on Wednesday October 25 and Wednesday November 1, all at 7.30pm, in Rathmines Church.

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.

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, Srulleen Parish, Clondalkin.

## FERMANAGH

Mass to St Peregrine for all the

sick every Wednesday evening in St Patrick's Church, Derrygonnelly at 7.30pm.

## GALWAY

*Call to Fatima* an award winning film produced by Thomas McCormack will be shown in Abbey Church on Francis St, Friday, October 6 at 7.30pm. There will also be blessing of relics of St Francis and St Jacinta.

## 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.

## LOUTH

Sixty-year anniversary of the All-Irish Pilgrimage to St Brigid's birthplace at Faughart, Dundalk. Ceremonies led by Archbishop Eamon Martin: prayers at the shrine, Mass and blessing with the relic of St Brigid and more, all as Gaeilge. September 24, 3pm.

## 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.

## MONAGHAN

There will be a week-long mission led by the Redemptorist mission team beginning on Saturday, September 30 at 8pm in St Marys Church, Lattin and on Sunday, October 1 at 10am in St Patrick's Church, Bawn.

## 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.

Feast of St Thérèse of Lisieux Sunday, October 1, celebrate with the Carmelite Sisters in Delgany at a 9.30am Mass at the monastery and a blessing of roses. Refreshments afterwards.



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# World Report

## UK MPs set to launch new 'Catholics for Labour' group

The UK's Labour party are creating a new group in order to reach out to the country's Catholics.

Nine MPs are launching a 'Catholics for Labour' group this Sunday which will focus on social justice and will be guided by Catholic social teaching.

Labour politician Mike Kane MP, currently shadow schools minister, said there are 3.8 million Catholic voters in England and Wales and "Labour will ignore them at its peril".

"I've always seen my politics as inextricably tied to my faith and I truly believe there is a natural connection between Catholicism and the Labour movement," he told the BBC.

"My desire to help those who have fallen on hard times all stems from my Catholic upbringing," he added.

The group is expected to publish a letter this week-end setting out its goals, and will be signed by eight other Catholic MPs on the Labour



Mike Kane MP.

benches according to the BBC. They expect to gather support from the wider party membership.

The group will be formally launched with a Mass at St Mary Magdalen Church.

Alongside Mike Kane, founders are believed to include Jon Cruddas, Keith Vaz, David Crausby, Stephen Pound, Emma Lewell-Buck and Conor McGinn.

A spokesman said the

group is aimed at those interested in applying Catholic social teaching to public policy, as well as Catholics interested in entering politics in the future.

### Ambitions

The founders say in a letter that they have "lofty ambitions".

"We are not about standing still or merely making observations of the world around us. Our hearts and minds are firmly focused on social justice and guided by the teaching of the Catholic faith we will work together to actively shape that world and prepare members for a life in public service."

Critics have said this will be seen as an attempt to win back Catholic voters who traditionally voted for Labour, with half of Catholic supporters in Scotland favouring the Scottish National Party.

The group is expected to face difficult questioning in relation to same-sex marriage and abortion.

## Catholic-origin health group railroaded into Euthanasia

Belgium's Brothers of Charity Group, which runs 15 centres for psychiatric patients, has rejected a Vatican order to stop offering euthanasia.

The organisation said that it "always took into account shifts and evolutions within society", and "emphatically believed" its euthanasia programme was consistent with the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

"We take unbearable and hopeless suffering and patients' requests for euthanasia seriously. On the other hand, we want to protect life and ensure euthanasia is performed only if there is no more possibility of providing a reasonable treatment perspective to the patient," the board said.

Only three Brothers of Charity are on the 15-strong board of trustees.

Bro. Rene Stockman, superior general of the Brothers of Charity in Rome, said he "deplores the fact that there is no willingness to negotiate" the text of the vision statement on the part of the Belgian organisation.

### Demand

Bro. Stockman said Pope Francis gave his personal approval to a Vatican demand that the Brothers of Charity reverse its policy

by the end of August. He said brothers who serve on the board of the Brothers of Charity Group must each sign a joint letter to their superior general declaring that they "fully support the vision of the *Magisterium* of the Catholic Church, which has always confirmed that human life must be respected and protected in absolute terms, from the moment of conception till its natural end".

## Vatican news

### Vatican diplomat embroiled in child pornography case

A member of the Vatican diplomatic corps serving in Washington has been recalled to the Vatican as he is involved in a criminal investigation regarding child pornography, the Vatican said. The Vatican was informed by the US State Department "of a possible violation of laws relating to child pornography images by a member of the diplomatic corps of the Holy See accredited to Washington".

"The Holy See, following the practice

of sovereign states, recalled the priest in question, who is currently in Vatican City," the Vatican press office said.

A request to lift the official's diplomatic immunity was denied by the Vatican

### Pope commends artists for 'clean fun'

Pope Francis thanked an association of street performers, carnival workers, musicians and magicians for their dedication in bringing joy to men, women and children.

The "joyful vocation" of entertaining people of all ages is also a mission to

provide "healthy and clean fun without the need to go low to look for material to entertain people," the Pope told the National Association of Traveling Performers.

Commemorating the association's 70th anniversary, Pope Francis acknowledged that the life of a traveling performer "is not an easy life," often requiring them to go to places "that don't always appreciate the social value of this type of show".

### Rescued Salesian priest meets Pope

One day after his release from captivity,





Edited by Chai Brady  
chai@irishcatholic.ie

## Prayers at a protest



A woman says a prayer next to a police officer in riot gear during protests this week after a not-guilty verdict in the murder trial of former St Louis police officer Jason Stockley, charged with the 2011 fatal shooting of Anthony Lamar Smith, who was black. Photo: CNS

## World obesity and malnutrition levels are still rising – UN report

Despite goals to end global hunger by 2030, the latest report from the UN shows the number of undernourished people has increased rapidly.

The number of people lacking adequate food on the planet increased from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million in 2016. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations' (UNFAO) recent report.

The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017 noted that famine struck South Sudan for several months in 2017, and the situations

in Nigeria, Somalia and Yemen were close to being identified as famines.

It stated: "Over the past ten years, the number of violent conflicts around the world has increased significantly, in particular in countries already facing food insecurity, hitting rural communities the hardest and having a negative impact on food production and availability."

Pope Francis is scheduled to visit the UNFAO on October 16, the UN-sponsored World Food Day.

In 2015 he criticised the

"paradox" of the free flow of the arms trade while petty politics and self-interest block humanitarian aid such as food for starving people.

Stunting of growth affects 155 million children under the age of five around the world due to lack of food, while childhood obesity is on the rise in all regions with the exception of Western Africa, South America and Eastern Asia, who have seen a decline.

### Rapid rate

However adult obesity is rising all over the world

at a rapid rate. It has more than doubled from 1980 to 2014 – as now more than 600 million adults (13% of world's adult population) were found to be obese.

"While it varies across regions, the problem is most severe in Northern America, Europe and Oceania, where 28% of adults are classified as obese, compared with 7% in Asia and 11% in Africa. In Latin America and the Caribbean roughly one quarter of the adult population is currently considered as obese," the report states.

Salesian Father Tom Uzhunnalil met with Pope Francis.

Fr Uzhunnalil [pictured] was kidnapped March 4, 2016, from a home for the aged and disabled, run by the Missionaries of Charity in Aden, Yemen. Four Missionaries of Charity and 12 others were murdered in the attack.

Before blessing Father Uzhunnalil, the Pope embraced him and said he would continue to pray for him as he had done during his imprisonment.

Recalling his time



in captivity, the Salesian told the Pope that although he was unable to celebrate Mass, "every day, I would repeat to myself, in my heart, all the words of the celebration".

### Mary's courage remembered in Vatican

Mary was a courageous woman who stood by Jesus even when the crowds turned against him and even though she knew he would face a tragic death, Pope Francis

said at a Mass in Domus Sanctae Marthae.

"At the very end, she is there, standing, looking at her son" on the cross. "Maybe she heard comments: 'Look, there is the mother of one of the three delinquents'. But she remains. Silent. She is the mother, she does not deny her son."

Commemorating the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, the Pope reflected on the day's Gospel reading from St John which recounted Jesus' final moments on the cross.

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# Letter from Rome

## Salesian priest recounts brutal capture and liberation

Junno Arocho Esteves

**S**alesian Father Tom Uzhunnalil was sitting in a room in an unknown location, one of several he had been relocated to during his 18-month imprisonment, when he received some unexpected news.

"Those who kept me came to where I slept and said, 'I bring you good news. We are sending you home. If you need to go to the bathroom, go. Take a shower, but quickly!'" Fr Uzhunnalil told reporters at the Salesian headquarters in Rome.

The Salesian priest from India was kidnapped on March 4, 2016, from a home for the aged and disabled run by the Missionaries of Charity in Aden, Yemen. On that day, four Missionaries of Charity and 12 others were murdered in the attack by uniformed gunmen.

Seeing a group of Missionaries of Charity sisters seated at the news conference in Rome, Fr Uzhunnalil expressed his condolences. However, the memory of the four sisters' martyrdom still proved too difficult to bear.

Silence filled the room as the Salesian priest covered his eyes, tears streaming down his face while doing his utmost to hold back emotions that he thought he could contain.

"I thank God Almighty for this day, for keeping me safe, healthy, clear minded; my emotions were in control until now," he said after regaining his composure.

"I don't want to speak too much about the sisters because I get too emotional," he said.

### Attack

Although reports following his kidnapping suggested the attack was carried out by the so-called Islamic State, Fr Uzhunnalil said his captors never identified themselves.

Knowing very little Arabic, Fr Uzhunnalil said he spoke to the militants with the few words he knew: "*Ana hindiin*" ("I am Indian"). To this day, the Indian priest still wonders why he was the only one spared in the slaughter.

"Why they did not kill me, why they didn't tie my hands, I don't know," he said. "Perhaps they wanted some ransom or whatever it is. I only believe that maybe God had put that into their heads when I said, 'I am Indian', and they made me sit there while they killed the others, the sisters."

After leaving him in the trunk of the car, the militants ransacked the chapel taking the tabernacle,

Salesian Father Tom Uzhunnalil, who was released after being kidnapped 18 months ago in Yemen, is anointed by Pope Francis during a meeting at the Vatican.



wrapping it with the altar linen and placing it near the kidnapped priest. With his hands unbound, Fr Uzhunnalil carefully moved the linen and found "four or five small hosts" which he kept to celebrate the Eucharist the first few days of his capture.

After his short supply ran out, he said, he continued reciting the Mass prayers when alone despite not having bread and wine.

**"You might have prayed to the third God, now you must pray to the second God so tomorrow can go well"**

"I peacefully was able to say my Eucharist all from memory, although bread and wine wasn't available. But I prayed to God to give me those items spiritually," Fr Uzhunnalil said.

