

The Irish Catholic

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Thursday, May 21, 2020

€2.00 (Stg £1.70)

The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

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Stay safe – pray safe

Relief as closed churches re-open for prayer

Chai Brady

Parishioners and priests across the North have reacted with a mixture of joy and relief after churches began re-opening this week as part of the relaxation of the coronavirus lockdown.

Bishop of Derry Donal McKeown told *The Irish Catholic* that he is “delighted”.

“It’s fine praying from home but I think people enjoy being able to be in a sacred space before the Blessed Sacrament.

“I think we’re clear enough ourselves that the next priority would be ensuring that government allows us to have small groups for baptisms and small numbers for marriages,” he said.

In Armagh Archdiocese, the motto for the re-opened churches is ‘stay safe – pray safe’.

Tradition

Archbishop Eamon Martin joined with leaders of other Christian tradition to welcome the re-opening of churches in the North.

“In particular, we are keen to respond to the appeals from those who find great comfort in visiting their church for private prayer, from couples who are anxious that they can proceed with their marriage ceremony and from parents who wish to have their child baptised,” they said in a statement.

It comes as an online poll of readers of *The Irish Catholic* found that almost nine out of 10 readers want a swifter return to public Masses as soon as it is safe to do so.

In the online poll, readers were asked “if churches can show – like other spheres of society – that small public gatherings can begin safely with physical distancing and hygiene measures, do you think small public Masses should begin sooner than currently planned?”

Of those who expressed an opinion, 87% – almost nine out of 10 – said they think that small public Masses should begin sooner than currently planned”. Just 13% voted ‘no’

» Continued on Page 2

Feeling God’s closeness while keeping our distance



Every morning throughout May, lifelong friends and neighbours, Peggy Coffey (83) and Imelda Coffey (94) visit the Grotto on Rock Road, Killarney, to recite the Rosary together. Both manage social distancing and miss going to Mass, but are happy watching the online Mass from nearby St Mary’s Cathedral, at 10.30am. Photo: Valerie O’Sullivan

MARY KENNY

Ukraine’s ‘abandoned’ surrogate babies

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OUR GREAT POPE

Remembering John Paul II a century after his birth PAGES 12 & 13



DAVID QUINN

Our bishops are being too cautious when it comes to return of public Masses PAGE 8



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Annual Subscription Rates: Ireland €145. Airmail €250. Six months – €75.
ISSN 1393 - 6832 - Published by The Irish Catholic,
23 Merrion Square, Dublin 2. Printed by Webprint, Cork.

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As Europeans return to Mass, our long Lent continues

"I thought my first cappuccino after 54 days was amazing, but being at Mass after 10 weeks was even better," a Roman friend said this week. Churches in the eternal city were re-opened for public Masses this week after a long Lent. "It finally felt like Easter," my friend wrote.

Italy has been devastated by coronavirus. At the time of writing, 32,007 Italians have died of Covid-19 – but many people fear that the real figure may actually be double that.

The Italian hierarchy worked in close partnership with the civil authorities to ensure that the churches could open safely on May 18. Teams from the army sanitised the churches and physical distancing is being observed in the churches.

Gatherings

Is it too soon? Public health officials evidently think not. The bishops in Italy have not moved any farther than they have been permitted by the civil authorities. The same is true in other European countries.

A French court ruled this week that the authorities must let worshippers start going back to Mass again next Tuesday. It said that since France had permitted gatherings of ten or more people for social reasons, the ban on public Masses was "disproportionate in

nature" and caused "damage that was seriously and manifestly illegal".

Last week COMECE – the commission of the bishops' conference of Europe – warned that the ongoing suspension of public Masses was a serious threat to religious freedom. It is not a body known for exaggeration.

Catholics can now attend Mass in Spain, Poland, Italy, the Czech Republic, Germany, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Sweden, Norway, Luxembourg, Austria, Romania, Greece, Portugal and Switzerland are reopening in two weeks.

Only in Ireland is the plan for public Masses nine weeks away.

Why is this? Are the public health officials in the countries listed above reckless? It seems unlikely.

Is there something about Irish people that makes them incapable of physically distancing or sanitising their churches? Whatever our shortcomings as a people, it again seems unlikely that we have less capacity than our European neighbours.

The Taoiseach Leo Varadkar hosted a meeting with Church leaders last

Editor's Comment Michael Kelly



week. There was precious little in the communique that followed. Church spokespersons have been tight-lipped since. "There is a plan," I am told when I ask members of the hierarchy why they believe the rest of Europe can open for Masses and we can't.

“Hairdressers, restaurants and public spaces will open but the churches will not”

I understand the concerns around health and safety, and these are legitimate. But if other countries in Europe can balance the risks with the benefits of religious practice it hardly seems outlandish that the same can be true in Ireland.

The garden centres are open this week, soon other retailers will follow. Hairdressers, restaurants

and public spaces will open but the churches will not. Catholics will soon be able to gather for physically distant common activity everywhere except in their churches. It's a stark truth if that is what indeed transpires.

It's not going to be easy to recommence public worship. There are serious questions about access, cleaning, Holy Communion, etc. – but these are questions that arose in other countries as well and faith communities were not found wanting.

The Church in Ireland is bruised, battered and tired. But surely there is the life to muster up the enthusiasm for Mass that animated countless generations of our forbearers. Surely?

As we prepare for Pentecost Sunday, we might make the ancient prayer of the Church our own: come Holy Spirit.

Laudato Si' plans positive move says Trócaire

Róise McGagh

A year-long initiative dedicated to study of the Pope's landmark 2015 encyclical on creation *Laudato Si'* has been hailed as a positive move by the Church's development agency Trócaire.

Announced on May 16 during *Laudato Si'* week by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, the Vatican-sponsored event will run until May 24 2021.

Jane Mellet, *Laudato Si'* officer with Trócaire told *The Irish Catholic*: "To go for a year-long drive is something really important and timely. I think they see the link between our current health crisis and the environmental crisis and they're seeing it as an opportunity to shape the way the world goes back to 'normal'.

"I think it's a renewed call and a renewed reminder of the urgency that we have this window in time," she said.

'Stay safe, pray safe'

» Continued from Page 1

saying they believe that public Masses should not return sooner, even if it is safe to do so.

Meanwhile, while lots of churches in the Republic did not close for private prayer, many of those that did are starting to open their doors again.

Bishop of Killaloe Fintan Monahan told *The Irish Catholic* that "the decision was not taken lightly.

"I have some reservations about it, in the interest of the wellbeing and safety of everyone. However on balance, considering the spiritual wellbeing and the careful guidelines recommended it seems a reasonable decision," he said.

See Page 6.



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LOVE
BOTH

Churches across Ireland to join in song for frontline staff

Róise McGagh

Musicians from churches all over Ireland will come together in a song for frontline staff on Pentecost Sunday May 31.

The blessing will be a rendition of the specially adapted hymn *Be Thou my Vision*. Submissions from different churches north and south of the border will be dedicated to local causes and also part of a wider national tribute.

Fr Martin Magill PP, St John's Parish in Belfast is one of the organisers said the idea was inspired by a British initiative to acknowledge the dedication of those involved in providing essential services.

"We opened up right across the denominations and we chose a different way. UK churches had 65 churches involved in theirs, but we decided we will throw it completely open and see who wants to take part.

"We will hopefully have a really good range across the denominations, the invitation is to all the churches and all the denominations."

Submissions will be composed of a mix of videos from musicians and singers

who cannot record together due to restrictions. Church-based singers or musicians in the North or the Republic are invited to download the recording pack available from www.theirishblessing.com. The project opened for entries on Monday and the deadline for recordings is 12 noon on Friday, May 22.

Blessings

Fellow organiser, Philip McKinley, Dublin-based Church of Ireland ordinand said: "God blesses us abundantly and is present with us, even in very difficult times. This song is an invitation to lift our eyes, to shift our vision far beyond ourselves, to him. Ireland is famous for its blessings, words to encourage friends, family and neighbours along the journey. We want to bless those on the frontlines with words of hope and life and relationship with the creator of all things."

Once recordings are completed, churches will submit these to the organising team where they will be considered for inclusion in an all-island version of the hymn. This final collaborative video will be released on YouTube on Pentecost Sunday at 11am.

Come on in, the doors are open



Bishop Fintan Monahan of Killaloe reopened churches this week in his diocese for private prayer in line with Government guidelines.

Primate urges suspension of academic selection for kids in the North

Chai Brady

Archbishop Eamon Martin has appealed to Catholic schools in the North to set aside the traditional transfer tests which decide based on academic selection which secondary school a child attends.

In a letter sent this week to 165 schools across the dioceses of Armagh and Dromore, Archbishop Eamon insisted that children are under enough pressure due to coronavirus.

The so-called 11+ exams to decide on whether a child could be admitted to grammar schools or not were abolished in 2008. However, some schools that wanted to continue to select children based on

academic criteria set up their own process.

Archbishop Eamon asked "in the best interests of our children and schools" that the education community "support a suspension of the use of academic selection for entrance to post-primary schools in September 2021".

He urged grammar schools to draw up criteria for admission that do not rely on the tests and insisted that he had no desire to "re-open the arguments for and against the transfer tests".

At the time the 11+ was abolished, members of the hierarchy were sharply critical of Catholic schools that wished to retain academic selection.

New Adoration Companion launched by *Magnificat*

Staff reporter

The publishers of *Magnificat* magazine have launched an Adoration Companion to assist Catholics during Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, a practice that seems to have increased during the Covid 19 period.

Fr Sebastian White op who edited the Compan-

ion describes the book as "a treasury of teachings, prayers, meditations and witnesses from the saints to help guide you in one of the most beautiful and elevated devotions of the Catholic Faith: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament".

Fr White says it is a powerful resource to help guide Catholics in prayer during Adoration and contains prayers, litanies, Scripture

readings and hymns.

The Adoration Companion can be ordered now exclusively from *The Irish Catholic* and bulk discounts are available to parishes and prayer groups. Limited stock available.

For more information contact Elica on 01-6874024, or send an e-mail to elica@irishcatholic.ie or magnificat@irishcatholic.ie



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- Aristotle

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New study aims to gauge impact of virus on Church

Staff reporter

The Mater Dei Centre for Catholic Education (MDCCE) aims to assess how the coronavirus pandemic has affected churchgoers with a new survey published last week.

Dr Gareth Byrne, Director of the MDCCE, said: "It is important to document the response of churchgoers to the Covid-19 crisis and its impact on their faith lives and connection with Church.

"We hope to capture evidence of people's experiences during this time, as well as indicators of possibilities and learning for the future."

The survey questions how people have coped with the pandemic and whether it strengthened or weakened their faith. It also asks how it has been for clergy and ministry teams trying to work during the crisis.

Experience

The hope is to capture evidence of people's experience, the ministry they've received or given, and what people think will happen to churches after the pandemic.

Researchers at York St John University recently initiated an empirical study of these issues in discussion with bishops, clergy and lay people in England, Scotland and Wales.

Working with them, the MDCCE at DCU is making this survey available within the Irish context. It can be found at: https://yorksj.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ONW4P1ZZDmuAPEF

Don't 'hide behind fear' say motor Mass priest

Chai Brady

A Kerry priest who is celebrating car park Masses for people struggling or unable to watch online Mass has said "we can't let fear dominate us".

Fr Kevin McNamara PP of Moyvane, who started celebrating outdoor Masses with his congregation, who stay in their cars throughout, said there has been a "great response".

"They're seeing their priest and I see them as well and even though we're apart, at that time of Eucharist we're together. We start at 7.15pm

with the Rosary and then we go straight into Mass every evening," he said.

"Rather than closed doors and places being sealed off, there is this little venture, and of course we have to be very realistic and very, very cautious."

Some of his parishioners don't have access to streamed Masses, so "they're cut off", Fr McNamara explained, "we're giving people encouragement that we're moving in the right direction, the country's opening up a little bit, we have to walk before we can run in this situation so again the difficul-

ty's there".

"Again I suppose, the one thing I would be saying is we can't let fear dominate us either, we can't go to a stage where we hide behind fear and deliver nothing, we have to strive to be faithful to what we've been called to do and that is to bring people together and bring Jesus to people."

Communion

There have been up to 50 cars in the carpark of the Church of the Assumption for Sunday Mass, according to Fr McNamara. There is no distri-

bution of the host, and similar to online Mass there is a spiritual communion.

"The big challenge that we're going to have, whether it's a month or two months or five months, is how to get people to receive Holy Communion because that's the biggest heartache and pain, people can't receive the bread of life and there is a real genuine spiritual hunger for that," Fr McNamara said.

Previously the parish set up a 'drive through' Stations of the Cross on Good Friday in the carpark.

Sacrament on the road in Priorswood



Fr Bryan Shortall OFM Cap. brings the Blessed Sacrament, via jeep, to the streets of Priorswood parish in Dublin.

NEWS IN BRIEF

New research starts on 12th Century Gospel manuscript

A new research project into the para-texts and annotations of a 12th Century Gospel manuscript has begun in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin.

The project, funded by the Templeton Religion Trust, seeks to understand the way that manuscript para-texts influence the way readers perceive its message.

Dr Garrick Allen, from Dublin City University's School of Theology, Philosophy and Music, will examine the library's Western Collection 139, a 12th Century Byzantine Codex of all four Gospels. "It has almost every possible para-text that you could find," says Dr Allen of the manuscript. "All of these para-texts reflect human engagement with the gospels in a concrete way."

Limerick offers online hope to students

Bishop of Limerick Brendan Leahy has urged Leaving Certificate students to stay positive and realise that this exam will not define them even if they feel their hard work is now for nothing. Speaking about the centenary of the birth of St Pope John Paul II (May 18), Bishop Leahy reminded the students that in his visit to Limerick, the Pope reminded us that we have to make choices regarding what kind of a society we want and that the Coronavirus has also given us time to reflect on this.

Bishop Leahy said that on June 3, the day exams were due to start, at 7pm, Fr Chris O'Donnell and Limerick Diocese youth ministry co-ordinator Aoife Walsh will offer students an online liturgy of encouragement via webcam from St. John's Cathedral.

Seamstresses unite to make masks for the vulnerable

Aron Hegarty

A group of seamstresses working in direct provision centres have come together to make over 1,000 face masks a week to protect the vulnerable from Covid-19.

The Sanctuary Mask Initiative (SMI) is spearheaded by BetterTogether and the

Cork Migrant Centre, with the support of the UCC University of Sanctuary, UCC Feminist and Fáilte Refugees Societies.

The SMI recruits women living in direct provision centres to produce hygiene masks to distribute to residence in direct provision, the elderly in nursing homes and other groups at risk.

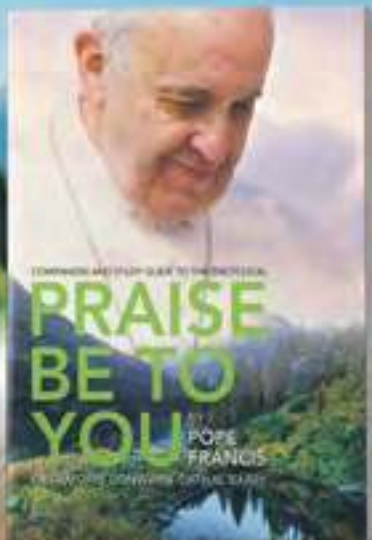
Speaking to *The Irish Catholic*, Emma Otten of SMI said the initiative is having a "positive impact" on the women involved and those they help.

"The initiative is designed to harness the strengths of people living within the Direct Provision system and give them a purpose during the Covid-19 crisis," she said

Laudato Si Week

From May 16 – 24, Pope Francis has invited the world to mark five years since the publication of his revolutionary encyclical on the environment.

Catch up on the main ideas and action points of the document with our study guide, *Praised Be to You*.



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Ukraine's 'abandoned' babies

Surrogacy is a complicated issue – the demand for surrogacy services certainly indicates that while there have been so many well-financed pressures to get rid of babies, there is also a strong global demand to acquire babies. Surrogacy is big business.

A recent drama on BBC TV, *The Nest*, broadcast in April, portrayed a wealthy Scottish couple desperate for a child. By chance, they happen upon a troubled teenage girl who is willing to act as surrogate for them – for £50,000. Because the regulations are so bureaucratic in Scotland, they travel to the Ukraine to organise the conception, which is accomplished with few questions asked.

That was the first I knew that the Ukraine is now something of a world hub for providing surrogacy for couples, both heterosexual and homosexual. But so it is. The BioTex Center for Human Reproduction in Ukraine will do a surrogacy deal for the quite modest price of €9,900. Ukrainian



Mary Kenny



Dan (Martin Compston) and Emily (Sophie Rundle) in *The Nest*.

women act as surrogate mothers for 'commissioning' couples from all over the world. The commissioning couples can be assured that the Ukrainian-born babies will be white.

But now the coronavirus has prompted a potential tragedy with the Kiev

reproductive company. According to the *New York Times*, at least 100 newborn babies have been left uncollected because the commissioning parents are unable to travel to collect them.

Another news source, the online *Remix* website, claims

that the number could be up to 500 infants. According to Grzegorz Górny, the local reporter, over 40 swaddled newborns have been left 'abandoned' and crying in their cots.

Further financial problems arise as the Ukrainians are not happy about having to support these infants indefinitely.

Emergency

Some effort is being made, internationally, to allow the commissioning parents to travel to Kiev, spending time in quarantine. Certainly, there should be an international emergency action to rescue the infants – as everyone knows, the first few weeks and months after birth are crucial for one-to-one bonding.

Surrogacy is not regarded as ethically permissible by the Catholic Church, and

feminists, too, are often opposed to it – on the grounds that it is hiring another woman's body for money. But here's the dilemma: once the baby exists, there is surely a moral requirement to extend love and care. The rescue of the surrogate babies is entirely aligned with a pro-life mission, as well as a humanitarian one. Simply because it's a pitiful situation – and it can't be in the child's best interests to be left swaddled and crying in a clinic's nursery ward.

The Nest brought out the psychological complexities involved in surrogacy: the volatile emotions between the 'commissioning' couple, Dan and Emily, and the unreliable teenager, Kaya, who has herself had a problem background – let alone the entanglements of money and power.

A rather patched-up happy ending is provided in the story, but it's evident there could be trouble down the line.

Surrogacy is indeed complicated. The Ukrainian situation illuminates that in no small measure.



President Trump [pictured] has caused shock and disapproval by saying that he takes the anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine as a protection against the coronavirus. Some experts say it's not proven to work, and a run on the drug could deprive people who really need it for malaria. Mr Trump's own doctor advises him it isn't doing any harm.

There's an 'anti-malarial' drug that was always widely used by travellers (and journalists) going to Africa and India. It was called 'gin and tonic'. The users swore that the quinine in the tonic and the juniper in the gin were an excellent defence against malaria.

I'm sure they're now swearing it's a defence against Covid-19!

During this lockdown period, I've been perusing the early Irish saints as a way of examining our roots, and the strong links between holy men and women and geographical location, as itemised in O Riain's scholarly *Dictionary of Irish Saints*. As we are moving towards exiting the lockdown, I'll bring this regular item to a close

with mention of St Conall of Inishkeel, Co. Donegal, who, on a pilgrimage to Rome, was given the Law of Sunday, to be brought back to Ireland.

He became a saint through penance for an earlier homicide. Conall's bell is now in the British Museum, and his traditional feast day is May 22.

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Govt asked for 'clarity' over wedding restrictions

Lorna Siggins

The Government has been called on to clarify whether church weddings and baptism ceremonies can proceed with small numbers under phase one of Covid-19 restrictions.

Fr John Carroll, Ferns diocesan secretary and communications officer in Co Wexford, said there appeared to be disconnect between Government regulations and their interpretation by the Garda.

A clear directive to solemnisers now would ensure ceremonies in all churches complied with regulations, Fr Carroll suggested. It would also help to address "a lot of anxiety" among people seeking ceremonies, he said.

Churches in the Ferns diocese have remained open during the coronavirus, and a small number of ceremonies had been taking place, he said.

"Some 95% of weddings were postponed, but there were a couple of cases where religious ceremonies were requested, along with baptisms, and these took place with numbers under ten as per the instruction for funerals," he said.

Concerns

However, last week the bishop's office was contacted by gardai over concerns about a wedding involving members of the Travelling community in Bunclody, Co Wexford.

"As I understand it, that wedding had been postponed already several times, and the priest had made an agreement that there would be under ten people in attendance, but the gardai then stepped in and stopped it," Fr Carroll said.

"I'd be concerned we are making rules for one section of the community which is unfair to another, and this is a human rights issue," he said.

"If there is clarity from Government, we know where we stand," he said. "We don't proceed until couples have permission from the State, but we also don't want to be making a law where one doesn't exist," he said.

Minister for Health Simon

Harris told RTÉ Radio 1's *Morning Ireland* on Monday (May 18) that the Government would be working on more detailed guidance about weddings over the next few weeks.

The Garda Press Office said that the Government road map on easing restrictions "envisages the opening of religious and places of worship where social distancing can be maintained during phase four".

Phase four may be implemented from July 20. Larger gatherings, also with social distancing, may be permitted from phase five, provisionally scheduled for August 10.

Asked to comment in rela-

tion to the Bunclody wedding, the Garda Press Office said that section 31 (a) of the 1947 Health Act provides for a "graduated policing response".

It said this response had been adopted in supporting the Covid-19 public health guidelines and regulations, based on its tradition of policing by consent.

"This has seen Garda members engage, educate, encourage and, as a last resort, enforce," it said.

In Britain, a petition is calling on the Government to put a stop to weddings to enable couples who were due to be married to file insurance claims.



The principal and First Communion teachers from Scoil Mhuire are pictured with Paul Brazzill (cameraman) at Mass in Barntown, Co. Wexford.

87% want swifter return to safe public Masses

Staff reporter

Almost nine out of 10 readers of *The Irish Catholic* online want a swifter return to public Masses as soon as it is safe to do so, rather than the July 20 deadline set by the Government in the Republic. In the North, where a ban on churches opening was lifted this week, there is no timeframe for Masses to recommence.

In an online poll, readers were asked "if churches can show – like other spheres of society – that small public gatherings can begin safely with physical distancing and hygiene measures, do you think small public Masses should begin sooner than currently planned?"

Of those who expressed an opinion, 87% said they think that small public Masses should begin sooner than currently planned". Just 13% voted 'no', saying they believe that public Masses should not return sooner, even if it is safe to do so.

It comes a week after research by Amárach found that more Irish people are anxious to see a return to public Masses than to pubs and restaurants with almost a quarter ranking churches in their top five not important.

When it came to restaurants and cafes, 21% of people ranked them in the top five. Just eight percent of people ranked pubs in their top five while just one percent of people ranked theatres and music venues in their top five things that they would give priority to opening.

The Ascension of the Lord

Some of the doors that have kept people locked in have been opened in recent days, but there is still a long wait until all doors will be opened. Religion has a huge role to play in sustaining hope by remembering the bigger picture of life.

We are celebrating the Ascension of the Lord to heaven. St Luke tells us that it was 40 days after the Resurrection. In the Bible, 40 usually refers to a time of preparation. The Risen Lord appeared in various ways to the disciples to help them in the transition from knowing him in human flesh to knowing him as the unseen God through Faith. "Blessed are those who have not seen yet believe." After Jesus it would truly be a New Age...a new power, a new mission and a new hope.

A new power
Jesus promised: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you." Next week we will celebrate Pentecost; see how the power of the Spirit changed the apostles... from ignorance to belief, from fear to courage, from despondency to joy.

A new mission
On the Mount of the Ascension, the apostles were told not to be looking up to the skies but to look out to the world as a field of mission. "Go, therefore, make disciple of all the nations. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time."

That mission and promise extends to our

The Sunday Gospel

Fr Silvester O'Flynn OFM Cap.



time. God is not just up there, but God is with us and in us. As Pope Francis put it, each one of us not only has a mission but each one is a mission to bring God's love and compassion to others. "I have no hands now but yours."

A new hope

The Ascension opens up the doors of heaven for us. This is beautifully expressed in the Preface for the Feast: "He ascended, not to distance himself from our lowly state but that we, his members, might be confident of following him where he, our Head and Founder, has gone."

Stephen Hawkins described human life as "chemical scum on an average-sized planet, orbiting around a very average-sized star, in the outer suburb of one of a million galaxies." Chemical scum! No, thank you! Give me our beautiful, meaningful and hope-filled Christian religion any day. Planets and galaxies suggest a big story but religion offers a story even bigger.

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Martin Mansergh

The View



The fruitful search for some peace of mind

Memories of people and travel, repeat performances and modern systems of communication with family, friends and colleagues all help to maintain sanity. While the airwaves are dominated by just one subject, we all need occupations that can absorb our attention and lift our mind onto other things.

The museum of the Vienna State Opera House provides a parable for the ending of the Second World War, the subject of muted 75th anniversary commemorations this month, and European recovery thereafter.

The last performance before the Vienna State Opera was bombed in the autumn of 1944 was fittingly Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*, or 'Twilight of the Gods', the last of four operas based on the medieval sagas of the Nibelungenlied. Valhalla, home of the Norse gods, goes up in flames. Hitler was a great admirer of Wagner, who was markedly anti-semitic, and the Third Reich ended in similar immolation.

General von Choltitz defied Hitler's orders to blow up Paris, when the Germans left in August 1944. Appeals were made by Eamon de Valera to all sides to spare Rome, as the allies advanced northwards from the south of Italy.

Spared

Vienna was fortunately largely spared as well. Russia, as successor of the Soviet Union, is proud of the particular care that was taken, when they captured Vienna, because of its importance as an historical pearl of western Europe.

Sparing cities also meant sparing its people, which did not happen in the case of Dresden, which was blanket bombed in February 1945 by the British and American air forces in an entirely gratuitous military punishment.

The city took decades to rebuild.

In 1955, Soviet forces withdrew from eastern Austria, including a sector in Vienna. It was also the year Ireland joined the United Nations, the Soviets having lifted their veto. While there are different views on the aesthetics of the large Soviet war memorial in the city, the Austrians have sensibly left it stand.

The rebuilt State Opera House reopened the same year, with a performance of Beethoven's only opera *Fidelio*. It is in the heroic mould, and celebrates liberation from oppression and also marital faithfulness in its most pronounced form, where Leonore risks her life to rescue her unjustly imprisoned husband, who is about to be murdered.

“Brahms once wrote on a card, on which was printed a few bars of Johann Strauss' Blue Danube waltz, 'alas, not by Johannes Brahms'”

This is the 250th anniversary of the birth of Ludwig van Beethoven in 1770 in Bonn, a city that was part of the domains of the Archbishop Elector of Cologne. The handful of electors were so-called, because they elected the Holy Roman Emperor, who latterly was nearly always a Habsburg.

In his early 20s, Beethoven went to Vienna, where he spent the rest of his life, initially to study with Haydn.

It was a city that between its nobles and its diplomats contained great patrons of music, and was home then and since to many famous composers.

Beethoven is indisputably the greatest of all, taking together the best of his symphonies and concertos, his piano and cello sonatas and his string quartets. Brahms sometimes felt intimidated by his shadow.

Both Beethoven and Brahms also had to acknowledge the popularity of lighter music. Towards the end of his life, Beethoven met Rossini, and encouraged him to carry on, as Rossini was much more to the taste of the Viennese public in the Biedermeier era than he was. Rossini was so successful with his prolific operas that he was able to retire early, though in 1869 he composed a magnificently enjoyable *petite messe solennelle*, which was neither little nor overly solemn.

Brahms once wrote on a card, on which was printed a few bars of Johann Strauss' *Blue Danube* waltz, "alas, not by Johannes Brahms".

In 2014, Jan Swafford, an American composer, published an absorbing and comprehensive critical account of the life and music of Beethoven sub-titled 'Anguish and Triumph'.

Even though the book contains many musical quotations, it can be enjoyed by anyone interested in music history. Beethoven's deafness was a huge physical handicap that he managed to transcend.

He had a prickly personality, and a difficult personal and family life.

His early career and the last stage of Haydn's from 1795 to 1802 overlapped. One of the themes of the book is how Beethoven set out to surpass his world-famous teacher, who was mostly too busy to devote much time to his lessons, so that he had to take them elsewhere.

Desolation

Beethoven belonged more to the revolutionary and Napoleonic era, which JKL, Bishop James Doyle of Kildare and Leighlin, in a letter to Daniel O'Connell compared to one of "those mighty convulsions of nature, which spread desolation for a while only to prepare a place for a new exhibition of her powers".

The *Eroica* symphony was originally to be dedicated to Napoleon, First Consul, but Beethoven

changed his mind, when Napoleon crowned himself Emperor. He likened the first movement of his *Fifth Symphony* to "fate knocking on the door". One needs to be in the right mood to listen to Beethoven in that mode. Unfortunately, his choral setting of Schiller's *Ode to Joy* in the last movement of the *Ninth Symphony*, which has become the European anthem, is rarely played alongside national anthems. The EU, despite its importance, does not arouse the same patriotism as the nation.

“Beethoven struggled with sacred music, being more of a humanist, as illustrated by his *Creatures of Prometheus*”

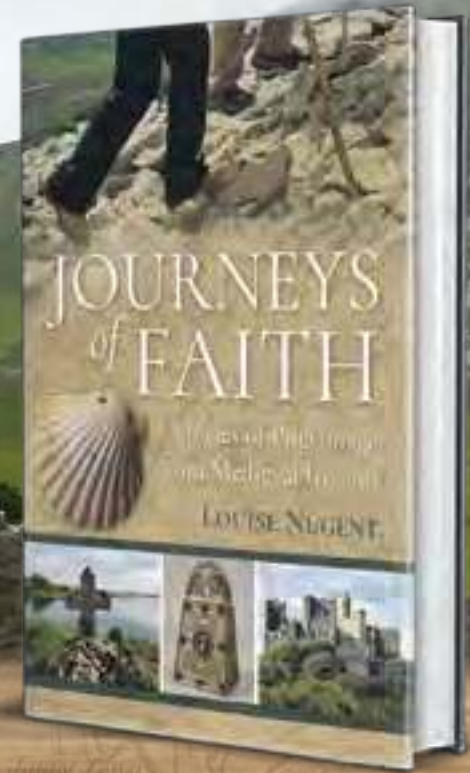
As Swafford acknowledges, in the genre of the string quartet Beethoven certainly equalled Haydn, who remains its *locus classicus*. Whereas Haydn was devout and attributed his inspiration to above, Beethoven struggled with sacred music, being more of a humanist, as illustrated by his *Creatures of Prometheus*, intended with his forgotten oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives* to be a response to Haydn's *Creation*.

Nor was he able to provide easily settings of the Mass, which formed the summit of Haydn's achievement. In some Viennese churches, the masses of Mozart, Haydn and Schubert are regularly performed on Sundays. Swafford regards Beethoven's rarely heard *Missa Solemnis* as his greatest work.

Beethoven's complete piano sonatas on disc played by John O'Connor both soothe and elevate the spirit.

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Our bishops are being too cautious when it comes to a return to public Masses



Why did the bishops go even further than the Government required by telling priests aged over 70 to strictly cocoon, asks David Quinn

A delegation from the bishops' conference held an online meeting with Taoiseach Leo Varadkar last week to discuss a return to public Masses. A statement was released by the bishops afterwards. It was remarkably uninformative.

Here it is in full: "The Taoiseach, today (Thursday, May 14), met with representatives of the Catholic Church, Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin and Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly (president, vice-president and secretary of the Irish Episcopal Conference) to share thoughts on the reopening of places of worship over the course of the summer. The Church shared information on the work that is being done at all levels to develop a national Church plan for the safe reopening and emphasised it will play its part in applying public health measures to ensure the health and safety of its congregation."

What is most notable is what is missing from it: namely any indication of a date to return to public Masses. Officially the date set in the Republic is July 20 (there is worryingly no timeframe in the North). This is not to say we will return to normal then. Strict social distancing and proper hygiene measures will still apply. But there was no hint that the bishops are applying any pressure for an earlier return.