He spent most of his days praying for the Pope, his bishop, his Salesian brothers and "certainly those sisters, all those persons whom God had called" on the day

of his abduction.

Fr Uzhunnalil said he found consolation in the words of a hymn, "One day at a time, sweet Jesus".

"Just give me the strength to do every day what I have to do. Yesterday's gone, sweet Jesus, and tomorrow may never be mine. Lord, help me today, show me the way, one day at a time," he would sing to himself in the solitude of his room.

On September 11, Fr Uzhunnalil was given the news of his liberation. After traveling for hours blindfolded, the priest along with two of his captors, waited in the car. Several hours later, his captors told him "some arrangements weren't done" and they headed back.

### Captors

Not understanding the Church's teaching on the Holy Trinity and the "unity of God in three persons", Fr Uzhunnalil recalled, one of his captors said: "You might have prayed to the third God, now you must pray to the second God so tomorrow can go well."

Returning to his cell, he slept

briefly when he was rustled out of bed in the middle of the night on September 12 and taken on the same long ride, his head once again covered. He was then moved to another vehicle where a person pulled up his picture on a cell phone and asked the priest, "Is this you?"

**"The Pope embraced him and said he would continue to pray for him"**

After confirming his identity, the driver drove for more than a day through the desert and told him: "Now you are free, now you are safe."

Fr Uzhunnalil was then taken to the Omani capital of Muscat where he received medical treatment, fresh clothes, and a shaving kit.

While he knows few details about arrangements for his release, Fr Uzhunnalil expressed his gratitude to those who helped secure his liberation, including Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said of Oman, the government authorities of India and the Vatican, including

Pope Francis whom he met the day after his release.

As Pope Francis entered the room September 13, the Salesian knelt before him and kissed his feet. Visibly moved by the gesture, the Pope helped him up and kissed his hands.

Before blessing Fr Uzhunnalil, the Pope embraced him and said he would continue to pray for him as he had done during his imprisonment.

"In that meeting, the Pope kissed my hand. I never deserved it," he said. "I'm only grateful to God for his blessings, I'm sure he prayed much for me."

Even his captors, Fr Uzhunnalil said, knew of the Pope's efforts and inadvertently gave him a reason to hope.

"One of the captors told me: 'The Pope has said you will be freed soon but nothing is happening still'. From that, I knew that the whole world was there, the whole Church was there, the world was worried for me. So, I am grateful," he said.

**Junno Arocho Esteves is a journalist for CNS.**





Inés San Martín

**A**fter statements from several Australian bishops reaffirming Church teaching to Catholics in the country ahead of an upcoming vote on same-sex marriage, two bishops are singing outside the chorus, with one of them saying it's a "decision each person is free to make".

Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen, appointed by Pope Francis to the Diocese of Parramatta, also said that just like the legalisation of divorce didn't change the law of the Church, whatever the outcome of the same-sex plebiscite taking place later this year, it won't change the teaching of the Church.

"The Church will continue to hold that marriage is a natural institution established by God to be a permanent union between one man and one woman, directed both to mutual companionship and to the formation of a family in which children are born and nurtured," he wrote.

Bishop Long also called Catholics to exercise their responsibility to engage in this "community discernment", saying that it's not a matter of a simple yes or no.

Over the next two weeks, Australian households will receive a postal ballot enabling the 16 million eligible voters to have their say. Opinion polls show a majority will vote in favour. If this is the case, the government has vowed to introduce legislation in parliament to legalise same-sex marriage before Christmas.

### Plebiscite

The ballots are supposed to be sent back in November. Unlike a referendum, where the citizens' vote changes the law or at least cannot be easily dismissed, the plebiscite is only a sampling of public opinion and is not legally binding.

"It is important to remember from the very outset that the postal survey is about whether or not Australians want the legal definition of civil marriage changed to include same-sex couples," Long wrote.

"It is not a referendum on sacramental marriage as understood by the Catholic Church," he added, in a pastoral letter addressed to his diocese.

Bishop Long is a Vietnamese-Australian who was appointed bishop by Pope Francis last year. His appointment made international headlines because he was the first Australian bishop of Vietnamese origin. He arrived in the country in a refugee boat, back in the early 1980s.

In February, he told the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse that, even though he was an adult when he got to the country, he too had been sexually abused by clerics, and that this

# Australian same-sex marriage vote won't change Church teaching



Protestors demanding same-sex marriage in Australia take to the streets.

made him empathise with other victims.

For many Catholics, Long wrote in his letter, same-sex marriage is not "simply theoretical but deeply personal", either because they themselves experience same-sex attraction, or because friends or relatives do.

**“Regrettably, the Church has not always been a place where they have felt welcomed, accepted and loved”**

"In such cases, they are torn between their love for the Church and their love for their same-sex attracted child, grandchild, sibling, cousin, friend or neighbour," he wrote.

Reiterating the commitment he made at his installation to make the Church in Parramatta a house for all peoples, where one can experience less exclusion and more "an encounter of radical love, inclusiveness and solidarity," he said it includes everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation, marital status and situation.

Long also

wrote that throughout history, LGBTI people have often not been treated with respect.

"Regrettably, the Church has not always been a place where they have felt welcomed, accepted and loved," he said. For this matter, and regardless of how the survey goes, Catholics must commit to reaching out to LGBTI people, "affirming their dignity and accompanying them on our common journey towards the fullness of life and love in God".

Bishop Bill Wright, of Maitland-Newcastle, took a similar position, saying that a "common good" argument could be made that "in our pluralist society, it does more for community peace and harmony for gay couples to have a place in the recognised structures than for them to be excluded".

Bishop Wright said that some time ago he'd noted that the push for same-sex marriage "seemed to arise from the desire of gay couples to have an officially sanctioned ceremony to formalise their commitment to each other and then to have that relationship accorded legal and social recognition".

According to Bishop Wright, it's an anomaly that in a society where same-sex

relationships are legal and gay couples can adopt and raise children, the relationship itself doesn't have a clear legal status.

Several news outlets in Australia have accused local bishops of going against Francis, whom they perceive to be in favour of gay marriage because of his "Who am I to judge?" comment, and his call for a more inclusive Church.

**“Archbishop Denis Hart issued a warning that Catholic employees would be expected to live according to teaching”**

However, Francis actually has defended Catholic teaching on the matter. In his document on the family, *Amoris Laetitia*, he wrote: "As for proposals to place unions between homosexual persons on the same level as marriage, there are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God's plan for marriage and family."

There are five million Catholics in Australia, and recently Archbishop Denis Hart of Melbourne issued a warning that Catholic employees would be expected to live according to teaching, regardless of the outcome of the vote.

"Our teachers, our parish employees are expected totally to uphold the Catholic faith and what we believe about marriage. People have to see in words and in example that our teaching of marriage is underlined," he said.

A pamphlet published by the Australian Bishops' Conference earlier this month argues that saying that marriage is between a man and a woman is "not a criticism of other kinds of relationships" nor an assertion "of bigotry, religious dogma or irrational tradition, but a recognition of human ecology".

In late August, the bishops also launched a campaign, inviting Catholics to pray and fast during the month of October "because all families need our prayers and need God's Grace".

The website for the Catholic Marriage and Family Council invites parishes, schools and homes across the country to pray "for our nation's understanding of the importance of marriage: that we will act to protect God's plan for marriage and family life. We also pray for the well-being of marriages and families, and in a particular way for people who are same-sex attracted or gender questioning."

① Inés San Martín is a reporter for Cruxnow.com



Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen.



# 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

### Small changes to missal without resources required

**Dear Editor,** I read with interest your lead article (IC 14/09/2017) which indicated that, although permission had been given to change, we will stick with the current missal, largely for resource/cost reasons

Could I appeal to the Irish bishops to make a number of small changes back to the previous translation – these could be easily organised via *Errata* slips to be inserted into existing missals, and would easily be incorporated into weekly missalettes.

1. Please, please, le bhur dtoil, give

us back the two beautiful Advent Prefaces. ("The virgin mother bore him in her womb with love beyond all telling", "Now we watch for the day, hoping that the Salvation promised us will be ours"). The lovely poetry and the clarity of the former translations is lost in the clunky new translation.

2. Change the Prayer for the Dead back to "Welcome into your kingdom etc."

The current "give kind admittance into your kingdom" suggests that you need a PayPal account, and the sentence construction is medieval Latin and

hard to understand.

3. Remove "consubstantial" from the Creed – the word is archaic, prescientific and a stumbling block to younger people.

I believe that these three simple changes could be easily implemented with no resources required, and would help to restore the balance disturbed by the new very literal translation.

Yours etc.,  
**Martin Clynes,**  
Clontarf,  
Dublin 3.

## Some thoughts on prayers and bad theology

**Dear Editor,** I read Fr Joe McVeigh's letter and responses to it (IC 07/09/2017). I read Fr Joe's letter again and went through it to see exactly what his theological objections were to the Rosary decade prayer. There I found it, not exactly as your other contributors interpreted it. Save us from the fires of Hell, is of course theologically unsound. We save ourselves from

the fires of Hell. No soul stumbles into Hell unawares, they choose to go there. I'm sure Fr Joe has no problem with the prayer to St Michael the Archangel, and when it says in it where Satan should be cast, and all the other wicked spirits.

The part in the decade prayer that I have more difficulty with is where it says, especially those most in need of thy mercy. I find

the concept of mercy hard to comprehend. We have a situation where one commits a crime, does not have sorrow, does not seek forgiveness, and appears not to deserve it, and then they are shown mercy. This must be the mercy that Pope Francis speaks about, when he says "who am I to judge".

My granny used to say in her simple theology, when she was doing her

knitting, the pattern is on the other side. As the Bishop of Limerick said in 1920, "ere I accuse I must have proof, a witness, place and time, ere I condemn I must be sure that there has been a crime. A little heavier on the forgiveness and mercy, and a little less on the condemnation."

Yours etc.,  
**Donnchadh Mac Aodha,**  
Co. Leitrim.

## Regarding the HPV vaccine

**Dear Editor,** I am writing in response to article by Dr Kevin McCarroll regarding the HPV vaccine (IC 07/09/2017). He elucidates in his article that the HPV virus is contracted by sexual activity. I presume that if young teenage girls refrained from sexual activity then they would not contract the virus. Thus they would not need to take the vaccine. I may be naive in simplifying it like this but I am surprised that it is taken for granted that most if not all young teenage girls are or will engage in sexual activity.

Yours etc.,  
**John Kennedy,**  
Balbriggan, Co. Dublin.