Distancing

The July 20 date in the south seems to be one of the latest in Europe. Public Masses, with appropriate physical distancing, began again in Italy on Monday,



for example. That is a full two months earlier than here. Admittedly they went into lockdown about three weeks earlier than we did, but the outbreak in northern Italy was much more severe. How can we justify a much later return date than Italy, or France, Spain, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, etc. for that matter?



In an interview on RTÉ last Thursday, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin [pictured above] was asked by Sarah McInerney whether he thought Masses would

return by the end of the year, never mind July 20.

He responded: "I think it's possible." Again, no mention of seeking an earlier return.

Health and safety obviously matter, but we can assume that bishops in other European countries are not being more reckless and irresponsible than our own in pressing for, and securing, earlier return dates than here. Maybe our bishops are being too cautious?

A further example of how cautious our bishops are being is that in respect of priests over-70, they told them to cocoon, even though the Government explicitly said priests in this age group could still privately say online Masses in their churches, officiate at funerals (at which no more than ten people could gather) and continue chaplaincy services.

In other words, the Government saw that priests over-70 were carrying out essential duties. Why, then, did the bishops go even

further than the Government required by telling priests in this age group to strictly cocoon?

“The choice is between excessive caution, and a small, calculated risk”

A lot of people aged over 70, including clergy, are still very fit and well and have no underlying conditions. Some clergy over 70 would surely have been happy to continue with limited ministry. For one thing, it would have taken pressure off their younger colleagues.

A priest is supposed to be a shepherd to his people, willing to lay down his life for them if need be. How compatible is an excessive attachment to health and safety with this essential aspect of the priesthood? Have we lost sight of it?

In truth, a healthy 75-year-old priest would be

at minimal risk celebrating a private Mass in his church. There would be only a tiny risk involved in officiating at a funeral with very limited numbers present. With the right personal protective equipment, there would also be very little risk administering the sacraments to sick patients in hospitals or care homes.

In the past, priests took far more risks in times of plague ministering to their people.

In the Black Death of the 14th Century, it is estimated that 30% of all people died, but almost half of priests because so many were willing to risk their lives, as a good shepherd is called to do.

In the aforementioned interview, the Archbishop of Dublin was asked: "Just in terms of nursing homes and obviously the very tragic situation there in the last couple of months, would you like to see priests been able to get back into nursing

homes to give the Last Rites?"

Archbishop Martin replied: "I think if it's safe for them to do that, it should be done but the important thing is nobody's life should be put at risk, neither the priest nor [the patient]".

But if you applied that attitude to the past, no priest would ever have put his life at risk during times of plague, or maybe for any other reason.

Is that really the spirit of Christianity? Is that really the calling of the priest; no risk at all?

The choice here is not between caution and recklessness. The choice is between excessive caution, and a small, calculated risk, such as is involved in having 40 people rather than 400 attending Mass in a church, such as is now happening in countries like Italy.

An excessive health and safety mentality is ultimately incompatible with the Gospel.

“In truth, a healthy 75-year-old priest would be at minimal risk celebrating a private Mass in his church. There would be only a tiny risk involved in officiating at a funeral with very limited numbers present”

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Out&About

Giving gratitude at a safe distance



ARMAGH: Archbishop Eamon Martin led Armagh archdiocese's 'Celebration of Gratitude and Hope' which involved an hour of sacred song, testimony and prayer celebrating those engaged in the fight against Covid-19 and those affected by the virus.



◀ **GALWAY:** Sr Áine Barrins RSM, Ballinasloe, delivered the western dioceses prayer from the Cathedral of St Brendan in Loughrea. Sr Áine reflected on the Gospel of John, Chapter 14.

▶ **TYRONE:** Liam (7) and Eva (9) Lynch's May altar in Ballygawley.



DERRY: A pupil of St Anne's Primary School Derry beside her May altar.



DERRY: A student from St John's Primary School beside his May altar.



TYRONE: A P6 pupil from St Eugene's Primary School, Strabane, crouches beside her May altar.

Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



ARMAGH: Fr Thomas McHugh and Fr Peter McAnenly took part in a celebration for all of this year's first Communicants in St Patrick's Cathedral.



DERRY: A May altar from Ballinascreen Parish.



ANTRIM: The May altar at Sacred Heart Church in Cloughmills.



TYRONE: Mia from Christ the King Primary School, Omagh with her May altar.



DUBLIN: Mary Murphy from Kilshane Cross's May altar.



DUBLIN: The Clifford family's May altar in south Dublin.

IN SHORT

Making a difference with 'Marathon in a Month'

The Irish Cancer Society is encouraging people to clock up 42km in a virtual marathon this June to help support people affected by cancer.

The effects of the coronavirus pandemic are far-reaching for the cancer community who are among those particularly vulnerable to the virus. The charity has expanded its services and introduced new ones as a result. 'Marathon in a Month' will help

raise funds to keep new and existing services going.

Participants have one month to reach 42km which can be done within the public health guidelines. Breast cancer survivor Carol Vaudrion (53) will be taking part in 'Marathon in a Month' for the second time.

Carol, from Co. Kildare, was diagnosed with breast cancer in June 2018 and underwent extensive treatment including surgery, chemotherapy and radio therapy.

"It was a rollercoaster year and when I finished treatment, I knew exercise would play a big part in rebuilding myself and Marathon in a Month was

the perfect way for me to work towards a goal while supporting others," she said.

Participants can link their everydayhero online fundraising page to their fitness app and keep track of their progress as they raise money to help the 40,000 people in Ireland who will be diagnosed with cancer this year.

Last year almost 1,000 people committed to undertaking a 'Marathon in a Month', equalling 12,000km and raising more than €130,000.

For more information or to register to participate in Marathon in a Month visit marathoninamonth.cancer.ie/

Events

● In the current Covid-19 crisis, it is clear that most (and perhaps all) Church events, other than some Masses, are suspended. Consequently, we are withholding the popular Events Listing column until normal activities can resume in our parishes. However, please do email us if you know of any parish event planned and we will publish details.

Remembering John Paul the Great



He was an evangelist who steadied the ship after the turmoil following Vatican II, the Papal Nuncio exclusively tells **Michael Kelly**

A hundred years ago this week, Karol Wojtyla was born in the small Polish town of Wadowice. Some 58 years later he would be catapulted on to the world stage as the 263rd Successor of St Peter when he was elected Bishop of Rome in 1978.

He was one of the most influential Popes of the modern era and travelled the world tirelessly promoting the Gospel message of justice, peace and the innate dignity of the human person. Above all, he preached the Gospel in season and out of season and became a towering figure on the world stage revered by millions and even winning grudging admiration from those who disagreed with him.

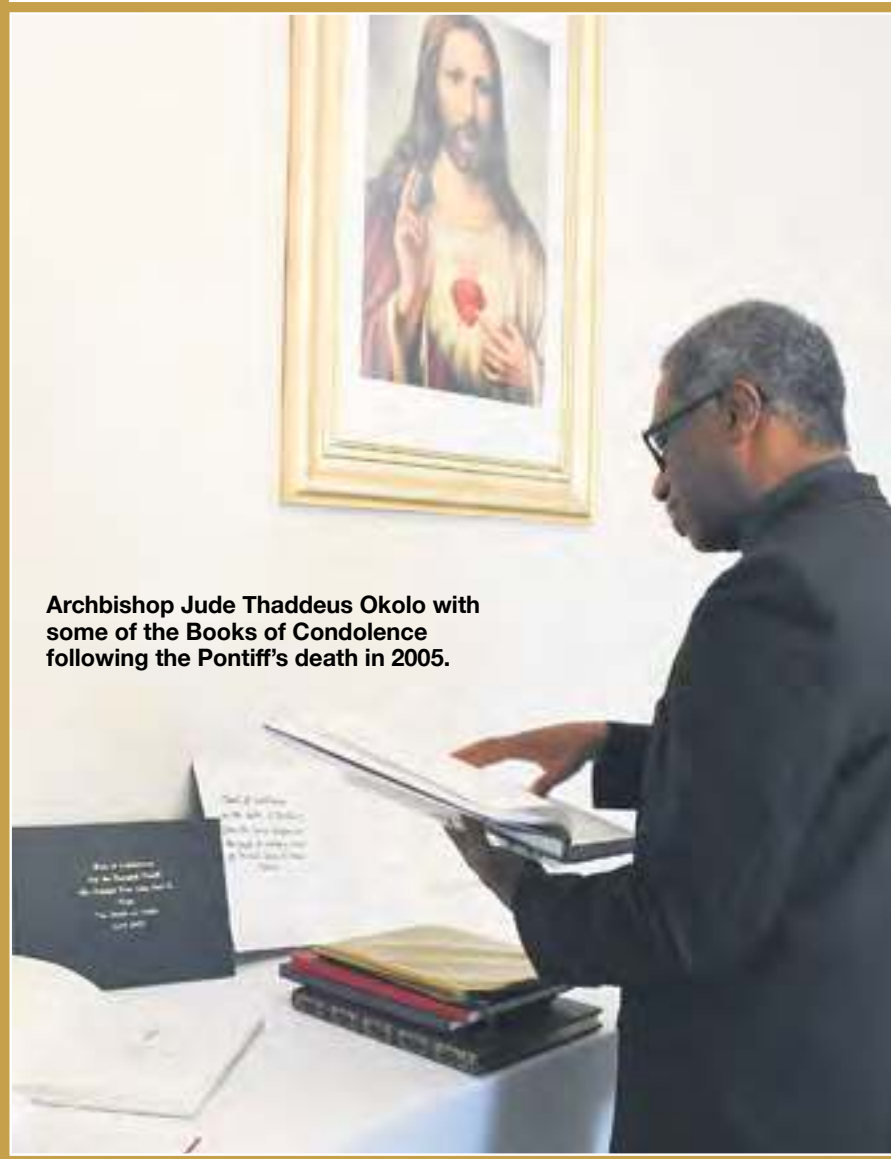
While he took the papacy to the modern world like no other Pontiff before him, he was not a politician but an evangelist. He set the tone in his first homily as Pope in 1978 when he appealed to people: "Do not be afraid to welcome Christ and accept his power. Help the Pope and all those who wish to serve Christ and with Christ's power to serve the human person and the whole of mankind."

Boundaries

In words that he would repeat in every corner of the globe, he said: "Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ. To his saving power open the boundaries of states, economic and political systems, the vast fields of culture, civilisation and development. Do not be afraid".



Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo stands at the shrine to St John Paul II at the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, Navan Road, Dublin. Photos: Chai Brady



Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo with some of the Books of Condolence following the Pontiff's death in 2005.

Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo first encountered the Slavic Pope when he was called from Nigeria to work at the Vatican in the mid-1980s. He would serve him as a papal diplomat until the Pontiff's death in 2005 and saw his impact throughout the world.

"He knew how to attract people to his teaching, even when the message was tough and demanding. He was very influential in all that he undertook," the archbishop told *The Irish Catholic*.

For Dr Okolo, the legacy of St John Paul II is immense. He said it relates to "every aspect of life: whether spiritual, ecclesial, inter-faith, political, diplomatic, social, economic or health was impacted by this

great man.

"Everyone felt his message directly and personally. He had a universal outreach – no continent monopolised him. No faith, no religious group was indifferent to his outreach. And of course, he respected the faiths and beliefs of others," he said.

The Pope has a dual role as a world leader, but also the chief shepherd of the Christian world. Bishop Wojtyla has participated in the groundbreaking Second Vatican Council (1962-65) and Archbishop Okolo said his ministry as Pope "helped to create the needed balance following the implementation of the Decrees of Vatican II.

"Together with Cardinal



a centenary after his birth



John Paul II played a decisive role in the fall of Soviet-style communism. Lech Walesa, founder of the Solidarity movement drew huge inspiration from his compatriot in challenging the system in Poland. He was not alone: “with the silent nudge of Pope John Paul II, many Poles drew the courage to demand for change, and they obtained it. From Poland, the influence spread all over, spilling onto the velvet revolution in Prague, and elsewhere,” according to Archbishop Okolo.

“He was a pathfinder. He redefined the way of governing the Church...he changed the vision of the papacy for a modern age”

The final illness which was to claim the life of John Paul II was marked by a profound outpouring of sentiment. Each evening in St Peter’s Square as the Pope was dying, thousands of young people gathered to pray for him and keep silent vigil. It is reported that when the Pope heard them he asked what was going on and then asked for the window to be opened so he could hear.

His personal secretary Stanislaw Dziwisz would later recall that this brought John Paul II huge comfort in his last hours. His entire papacy was marked by a particular attention for young people.

According to Archbishop Okolo, “all through his pontificate, Pope John Paul II championed the animation of youth. His interest and attention towards them was almost like an extension of his successful work with youth when he was a young priest”.

* * * * *

John Paul’s death in 2005 was a massive outpouring of grief around the world. Archbishop Okolo said he is privileged to keep in the archives of the Apostolic Nunciature in Dublin some of the many books of condolences that were collected from all over Ireland. From Donegal to Wexford, from Kerry to Antrim it is evident from the message the enormous impact John Paul had on so many Irish people.

The achievements of Pope John Paul II are immense. Every Pope has to be evaluated within the context of

Joseph Ratzinger, he championed the correct interpretation of Vatican II, calmed the dissent of theologians, and gave authentic orientation to newly evolving theologies, including the theology of liberation,” he said.

Archbishop Okolo also sees John Paul II as bringing a freshness to the truths of the faith. “It is interesting that, although he was bent on developing the faith, and promulgated the catechism, John Paul II did not define any new dogmas, nor did he deny, dilute, or tamper with the revealed truths he was entrusted with as Supreme Pastor of the Universal Church. “What he did was to explain the Faith and doctrine in modern language, in a brighter light and with enthusiasm,” said Archbishop Okolo.

Darkness

During his years as a student, priest and later bishop Karol Wojtyla’s life was marked by much darkness as Nazism and later communism ravaged his native Poland with devastating consequences and constant attacks on the Church.

Suffering, according to Archbishop Okolo, helped John Paul II reach people.

“He knew the pain of suffering, and therefore his message resounded also among those who were in pain. He associated with all who suffer, because of the sufferings of his own past; he lost a brother (a doctor), and his parents when he was still very young.

“He grew up under Nazi and Communist oppression. He was shot at close range by Ali Agca. He laboured under the weight of governing the Church in difficult times. He had to bear the pain of untold and unimaginable calumnies.

“In his last years, he had to bear the pain of Parkinson’s disease.”

During his papacy, he made 104 trips outside Italy. Archbishop Okolo sees that as part of his mission to bring the Church to the world. “In a way, his frequent use of pastoral visits to communicate directly with local Church members and the society in which they live became a clearly distinctive mark of his papacy.

“The trips gradually became an effective means of responding to a Church and society constantly threatened by secularisation. It was a way of drawing people closer to God,” he said.



Left, the Jim McKenna sculpture presented to the late Pontiff and above, the cover of *San Giovanni Paolo Magno* (St John Paul the Great).

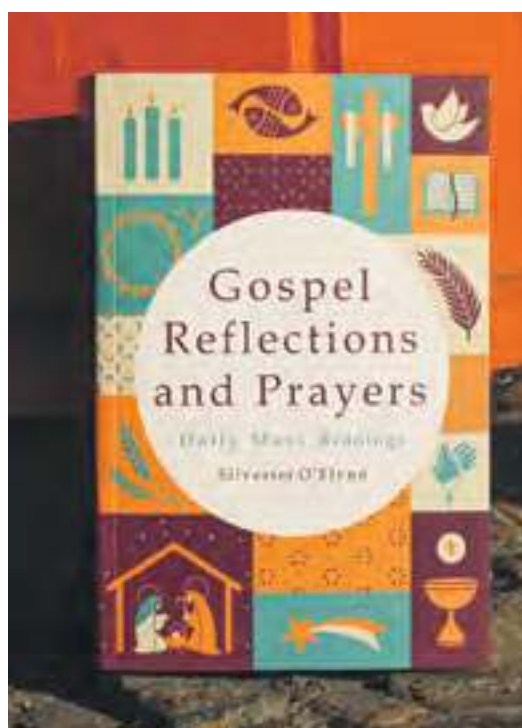
the times in which he lived, and, for Archbishop Okolo, “it is evident that very few Popes of any century have had such an impact, either on the Church or the times in which they lived.

“He was a pathfinder. He redefined the way of governing the Church. Instead of remaining in the Vatican, he chose to move out and meet people in their contexts, in

the countries, where they lived. John Paul II travelled to practically every corner of the world to meet his flock, and changed the vision of the papacy for a modern age.”

As we discuss his impact further, I point to the fact that a book co-authored by Pope Francis and Fr Luigi Maria Epicoco has been published to mark the centenary.

The book is entitled *San Giovanni Paolo Magno* (St John Paul the Great). While many of the successors of St Peter have been canonised, only three Popes have ever been declared ‘great’. “It is an audacious title for a book,” I put it to Archbishop Okolo. “It is audacious,” he agrees. “but then, John Paul was a great Pope.”



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Bishop of Down and Connor Noel Treanor cuts a solitary figure as he blesses graves during a traditional cemetery Sunday celebration in Belfast on May 10. Due to coronavirus restrictions, bereaved family members were unable to attend the ceremony.

Scant regard has been shown for access to the Sacraments



Religious freedom and political freedom are woven from the same cloth writes **Ray Kinsella**

Reflecting on Ireland's experience under the cosh of the Covid-19 pandemic there are very real reasons for concern. The scientific evidence justifying authoritarian edicts restricting freedom of movement and of religious practise - enforced by an unsettling show of force - have not been properly set out. Cosy television ads have their place but they are no substitute. There is no real political accountability - just two brands of the same toxic politics going through the motions to get a bit of coverage.

Serious concerns relating to the protection of residents in care homes were deflected until a few courageous commentators demanded a response. A chronically-underfunded

public hospital system effectively commandeered independent hospitals. The damage to patient care caused by a (once again) oppressive contract imposed on medical consultants in those same hospitals - some half empty - is a real worry as the country faces into the enormous backlog of deferred elective care. Once again, it is medical consultants aghast at the damage being done that are calling out what's happening, not the oligopoly that passes for politics.

“The main parties seem utterly untouched by the importance of faith in the lives of families impacted by worries”

That same mindset is evident in the scant regard it has shown for religious worship and the lack of access to the sacramental milestones for our children that are at the heart of family and parish life - and which could certainly have been managed safely in a less ideologically-driven and anti-Catholic politics. A wiser, even a more savvy,

Government would have understood this. That's a worry too.

The main parties seem utterly untouched by the importance of faith in the lives of families impacted by worries, fears and the trauma of bereavement, many without the solace of a funeral Mass. The same faith that built our hospitals and provided training to generations of medical professionals in surgery - but also in hygiene and risk management - is celebrated in families First Holy Communion Mass and at a funeral Mass. The practise of faith is an essential service - embedded in all of our life narratives. The Church should have been invited to input and advise, especially on this aspect of the pandemic, from the outset.

The fact is that our mainstream politics is as out of touch with the faith convictions and sensibilities of many people as they were in relation to housing and healthcare and which cost them the election - but not, it seems, power.

Perhaps - with some outstanding exceptions of pastoral leadership - the institutional Church has been too accommodating and too reluctant to call out our self-serving political system, fixated on short-term 'deals'. A social economy that works for all



Mass is celebrated at St Mary's Cathedral, Killarney, Co. Kerry, behind closed doors to assist and control the spread of Covid-19. Celebrating the Mass was former Bishop of Kerry, Bill Murphy, concelebrated by Fr Niall Howard and assisted by cathedral sacristan for over 50 years Tadhg Fleming. Photo: Valerie O'Sullivan

the people, and a political mindset respectful of the spiritual values in their lives, is what the country needed. It is also what we don't have.

The structural and fiscal problems, arising from a model of globalisation that is in stasis, heading straight for the solar plexus of the Irish economy - the labour market - raise frankly scary issues for political stability. It will take more than a

show of force on our streets to reassure a traumatised electorate that the governance of the country is in safe hands.

We now live in a 'Room 101' political system where the two parties who emphatically lost a general election in February are still in office without a mandate - and are still scheming, as we approach June, how they can, between them, remain in power. What

waits in the wings is even more ominous.

Pressures are growing that are disquieting. Religious freedom and political freedom can never, ever be taken for granted. I very much fear that is precisely the *cul de sac* into which the country is being impelled.

Dr Ray Kinsella is professor emeritus of economics, University College Dublin.

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SPRING

LEGACY SUPPLEMENT

The Irish Catholic



Increasing numbers of people are using their will to leave a legacy that will live long after them writes **Aron Hegarty**

The current coronavirus crisis has focused attention on the important rituals that surround death and dying in Ireland. As a people, we have often prided ourselves on the fact that we do death well. Restrictions around wakes and funerals – while necessary – have caused great pain and focused attention on the importance of remembering and honouring those who have gone before us.

Few people want to think about death, let alone their own. And yet, providing for what happens around one's funeral and the arrangements for a will are necessary and important parts of life.

Increasingly, while ensuring that loved ones are looked after – many people are choosing to support a charity that they have cherished during their lives. Still other people reflecting in the twilight of life want to give something back to those who are most in need.

This is where a charitable legacy comes in and many good causes rely on such generosity to continue their vital work.

The Irish Hospice Foundation is one such organisation that continues to play a profound role in the life of those living with a terminal illness and their families.

The IHF was set up in 1986 to fund and develop hospice services and provide support relating to dying, death and bereavement.

Its mission is to “strive for the best care” and “achieve dignity, comfort and choice” for people facing end of life and “promote discussion” of issues related to care at the end.

Sharon Foley is Chief Executive of the foundation and says the organisation journeys with people to decide together how best to address their needs and concerns.

“A lot of our work focuses on ensuring people have the best end of life and bereavement care,” she told *The Irish Catholic*.

“Our healthcare programmes are very active in acute hospitals, we have a very large hospice foundation which works with all the hospitals in Ireland to deliver better care at end of life.

“About half of the population will die in acute hospitals, so it is very important that we improve care there,” she insists.

According to Sharon, the IHF has “a strong programme that works with 160 nursing homes across Ireland to improve end of life care”. The organisation also funds nursing



Children and volunteers enjoying some of the activities at Barretstown

Helping those most in need...even after we've gone

for non-cancer patients and works with the Irish Cancer Society to provide nursing care to the tune of around €800,000 a year.

“If you ask people what they want at end of life,” she explains, “three-quarters (75%) of them would like to stay at home; to be nursed and cared for at home.

“One very important piece of work we do is our ‘Nurses for Nightcare’ service, which allows people to stay at home at their end of life.

“This service really gives them that opportunity, and offers supports to families at end of life by providing nursing care through the night,” she says.

Such assistance is vital to families who may have taken on the role of full-time carers to give them the opportunity to get some rest at night knowing that their loved one is in safe hands.

Even when family and friends have come to terms with the fact that a loved one is terminally ill, death still comes as a shock. This is where the foundation concentrates time and energy around helping people who are going through loss.

Sharon says the organisation offers “a range of specialist

bereavement services where we train people right up to master's level and we do a lot of information around bereavement all over the country.

“We have a very large hospice foundation which works with all the hospitals in Ireland to deliver better care at end of life”.

“At a broader level,” she continues, “we try to communicate with Government officials about improvements in end of life care and bereavement support that need to happen.

“A lot of our work is in advocacy and improving policy, and we also seek to engage with the public around conversations on dying as it can be hard to talk about death and bereavement,” she says.

Sharon cites just one example of this as the ‘Think Ahead’ form which the foundation has pioneered. It is aimed at helping people think about

what kind of end of life care they would like and facilitate sometimes difficult conversations with family and friends.

“We have a big public engagement programme which works with people and provides a ‘Think Ahead’ form that allows you to plan ahead for end of life, to think about things that are important to you and your family,” she says.

End of life care is often not something that people want to think about, but with the steady hand of the Irish Hospice Foundation it is a conversation that one can embark on with confidence and trust in experienced hands.

Another charity benefitting from legacies is Barretstown where children living with serious illness have a chance simply to be children. Many of the users of the service spend a lot of time in hospital and dealing with very complex issues at a young age. Barretstown – the vision of famous US actor Paul Newman – gives them the space just to have fun.

Based in Co. Kildare, it is a 500-acre site where residential camps and programmes are run for children and their families affected by cancer and serious illness.

Barretstown offers a range of adventurous, fun and challenging activities which are supported behind the scenes by 24 hour on-site medical and nursing care.

Everything involved, including transport, accommodation, food and medical assistance are provided at no cost to the families.

The Barretstown mission is to help rebuild the lives of children affected by serious illness and their families through a “life-changing” therapeutic recreation programme in a “safe, fun and supportive environment”.

Dee Ahearn is CEO and insists that while the children and their families come to have serious fun, there is another side to it.

“Our therapeutic programmes are designed to rebuild confidence and self-esteem in these children,” she says.

“They leave here with their heads held high, believing that they can do anything and are not defined by their illness and that's what Barretstown is all about.”

Paul Newman founded Barretstown in 1994 and, according to Dee, he was inspired to do so “because he felt that luck had played a huge role in his life, and



Dee Ahearn - Barretstown CEO



Sports journalist and former professional cyclist Paul Kimmage pictured with his daughter Evelyn. The pair had been due to lead the 12th Cycle for Care in aid of the Irish Hospice Foundation (IHF) this June. It is just one of the vital fundraising efforts that is now postponed. Photo: Robbie Reynolds

"One of the most recent tools we've developed is caring for somebody who is dying at home. We provide a resource for those people, and all that information is available on the 'Care and Inform' section of our website (hospicefoundation.ie)," according to Sharon.

The IHF is also conscious of the current changes to practices around death and is reacting in a proactive fashion. Sharon says that "we also have specialist information for people organising funerals and a range of information for healthcare professionals working in hospitals, nursing homes and for families visiting their loved ones."

Barretstown is also feeling the pinch with a loss of donations as well as having to curtail services due to restrictions on bringing people together. Dee says that "our outreach and residential programmes aren't able to continue."

"So we've had to close our gates at Barretstown," she adds with sadness.

But, the charity is responding creatively and making the best of a challenging situation. "The children we serve are very vulnerable and are feeling the effects of isolation now more than ever, so we established 'Barretstown Live', which is an online platform.

"We built a studio here in Barretstown and every Saturday from 10am to 4pm, the families who were due to come to Barretstown that weekend get a private invite and link so they can engage with us here.

"We send out kits that include everything," Dee explains, "which are delivered to the families on the Friday so that the kids can participate.

"On Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays we broadcast live on Facebook, so that children who were with us at the weekend can tune in and have lots of fun with our team, many of whom have stayed on-site during the lockdown and we are very fortunate for that," she adds.

While acutely feeling the pain that the children can't be physically present, the volunteers are doing their best to give them the full experience. "The children get so

excited," Dee says, "and they love seeing the Barretstown car pull up outside their house and the kits being delivered: the feedback we have had from families has been phenomenal.

"The parents have said it's been a lifeline to them because they are so isolated right now and want to do so much with their children," she says.

“A lot of our work focuses on ensuring people have the best end of life and bereavement care”

The idea of leaving a legacy to a charity as well as providing for family and friends is something which has gained in popularity in Ireland in recent years. When a legacy comes in, it can often add significantly to the projected income for that year allowing the organisation to embark on new projects.

"They are an immensely valuable part of a charity's work," Sharon says of legacies, adding that "they are amazing gifts which allow charities to really look to their vision.

"What you find with a legacy is that it is a very substantial amount of money and whenever we get a legacy, we sit down and we think 'how can we best use this legacy to really make a difference?'

"Legacies allow big change to happen," she continues, "when you get a legacy of a significant amount, for example, it may allow you to start a new programme," she says.

One such example of this is the roll-out of IHF programmes in care homes. Sharon recalls how "a few years ago, we received a significant legacy which allowed us to start all of our work in nursing homes.

"In that context, legacies are tremendously important because they allow the charities to really stop and think about priorities, and what can be done which would really push change," she says.

Sharon says that she is humbled by the support that the organisation receives. "A lot of readers of The Irish Catholic help

fund us, and I want to say a huge 'thank you' for supporting us".

There are several types of legacies available to any person wishing to assign or leave a legacy in their will. The first is a fixed-sum legacy (or pecuniary legacy), which is a pre-specified monetary amount.

Another option is a residual legacy, where the amount left in an estate is assigned after all debts and expenses have been paid.

The specific legacy constitutes any non-monetary gift such as stocks, shares or physical items like property, land and so on.

Lastly there is a testament trust created in the will to safeguard and distribute some or all of the estate for the named beneficiaries, which only comes into effect after a person's death.

At Barretstown, legacies also help take the pressure off so that the staff and volunteers can concentrate on their core mission: lifting the spirits of children and young people who are going through so much.

"Legacies are very important to us as they allow us to create more magic for the children and their families who come to Barretstown," according to Dee.

"Every year we have to raise almost €7 million to run our programmes. We get 2% of our funding from the HSE, but everything else we have to raise ourselves.

"The funds that we raise go into the day-to-day running of our programmes and are used to ensure that we can continue them," she says.

Such bequests have allowed Barretstown to expand considerably. "Thanks to legacies, we have done so much over

the years to improve our facilities and create new activities for the children and their families that we simply couldn't do otherwise.

"For example," she explains, "we have been able to build a new dining hall which is 50% greater than the capacity of our old hall because our numbers are growing year on year.

"We were able to upgrade our cottages, thanks to a legacy, and we were able to build a new accommodation block for our 2,500 yearly volunteers, thanks to a legacy.

"We have created a Hill of Remembrance here, where we remember those who have helped us and we put lights on it to recognise those wonderful people who left legacies to Barretstown.

"We make such a difference to the children and families that we serve, and if people would consider leaving a legacy towards Barretstown, we would be hugely grateful.

"Any legacy is hugely welcomed," she says, "and it doesn't matter how big or small that legacy is, we will really appreciate it."

A legacy really is a way to make a difference and leave a gift that endures.

that children who had to endure serious illness weren't so lucky.

"During our first year there were 124 campers. Now we are serving more than 9,500 campers on an annual basis," she says.

"Last year we celebrated our 25th anniversary and the milestone of having served 50,000 campers since Paul set it up," Dee adds with modest pride.

Like the IHF, Barretstown would be lost without the generous support of the general public and fundraising is a constant job of work. With many people seeing their income shrink due to Covid-19, both are concerned that a reduction in donations and cancelled fundraising events will affect vital services.

Sharon says that the hospice foundation's "fundraising has been massively damaged".

"All our community events are gone, so there has been a huge impact on our income," she says. At the same time, "never before have our services been so in demand".

"We have developed a new care and information resource which provides supports, tips and ideas for people grieving in these exceptional times.



Sharon Foley of The Irish Hospice Foundation

It's been said that if your name is held in the hearts of others, you will never truly die.

When you set aside a gift of any size in your Will to Trócaire, your good and generous name will never die.

Every year after your passing, we'll honour your name in gratitude and love at a special Remembrance Mass where all faiths are welcome.

We'll keep your name safe and warm in our Books of Remembrance, too, where all the people who've loved you can come to see it.

Simple bequests of any size by Will are some of the greatest,

most everlasting gifts of all made by caring people just like you across Ireland.

So whether you ultimately include Trócaire in your final legacy – *or another worthy cause* – we have a free and easy planner you can bring to your solicitor to get started. We're happy to post it to you, discreetly, and with our heartfelt thanks for your consideration and for being a faithful Irish Catholic reader.

For the relief your legacy will bring to people living in fear from poverty, injustice,

indifference, and exploitation worldwide, we believe that even though you pass on, your good name should never die.

Request your free and confidential legacy planner from Trócaire today. Then bring the planner to your family solicitor for an open and honest conversation.

We'll remember your name.

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To request your free legacy planner now, including bequest wording and a simple 4-step worksheet you can share privately with your solicitor, ring Grace Kelly on 01 5053 221, or email grace.kelly@trocaire.org

Charity Regulatory Authority No. 20204842; Revenue Number CHY 22508; Company Number 661147



Supporting people to die at home during the COVID-19 Crisis



By Rebecca Kelly, Irish Hospice Foundation

The challenges we are facing with COVID-19 are not normal. This is an emotional and uncertain time for everybody.