## The other side to mindfulness techniques

**Dear Editor,** I refer to a recent article by Fiann O Nualláin entitled 'Living up to your full potential, mindfulness is more than a stress management technique' (IC 07/09/2017). It's difficult to argue with points made by Mr O Nualláin – being in the present moment, being aware and observing the changes in the seasons. However, he does not refer to the breathing meditations that would be practiced and recommended for regular practice at mindfulness meetings. With Buddhist roots those practices are about 'emptying' as understood in that tradition and they can open up the subconscious. Not unusually, the article is entirely positive about mindfulness. An article entitled 'Has mindfulness

lost its mind', by psychiatrist Professor Patricia Casey in the *Irish Independent*, on January 17, 2017, paints a different picture. It relates to clinical research projects carried out in the UK where all psychologists caution against the simplistic and over exaggerated claims made by its proponents and by the media. The research showed up inconsistencies in relation to the effects of mindfulness, for example it being helpful in preventing relapses of depression for just some categories of people who already had three relapses but not for those with less, relief for stress being no better than what is gained from exercise or relaxation, and contrary to common belief studies

of the impact on brain structure and coping skills reveal that a plateau is reached after a few weeks. Prof. Casey concluded that "enthusiasm should not outrun evidence and this is a real possibility where mindfulness is promoted as a panacea for all our unpleasant emotions".

I agree with the view of one research coordinator that what he called the "powerful social phenomenon" is probably rooted in our culture's desire for quick fixes and "its attraction to spiritual ideas divested of supernatural elements".

Yours etc.,  
**Eileen Gaughan,**  
Strandhill, Sligo.

## Why does society fear children with disability?

**Dear Editor,** The greatest argument against abortion for what is wrongly termed 'fatal foetal abnormality' is given in the book *Under the Eye of the Clock* (1987) by Christopher Nolan.

Christopher Nolan, native of Clontarf, Dublin was severely disabled at birth with cerebral palsy. Yet through the care of his parents, especially his mother who used a typing stick attached to his head, he learned to type, being confined to a wheelchair and suffering from severe disability, every day. At the age of 15 years he won international fame and awards for his book of poems *Dam-Burst of Dreams*.

In his autobiography he wrote against abortion of disabled children, with the following: "Now they threatened to abort babies like him, to detect in advance their handicapped state, to burrow through the womb and label them for death, to baffle their mothers fear for their coming...why then does society fear the crippled child and why does it hail the able-bodied child over what may in time become a potential executioner?".

Yours etc.,  
**Fr Con McGillicuddy,**  
Raheny, Dublin 5.

## Growth of Orthodoxy due to beauty of liturgy

**Dear Editor,** One aspect of the growth of Orthodoxy in Ireland (IC 07/09/2017) and indeed elsewhere, is the beauty of the liturgy, both in the rite and in the choral music; a mirroring of the Extraordinary Rite in the West. Is it any wonder that beauty and the rite of centuries are attractive, especially for the young, and makes a welcome change from priests dancing with bridal parties in the aisle, or a flash mob wanting to be the next five-minute sensation on YouTube! Thank God for the beauty of holiness!

Yours etc.,  
**Fr John McCallion,**  
Coalisland, Co. Tyrone.

## Christ's spiritual electrons at work

**Dear Editor,** This is a memory I have carried with me. Shortly after WWII, two nuns from Texas came to our school in Crossmolina, Co. Mayo. They did not seem to be looking for vocations.

One nun spoke. The other was silent. The first words were: "Do you know what electrons are?" I certainly did not. If any other pupil knew, they stayed silent.

"Electrons are the electrical impulses that are generated in the power house," she explained. "They are carried along the wires that run from pole to pole, bringing light and heat to your home. I have come to ask you to be spiritual electrons for us sisters, to help us in our work for souls."

Many years later I found myself thinking of Calvary as the power house and the priests at Holy Mass as Christ's electrons bringing his power and his victory over sin and death to us each day all over the world.

Yours etc.,  
**Annie T. Morris,**  
Foxford, Co. Mayo.

## 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



**ENGLAND:** An injured woman is led away following a blast caused by an improvised explosive device on a London Underground train. ISIS claimed responsibility for the terrorist incident. Photos: CNS



**PUERTO RICO:** A child looks at donated clothes at a convention centre used for people displaced after their homes were destroyed by Hurricane Irma in San Juan.



**ENGLAND:** Prelates process during the funeral Mass for English Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor in London's Westminster Cathedral.

**USA:** Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, laughs as Kaila Flynn (9) holds his crosier after he was vested with a pallium by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the US.



**GUATEMALA:** Protesters take part in a rally against finance laws approved by congress in Guatemala City. Placard reads "Everyone get out".



**ISRAEL:** US and Israeli army veterans light candles while visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem during their tour of the Holy Land with the Heroes to Heroes programme.





# Our struggle with riches



**Fr Rolheiser**

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

A number of years ago I attended a funeral. The man to whom we were saying goodbye had enjoyed a full and rich life. He'd reached the age of 90 and was respected for having been both successful and honest. But he'd always been a strong man, a natural leader, a man who took charge of things.

He'd had a good marriage, raised a large family, been successful in business, and held leadership roles in various civic and church organisations. He was a man who commanded respect although he was sometimes feared for his strength.

His son, a priest, was presiding at his funeral. He began his homily this way: "Scripture tells us that 70 is the sum of a man's years, 80 for those who are strong. Now, our dad lived for 90 years. Why the extra 10 years? Well, it's no mystery really. It took God an extra 10 years to mellow him out!"

"He was too strong and cantankerous to die at 80! But during the last 10 years of his life he suffered a series of massive diminishment. His wife died, he never got over that. He had a stroke, he never got over that. He had to be moved into an assisted living complex, he never got over that. All these diminishment did their work. By the time he died, he could take your hand and say: 'Help me.'"

"He couldn't say that from the time he could tie his own

shoe laces until those last years. He was finally ready for Heaven. Now when he met St Peter at the gates of Heaven he could say: 'Help me!' rather than tell St Peter how he might better organise things."

This story can help us understand Jesus' teaching that the rich find it difficult to enter the Kingdom of Heaven while little children enter it quite naturally. We tend to misunderstand both why the rich find it hard to enter the Kingdom and why little children enter it more easily.

**“Riches, be that money, talent, intelligence, health, good looks, leadership skills, or flat-out strength, are gifts from God”**

Why do little children enter the Kingdom quite naturally? In answering this we tend to idealise the innocence of little children, which can indeed be striking. But that's not what Jesus is holding up as an ideal here, an ideal of innocence which for us adults is impossible in any case. It's not the innocence of children that Jesus praises; rather it's the fact that

children have no illusion of self-sufficiency.

Children have no choice but to know their dependence. They're not self-sufficient and know that they cannot provide for themselves. If someone doesn't feed them they go hungry. They need to say, and to say it often: "Help me!"

It's generally the opposite for adults, especially if we're strong, talented, and blessed with sufficient wealth. We easily nurse the illusion of self-sufficiency. In our strength we more naturally forget that we need others, that we're not self-reliant.

The lesson here isn't that riches are bad. Riches, be that money, talent, intelligence, health, good looks, leadership skills, or flat-out strength, are gifts from God. They're good. It's not riches that block us from entering the Kingdom. Rather it's the danger that, having them, we will more easily also have the illusion that we're self-sufficient. We aren't.

## Self-sufficient

As Thomas Aquinas points out by the very way he defines God (as *Esse Subsistens* – Self-sufficient Being) only God does not need anyone or anything else. The rest of us do, and little children more easily grasp this than do adults, especially



Tough on the rich: St Luke's Gospel.

strong and gifted adults.

Moreover the illusion of self-sufficiency often spawns another danger: riches and the comfort they bring, as we see in the parable of the rich man who has a beggar at his door, can make us blind to the plight and hunger of the poor. That's one of the dangers in not being hungry ourselves. In our comfort, we tend not to see the poor.

And so it's not riches themselves that are bad. The moral danger in being rich is rather the illusion of self-sufficiency that seems to

forever accompany riches. Little children don't suffer this illusion. But the strong do. That's the danger in being rich, money-wise or otherwise.

**“Riches are good, but only if they're shared. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus praises the generous rich but warns the hoarding rich”**

How do we minimise that danger? By being generous with our riches. Luke's Gospel, while being the Gospel that's hardest on the rich is also the Gospel that makes most clear that riches aren't bad in themselves. God is rich. But God is prodigiously generous with that richness.

God's generosity, as we learn from the parables of Jesus, is so excessive that it's scandalous.

It upsets our measured sense of fairness. Riches are good, but only if they're shared. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus praises the generous rich but warns the hoarding rich. Generosity is Godlike, hoarding is antithetical to Heaven.

And so from the time we learn to tie our own shoe laces until the various diminishment of life begin to strip away the illusion of self-sufficiency, riches of all kinds constitute a danger. We must never unlearn the words: "Help me!"



# Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, September 21, 2017

## Personal Profile

Faith shining through the darkness

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**We  
need to  
talk  
about**

**CANCER**



**E**very 15 minutes someone in Ireland hears the words 'You have cancer'. It is a disease that has touched every family in every community in Ireland.

The rates of cancer diagnosis are rising but so too are survival rates. This year an estimated 40,000 people across the country will be diagnosed with cancer. At the same time there are more than 170,000 people living with and beyond cancer.

Cancer Week Ireland takes place next week, Monday, September 25 to Sunday, October 1, with events being hosted across the country to raise awareness and open up a national conversation about cancer in communities and



**Cancer diagnosis rates are rising, but so too are survival rates, writes Mags Gargan**

organisations.

Cancer Week Ireland is the brain child of the Irish Cancer Society and Trinity College Dublin. It first took place in 2014 and brought together national and international experts to discuss improvements in cancer treatments, as well as tackling the physical and emotional consequences that a cancer diagnosis can bring.

In 2015 the Cancer Week

concept continued to grow and led to another successful week-long programme of events on the theme of cancer research and clinical trials.

Now in its fourth year, Cancer Week is rolling out nationally to become Cancer Week Ireland. This year it wants to start a national conversation about cancer and how more people are surviving as more advances are made in detection and treatment.

There are events, large and small, planned across the country. ([cancerweek.ie](http://cancerweek.ie))

"Cancer Week is for anyone who has an interest in cancer - whether they be academics, physicians, patients or patient groups - to just have a conversation around cancer," says Donal Buggy, Head of Services and Advocacy at the Irish Cancer Society.

### Lifestyle

"It's to create an awareness that the story of cancer is complex and it is changing. It's to make people aware that four out of every 10 cancers can be prevented by changes in lifestyle.

"People tend to think there is an inevitability about cancer,

but there is actually a lot that you can do to avoid it. Also more and more people are surviving cancer and they have medical and support needs that are outside of the traditional cancer treatments of radiotherapy and chemotherapy, around psychological support to help with the impact of the cancer personally or indeed social and financial support. How to get back to work for example, that's something employers need to be aware of.

"The financial impact of cancer is often not considered. You may have to quit or cut down on work which means you have a reduced income at a time when costs in terms of medicine, and

» Continued on Page 25



## Family News

### AND EVENTS

#### Annual Babywearing 'Wear a Hug' fair

Babywearing Ireland is a not-for-profit organisation run by a network of volunteers all passionate about promoting safe babywearing and its benefits for both children and caregivers.

It is a voluntary, community-based organisation with an nationwide network of sling libraries, meets and online support.

The annual 'Wear a Hug Fair' which takes place on Sunday, October 1 at the Glenroyal Hotel

in Maynooth, Co. Kildare from 10:30am-5pm, is Ireland's largest gathering of baby wearers. Last year it attracted over 1,000 attendees.

The fair will have over 45 stands, with everything from slings and babywearing accessories, to natural parenting products, a sling library for trying on slings and baby carriers, a fashion show, demos and talks, a sling meet and children's entertainment. See [www.babywearingireland.ie](http://www.babywearingireland.ie)

#### HOW TO PACK HEALTHY LUNCHBOXES:

Lunches provide around one third of children's daily nutritional needs, so it's important to put some thought and planning into them. Here are some tips from Safefood on how to prepare a healthy lunchbox.

- Include a wide variety of foods: starchy foods, protein, dairy, and fruit and vegetables
- Try to offer different foods every day - no one wants to be eating a ham sandwich five days a week!
- Vary the types of bread e.g. pitta bread, bagels, wholemeal rolls - keep a stock in the freezer
- Cook extra rice/pasta in the evening - these can make interesting salads
- Theme your lunchbox on a different country, e.g. Italian - try a pasta salad, Mexican - fill flour tortillas
- Home-made soup (in a Thermos flask) is great for cold days, while salads are light and refreshing for warmer weather. Both are packed with essential vitamins and minerals
- Fluids are important for children - up to six cups of fluid should be encouraged daily. Milk and water are the best options. Straws and brightly coloured drinks bottles can make rehydrating more interesting.

#### Father and son fun run

A 'Father & Son Fun Run' will be one of the first fundraisers organised by the Keith Duffy Foundation and its first corporate partner, Costcutter, in both Cork and Dublin next month.

Critically ill children and young people, and those with a disability or learning difficulties, are the focus of the new charity, which will host a number of high-profile annual events, such as the Keith Duffy Ball and Golf Classic, as well as smaller events and local fundraisers for chosen charities around Ireland.

"We want to go direct to the people in need, helping individuals, families and schools, in particular, so that funds raised make a real and immediate difference," Keith Duffy [pictured] said.

● See [www.keithduffyfoundation.ie](http://www.keithduffyfoundation.ie)



**H**uman beings are members of a large group of animals known as mammals and all female mammals have mammary glands (breasts) that produce milk for feeding the young. This natural method of breastfeeding is scientifically well established as the optimal form of nutrition for babies and is enthusiastically promoted by national and international medical organisations.

Nevertheless, the traditional low rates of breastfeeding in Ireland remain among the lowest in the world. There is much scope for improvement here, but we must also remember that not all women can breastfeed for a variety of reasons and, in any event, we must respect the right of every mother to freely choose whether to breastfeed her baby or to bottle-feed her baby with formula milk.

Ireland has the lowest rate of breastfeeding in Europe. The National Longitudinal Study of Children (Growing Up in Ireland) published a report in October 2014 that is a veritable mine of information - Maternal Health Behaviours and Child Growth in Infancy, authored by Richard Layte and Cathal McGrory. The report covered both Irish citizens and women of other nationalities living in Ireland.

About 60% of mothers overall initiate breastfeeding in Ireland compared to a figure of about 93% for the EU as a whole. The most commonly stated reasons for never starting breastfeeding were inconvenience/fatigue (17.1%), difficulty with breastfeeding technique (8.3%) and embarrassment and social stigma (5.6%). The mean duration of breastfeeding for Irish citizen mothers is 47.8 days, but the mean is 112.2 days for mothers who are not Irish citizens.

#### “Breastfeeding also strengthens the emotional bond between mother and baby”

Level of maternal education is strongly associated with initiation of breastfeeding - about 80% of mothers with postgraduate level education take up breastfeeding compared with about 30% of mothers with lower secondary level education or less. Level of household income is also positively associated with breastfeeding, but the association is weaker than that with education.

The report also notes that women who have caesarean sections (CS) are 50% less likely to breastfeed. Given that 25% of births are now delivered by CS and that this proportion is increasing, this issue merits policy attention at both national and hospital level.

Breastmilk is the natural, normal food for babies from birth. It cannot be

# Irish among world's lowest breastfeeding rates



## Science of life Prof. William Reville

replicated. It contains all the nutrients the infant needs for proper growth and development including water, proteins, amino acids, nucleic acids, fats, carbohydrates, minerals, vitamins, and trace elements. Breast milk also contains antibodies, antimicrobial factors, digestive enzymes, hormones and growth factors that are important for passive protection against infections and for development of the immune system.

Breastfeeding encourages the development of a stronger immune system in the baby and reduces the risk of developing allergies, obesity, Type II diabetes, gastrointestinal disorders and middle ear infections. Breastfeeding also strengthens the emotional bond between mother and baby. In short, there is compelling scientific evidence that breastfeeding contributes to better child health, both in the short and long term and possibly into adulthood.

#### Cost

The annual cost of treating acute infections in infants in Ireland is €12 million-€15 million. If only a fraction of this money were spent promoting breastfeeding, significant overall savings would be made because breastfeeding prevents such infections in the first place. The Government spends only about €100,000 per year promoting breastfeeding.

In Ireland the proportion of mothers exclusively breastfeeding six months after birth is just 6% whereas the medical advice is to

feed the baby exclusively by breastfeeding for at least the first six months. About half of Irish babies are put on solid food at four months, whereas medical advice is to hold off on solids until six months. Weaning too early mitigates against the optimum development of the baby.



But of course there are some cases where breastfeeding is not in the best interest of mother or baby, e.g. where the mother has suffered a stroke during delivery, where the mother is suffering from post-partum depression or psychosis, where the mother is on

chemotherapy for breast cancer, or for several other reasons.

#### “Formula milk lacks many components found in breast milk, e.g. many fatty acids”

Mothers who do not breastfeed must bottle-feed their babies with formula milk instead. Cows' milk formula, where the milk has been altered to resemble breast milk, is the most common. Although formula milk will provide adequate nutrition for the baby, it cannot replicate breast milk which undoubtedly is the superior food.

Formula milk lacks many components found in breast milk, e.g. many fatty acids. Breast milk is also more easily digested by the baby than

formula, and breastfed babies tend to be less 'gassy' and to suffer less from constipation than formula-fed babies.

Several studies have investigated whether breastfeeding enhances babies' IQ and early work suggested a link between breastfeeding and higher IQ. However, the latest and most rigorous study carried out by researchers from Goldsmith University of London found no significant difference in the intelligence of breastfed as compared to bottle-fed babies.

Dr Sophie Von Stumm, the chief researcher of the study comments: "Mothers should be aware they are not harming their child if they choose not to or cannot breastfeed. Being bottle-fed won't cost your child a chance at a university degree later in life. Information such as this removes the level of guilt felt by many new mothers who are unable, or decide against, breastfeeding their baby."

#### Gold standard

Nobody disputes that breastfeeding is the nutritional gold standard and we should continue to promote it as the best way to feed the new-born baby. However, while breastfeeding undoubtedly increases the likelihood of good health outcomes this does not mean that breastfeeding guarantees that obesity and other diseases will not occur in the future, and it does not mean that to exclusively bottle-feed a baby either condemns the baby to ill-health or otherwise seriously compromises his/her future.

Bottle-feeding infant milk formula can still give the baby a good start and, where it is voluntarily chosen by a mother as an alternative to breastfeeding, should never be condemned as a 'bad' choice. We must remember that as recently as the 1970s only about 20% of new mothers in Ireland breastfed their babies and the world didn't cave in.

William Reville is an Emeritus Professor of Biochemistry at UCC.



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Minister for Health, Simon Harris, at an event in Purple House Cancer Support, Bray during Cancer Week 2016.

things like electricity, because you often feel cold during treatment, are at a height. There are lots of costs associated with a cancer diagnosis. So there are lots of different conversations around lots of different aspects of cancer," he says.

Cancer is a complex issue. It is an umbrella term that covers a group of more than 100 diseases involving abnormal cell growth, including breast cancer, skin cancer, lung cancer, colon cancer, blood cancer, prostate cancer and lymphoma. So it is easy to see why cancer is so prevalent in Ireland, but why are the rates rising?

"There isn't a single cancer," Donal says. "There are a myriad of different diseases in cancer, but when you strip out the cancers that occur in early life and early adulthood, a lot of cancers are cancers of ageing. So because we are living longer and because none of us have figured out how not to be mortal, we all have to die of something."

**Smoking is very strongly correlated with cancer, as is alcohol and physical inactivity. Obesity is also a challenge**

"As your cells divide they regenerate. The more times they divide and regenerate the more likelihood there is of something going wrong. So as we get older, we get more cancers and because we now live on average into our 80s rather than into our 50s as we did years ago, there would be far more cancers."

However, Donal says that lifestyle has an influence on contracting the disease. "Smoking is very strongly correlated with cancer, as is alcohol and physical inactivity. Obesity is also a challenge. So more and more cancers are now related to our behaviour and lifestyle. While we may be getting better in terms of smoking rates and cancer treatment, other lifestyle factors are causing more cancers," he says.

The good news is that survival rates are also improving, thanks to advances in knowledge of how cancer works and how to treat it.

"If we look back at the 1980s, about four out of every 10 people would have survived their cancer, living five years beyond treatment. That figure is now heading between six and seven out of every 10 who are diagnosed with cancer, will live for more than five years after their treatment," Donal says.

"That is down to a number of things, such as the fact that we have centralised our cancer services. Now if you are diagnosed with cancer you are more likely to be seen by a cancer specialist who deals with your type of cancer on a daily basis, so more specialised skills can give you a better treatment. Also technology has advanced – radiotherapy and chemotherapy is significantly better. We also know more about cancer treatment – what works and what doesn't work. Our understanding of cancer has improved."

### Prevention

The Irish Cancer Society offers a range of support for people affected by cancer, from prevention to diagnosis through treatment to survival or end of life care. It offers research, information, support,



Una Delahunt, Assistant Cancer Prevention Officer, offering information at one of the stands at the Living Well conference last year.

community outreach and advocacy to inform policies and resources that affect the lives and wellbeing of people who have cancer, survivors, families and caregivers.

"We have a number of flagships services," says Donal, "such as our night nurse service, which help people who are at end of life to

die comfortably. That is greatly appreciated by families and by the people themselves who are helped at the end of their life, because the vast majority of people want to die at home surrounded by their loved ones and this service helps them to do that."

Daffodil Centres provide cancer information, support and advice in local hospitals and a nurse line staffed by cancer nurses offers support and advice.

**“We also have a group of people who work with us as volunteers who have had cancer themselves”**

"We also do a lot of work around just being available to people affected by cancer," Donal says.