But, for the many people who are caring for loved ones at home, who are nearing the end of their lives, it is a particularly worrying and difficult time.

Since the beginning of COVID-19 restrictions in March, Nurses for Night Care have been continuing to deliver compassionate and considerate care for those wishing to spend their final days at home, surrounded by those they love.

Funded by the Irish Hospice Foundation, Nurses for Night Care is a free national service for people with non-cancer illnesses who want to die at home. Nurses provide care for patients at end of life, along with practical support and reassurance for their families.

Demand for the service is set to grow in 2020.

Fiona Mulchrone is a Night Nurse who works in the West of Ireland: "It's familiar to be in your own bed and house. Patients have more space, and they don't have to be in and out to the hospital. There's just something more comforting for a person to die at home."

Fiona works from 11pm to 7am in the homes of people who are dying from illnesses such as dementia, motor neurone disease, advanced respiratory disease and heart failure. She is central to creating a calm environment for all those in the home; making patients as comfortable as possible at end of life, and providing much needed reassurance and rest for family and friends.

"You have to be calm," Fiona explains. "The Night Nurse has an influence over the whole scene, the whole ambiance, the whole atmosphere. You do little things like bringing chairs in for them, so they can all be in the room with their loved one. You're trying to make the last couple of days as memorable and as easy for everybody as you can."

"There are a lot of deep emotions. You have to be very caring, kind, supportive, sympathetic and empathetic."

Faith at end of life

When a loved one dies, family members often find great comfort in their faith. Praying can often bring a sense of calm and peace to many at such heartbreaking times. Fiona has experienced this frequently, particularly in the West of Ireland, and she often suggests prayer to bring families together at these times of great sadness.

"When you mention a few prayers, families love it," says Fiona. "They go running for the rosary beads and they sometimes send me running down looking for the holy

water. They just get this sense of calm when they start saying prayers."

The power of love

While the death of a loved one is devastating for family members, Fiona believes that when somebody is able to die in their own home, it can bring about many positive emotions and memories too, particularly in these COVID-19 times. Having a night nurse look after somebody at end of life allows families to rest, if they need it, and focus on all aspects of the grieving process, safe in the knowledge their loved one is being kept comfortable.

"The last couple of days you're with them you hear so many stories, good laughs, and you see so much love. The power of love is overwhelming. It's incredible how beautiful the last few days of somebody's life can be."

Being with a person who is dying at home

Caring for a dying person at home is very rewarding, but it can also be very hard. The following points may be helpful to consider:

- If you are well yourself, it is good to sit in the room with the person and continue to speak to them, and to have conversations if they want to.
- Sitting with the person and listening is very important. Careful listening helps the person who is dying to share their feelings. It will also help you to understand their concerns.
- Be respectful of what the person says. Try not to brush them off or change the subject.
- Most people just want to be listened to as they express their hopes and fears. They may also just want to know they are not alone.
- If they can respond, provide the person with a phone, iPad or tablet to allow them to stay connected. Even if they can't respond, they may enjoy being able to see or hear people who contact them.
- Some people might need to be transferred to hospital at the end-of-life. This can be upsetting but could also be the right thing for everyone.

* Taken from 'Caring for Someone Who is Nearing the End of Life at Home during the COVID-19 Crisis', a new resource from the Irish Hospice Foundation. Available from www.hospicefoundation.ie
CHY: 6830 Registered Charity: 20013554



If you'd like to donate to The Irish Hospice Foundation please phone the Fundraising Team on 01 679 3188, or online at www.hospicefoundation.ie



The Gift Of A Lifetime

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

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

Help us realise our vision that no-one will face death or bereavement without the care and support they need.

To find out how you can make a lasting difference

Contact Clare Martin | Individual Giving Manager
at 01 679 3189 or Clare.Martin@hospicefoundation.ie
www.hospicefoundation.ie



Illustration designed by Conor Nolan

FOCUS Ireland

“In learning not to fear uncertainty we discover inner strength”

- Sr Stanislaus Kennedy



Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy
(Founder & Life President
of Focus Ireland)

Since the beginning of March, Ireland, and indeed the world, has been hit with vast uncertainty, fear and for many of us – feelings of isolation. Many have suffered the terrible loss of a loved one during this time. My thoughts and prayers are with them all.

For all of us our lives have now completely changed. How we work, how we communicate, how we celebrate, how we exercise. Holidays have been cancelled, weeks have passed since we have hugged our loved ones, events have been rescheduled, but one thing that has not cancelled is our human spirit.

In my own organisation, Focus Ireland, I have seen such strength, resilience and kindness as we work through this exceptional time. Our staff, customers and supporters are all working together to adapt to these unfamiliar waters. I am so grateful to our supporters who have allowed us to continue to help those who need us the most during this incredibly difficult time. The work being done is amazing and it was great to see that in the last two months we managed to help a record total of 280 households to secure a home across March and April – this included 332 children who all

now have a place to call home.

All of our essential services have remained open and have adapted to adhere to the guidelines set out by the government in slowing the spread of COVID-19. Our support workers are attending appointments online to continue to engage our customers in vital key work. Where online appointments are not possible, we have invested in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect the safety of our customers and our staff. Furthermore, our Family Homeless Action Team in Dublin are working with over 500 families living in emergency accommodation and hotels and we have also opened a temporary cocooning facility for people who are over the age of 70 and homeless. This temporary cocooning facility was a measure put in place following government guidelines that certain, more vulnerable groups such as anyone over the age of 70 should ‘cocoon’ (stay at home in all circumstances).

People who are homeless are one of the most vulnerable groups in society and this vulnerability has only intensified with the spread of COVID-19. Whilst the world-wide response is to stay at home wherever possible and keep socially distant, this is practically impossible when you are homeless. Indeed, many of the over 500 families we work with across the country find themselves together in one small hotel room, rendering social distancing impossible. Most people who are homeless have no access to a functioning kitchen to prepare nutritious meals, which is key to a strong immune system. Our Coffee Shop counters this issue by offering hot and healthy meals,



providing one very basic and essential need – a balanced diet – to those who need it most. Our Coffee shop has seen an increase of 49% of presentations per day when compared to a regular day before COVID-19, displaying that the need is only increasing.

Additionally, many people that are currently homeless and thus more vulnerable to the effects of COVID-19 need extra support and guidance in what to do with underlying health issues or worsening mental health issues. Our advice and information centres support these people by providing crucial information on best practice regarding COVID-19, practical support on tenancy issues and advice and support for

bettering health and mental health. Moreover, our temporary cocooning facilities help people who are at the greatest risk (Due to suffering from underlying health conditions and other issues) by supporting them around the clock and ensuring they have their own room to self-isolate and keep safe.

Focus Ireland has already seen a 163% increase in demand for our advice and information services over the past month. We expect this figure to rise when the full economic impact of the pandemic hits. While these times are incredibly testing Focus

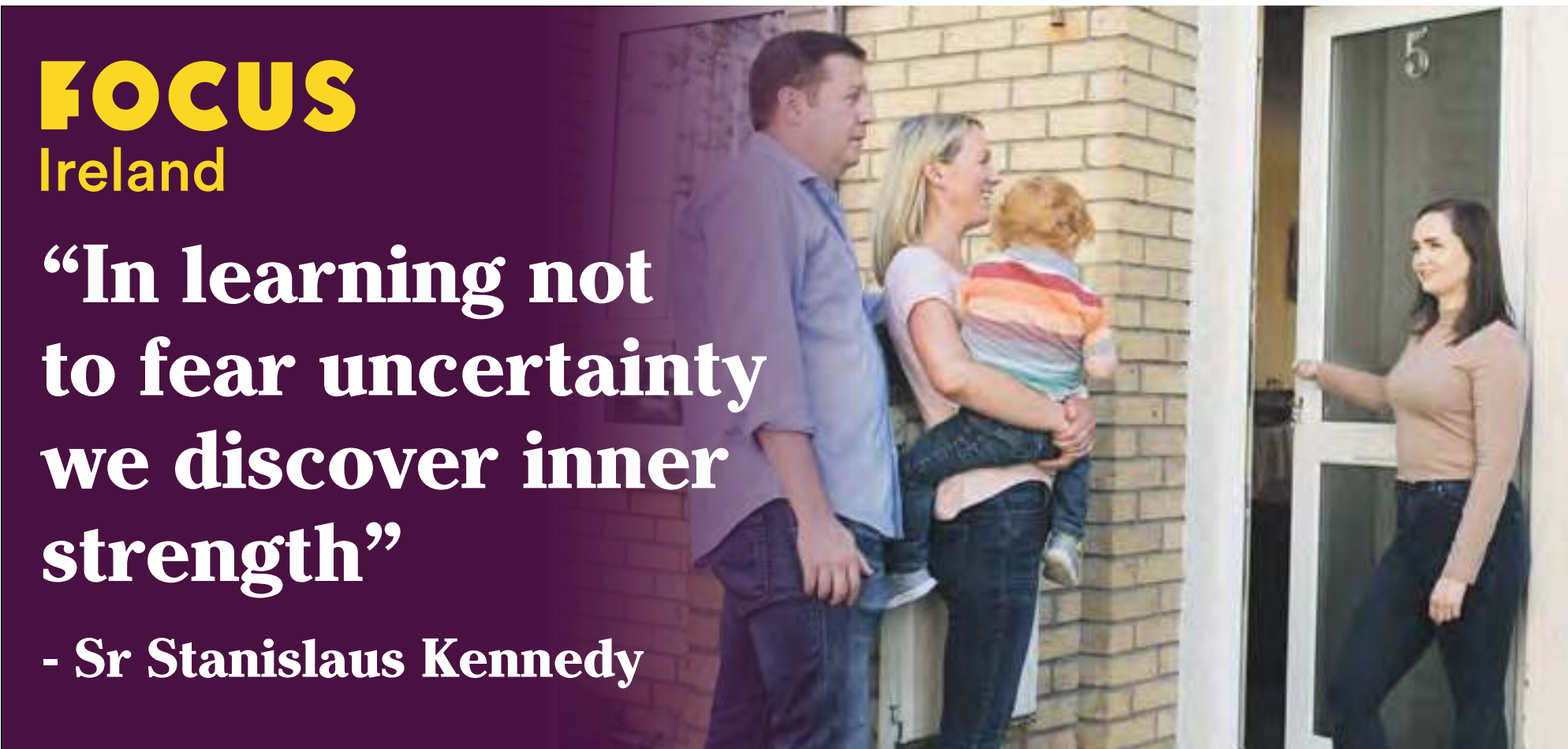


Ireland – with the help of our supporters – have ensured that every effort is made to minimise the physical and mental negative effects on families and individuals who are homeless. I have immense gratitude to those who have contributed to Focus Ireland, whether it is through regular donations, Christmas gifts or Legacy donations – it’s making the world of difference as we brace ourselves to be ready for the difficult challenges ahead. Those who have left Legacy gifts have expressed the greatest act of kindness, a promise to change the life of someone

they have never met. This is an outstanding display of humility and generosity, no matter the size of the gift, it is so graciously received. If you would like to consider including Focus Ireland in your Will, you can contact the team on 1850 204 205.

These are worrying times, but the one thing we have in common is that we are all experiencing this as one global community. I look forward to the day we can be together again, please God, but until then we will maintain faith and hope for brighter days.

Special thank you to Primark, Lir Chocolates, Bord Gáis Energy, Sligo Homeless Appeal and Leonidas Cork for ensuring children within the services of Focus Ireland received gifts of clothes, Easter Eggs and activity packs during this pandemic.



Leaving a lasting gift

Legacy giving is a crucial element of Focus Ireland's fighting homelessness strategy. Focus Ireland has been extremely fortunate to receive a number of gifts carefully left by kind people in their Wills. We have also received pledges, which is a promise from a supporter that they will leave a gift. All of these gifts, from the smallest to the largest, from a cash gift to an entire estate are gratefully received by us as being equal in generosity. These gifts are so important in ensuring our vital work continues. A promise of a gift in your Will is vision and kindness at their most powerful.

We need to offer help and the gift of hope to people who are struggling to keep a roof over their children's heads; to immigrants, to people who are marginalised and excluded; to people who are displaced, stressed and without a home, without a front door to close. While the last number of weeks have been stressful and at times fearful, we are maintaining hope that our supporters and staff will work together to ensure

our customers are holistically cared for to the best of our ability. Even though it is difficult to predict how Ireland will look, work and travel post Covid-19, we must plan for the future and pre-empt issues before they arise.

One woman who left a plan and a lasting gift was Margaret Dowling. Margaret was deeply saddened by the homelessness crisis following an interaction with a homeless woman on O'Connell Bridge on a particularly icy afternoon in Dublin. She stopped and spoke to her, human to human, gifted her dry clothes and did her best to help her in that moment. Margaret's friend, Anne Comiskey tells us how that one interaction left a lasting impact on her, "this woman really touched Margaret's heart, and she thought that nobody should be on that bridge in the freezing cold, or any street for that matter. Margaret wanted everyone to have a home of their own and she reached out to Focus Ireland to ask how she could have a lasting impact". Margaret informed her solicitor and the fundraising team

that she wished to include Focus Ireland in her Will and her wishes were gratefully recorded.

Margaret shared Focus Ireland's values that homelessness is fundamentally wrong, "she was heartbroken seeing people on the streets, she really believed everyone should have somewhere safe and warm where they can switch their own kettle on" Anne tells us.

Through legacy giving, supporters of Focus Ireland can be assured that their impact will live on and that they will be remembered as a valued member of the community working towards ending homelessness. Margaret's gift has made a huge difference in preventing families from entering homelessness and ensuring that when people leave homelessness, they leave it forever. On hearing how Margaret has changed so many lives for the better, Anne says "she would have been thrilled to know she can give hope to people to get their own home. It's terrific what's happening with legacies, to think that you can help others you've never met - I think that's marvellous."



If you would like to speak to a member of our fundraising team about leaving a lasting impact or if you would like to include a loved one in our Remembrance Book please call 1850 204 205

Continue to make a difference.

Inspired by the vision and passion of Sr. Stan, many people are choosing to leave a loving gift in their will to support people who are homeless to find safety and a place they can call home.

Please Support Focus Ireland in your Will

To join in Sr. Stan's vision please contact eve.kerton@focusireland.ie or phone 1850 204 205

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Leaving a Legacy – Remembering the Hospice in your will.

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

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

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

Thank you.



Jackie Slattery

Legacy Manager

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

Find us on [f](#) [in](#) [t](#) [v](#) Visit: Olh.ie/legacy

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It's my way of leaving Cork a better place.

Helping people who are homeless after I've passed on... that's my legacy to Cork, the city I love.

**Join me by leaving a gift to
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For more information please call Leona on 021 4929 418 or email Leona@corksion.ie

Pope Francis: 'What am I leaving behind? What did I do?'



Photo: Jeffrey Bruno / Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic license.

Pope stresses importance of reflecting on your 'final farewell'

Everyone would do well to reflect on their "final farewell" from earthly life said Pope Francis during a morning Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

"It will do us good," he added. "What am I leaving behind? What did I do?"

"What did I do?"

Pope Francis isn't talking about your career, or even your family. He's asking you to contemplate the difference you've made.

One way to ensure you're always doing some good is to support charities.

"How marvellous it would be if, at the end of the day, each of us could say: today I have performed an act of charity towards others!"
– Pope Francis

And it's clear many people do already generously give to causes close to their hearts. The Irish Catholic's own research shows 97% of readers regularly donate to charity.

However, with so many different charities carrying out so much good work, choosing one to support is certainly not an easy decision to make.

"Poverty in the world is a scandal. In a world where there is so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone, it is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children, that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons." – Pope Francis.

One charity fighting poverty is Ireland's own Concern Worldwide. In fact they state their mission is to: End extreme poverty – whatever it takes.

Concern was founded in 1968 by John and Kay O'Loughlin-Kennedy – in response to the famine in the breakaway province of Biafra in Nigeria.

On Friday 6th September 1968 the MV Columcille set sail from Dublin to Sao Tome – a Portuguese island off the coast of Nigeria.

The 600 tonne ship was full of vital supplies of powdered food, medicines and other life saving items for the people suffering the horrific famine in Biafra. This single shipment was only the start of an aid mission which became one flight every day over the next 11 months.

Since then Concern has helped transform lives in 48 of the world's poorest countries, including:

- Rwanda, 1994: Concern was one of the first Irish charities to respond to the Rwandan Genocide.
- Haiti, 2010: Within 1 year of the earthquake, Concern had helped over 1,000,000

- people in the country.
- Syria, 2013 – present: Concern's emergency programmes meet the urgent needs of people displaced by war.
- Nepal, 2015: After the severe earthquake, Concern provided non food items, kits and material for makeshift accommodation, repaired 14,500 homes and helped almost 80,000 people.
- 2020: As the COVID-19 outbreak continues to spread globally, our teams are mobilising to support the most vulnerable.

As you can see, no matter what the crisis, Concern always helps those in the most desperate need no matter how hard they are to reach.

Last year they responded to 102 different emergencies. And helped an incredible 27.4 million people around the world.

"What am I leaving behind?"

When Pope Francis asked this at the Domus Sanctae Marthae Mass, many may have been wondering about the impact their own lives will have. Perhaps you are too.

One thing you can leave behind is a life changing gift to your preferred charity in your Will. This ensures your legacy lives on, while supporting the charity you care for and helping save lives long into the future.

Just as Fiona from Co. Louth has for Concern. Here she explains why: "I have two children and if they were in need, I would hope that somebody, somewhere would reach out to help them. With my legacy, I will be that person for somebody's loved ones – you could be too."

If you join Fiona and leave a gift to Concern, your legacy can help end hunger, for good. And will help people like Nala*.

Nala lived with her mother and two brothers in a camp for displaced people in Mogadishu, Somalia. Her mother was pregnant with Nala when she and her sons fled their village which was attacked. Even in the safety of the camp, Nala's mother struggled to find food for herself and her children. So Nala never gained weight properly.

At nine months old she was barely bigger than a newborn. Fortunately this was when the family came to a Concern supported nutrition centre.

Nala was diagnosed with severe acute malnutrition and fading fast. She was immediately given therapeutic food sachets.

As you can see after a few months of receiving help, Nala was thriving.



Photo: Jennifer Nolan / Concern Worldwide.

When admitted to a Concern supported health centre in Mogadishu, nine month old Nala was extremely malnourished – and so lethargic she couldn't open her eyes.



Photo: Mohamed Abdihakab / Concern Worldwide.

Nala a few months later after receiving therapeutic food sachets.

"Charity is at the heart of the Church, it is the reason for its action, the soul of its mission."
– Pope Francis

By leaving a gift in your Will to Concern, you won't just be giving food to those who desperately need it. Your gift also gives people the seeds, tools and skills to grow their own healthy crops.

Just as our supporters did for Elisabeth. She lives with her husband and their six children in central Burundi.

Elisabeth used to struggle to provide just one meal a day for the family. And could rarely afford the fresh vegetables essential for her children's healthy development.



Photo: Darren Vaughan / Concern Worldwide.

Elisabeth's 12-year-old son, Egide, helping at his family's kitchen garden

Concern gave her the tools, training, seeds and compost she needed to cultivate her own home garden.

Now she prepares well balanced meals of sweet potatoes, beans, rice, maize, cassava, tomatoes and aubergines.

It's people like you, leaving Concern a gift in their Will, who have helped save Nala, Elisabeth and their families.

To discover about how a gift in your Will can help end hunger:

- ✓ When natural disaster strikes
- ✓ When conflict threatens lives
- ✓ When poverty prevents progress

Please request your complimentary copy of 'A World Without Hunger' – Concern's legacy booklet.

Inside you'll discover how others who were desperately

in need have been helped by gifts left in the Wills of people just like you.

The booklet also answers many of the common questions people have about leaving a gift in their Will. And explains how to start the process. Naturally, requesting your free booklet does not oblige you to support Concern in any way or do anything else.

"I am proud to know that even when I am gone, by including Concern in my Will, my support will continue to help save lives."
– Colm O'Byrne, Co. Galway.

* Name changed for security reasons.



To receive your free, no obligation booklet – in complete confidence – please contact Concern's Legacy Manager, Siobhán O'Connor. Call **01 417 8020**, email **siobhan.oconnor@concern.net**, or visit **www.concern.net/bequest**

CONCERN
worldwide

**ENDING EXTREME POVERTY
WHATEVER IT TAKES**

How a little wooden heart from Merchants Quay Ireland finds its home...

It was in the storm of a dark winter's night that a mighty beech tree was felled by the wind. It had watched over Merchants Quay Ireland's St. Francis Farm since it was a sapling.

St. Francis Farm is where miracles grow - a chance to

start life anew. Merchants Quay Ireland reaches out to people living on the streets, sleeping in doorways. Offering kindness to those who are hungry and alone, struggling with addiction and suffering poor mental health. MQI lights a pathway to recovery.

The legacy you leave for tomorrow, the keepsake you'll have for today...

Like the lives that are saved at MQI's St. Francis Farm, the timber from that beech tree was recovered. A small workshop on the Farm holds the seasoned wood and clients use it to carve simple little hearts. Even after it has died, that tree gives them the chance to create something beautiful, to shape it with a special purpose. Each heart is inscribed with a quality that speaks to its maker, "Respect" "Compassion" "Dignity" "Justice" and on the back, their initials. Each heart is made especially for people who include a legacy for MQI in their will.



"There's none of us perfect. Beechwood is the picture of any of us..." Farm manager, Norah.

Beech is secretive. It's only when the tree falls that the grain is revealed. Every wooden heart is unique. The clients who make them know that their hearts are going to someone who's leaving a legacy to Merchants Quay Ireland. Says our farm manager, Norah "They fully understand it's for someone who's remembering MQI in their will. The absolute gratefulness for that type of contribution to be coming to Merchants Quay, to sustain the work being done, they 'wow' about it when I tell them."

From our hearts to yours.

Your legacy, of any amount, can enfold the most vulnerable and lonely in wrap-around supports. You can decide to keep the details confidential. But we want to give you this little wooden keepsake. This is your heart for the homeless and those on the road to recovery.

"This is your heart for the homeless and those on the road to recovery."

MQI

Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

To receive your little wooden heart and information on remembering Merchants Quay Ireland in your will, ring **Emma Murphy, Legacies Manager** at **01-524 0965** or email **emma.murphy@mqi.ie**

The good they do is rooted in the goodness of your heart.



"I never thought I had a lot to give... but realise I do now through leaving a gift in my will to NCBI." - Legacy Donor

Let your legacy be part of the vision...

Your kindness can live on for someone living with sight loss.

Your will is your chance to leave a lasting gift to others. When you make your will, please think about making a donation to NCBI, the National Council for the Blind of Ireland. Your generosity and kindness will never be forgotten by those who are blind or visually impaired. Your gift of any size will make a difference by enabling us to deliver life changing, rehabilitative support services to the over 55,000 people living with sight loss in Ireland.

We believe that while you may be gone, your generous good deed is your legacy.

"I had to give up work when I was diagnosed with Glaucoma but doing my long cane training liberated me giving me back my independence; it's become my best friend."

Deirdre Deverell

We can offer you free and easy advice on how to make a will. We're always on hand to answer any questions.

Please contact: 01-870 7033 | www.ncbi.ie | roisin.walsh@ncbi.ie

Leave a priceless gift.

Please remember GOAL
in your will



GOAL

You do not need to re-write your will, you just need to include us in it. Doing so will help us respond to global health crises, continue to provide life saving support for families and communities struck down by disaster or conflict and to feed the hungry. Founded in 1977 GOAL continues to make the world a better place. You too can help change lives.

**Talk to someone
in confidence.**

**Contact Courtenay on
01 2809779 or via email
at cpollard@goal.ie**

Ursula is no longer with us. But she's helping to save lives.



- With a gift in her Will, Ursula is helping fund ground-breaking cardiac research
- Her gift will help medical staff at The Mater Hospital understand the prevalence of heart failure in Ireland
- Thanks to her, the medical team will be better prepared to treat patients in need of advanced cardiac care



Ursula was full of life, laughter and song. She worked as a dressmaker and a designer, and always stepped out in stylish and colourful outfits. She even designed the movie star Kim Novac's dresses in the classic 60's movie *Of Human Bondage*. The Hollywood star and the Dublin dressmaker got on so well, Novak invited Ursula to make her wedding dress.

“For the last decades of her life, Ursula was treated at the Mater and in her 70s had a lifesaving operation to replace a heart valve.”

But her incredible and vibrant life could have been very different. She was diagnosed in the 1960s with a heart condition. She came from a large family. Her sister, Laura, had already died of complications

relating to the same condition.

For the last decades of her life, Ursula was treated at the Mater and in her 70s had a lifesaving operation to replace a heart valve. The care she received later inspired to include a gift to The Mater Hospital in her Will.

“Ursula's gift is now funding lifesaving research into heart failure.”

Her devoted sister Marie says, *“My sister was thoughtful and caring. She worked hard and she had fun, with a great sense of humour. She loved dancing. About four or six weeks before she went into hospital for the final time, I went into her apartment to bring her in something, and I found her dancing around her kitchen to a song that was on the radio that she liked. She never lost that sense of fun. She enjoyed life to the full.*

She felt that if she could help somebody else like her through this research, then that would be something. She herself benefitted from the research that had been done prior to her procedure. If that research hadn't been carried out, then she wouldn't have been given the gift of all those years.

My hope is that people can benefit from her legacy and that they

would be given a chance, like she was, to live a long and happy life.”

Ursula's gift is now funding life-saving research into heart failure.

Ursula was generous to those she loved all her life. Now her kind spirit lives on through research that will allow medics at The Mater to identify patients quickly and get them the treatment they need as early as possible.

Heart failure affects approximately 90,000 people in Ireland. It is a highly debilitating, life-threatening condition in which the heart cannot pump enough blood around the body, as the walls of the heart become too weak or too stiff to work properly.

“This research will allow us to provide us an advanced level of cardiac care to everyone in Ireland who needs it. This will improve not just the years in their life, but their life in the years. And it's all thanks to Ursula's gift.” – Dr Emer Joyce, Lead Researcher, The Mater Hospital

Once loved ones are taken care of, please consider leaving a gift in your Will today. A gift of any amount in your will can make a lasting difference to patient care in the Mater Hospital, and it doesn't have to be a very large sum to achieve this. It is a profound way to shape the future of care in the Mater. As little as 1% of your estate can make a real and lasting difference providing for the health of future generations.



“You can make a lasting difference for the health of our future generations by leaving a gift in your will to the Mater Foundation.”

Childhood stops for seriously ill children.

At Barretstown we **Press Play**.



**Without Paul Newman:
Barretstown would not exist.**

**Without our supporters:
Barretstown won't continue to exist.**

Be part of Paul Newman's legacy for future generations of children living with serious illness.

One of the most powerful and lasting ways a person can support Barretstown is by considering leaving a gift in their will.

In 2020 it will cost over €6.9 million to run our therapeutic camps and programmes. We must raise 98% of the funds needed from public sources.

Will you help to Press Play on childhood for a family living with serious illness?

Would you like more information about leaving a gift in your will to Barretstown?

Please feel free to make a no obligation phone call, or pop in and visit us here in Ballymore Eustace, Co. Kildare.

If you are leaving a gift in your will to Barretstown you don't need to tell us, we know it's a very private matter. The only reason we like to know, is so we can say thank you!

Please contact Karen Reid
on 045 864 115 or email
fundraising@barretstown.org

BARRETSTOWN
a seriousfun camp

📷 Around the world



▲ **EL SALVADOR:** People wearing protective masks take part in a procession in San Salvador in honour of Our Lady of Fatima last week. Photos: CNS

◀ **ETHIOPIA:** Febedu Mehari serves a meal to her children in Hadush Emba. Catholic Relief Services has launched an awareness campaign about acute hunger, which is expected to double in vulnerable populations due to the coronavirus.



INDONESIA: Health care workers wearing protective masks pray for Covid-19 patients in the emergency room at a hospital in Jakarta.



BRAZIL: The relative of a person who died of Covid-19 and funeral workers wearing protective clothing and masks carry the victim's coffin in Manaus.



USA: Maryland priests of St Andrew's Apostle Catholic Church walk in rain on day two of their 54-mile 'Walk for the Poor'.



GERMANY: A staff member of a restaurant in Berlin prepares for reopening as the country relaxes coronavirus restrictions.



Facing our tough hours



Fr Rolheiser

Discernment isn't an easy thing. Take this dilemma: when we find ourselves in a situation that's causing us deep interior anguish do we walk away, assuming that the presence of such pain is an indication that this isn't the right place for us, that something's terminally wrong here? Or, like Jesus, do we accept to stay, saying to ourselves, our loved ones, and our God: "What shall I say, save me from this hour?"

At the very moment that Jesus was facing a humiliating death by crucifixion, the Gospel of John hints that he was offered an opportunity to escape. A delegation of Greeks, through the apostle Philip, offer Jesus an invitation to leave with them, to go to a group that would receive him and his message. So Jesus has a choice: endure anguish, humiliation and death inside his own community or abandon that community for one that will accept him. What does he do? He asks himself this question: "What shall I say, save me from this hour?"

Although this is phrased as a question, it's an answer. He is choosing to stay, to face the anguish, humiliation and pain because he sees it as the precise fidelity he is called to within the very dynamic of the love he is preaching.

Anguish

He came to earth to incarnate and teach what real love is and now, when the cost of that is

humiliation and interior anguish, he knows and accepts that this is what's now being asked of him. The pain is not telling him that he's doing something wrong, is at the wrong place, or that this community is not worth this suffering. To the contrary: the pain is understood to be calling him to a deeper fidelity at the very heart of his mission and vocation. Until this moment, only words were asked of him, now he is being asked to back them up in reality; he needs to swallow hard to do it.

What shall I say, save me from this hour? Do we have the wisdom and the generosity to say those words when, inside our own commitments, we are challenged to endure searing interior anguish? When Jesus

asks himself this question, what he is facing is a near-perfect mirror for situations we will all find ourselves in sometimes.

In most every commitment we make, if we are faithful, an hour will come when we are suffering interior anguish (and often times exterior misunderstanding as well) and are faced with a tough decision: is this pain and misunderstanding (and even my own immaturity as I stand inside it) an indication that I'm in the wrong place, should leave, and find someone or some other community that wants me? Or, inside this interior anguish, exterior misunderstanding and personal immaturity, am I called to say: *what shall I say, save me from this hour? This is what I'm called to! I was born for this!*

“Marriages, consecrated religious vocations, commitments to work for justice, commitments to our Church communities...can be abandoned on the belief that nobody is called to live inside such anguish, desolation and misunderstanding”

I think the question is critical because often anguishing pain can shake our commitments and tempt us to walk away from them.

Marriages, consecrated religious vocations, commitments to work for justice, commitments to our Church communities and commitments to family and friends, can be abandoned on the belief that nobody is called to live inside such anguish, desolation and misunderstanding.

“Granted, discernment is difficult. It's not always for lack of generosity that people walk away from a commitment”

Indeed, today the presence of pain, desolation and misunderstanding is generally taken as a sign to abandon a commitment and find someone else or some other group that will affirm us rather than as an indication that now, just now, in this hour, inside this particular pain and misunderstanding, we have a chance to bring a life-giving grace into this commitment.

I have seen people leave marriages, leave family, leave priesthood, leave religious life, leave their Church community,

leave long-cherished friendships and leave commitments to work for justice and peace because, at a point, they experienced a lot of pain and misunderstanding. And, in many of those cases, I also saw that it was in fact a good thing.

Pain

The situation they were in was not life-giving for them or for others. They needed to be saved from that 'hour'. In some cases though the opposite was true. They were in excruciating pain, but that pain was an invitation to a deeper, more life-giving place inside their commitment. They left, just when they should have stayed.

Granted, discernment is difficult. It's not always for lack of generosity that people walk away from a commitment. Some of the most generous and unselfish people I know have left a marriage or the priesthood or religious life or their churches. But I write this because, today, so much trusted psychological and spiritual literature does not sufficiently highlight the challenge to, like Jesus, stand inside excruciating pain and humiliating misunderstanding and instead of walking away to someone or some group that offers us the acceptance and understanding we crave, we instead accept that it is more life-giving to say: *what shall I say, save me from this hour?*

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, May 21, 2020

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Alcohol risks under lockdown



Social distancing and staying at home have become the new norm and even as restrictions are eased there are still a lot of people doing this to protect each other during the pandemic. However, there are concerns this could be leading to dangerous behaviours due to boredom, anxiety and or health issues.