At the heart of everything that the charity does, are the volunteers. "We have a volunteer driving programme, with more than 1,000 volunteers right around the country who bring cancer patients to and from their hospital appointments, taking the pressure off the family," Donal says. "We also have a group of people who work with us as volunteers who have had cancer themselves and they talk to people who have just been diagnosed. They talk about that what to expect."

After five years of working with people with cancer, Donal has seen people at the worst time in their life, and what has touched him is their inner strength and the kindness of those around them.

"I have seen people who are absolutely astounding in terms of how they cope with the challenges of cancer and how they support other people too. People are so generous with their time and willingness to support people who have cancer," he says. "The Irish Cancer Society couldn't do the work it does without the volunteers, who are so generous with their time and are so patient, kind and supportive to people who are going through a very difficult experience."

❖ *Cancer Week Ireland takes place from Monday, September 25 to Sunday, October 1. See [cancerweek.ie](http://cancerweek.ie)*

## Faith — IN THE — family

Bairbre Cahill



Our children always comment (or complain depending on how you look at it) that whenever and wherever we are on holiday we will end up in a cathedral, a church or a graveyard at some point of the trip. That was certainly true this year when we went to Italy. From little quiet chapels in villages along Lake Como to the enormous beauty of Il Duomo, the Cathedral of Milan, we stopped and gazed and lit a candle or two. Somehow that comes naturally on holiday. We expect to take time, to read the guide book, to explore and enjoy. Strange how we don't do that at home.

Shortly after we returned to Donegal a cousin of my husband's came to stay. Jim announced that while he was here he wanted to see the cathedral. Being good hosts we made sure that he got his wish and we accompanied Jim on his visit. This is not our parish church but we are very familiar with it nonetheless. Or are we?

That day with Jim we became visitors in our own home place. It was unintentional, but somehow having looked up some details about the Harry Clarke stained glass windows and finding a guide book at the back of the cathedral, we began to see this familiar building with fresh eyes.

We went up along the side of the sanctuary. Who knew that the ceiling above where the folk group sits is so beautiful? We continued on around the back of the altar to the shrine to Our Lady noting the many beautiful paintings on the walls – little gems of wonder that we had never known were there.

### Richness

I was struck by the richness and beauty of the cathedral. It seemed strange that we had never done this before. There was artistry and elegance waiting quietly to be discovered, but that would only happen if we stepped outside of the usual rush of life and

took the time to gaze, to raise our eyes, to be inspired by the skill of those who crafted this beautiful place. Thank God Jim wanted to see the cathedral or we may never have noticed it!

I was struck by that beauty again a few weeks later at the ordination of our new bishop, Dr Alan McGuckian. There was a vibrancy, an energy about the whole ceremony and with people there from every

parish in the diocese there was a real sense for me of the cathedral coming into its own and being the mother church bringing forth new life.

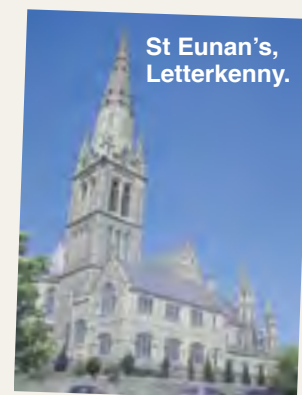
In all our lives we can see the same people, places, events day in, day out and never really see them at all.

We needed to become pilgrims in our own cathedral before we actually noticed the beauty of it. I think the same can be said for life.

**“How would my life look to another, someone less hassled and busy?”**

Sometimes we are too caught up in the routines and ruts of life to notice what is actually in front of us. I can be tired with working, frustrated with bills, rushing between commitments – and never taking time to stop, and gaze and raise my eyes to see the beauty and artistry that are here. Maybe I need to become a pilgrim in my own life. How would my life look to another, someone less hassled and busy? I think they would see the beauty of relationships, gentleness, love, little things that speak of so much more.

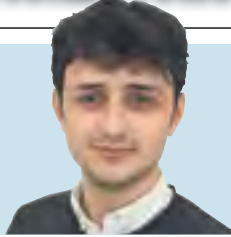
I think they would notice blessings like warmth, security, good food on the table and laughter, lots of laughter and chat and craic. There is an artistry and beauty in family life that is made up of very ordinary, everyday elements. What we need is to take time, to let our thoughts wander like a pilgrim through the fabric of our day and to notice, just that, notice the blessings that are there.





# Faith shining through the darkness

## Personal Profile



## Colm Fitzpatrick speaks to Fr Tomás King SSC about life in Pakistan

In spite of his surname, Columban Fr Tomás King, has lived a life far removed from social prestige and wealth, spending the past 25 years away from his Irish home, in a country which suffers from internal political disputes, severe poverty and ongoing violence.

His journey from working with the Traveller community in Galway to helping families deal daily with injustice and death in Pakistan has been a challenging and inspiring one, where he realised he had been “taking things for granted”.

Although Fr Tomás was raised in a traditional Irish Catholic family where the Rosary was said at night, his interest in religion and subsequent decision to join the Columbans was influenced by missionary magazines like the *Far East* which his mother bought, as well as the contemplative moments he had working in the family farm for five years.

“Reading magazines growing up, the interest of being overseas, things beyond Ireland kind of developed,” Fr Tomás says.

“I would have worked on the farm my whole life but somehow I had the sense it wasn’t for me. It did maybe help with the reflective disposition to be able to live with oneself.”

Combined with his desire to

help people in poor countries, Fr Tomás saw the priesthood “as one way of doing it”, and today finds himself serving the poor families in Sindh province, including the vast Tharparkar desert, in Pakistan’s south-east, bordering with India.

The transition from Ireland has been a poignant one, with socio-economic and political conditions

resulting in higher child mortality.

“The more difficult things are probably all the funerals I’ve presided over the years – there’d be as many children as adults.

“You go into a graveyard and you see all of these mounds of clay, and the big mounds of clay are adults and the small mounds are children. In some places, it’s 50:50.”

**“What’s amazing is the resilience of people... people want to live, people want to try their best for the children”**

Alongside this “needless death”, as Fr Tomás describes it, he also works with groups who are primarily working as bonded labourers, who live in a state of constant debt to their landlords, which although against the law, is not tackled properly in Pakistan as the parliament benefit from the corrupt practice.

In the midst of this exploitation, Fr Tomás sees the vulnerable as a

strong and courageous people who are fighting against all the odds to stay alive.

“What’s amazing is the resilience of people – that no matter how poor and how much injustice they are suffering, people want to live, people want to try their best for the children.”

One lucid memory Fr Tomás draws upon to illustrate this is the image of a young woman squatting in a field making chapatti, a flat thin bread on a flat pan. The woman had few possessions, but managed to build a mud stove, and then kneaded the dough, broke it into pieces and then flattened it with the palms of her hands, keeping an eye on her infant child the whole time.

### Real Presence

“The Eucharist was being celebrated right before our eyes; as the woman baked the bread and shared it with her family. There was no doubt about the Real Presence in the making and breaking of bread by that young woman.

“By her actions, you could

almost imagine her saying to the world, ‘no matter what you throw at me nothing will stop me from baking and breaking bread. I will go on nurturing life’.”

This crossing of boundaries, of new experiences and encounters has provided Fr Tomás with the “strength” to keep going forward, and to learn more about himself, the world, and God’s role within it. He uses the famous St Columban quote, “a life unlike your own can be your teacher” to help him to remember this.

“In two weeks’ time, I might be sitting on a mud floor in a village somewhere. It is a privilege, there’s a lot to be grateful for, to enter into the lives of so many people.”

**“The Church by her nature should always try to be missionary, whether at home or abroad”**

Not only is he appreciative of the brave communities in Pakistan, but also those in Ireland who have supported him despite the scandals and conflict within the Church.

“There was and still is strong support from the local community, even though the Church is going through a very difficult time, and even many people who have stopped practicing, when you meet people at home, face to face, they still have a lot of respect.”

Although Fr Tomás is aware that not everyone in Ireland and around the globe can pursue a missionary vocation, he believes that we all have a role in changing the world, even if it begins by firstly changing ourselves.

“The Church by her nature should always try to be missionary, whether at home or abroad,” he says, adding, “it has to continue to go beyond itself.

“The primary conversion is trying to be a better person, be a better human being – to live by one’s principles, and trying to make one’s principles stronger.”



Fr Tomás King celebrating Mass and meeting local children in St Nicholas’ Parish, Nagar Parkar in the south east of Pakistan.



## Sweet Treats

Erin Fox



## Apple, blackberry and custard crumble muffins

It’s not autumn until you’ve had apple and blackberry crumble or pie topped with delicious custard for dessert. My childhood memories are filled with homemade apple pie, crumble, or sponge pudding with handpicked blackberries and creamy custard. As long as it had apple, blackberries and custard, it didn’t matter whether it was pastry, sponge or crumble. It’s my go-to dessert when the blackberries are ripened on the hedgerow.

This muffin recipe is inspired by autumn desserts so, get out your tupperware some weekend and pick some blackberries for these apple, blackberry and custard crumble muffins inspired by the greatest autumn dessert.

They’re a fantastic dessert, afternoon tea treat, or picnic food, so you can pack them away while you’re out foraging for more autumn berries.

### For the crumble

- 25g jumbo oats
- 25g unsalted chilled butter grated or cubed
- 25g plain flour
- 25g light muscovado sugar

### For the muffins

- 100g butter
- 250 self-raising flour
- 1 tsp bicarbonate soda
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 100g golden caster sugar
- 2 bramley cooking apples
- 100g blackberries
- 2 eggs
- 150ml sour cream
- 2 tbsp milk
- 12 tsp custard or 15 tsp if using a cupcake pan

Preheat oven to 180 degrees fan and line a 12-inch muffin tin with muffin wrappers.

To make the crumble, mix all the ingredients in a bowl until it resembles breadcrumbs. Place the crumble in the freezer while you’re making the batter for the muffins.

For the muffins, melt the butter in a saucepan over a low heat and then set aside to cool. Peel the apples and slice into thin wedges. Place them in a bowl and squeeze over some lemon juice to stop them from going brown.



Sift the flour, mixed spice, and bicarbonate of soda into a large bowl and tip in the sugar.

Make a well in the centre and add the eggs, melted butter, sour cream, and milk and stir with a large metal spoon very lightly just until the mixture is combined.

Gently stir in the apple and blackberries.

Divide the mixture into the muffin holes but start by filling each muffin hole half full. Next, add a teaspoon of custard on top of the batter and then top with the remaining batter. Repeat until all the muffin holes are filled.

Scatter the crumble all over the tops of the muffins before transferring to the oven. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes until well risen and golden in colour. Leave the muffins to cool in their tins before transferring to a wire rack. Enjoy them hot as a dessert or eat them cold.