Charities and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have warned about the consumption of alcohol during the coronavirus crisis as people are faced with lockdown and a dramatic change in lifestyle.

Alcohol, when consumed responsibly, can have very



Isolation could lead to risky behaviour, writes Chai Brady

limited negative health implications according to several studies, but there is a need to be vigilant and keep an eye on how many units are being drunk each day and week. These are unusual times however, and some authorities are advocating for people to drastically minimise their intake.

There is also a lot of false information and 'fake news' in the public sphere about the virus, with some people apparently believing high strength alcohol can protect them from Covid-19. Last week the WHO published a fact sheet focused on alcohol in an effort to dispel myths. It states: "Alcohol is known to be harmful to health in

general, and is well understood to increase the risk of injury and violence, including intimate partner violence, and can cause alcohol poisoning.

"At times of lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic, alcohol consumption can exacerbate health vulnerability, risk-taking behaviours, mental health issues and violence. WHO/Europe reminds people that drinking alcohol does not protect them from Covid-19, and encourages governments to enforce measures which limit alcohol consumption."

Busting myths

As part of its public health response to Covid-19, the WHO

has worked with partners to develop a fact sheet entitled: 'Alcohol and Covid-19: what you need to know'.

"Fear and misinformation have generated a dangerous myth that consuming high-strength alcohol can kill the Covid-19 virus. It does not. Consuming any alcohol poses health risks, but consuming high-strength ethyl alcohol (ethanol), particularly if it has been adulterated with methanol, can result in severe health consequences, including death," it states.

"Alcohol consumption is associated with a range of communicable and noncommunicable diseases and mental health

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Family News



AND EVENTS

ENTERTAINING TOTS WITH CHILD-FRIENDLY APPS

There is a lot to be said for co-using technology with your children, especially as this gives you the opportunity to influence how they engage with technology.

There are several apps that can bring out children's creative side, or enhance skills such as problem solving, collaborating or communicating with others.

A recent UK study looked at some children's apps that are very popular with the 0-5 age group and examined whether these apps had educational merits. They found that CBeebies, Disney, Peppa's Paintbox and Toca Boca apps were appropriate for this age group and promoted a range of types of play and creativity.

There are lots of great YouTube videos out there with fun activities, but remember that even YouTube Kids, while a safer and more restricted app to use than the full version of YouTube, is not always successful at filtering out harmful content so there may need to be some supervision.

CHILDREN'S HEALTHCARE AND EDUCATION AFFECTED BY PANDEMIC

Healthcare and education of children has suffered considerably during the lockdown meant to curb the Covid-19 spread, a US online survey conducted by children's organisation Child Rights and You (CRY) has found.

Almost 50% of the children under the age of five years in the surveyed families were deprived of crucial immunisation services – something that could adversely impact their health in the long term, the study has shown.

The online survey was rolled out between April 10-20 on social media platforms Twitter, WhatsApp and LinkedIn and received as many as 1,102 responses.

One in every four of the respondents, the parents or primary caregivers, reported non-accessibility of regular healthcare services for children during the lockdown, while 74% of the respondents reported the lockdown has affected education and learning.

JUDO HELPS KIDS WITH AUTISM STUDY SAYS

Practicing the martial art Judo is a viable option for helping children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) be more active and interact with others, according to a study by researchers at the University of Central Florida.

The study found Judo gave the children more opportunities to engage in physical activity, thereby reducing their risk of heart disease, obesity, and more. After the study the children involved expressed interest in continuing to practice Judo.

Parents reported that their children were more comfortable with social interaction and physical activity overall, two areas in which children with autism struggle with.

"While karate, a form of martial arts, has documented benefits for the autism population related to social interaction, we hypothesised that the emphasis on mindfulness and self-defence promoted by Judo would provide additional benefits for ASD youth," said study leader Jeanette Garcia, UCF assistant professor of Health Professions and Sciences.

A vision of sex beyond portrayal in Normal People



BBC/ELEMENT/ENDA BOWE

My daughters all love the film, *Pride and Prejudice*. Times may have changed, but there's something timeless and appealing about the spirited Elizabeth Bennet and the dashing, debonair, Mr Darcy.

It is the perennial theme of a great love, a story that never grows old, boy meets girl, there are some challenges to be overcome and they fall 'madly in love'. There is never any room for half measures; love is always 'truly, madly, deeply' as nothing else could possibly do.

Great literary love stories rarely do half measures – no one wants a wishy-washy romance. I was reading an article in *Psychology Today* on what women want from the men in their lives and it's surprisingly similar to what the young Elizabeth Bennet wanted from Mr Darcy: honesty, trust, respect, responsibility and, most of all, love.

On a similar theme, an article I came across on the *HuffPost* website, '7 Things Your Husband Isn't Telling You He Needs', had a lot of overlap with the desires expressed by women in the *Psychology Today* piece.

Men were reported as needing praise, appreciation and validation. They wanted their wives to respect them and to focus on their strengths and, like women, men also wanted love, longing to hear the expressions of love and their wives uttering the words 'I love you'.

The 12 part television series, *Normal People*, has been lauded by some as another great love story: the relationship between two teenagers, both from a typical small town in Ireland. Unlike *Pride and Prejudice*, loved by many for its portrayal of how to negotiate a relationship in early 19th Century England, *Normal People*



A parent's perspective Maria Byrne

doesn't focus on marriage as the ultimate dating goal.

In Jane Austen's time, young men and women were very aware of the social mores and the rules of behaviour were clearly delineated. It was a given that a young person who was dating would be hoping to find a suitable partner and, after a successful courtship, would move quickly towards marriage, settling down and raising a family. It's a measure of how much society has changed when Ciara Phelan, writing for the *Irish Mirror* expressed the view that education officials should consider making *Normal People*, the book and the series, mandatory for Leaving Certificate students.

She referred to it as "the ideal bible" for home or school with a lot of her praise centred on how the whole issue of consent is dealt with. There's no mention in her article of love or commitment; consent is all that seems to be required. Conall (played by Paul Mescal), is viewed as chivalrous for using contraception and telling Marianne (played by Daisy Edgar-Jones) that they can stop anytime during what is Marianne's first experience of sex.

It can be a bit of a minefield to offer any critical commentary on a series that thousands of people are enthusiastically applauding. I didn't hear Joe Duffy's *Liveline* and the complaints about the sex scenes and nudity but social media dismissed anyone

who had any criticism as cranks and Catholic killjoys.

How can parents express their objections to *Normal People* while still getting the message across to their children that sex is good, an amazing gift and the language of the body that speaks of total commitment and a lifetime of shared love.

That's a really authentic message and one that we seem to be nervous about promoting. There's endless commentary on *Normal People* but a dearth of alternative angles that question the almost blanket media



Jane Austen

approval. The US magazine, *Vanity Fair*, points to how the character, Connell, doesn't want it to be known that he's dating Marianne and refuses to talk to her in school, behaviour *Vanity Fair* refers to as exploitative and refers to the "agonising" on/off relationship. The Christian vision of love is more like a line from Elizabeth Barrett

Browning's Sonnet XLIII: "I love thee with the breath, smiles, tears of all my life..."

There is a lot of attention on the amount of time the series devotes to sex scenes with *digitalspy.com* describing it as "a masterclass in nudity onscreen". Much is made of the fact that there was an "intimacy coordinator" on set who choreographed the intimate scenes. Ita O'Brien was interviewed by *RTE's* Brendan O'Connor and the reality of the filming became painfully clear with references to the need to carry out a risk assessment, modesty patches and pouches for the actors and the aim of "serving the director's vision". It was shocking to hear that many actors in the past had been so damaged by participating in sex scenes, one so badly that they never acted again.

On set, they talk of safe words and creating safe spaces and the actors being empowered. Having a daughter who's nearly 21, the age of Daisy Edgar-Jones, and a nephew close in age to Paul Mescal, I wonder how empowering it is to fall in with a director's vision. The Catholic vision of sexuality is one of revealing one's intimate self in the perfect "safe space", the loving protective arms of a husband or wife, not on a film set to be viewed by thousands.

It's a much richer and more fulfilling vision than the impoverished view of sex that's portrayed in *Normal People*. As believers in Christ, we need to stop keeping this vision of love to ourselves and market our superior offering with the same zeal as those promoting *Normal People*.

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disorders, which can make a person more vulnerable to Covid-19. In particular, alcohol compromises the body's immune system and increases the risk of adverse health outcomes.

"Therefore, people should minimise their alcohol consumption at any time, and particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic."

WHO add that as alcohol is a psychoactive substance that is associated with mental disorders, people at risk or who have an alcohol-use disorder, are particularly vulnerable, especially when in self-isolation. "Medical and treatment services need to be alert and ready to respond to any person in need," it says.

Restriction

Alcohol is responsible for 3 million deaths a year worldwide according to WHO, who say a third of these deaths occur in Europe. It says the 'European region' not only has the highest alcohol intake and the highest prevalence of drinkers in the population, but it is also the region with the highest prevalence of alcohol use disorders in the population and the highest share of deaths caused by alcohol, among all deaths.

"Alcohol is consumed in excessive quantities in the European Region, and leaves too many victims. During the Covid-19 pandemic, we should really ask ourselves what risks we are taking in leaving people under lockdown in their homes with a substance that is harmful both in terms of their health and the effects of their behaviour on others, including violence," says Carina Ferreira-Borges, Programme Manager, Alcohol and Illicit Drugs Programme, WHO/Europe.

The WHO go as far as to propose restrictions be put in places to "protect health and reduce harm caused by alcohol". The WHO add that this should be "complemented by communicating with the public about the risks of alcohol consumption, and maintaining and strengthening alcohol and drug services".

Already there are studies ongoing in Europe aimed at quantifying what change, if any, there has been regarding people's relationship with alcohol during the pandemic. Alcohol Action Ireland promoted a survey this month that is attempting to do just this.

The study is a collaboration of epidemiological scientists from 11 research institutes across Europe with the aim of linking alcohol intake to experiences regarding the current Covid-19 pandemic. With the change in government regulation regarding the pandemic, it is believed there could also be a change in alcohol consumption.

The principal investigator of the survey is Dr Jürgen Rehm and it is being co-ordinated through the Institute of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy at Technische Universität Dresden.

Dr Rehm is a leader in generating and analysing the scientific data needed to inform policy-makers about strategies to reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug-related harm. This includes economic studies on the costs of substance use and the cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness of various interventions strategies.



Eunan McKinney, Head of Communications and Advocacy in Alcohol Action Ireland said: "The dramatic impact of Covid-19 on all our lives has been significant and the early trade data, up to mid-April, indicates there has been a significant spike in alcohol sales.

"By collaborating with our colleagues across Europe, we hope this study will contribute to a better understanding of consumption patterns and health outcomes during times of pandemic or similar events involving restrictions and quarantine, and should support evidence-

based policy action and decisions in times of crises to protect health and well-being."

Those wishing to contribute to the study can take a 10 minute anonymous survey by following: <https://bit.ly/EUCovid19alc>

Domestic abuse

It has been highlighted that although many people are doing their best to stay home and keep others safe, there are many that are unsafe in their homes due to domestic abuse.

According to a post on Drugs.ie, which is managed by the HSE National Social Inclusion Office and are responsible for providing services connected to a range of issues including addiction and homelessness, drug and alcohol use could increase the risk of domestic violence and could also be used as a coping mechanism by those who experiencing abuse.

In a message published on their website it states: "Problematic use can prevent someone from seeking help for domestic violence and can be used as a threat to them by a perpetrator. Regardless if drugs or alcohol are involved, it is important for you to get support for yourself during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"It is important that you know you are not alone – domestic and sexual violence support services from State agencies and the voluntary sector have been adapted and increased to ensure they remain available to support you, even during the restrictions which are now in place due to Covid-19."

The coronavirus crisis is not just a crisis relating to the danger of the virus itself, as it's increasingly becoming clear, there are many more implications to those who are suffering its wider affects that we may not realise until it's too late. Many of the severe outcomes can be avoided by personal responsibility, and it seems getting a hold of alcohol consumption is certainly one of them.

Get information and support for domestic violence at Stillhere.ie Support for drug and alcohol use during the pandemic can be found at the HSE Drug and Alcohol Helpline on 1800 459 459 Monday-Friday 9.30am -5.30pm or via email at helpline@hse.ie

Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



The newly arrived swallows swoop across the evening sky; happy heralds of summer. They have journeyed from Africa to our eaves, where they will nest for the summer.

Our little valley has become rewilded in recent years, with acres of new woods springing up nearby us. Buzzards and falcons now regularly soar overhead. Trout frequent our stream in greater numbers, while rabbits scamper in the grass. There is even a wild deer which sometimes visits at dusk. As we quietly approach, it stares at us for one curious moment and then leaps silently into the woods – disappearing into the tangled green, like some creature of myth returning to its otherworldly realm.

“Our little valley has become rewilded in recent years, with acres of new woods springing up nearby us”

Now that we are bound to our immediate surrounds by the coronavirus pandemic, the children are witnessing the drama of nature's great springtime awakening firsthand. They are excited to find a blue blackbird's egg shell in the grass, cracked open. They ask, did the chick safely hatch, or did a magpie take it? They creep softly towards the stream at dusk, to see what creatures they might see swimming there. They issue a barrage of questions: How do those insects walk on the water? How do birds stick their nests together? What is a hawk's chick called?

They often go out into the gloaming to see the bats scampering in circuits through the air, hunting flies and moths. From first light, the dawn chorus now fills the valley, and all the chirpy chatter even enters into our bedrooms and intrudes upon our dreams.

Yet nature is not all music and flowers. My eldest daughter ran to me the other day in floods of tears, having found a badly injured rabbit, which she begged me to help. It had been attacked by a predator, and was left

injured and twitching, unable to escape. Its terrified brown eyes looked up at us as the life left its body. I told her I'd bury it and asked if she wanted to put a flower on its grave, she sobbed and said, "no, that would make it even worse". Later that same week, the children saw a fox leap down upon another



rabbit, kill it and then saunter nonchalantly back towards its den with the corpse hanging from its mouth. Nature is also cold and indifferent, and its cycles of life and death are the engine of its flourishing.

“Yet nature is not all music and flowers. My eldest daughter ran to me the other day in floods of tears, having found a badly injured rabbit”

I don't think that the peace we find in nature is a product of nature per se. I see nature as more like a signpost. Our immersion in it sets our souls right, so that we become susceptible to glimpsing something eternal, something which permeates all nature. I sometimes catch one of the children sitting alone, lazing in the woods, gazing at the sparkling stream in a reverie, happily lost in a soundscape of water, breeze and birdsong. As they stare contently, I can see that their mind has shifted gear, and that a deep peace has come upon them. That peace stays palpably with them long afterward too. Something in them has been unlocked.

Faith, ministry and music a holy trinity for one deacon

Personal Profile



Aron Hegarty

A Northern Ireland deacon is putting his love for music and ministry to great effect as he preaches the Faith through broadcasts on social media.

Deacon Brendan Dowd, one of nine permanent deacons in the diocese of Down and Connor, has been using his Facebook page and YouTube channel to spread the Gospel during the coronavirus.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic*, the “working man” from north Belfast talks about how religion unites all his passions.

“I’m essentially a nobody trying to do something,” Brendan jokes about himself.

“I have found since I was ordained a deacon in October 2018 it to be such a privilege and it’s a wonderful way to be with people.

“Like everybody else, my journey of Faith is an on-going one and it has been a privilege”

“I work together alongside my wife (Pauline), I preach at weekends in Holy Family, my parish, and then I work in ministry.

He adds: “Ministry is a big part of my life, Faith is a key aspect for me and I also love being with people.

“I find it a privilege that people allow you into a sacred place in

their life to preach and share the Faith with them.”

Brendan reveals how one self-isolating priest from Co. Galway, who broadcasts daily Mass from his home despite being diagnosed with a treatable leukemia condition, inspired him.