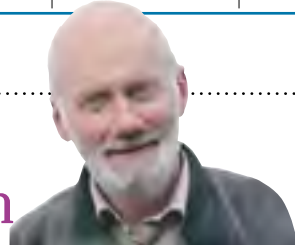
If you like extra spice, add a pinch of cinnamon to your crumble. This recipe also works great with elderberries instead of blackberries, or a combination of both.

You can also make the muffins without the crumble if you prefer.



# TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



## Newstalk controversy reached ridiculous levels

Last week I reviewed some of the new programmes on Newstalk, but even then trouble was brewing on one of the regular shows, George Hook's **High Noon**. The controversy reached ridiculous levels last week, culminating in the suspension of the presenter.

There were lots of toys being thrown out of prams, followed by the mob with torches and pitchforks. On Monday singer Mary Coughlan walked out of an interview with Ivan Yates on **The Hard Shoulder** because she objected to comments by George Hook. Strange enough. Tuesday's news on RTÉ reported a letter from around 20 Newstalk staff calling for Hook's removal, but curiously we didn't get to hear who signed that.

Newstalk presenter Chris Donoghue had been first out of the traps criticising Hook, and later in the week Dil Wickremasinghe said she wouldn't do her *Global Village* show in protest. Social conservatives were thinking they had won the jackpot. Newstalk's afternoon presenter Sean Moncrieff tweeted about Newstalk staff being "brave" during this "incredibly difficult week" (for who?). Brave? Brave is jumping into a river to save a drowning person. Brave is standing up to the mob, but Newstalk didn't.

Tuesday morning's **It Says**



**in the Papers** (RTÉ Radio 1) reported *Irish Times* journalist Fintan O'Toole saying he wouldn't appear on any Newstalk show. Then another *IT* journalist Una Mullally said the same and on social media those who were not their fans were cheering up.

### Opinions

On the same slot last Thursday came reports that Newstalk was fighting back and considering not having any *IT* journalists on their shows at all. Those of a conservative inclination were celebrating, but it didn't last. The pressure to have journalists

who express nothing but the 'acceptable' opinions became too strong. The arrogance of the self-righteous knew no bounds and it looked like the patriarchy was being replaced by the 'mediarchy'.

I heard Hook's original comments about rape and thought they were over the top and poorly expressed (a side effect of the opinionated, 'shock-jock lite' approach to radio). He apologised unreservedly, but in essence he had raised a question about people's responsibility for their own safety – specifically young women meeting strangers in bars and going

back to their hotel rooms. In the process he lambasted the awfulness of rape and rapists. Because the Newstalk website removed the item from the 'listen back' facility, people are judging Hook on incomplete and out of context quotes, hardly in line with natural justice.

A seriously incomplete recording of Hook's comments was played on last Thursday's **Today With Sean O'Rourke**, when David Quinn had a bust up with Ruth Coppinger TD, on the controversy and the broader issues (like the irresponsible 'hook-up' culture).

Coppinger was in censorious mood, having a problem with "very right-wing and dangerous views" being on radio. So, is it simplistically left-wing good, right-wing

bad? I was glad to see Quinn using the opportunity to highlight Newstalk's bias on social issues, including their celebration of the marriage referendum result. "We're all celebrating that," said Coppinger, showing what bubble she is floating around in and blissfully erasing the near 40% who voted against.

### Interview

If Newstalk is on for taking steps to curb objectionable broadcasting they could start with their bias on the Eighth Amendment issue. On **The Pat Kenny Show** on Wednesday we got a detailed interview with Dr Rhona O'Mahony, Master of Holles St Hospital. There was much about serious skill shortages, HSE problems and at the end a conversation about the Eighth Amendment.

I liked her approach of saving as many lives as possible in difficult pregnancies, and in the case of problems arising after viability (a moveable feast!) she was in favour of doing all possible to keep the baby alive, but she was still in favour of repealing the Eighth to make it easier to deal with issues pre-viability (effectively taking away the equal right to life of those unborn babies).

I found her arguments here unconvincing and worrying. There were no challenging questions from Pat Kenny, and in fact some of the time, effectively, he was actually helping



Dr Rhona Mahony.

### PICK OF THE WEEK

**SUNDAY MORNING LIVE**  
BBC 1, Sunday,  
September 24, 10am  
Thought-provoking debate and instant audience reaction on the big ethical talking points of the week.

**JERUSALEM: THE MAKING OF A HOLY CITY**  
BBC 4, Tuesday,  
September 26, 10pm  
Historian Simon Sebag Montefiore presents a three-part series illuminating the history of Jerusalem.

**MINISTRY OF HOPE**  
RTÉ One, Thursday,  
September 28, 10:15pm  
A chaplain brings faith, hope and love in the Mater Hospital.

her to elucidate her opinions.

Suspiciously, this interview ended shortly before the news headlines and lo and behold her call for repeal of the Eighth Amendment was the main news item – nothing about the serious health service issues that comprised two thirds of the interview.

Is this not just blatant campaigning?

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



Aubrey Malone

# Film

## Engrossing prison drama unpicks 'The Troubles'

### Maze (15A)

The break-out from the Maze prison in 1983 was ultimately unsuccessful – most of the 38 prisoners who escaped were either captured or killed – but it could be argued that it galvanised the powers-that-be towards the Good Friday Agreement which occurred more than a decade later.

This brilliant film is set in the aftermath of the hunger strike that resulted in the deaths of 10 Republicans and the IRA's subsequent abolition of the 'dirty protest'. The prison authorities looked on this as a British victory. The escape that occupies the lion's share of *Maze* lets us know in no uncertain terms it was



Tom Vaughan-Lawlor (left) stars in *Maze*.

anything but that.

Political films are infinitely better when they replace 'agitprop' elements with pulsating drama. This one does exactly that, carrying all the pace of a thriller with it. It has an electrifying atmosphere even though we know what

happens in the end.

The main focus is the relationship between a warder, Gordon Close (Barry Ward) and an inmate, Larry Marley (Tom Vaughan-Lawlor). This acts as a microcosm of the wider dynamic apparent in the friction between the

Unionists and Republicans elsewhere in the prison.

Larry pretends he's deserted 'the cause' so he can be transferred to another wing – the one where the main security system is located. Here he undertakes 'skivvy' duties like mopping floors. It seems like an insult to the hunger strikers who gave their lives for the dignity of wearing their own clothes. It results in him being dubbed a traitor by those unaware of what he's up to.

### Struggle

He patiently listens to Gordon sounding off on what he sees as the pointlessness of the armed struggle. He gives him to believe he's with him in at

least some of his arguments. A grudging friendship develops between them.

At one point Gordon even finds himself divulging his marital problems to Larry. The dropping of his personal guard means the relaxation of security as well. This plays into the hands of the break-out plan Larry is masterminding with the other internees.

Whatever one feels about the moral or political credos of the IRA, most people agree they were one of the most intricate organisations in history and also one of the most difficult for the British to break down. ISIS has probably taken over that mantle now.

Larry's discovery that a simple playing card he finds

in Gordon's jacket is what gets the prison gates to open is a 'eureka' moment for him. Elsewhere, letters to loved ones are nonchalantly smuggled to and fro in thumbnail-size packages.

Stephen Burke's direction sustains the tension admirably. The film boasts bravura performances from Vaughan-Lawlor (you'll know him better as Nidge from *Love/Hate*) and Ward, two men who are polar opposites politically but equally passionate about their beliefs.

"There'll come a day when people like me will be a thing of the past," Larry tells his son in one scene. And so it came to pass.

Excellent

★★★★★



# BookReviews

**Peter Costello**



## Recent books in brief

**The Source of All Love: Catholicity and the Trinity**  
by Heidi Russell  
(Orbis Books / Alban Books, £22.99)

This book is by a distinguished member of the faculty of the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University in Chicago. She addresses the problem of presenting the doctrine of the Trinity in a manner that reflects our modern understanding of the nature of things, rather than the classical and medieval model that still seems to serve many theologians. She is also an authority on the theology of Karl Rahner, and uses his insights to inform her treatment of what is, in an unbelieving age, seen as a problem by many. Indeed one sometimes feels that many Christians are basically Unitarians. (Though the Trinity it seems to this reviewer, perhaps not as strange a notion as so many think; there is indeed a sense in which all of us have different persons within us, when we are child, spouse and parent.)

What emerges from her chapters is a pleasing sense of the wholeness of things, the interconnectedness of life at its fullest extent.

The leading notion in the book is that the true nature of God can be experienced through thinking of God as the source of Love, the Word of Love, and the Spirit of Love.

In making available this interesting exposition she will serve the needs of the ordinary reader seeking enlightenment as well as students.

It is certainly worth persevering though her chapters on the Fathers of the Church, theological developments and the ideas of modern physics, to reach her final chapter and conclusion in which Catholicity is equated with "the wholeness of love".

The book is published as part of the publisher's series "Catholicity in an Evolving Universe", of which Ilia Delio, who provides a foreword to this book, is the general editor.

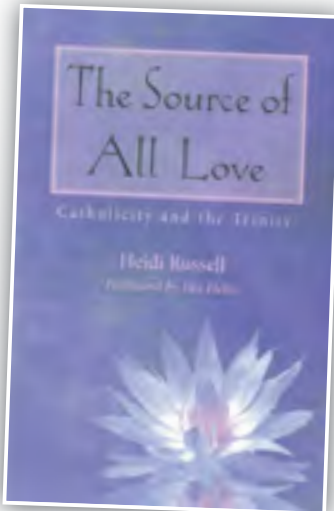
**Let the Word of Christ Dwell in the You: Weekday Reflections for the Liturgical Year 2017/2018**

by Martin Hogan  
(Messenger Publications, €14.95)

Though Advent and the start of the Liturgical year is still some way off, it seems appropriate to bring to the attention of readers Fr Hogan's new book. He is one of the priests at St John the Baptist parish in Clontarf, but for many years lectured at Mater Dei. He has already issued book reflections on the readings from Mark, Matthew and Luke. This book completes the set, which many will already have begun to purchase in previous years.

What he manages to combine in his writing is both a sense of what works at a local pastoral level, at regular Masses, with a firm sense of the present scholarship and theological thoughts that underpin our understanding of the Gospels.

The pieces are quite short, but that is all to the good, for it enables him to be focused rather than diffuse, to be concentrated rather than verbose. This approach enables a better understanding of the passages, which in any case should only be a start towards a personal exploration not only of the Gospels but of all the earlier Biblical texts from which they draw so many of their allusions and teachings.



# Brigid of Ireland, Europe's virgin

**Saint Brigid: Life, Legend, and Cult**  
by Noel Kissane  
(Four Courts Press, €24.99)

**Padraig Ó Riain**

In the *Life* he wrote for Brigid, Cogitosus, the earliest known Irish biographer of a saint, declared that because of her, Kildare's authority extended "from sea to sea", from one side of Ireland to the other.

Judging by the dedications to Brigid listed in this book by Noel Kissane, province by province, county by county, Cogitosus' words certainly applied to Kildare's patron saint.

Devotion to her extended from the south coast of Co. Cork, where there are four dedications, to the Inishowen peninsula in Co. Donegal, where two medieval churches bore her name. From Clare Island in West Mayo to Killossery parish in north Co. Dublin, where the local townland of Brazil is named after her family, the Uí Bhreasail, her memory was similarly cultivated, as also at Killester, and at St Bride's cathedral within the medieval town of Dublin.

Alas, the author's native county of Kerry is one of the few that are poorly provided with dedications to the saint; under churches he lists one only, at Duagh near Listowel.

## Recommendation

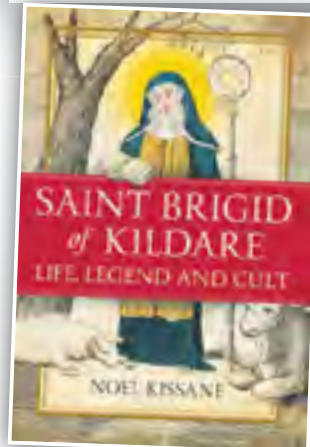
Noel Kissane's interest in the saint arose by accident; on the recommendation of his supervisor in UCD, the renowned Patrician scholar Ludwig Bieler, he chose her Latin metrical *Life*, written about 850 by Donatus, an Irish bishop of Fiesole, as the subject of his doctoral thesis.

Beautifully situated in the hills above Florence, Fiesole is now adjoined by a village and church of Santa Brigida, and further north, in Piacenza, near Bobbio, is another Santa Brigida, founded to provide hospitality for Irish pilgrims.

Numerous overseas dedications to the saint are listed by the author, beginning with England, Wales and Scotland. While particularly strong in Britain's Celtic fringes, her cult was also cultivated among the



St Brigid's Well in Kildare, an ancient shrine.



ancestors of the present-day English. Indeed, one English dedication, a well in London, left its mark on the English language, in the word bride-well, which recalls a holy well in the City of London, located near a prison (formerly a royal residence of Henry VIII).

The continental traces of the saint listed here should be of particular interest to those travelling on educational or leisure trips abroad. A 13th-Century Irish poet quite properly described Brigid as ógh na hEorpa, 'Europe's virgin'; in medieval times, it is doubtful if any other non-biblical virgin was venerated as widely.

There are many question-marks still hovering over the record of the saint. Was she born at Faughart, near Dundalk, as Louth people maintain?

Or was this belief the result of (deliberate) confusion between Fothairt, Brigid's people south of Kildare, and Fochairt, the Irish form of Faughart? And is she buried in

Kildare, or, as many came to believe, at Downpatrick in the exalted company of Patrick and Colum Cille?

The evidence for each of these beliefs is discussed by the author. Perhaps the greatest question-mark hanging over Brigid's record is whether she ever existed as a real person, a subject to which many pages are devoted.

Several scholars, including the present reviewer, are of the view that she was a Christianised version of a pre-Christian divinity whose cult was widespread among the Celtic peoples. But Noel Kissane joins other scholars in the view that, on the balance of probability, Brigid was a real person.

**“The greatest question-mark hanging over Brigid's record is whether she ever existed as a real person”**

With the exception of Patrick, no other saint has been the subject of as many biographies, beginning with Cogitosus, and continuing with several anonymous biographers down to the 12th Century, when an Englishman, Laurence of Durham, compiled a very polished version of her *Life*.

The 16th and 17th Centuries witnessed a revival of interest in the saints, and the Louvain Franciscan John Colgan devoted 125 folio

pages to Brigid in his *Trias Thaumaturga* (1647).

A second revival of interest took place in the late 19th Century, as is shown by over 200 pages being devoted to Brigid by Laois-born priest Canon John O'Hanlon, the energetic litterateur and painstaking scholar of the diocese of Dublin, in the February volume of his *Lives of the Irish Saints* (1875).

Noel Kissane's book of over 350 pages details her story and the influence it has exercised, from earliest times down to the many modern reminders of the saint, in names of churches, parishes, townlands, schools, religious orders, and secular associations, including numerous GAA clubs.

As the author shows, wherever the Irish have gone, from earliest medieval times on the continent to modern times worldwide, devotion to Brigid has accompanied them.

By devoting what amounts to a lifetime of research to Brigid, while also engaged on his duties as Education Officer and Keeper of Manuscripts in the National Library, Noel Kissane has paid a handsome tribute to Ireland's national female saint, Mary of the Gael, who, as is said in an Old Irish poem, sits "safely enthroned, triumphant upon the side of Liffey, as far as the strand of ebbing sea".

**Padraig Ó Riain is Professor Emeritus of Old and Medieval Irish at UCC.**



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.



James Larkin speaking to workers in O'Connell Street.

## The Reds in the street

**The Dublin Lockout 1913: New perspectives on Class War and its Legacy**  
edited by Conor McNamara & Padraig Yeates  
(Irish Academic Press, €24.99pb / €44.99hb)

**Tom Morrissey**

The Lockout centenary commemoration was a triumph of careful organisation, hard work and trade union support.

In the process, James Larkin was glorified, his failings largely ignored. The Great Strike / Lockout was depicted as a 'moral victory' even a 'great turning point', when in fact it left hundreds of families worse off than they had been, hundreds of men jobless, forced to emigrate or join the British army and soon after face the horrors of the First World War, while the Transport Union itself was almost destroyed.

People active in support of the locked out workers, such as Helena Moloney, were, as Ferghal McGarry points out, given special prominence during the commemoration, and Rosie Hackett was plucked from relative obscurity to have a bridge named after her.

Despite a sense of saturation concerning the Lockout at this stage, the present book deserves attention for its many interesting papers given originally at the Byrne-Perry Summer School in Wexford.

### Examination

A most interesting paper or chapter is that by Ferghal McGarry "Into the Sun: Helena Moloney's Lost Revolution". His



searching examination follows the career of a woman of idealism and compassion in 1913, who subsequently became an extreme nationalist who was prepared to work with Soviet communism and even German National Socialism to further her cause.

**“Their sense of success in the American context rendered social division at home as a painful subject”**

In the 1940s she assisted in the sheltering of a German spy and worked for a German invasion / liberation of Ireland.

An international aspect to the Lockout is contributed by Meredith Meagher in "An Irish-American perspective in the 1913 Lockout".

It is concerned with the different strands in the Irish-American press: those represented by Patrick Forde supporting Redmond and a Home Rule Ireland, and those by John Devoy, seeking a republic even by violence.

Both were conscious

of the Irish as the 'old' immigrants who adapted successfully to American ways, as distinct from the 'new' immigrants from Eastern Europe or Asia.

Their sense of success in the American context rendered social division at home as a painful subject.

### Solution

They emphasised that the solution to Ireland's problems, political and social, lay in Irish self-government. A view that was shared by Connolly during his American years and later, though he travelled a route that welcomed all immigrants to his socialist cause.

Another chapter that appealed to the present writer was "Dublin's Newsboys, 1900-1922". It is an unexpectedly interesting story of youths living in intense poverty, who earned what they could by selling newspapers and who, following the trade union strike fever in 1911, were prepared themselves to go on strike and use violence to gain better pay.

Like the men on the Great Strike they failed in their quest, but they remained loyal to Larkin, who had paid them better than other newspapers for distributing the *Irish Worker*.

The article pays tribute to the different philanthropic and charitable societies that were formed to assist the newsboys, including the Belvedere Newsboy Club, still operating, which was founded by Dr Lombard Murphy, who was greatly admired by the newsboys even if he was the son of William Martin Murphy!

## WebWatch

# Societies and souls need more than the freedom of the market

Ever since Pope Leo XIII issued *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, the Church's social teaching has commonly been seen as favouring a carefully qualified form of capitalism, of sorts perhaps best expressed in the Rhenish capitalisms of Christian democrat Germany and Holland, or even in social democrat societies.

Catholic advocates of less restrained capitalist models, however, have long maintained that the freedom that's essential to free-market capitalism is itself necessary for the flourishing of other freedoms, including religious and civic life. This thesis underpinned Michael Novak's 1982 book *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, and long influenced the religious journal *First Things*, to which Novak, who died this February, was a frequent contributor.

All of which has made startling a lengthy piece on [firstthings.com](http://firstthings.com) by *First Things* editor R.R. 'Rusty' Reno which admits that this thesis is – at least now – highly problematic.

'The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism' revisits Novak's book of the same name and observes that "Capitalism is not a choice, as it seemed to me and many others when Michael wrote his book. It is our fate – and our problem."

### Analysis

Novak's analysis, he says, recognised that healthy societies need "a free economy; liberal, democratic political institutions; and a Judeo-Christian moral ecology that prizes human dignity and encourages self-discipline, social trust, and individual initiative", but, he says, the stability of such systems have depended very much on a historical moment that is passing away.

The 1970s against which Novak wrote were an era when liberation was seen as the highest of goods. Reno argues that the "new birth of freedom" Novak championed largely came to pass, but did so in a



Michael Novak.

way that has weakened democratic institutions and a vital religious and moral culture. Similar and related points have been made in recent years by such diverse thinkers as Jonathan Haidt, Phillip Blond and Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.

"Michael observes that 'greater incentives will stimulate greater economic activism,'" Reno writes, before continuing: "True, but he did not recognise that ever-greater economic activity can crowd out political engagement and sideline religious and moral authority. This is what has happened."

"Capitalism, now global in scope, is swallowing up more and more of civic life, so much so that in some contexts economists and policymakers present free market principles as ironclad laws about which we have no choice."

"Dwindling manufacturing jobs, technological displacement, global flows of labour and capital – we are told we have no alternative. This is a cruel reversal of what Michael commended as the source of freedom and openness."

Warning against tendencies towards oligarchic systems where "the well-placed few" – whatever their political



R.R. Reno.

outlooks – "govern the largely docile and easily manipulated many", Reno says that *First Things* has, in retrospect, "underestimated the flesh-eating character of our free market economy, which now markets 'community' and uses 'social justice' as a way to sell products".

The effect of multinational companies positioning themselves as agents of social change is, Reno argues, "a political placebo, one that substitutes social-therapeutic gestures for genuine solidarity and civic engagement. The market is becoming the dominant mode of our social engagement, with social media leading the way."

**“The very virtues of free-market capitalism work against any kind of permanence”**

This diminishes democratic culture, he says, and undercuts traditional religious moral attitudes, with companies that believe in religious freedom knowing they will be punished by the market if they speak up.

Diversity may bring innovation and success, but Reno laments that modern diversity too often entails signing up to certain progressive cultural commitments, "which in turn means accepting the authority of a rigid, punitive ideological system".

In our world, Reno argues, the very virtues of free-market capitalism work against any kind of permanence – even those for which our hearts cry loudest – and help to foster the notion of a world where constraints seem arbitrary.

"It is inhumane to forsake the dynamism of capitalism," he says, "But it is also inhumane to think that quality sufficient. In 2017, we need to think about how to direct economic freedom toward service of the common good."



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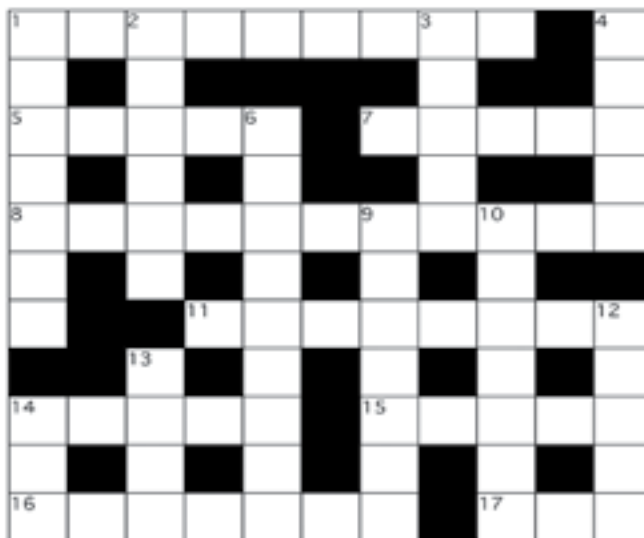
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# Leisure time

## Crossword Junior

Gordius 200



### ACROSS

- 1 Use its engine when sailing in it (9)  
 5 The opposite of South (5)  
 7 Female fox (5)  
 8 Use it to take someone's temperature (11)  
 11 Has an argument (8)  
 14 You can go quite high when you go back and forth on this piece of playground equipment (5)  
 15 You might book a room for the night here (5)  
 16 Used a spoon (7)  
 17 Finish (3)

### DOWN

- 1 There are sixty of them in an hour (7)

- 2 You aim at this (6)

- 3 There's a book about her adventures in Wonderland (5)  
 4 Someone who digs for coal or gold, for example (5)  
 6 This item of fast food could be a quarter-pounder (9)  
 9 Walked together, like soldiers (7)  
 10 Go here to see a play on stage (7)  
 12 Tasty dish usually eaten in summer (5)  
 13 Very short skirt, or a small car (4)  
 14 These letters mean someone is in trouble! (111)

## LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

### GORDIUS No.316

**Across** – 1 Little Rock 6 Asia 10 Truce 11 Goose step 12 Rhondda 15 Tanya 17 Sufi 18 Atop 19 Faded 21 Actuary 23 Lungs 24 Cute 25 Hymn 26 Lodge 28 Scalpel 33 Walking on water 35 Rake 36 Condescend

**Down** – 1 Lots 2 Touchdown 3 Lie-in 4 Rigid 5 Cook 7 Sit-in 8 Applauding 9 Testify 13 Disc 14 Assumes 16 Wallflower 20 Day centre 21 Ascetic 22 RADA 27 Dalek 29 Caned 30 Lewis 31 Agio 32 Fred

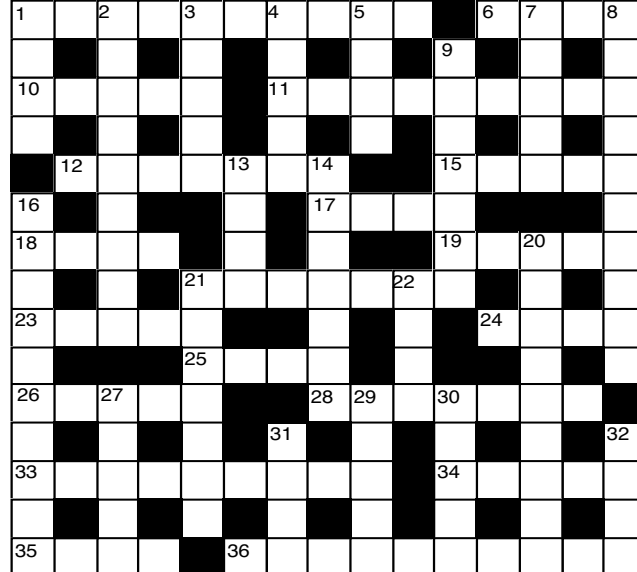
### CHILDREN'S No.199

**Across** – 1 Unfortunate 5 Pretty 7 Sprint 9 Rocks 11 Trip 13 Sat 15 Cup 16 Alien 17 Spine 18 Useless

**Down** – 1 Upper 2 French 3 Toys 4 April 6 Stretcher 8 Princess 10 Strange 12 Pea 13 Spain 14 Wine

## Crossword

Gordius 317



### ACROSS

- 1 An identical facsimile (6,4)  
 6 Service the mother ship (4)  
 10 Infantile paralysis (5)  
 11 Command Class - it needs filling in (5,4)  
 12 One frightens about five by putting them around their necks (7)  
 15 Rub out (5)  
 17 Furnace for firing pottery, making bricks, etc (4)  
 18 Historic Scotsman - or pioneer from Western Australia? (4)  
 19 & 26a It's a measure of the volume that it is written initially by CC (5,10)  
 21 Junior hotel employee (7)  
 23 Hardy kind of Greek monster (5)  
 24 Rear (4)  
 25 Hearing-disabled (4)  
 26 Wanderer Damon returns (5)  
 28 Israeli city that developed from a suburb of Jaffa (3,4)  
 33 Red soft fruit (9)  
 34 Pew taken from Benbulbin church (5)  
 35 She did nothing but found Carthage (4)

- 36 See 19 across

### DOWN

- 1 Just about manage with a vestment (4)  
 2 Colder tea is stirred and moved somewhere new (9)  
 3 A smell (5)  
 4 Genetic duplicate (5)  
 5 Quiet commercials donned by cricketers (4)  
 7 Scent a romantic opening (5)  
 8 Mike cleans up an Easter treat (6,4)  
 9 Condition of pressing importance (7)  
 13 Such wickedness is gripping! (4)  
 14 It makes sure one is up for winter sport! (3,4)  
 16 Ten score this many! (3,7)  
 20 Some food for an enthusiast of Samba Country (6,3)  
 21 Money owed that will not be recovered (3,4)  
 22 Egg-shaped (4)  
 27 A thousand employed - or so one thought (5)  
 29 The Land of the Pharaohs (5)  
 30 In which to keep photos (5)  
 31 At liberty (4)  
 32 Clarified butter (4)



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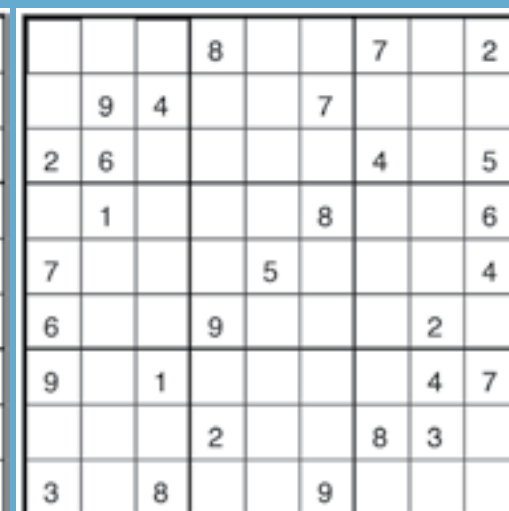
## Sudoku Corner

200

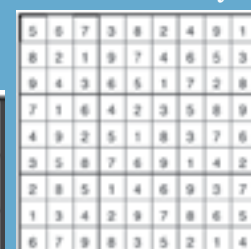
### Easy



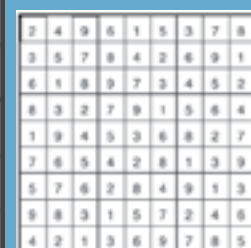
### Hard



### Last week's Easy 199



### Last week's Hard 199





# Notebook

Fr Martin Delaney



## An Irish aversion to friendly advice

**THERE WAS AN** interesting exchange between Rory McElroy and his then caddie JP Fitzgerald during the opening round of this year's British Open at Royal Birkdale. McElroy had a disastrous start and after six holes he was already five over and facing the humiliation of missing the cut for the third successive week. His caddie could take no more and launched a verbal, foul-mouthed onslaught at the world No.4 and one of his closest friends.

The response from Rory was immediate and sparked a dramatic revival which put him ultimately in contention for the championship. Rory later acknowledged the part played by his caddie in his change of fortune.

However, the following week Rory fired his caddie but subsequently indicated that it was to preserve their close personal friendship that he sacrificed his professional relationship with JP.

### Exchange

I was reminded of that exchange when I came to read the Gospel for the 23rd Sunday of the Year (September 10). The practical theme of the Gospel was about fraternal correction, but I'm not



Rory McElroy (right) with his former golf caddie, JP Fitzgerald.

sure how easily that sits with us Irish. Conventional Irish wisdom advocates caution in all things. Signing nothing, minding your own business and keeping your distance have long been extolled as practical guidelines for virtuous living.

Just the other day I met someone and part of our conversation was about a man we both know who is partially sighted but continues to regularly drive his 'uninsured' vehicle, (sometimes

after an extended visit to the local pub) along country roads in a manner which potentially puts himself and others in grave danger. However nobody in that man's circle of family, neighbours and friends; including the two having the conversation, are prepared to confront him about his situation.

How often have we heard the comments in the aftermath of some atrocity or tragedy... somebody must have known...

was there no one to take him aside and speak some sense into him...no friend to shout STOP. Even within our own families we don't want to get involved when there is a problem and sometimes when somebody does try they are accused of interfering.

That Gospel on Sunday, September 10 indicates very clearly, from the Christian standpoint, discreet non-involvement is not always adequate. We are asked to claim our responsibility for those who walk the road of life with us.

In the Gospel Jesus puts a very practical but a very difficult challenge before us and one that probably all of us will at some point in our lives be presented with. It is of course also a matter of HOW we do it. If and when we stage an intervention in the life of someone we love and care about, it must be done with gentleness and reverence.

When I approach a brother or a sister or a friend I am treading on sacred ground. Concerned Christian correction will lead to reconciliation not humiliation. It must always be based on love which 'cannot hurt your neighbour' but will call them onwards and upwards to greater things.

**SR PEG:** Some time ago I had the sad privilege of celebrating the funeral Mass for a great friend and proud Kerry woman, Sr Peg Rahilly. Peg would always be so excited coming up to a football All-Ireland that included the Kingdom.

Even though her native county did not contest this year's final, Peg will still be a proud Kerry woman and I'm reminded of these words by the famous bard from Listowel: "Being a Kerry person, in my opinion, is the greatest gift that God can bestow on any human being. When you belong to Kerry you know you have a head start on the other fellow. In belonging to Kerry you belong to the elements, to the spheres spinning in the Heavens. You belong to History and Language and Romance and Ancient Song. It is almost unbearable being a Kerry person and it is an awesome responsibility." – John B. Keane



## 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.

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