“My inspiration came from Fr Des Forde of Lahinch in Co. Clare, who does Mass everyday via social media and that gave me the inspiration to do music and prayer and take it from there.”

“Being involved in music and ministry, gives me the opportunity to express my Faith and practice it through a means where the Lord is calling me.”

On being asked if his Faith has been enriched by his virtual and online experiences, Dowd replies: “That’s a very easy question to answer. Yes.

“Prayer is what is bringing and keeping us together because we are separated due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Despite much of the sacramental life of the Church being unavailable or dramatically changed, he says “we are working outside our church buildings to share our Faith through technology”.

He adds: “I am enriched by online conversations with people from around the world that I never knew before.

“It is wonderful, incredibly enriching and is a small example of people coming together, who want to share their Faith regardless of their geographical location.”

In addition to music and ministry, Brendan is also a teacher in Religious Education (RE) at St Malachy’s College.

The St Mary’s University College Belfast graduate, who studied M.Ed Religious Education at Queen’s University Belfast, says his Faith journey is “ongoing” and a “joy” to share with others.

“Like everybody else, my journey of Faith is an on-going one and it has been a privilege.

“I have been an RE teacher for 32 years now and it’s been a joy to share the Faith with students.”

Sadly the school was hit with a tragic loss of life recently, which Brendan feels has brought attention to the “harsh reality” of coping during the crisis.

“One of our students, at just 15 years of age, tragically took their own life recently,” he says. “The funeral was the other day and we couldn’t go or attend it.

“This tragedy brought home the harsh reality that we can’t be physically together or there for each other when mental health issues such as exam pressure, isolation or loneliness are being felt by the person.

“I find it a privilege that people allow you into a sacred place in their life to preach and share the Faith with them”

He continues: “The school and I are in contact with students on a daily basis, but it’s tough that none of us can be physically there to help them.

“We are reaching out by streaming religious services online from our chapel, so that students can still be a part of the prayer and service during this difficult time.

“We are doing the best we can with what we have through technology and social media; we are encouraging them to talk to their family, friends and teachers as well as showing them that we are listening and there for them.

“We are trying to help young people by keeping them connected to prayer and Faith in desolate times.”



Children’s Corner

Chai Brady

Mysteries and magic behind washing up liquid

In these days of lockdown many parents are doing their best to keep their children occupied and up to date with their education.

With schools being out of the equation it can be daunting to teach children subjects that may not be a parent’s strong point: like science.

However, there are fun and easy experiments that anyone can do with their children that require minimal preparation, household objects and a very basic understanding of chemistry. Some things just don’t get along well with each other. Take oil and water for example, you can mix them together and shake as hard as you like but they just won’t mix. While explaining this in a fun way, the experiment can be taken a step further to show how washing up liquid works so well.

Apparatus:

- Small bottle
- Water
- Food colouring
- Two tablespoons of cooking oil
- Dish washing liquid or detergent

Instructions:

- Add a few drops of food colouring to the water.
- Pour about two tablespoons of the coloured water along with the two tablespoons of cooking oil into the small bottle.
- Screw the lid on tight and shake the bottle as hard as you can.
- Put the bottle back down and have a look, it may have seemed as though the liquids were mixing together but the oil will float back to the top.

What’s happening?

While water often mixes with other liquids to form solutions, oil and water does not. Water molecules (made up of hydrogen bonds), are strongly attracted to each other, this is the same for oil molecules. They separate and the oil floats above the water because it has a lower density.



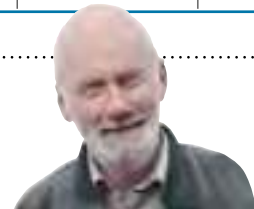
For older children who have done some chemistry, it can be explained that water molecules are polar molecules. That means one end of the molecule has a positive charge and the other end has a negative charge. This allows water molecules to bond together. Oil molecules, on the other hand, are non-polar.

Non-polar molecules only mix well with other non-polar molecules. This explains why oil doesn’t mix well with water. Their molecules aren’t able to bond.

So, what happens when you try to mix oil and water? The water molecules attract each other, and the oil molecules stick together. If you really think oil and water belong together, add some washing up liquid or detergent to help them to bond. Detergent has molecules that have both polar and non-polar parts, and is attracted to both water and oil helping them all join together to form something called an emulsion. This is extra handy when washing those greasy dishes, the detergent takes the oil and grime off plates and into the water.

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



All kinds of everything during lockdown

One of the things I've noticed about public debate in the media is that sometimes certain views are marginalised. People are often unaware of this, or conveniently oblivious, until they find their own views suffering the same fate and then the penny drops.

This is happening to a certain extent in the debates over Covid-19, with some coverage seeming like PR cheer-leading for the Government line. Contrarian voices may sometimes be misguided, but it's useful to have them. So I was glad to hear journalist Karl Dieter on the **Pat Kenny Show** (Newstalk) last Thursday, in debate with Dr Sam McConkey.

The debate was about the merits or otherwise of our lockdown. Dieter was in favour of opening up the economy more promptly, citing arguments from freedom, human individual rights, the damage caused to the economy and to people's wellbeing by lockdown. McConkey was more inclined to favour the Government's approach. Neither was arguing that Covid-19 was negligible, or that social distancing or 'respiratory etiquette' was to be abandoned.

I wasn't too keen on Dieter's "bodily autonomy" arguments. I didn't notice presenter Pat Kenny getting the flaw in that argument



Dana featured in a documentary shown on RTÉ and BBC.

during the recent referendum, but he gets it now – he challenged Dieter – yes, do what you want with your own body but not with mine – don't infect me! It's not just me bringing abortion into it but Dieter explicitly made the point, referring back to the Repeal campaign with approval, seeing the result of that referendum as a good thing. I was conscious yet again of how the strong individualistic streak can trump social solidarity.

Away from the fractious debates, last Sunday's **Songs of Praise** (BBC1) was a tonic.

The focus was on modern hymn writers, and while presenter Aled Jones' pieces to camera and some of the interviews were new, they relied, as so many shows do these days, on archive material.

Rendition

Among these featuring was Catholic composer Bernadette Farrell and we got a fine rendition of her well-known song *Christ Be Our Light*. She was humbled to hear how her songs connected with people – particularly so when she heard from a prison chaplain about how this song of hers

was popular with inmates. She thought hymns should be challenging and we learned how her work sometimes dealt with modern issue like threat to the environment.

For Graham Kendrick hymns were a blend of experience poetry and theology – he wanted to sing his Faith and wrote so that people could "sing the truth" – he performed one of his best-known modern worship songs, *Shine Jesus Shine*.

Kendrick was one of those featured in the YouTube hit *UK Blessing* which was replayed on the show – it's one of those virtual choir split screen performances, and if you liked that try also the wonderful version of *Be Not Afraid* on YouTube by Catholic Artists From Home.

Also on the show we saw how Grammy Award winning American singer-songwriter Michael W. Smith was inspired these days by looking to the heavens – inspired by the wonder of the universe, he wondered how anyone seeing this could not believe in God.

Music director Ken Burton, had lots to say about hymns – they have a "collective empathy"; they could be cathartic, soothe the soul and convey sentiments. He recognised the power of the old hymns – they have "sustained Christian communities". He referenced scripture where hymns celebrated, commem-

PICK OF THE WEEK

SONGS OF PRAISE

BBC1, Sunday, May 24, 1.15pm

Islands of Faith: Katherine Jenkins introduces uplifting stories of Faith amidst spectacular scenery as she looks back to when *Songs of Praise* has explored islands around the British coastline.

WOMEN OF GRACE

EWTN, Friday, May 29, 4.30pm

Women of Grace encourages and affirms women in their dignity and authentic femininity.

THE LEAP OF FAITH

RTÉ Radio 1, Friday, May 29, 10.05pm

Topical religious issues with Michael Comyn.



Graham Kendrick

orated and even lamented. Modern hymns could capture "the essence of the age" with "deep theology". He followed his reflections by a clip where he was directing a choral piece *Come Let Us Sing of a Wonderful Love* – a marvelously heartfelt performance.

Music was also central in **Dana, The Original Derry Girl**, which aired first on RTÉ1

on Monday of last week but was repeated several times during the week on RTÉ and BBC. It was emotional yet dispassionate, and a fascinating review of Dana's life. In a clip from an EWTN show she said "each one of us is created unique" and her life has certainly been unique – she is a trailblazer in music (from folk club days through Eurovision to *Top of the Pops* and her latest album recorded in Rome) and in politics (uniquely an Independent presidential candidate on two occasions and an MEP).

It was clear that music with its creativity was kinder to her than politics with its dirty tricks, but what a full life so far.

✉ boregan@hotmail.com,
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Film

Aubrey Malone



Online movies worth paying for not in short supply

Covid-19 has made us all change the way we watch movies. Those of us lucky enough to have computers can cope easily enough with online purchases. Others have to be more innovative; I saw a news report about a man in Fermoy recently who's showing films on walls for his neighbours. Desperate situations require desperate remedies.

The Irish sci-fi thriller *Sea Fever* is being streamed on digital platforms. So are *Jihad Jane* and *The Disney Family Singalong* – the latter is one for all the family. *Birds of Prey* and the *Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn* is available on DVD and Blu-Ray.

The #MeToo movement has meant Woody Allen

has been halted from making films for the moment. A sexual scandal about him allegedly abusing one of his children in the past has resurfaced. It seems to have made him surplus to Hollywood requirements. He's transferred his attention to writing. His memoir, *Apropos of Nothing*, has just been published.

Woody has many successors and they'll take up the mantle when he retires. Noah Baumbach is one of them. Check out his film *Frances Ha* on Amazon. It's reminiscent of Woody's *Manhattan*, another black-and-white nugget. Greta Gerwig is the main star. She's another Allen aficionado and his fingerprints are on her work.



Maggie Gyllenhaal stars in *The Kindergarten Teacher*.

Another director who's heavily influenced by Allen is Todd Solandz. He's like a darker version of him. You might like to watch his most famous film, *Welcome to the Doll House*. Others I saw recently were *Happiness*, *Dark Horse* and *Wiener Dog*.

Beware: these films are adult and very quirky.

Interest

The best film I bought since the outbreak of the virus is *The Kindergarten Teacher*. Maggie Gyllenhaal plays the title character. One of her

pupils is a poet – he's five years old. Have you ever seen a five-year-old poet? He even gives readings.

Gyllenhaal takes an inordinate interest in him. It leads her to perform a shocking act. The film is directed very tastefully by Sara Colangelo. It's European in its style. Out of a very far-fetched premise has come a very moving work. Everything is understated. It's really a film about loneliness when you boil it down.

A Beautiful Day in the Neighbourhood is an uplifting Tom Hanks film concerning a jaded magazine writer who overcomes his cynicism about a neighbour and learns to appreciate his great decency. A strong friendship ensues.

If you're into political films you might like *Vice*, which documents the life and career of Dick Cheney, or *The Front Runner*. This deals with the rise and fall of Gary Hart, a presidential candidate from the 80s. He had his career cut short by an extra-marital affair with a fundraiser. It's also tasteful. The director, Jason Reitman, avoids anything sleazy.

The Ides of March is a political film featuring Ryan Gosling. He plays a staffer for the campaign of presidential hopeful George Clooney, a character who hides his skeletons behind idealistic rhetoric. The Caesarean overtones are obvious from the title. *Et tu, Ryan*.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



Following the pilgrim paths across Ireland and Europe

Journeys of Faith. Stories of Pilgrimage from Medieval Ireland
by Louise Nugent
(Columba Books, €26.99)

Peter Costello

This book is an epitome of a thousand years of Irish history, roughly 500 AD to 1500 AD. It is a reminder, if one is really needed, of just how important the context of history is to understanding present attitudes to religion and spirituality in Ireland.

Dr Nugent's book is one which I suspect many ordinary readers, especially those who are local historians, have long felt the need of. Her theme over this period is the various kinds of pilgrimage, local and European with which people in Ireland have involved themselves. But this is also a book which will be valued by many academics too: the astonishingly detailed and lengthy bibliography, which suggests that the author may have read or seen everything connected with Irish pilgrimages and pilgrims.

Humanities

Like so many others these days, in a period when universities are keener on promoting posts in science rather than the humanities, she works as an independent scholar. She is eminently well qualified with degrees from UCC and UCD. Her doctorate dealt with pilgrimage in

medieval Ireland, the research creating the foundations of this book.

But she also curates a popular blog on the topic, and so is skilled in communicating the subject to the widest possible audience, bringing it right into the public realm.

This book deals in depth with Irish pilgrimages, such as Lough Derg, and the mentalities behind them. St Patrick's Purgatory brought people from all over Europe. But to reach the mountains of Donegal from, say, Hungary one needed status and wealth; travel, remember, was for many in the middle ages an expensive affair, it was not for everyone.

“I feel myself that in Brittany people manage to get the balance right between prayer and *patrimoni*”

The author also follows the Irish abroad to European shrines, so giving, in the context of time, a universal view of Christendom, from Clonmacnoise to Jerusalem, the city on which the medieval Christian imagination was fixed.

The illustrations which are numerous and very well selected also enlarge the book in a remarkable way.

Aside from all this, Dr Nugent also deals with the

legends, the rites and prayers involved. And in the very end of it all gets her pilgrims home again.

In these pages we can follow in very human detail the continuing story of the passage of faith over the centuries in Ireland in a very vivid way.

But a point strikes this reviewer on reaching the end: is there not some way that these ancient pilgrimages in Ireland can be revived and sustained, while not allowing them to become a part of a 'tourist industry'.

I feel myself that in Brittany people manage to get the balance right between prayer and *patrimoni*. A pilgrimage such as that to Sainte-Anne-d'Auray (Morbihan) is an example.

This dates from 1625, outside Dr Nugent's period. But this shrine shows how on a still intimate scale pilgrimage can sustained itself and maintain the medieval sense of reverence and devotion and simplicity, that are essential to true religion.

Difficult to achieve, but not impossible, and much would depend on local people, of course, and a developed resistance to turning everything into a 'revenue-stream'. Some company or association should take it in hand. We will have to see 'when all this is over'.

But even in early medieval days, the era of what Frank O'Connor once called "the little monasteries", cautious



Medieval pilgrim entering the cave of St Patrick's Purgatory, Lough Derg, a European view © Morgan Library/New York Public Library). The fanciful city in the background is meant perhaps for Armagh.

voices could be heard from time to time:

*Techt do Róim,
mór saítho, becc torbai;
in Rí con-daigi i foss,*

manim bera latt ní fhogbai.

To go to Rome / is little profit, endless pain; / the master that you seek in Rome / you find at home or

seek in vain.
(Translation by Frank O'Connor)

! To contact Louise Nugent's blog and share in the con-



La Madonna della Sedia.

Raphael, a past master of

Raphael's World
by Michael Collins
(Messenger Publications,
€19.95 / £17.95)

Peter Costello

The Renaissance painter Raphael (1483-1520) is an artist whose work is widely familiar to many people without them being aware of it. His images affect their imagination because of their content, not because of whom they are by. This is because (rather like Murillo) he was a source of prints for many 'holy pictures'. These hung in so many convents,

school and colleges that few Catholics can have avoided them before the 1970s.

Certainly in the large junior class room in the Sacred Heart in Leeson Street over the fireplace there hung a copy of Raphael's *Madonna della Segiola* (c. 1514). Outside of the pictures at home I think this was the first real painting that affected me as a very small child: it seemed to sum up so much about the nature of motherly love, and so of love itself. I had never heard of Raphael, of course, but could recognised what this picture

was about, an essentially warm human scene.

“His religious paintings are just one topic explored by Fr Collins”

To provide holy pictures may seem an unkind fate, one the painter did not deserve, but careful scholarship has thankfully preserved him from that. But the pervasive influence of early images cannot be escaped. In that sense then Raphael is one of the great

painters of Western culture. He is one of the great past masters, not just of art, but of religious art in particular.

His religious paintings are just one topic explored by Fr Michael Collins in his new book, published to mark the 500th anniversary of the death of 'the divine painter' which falls this year. In this concise but detailed book he manages within a very limited space to provide an exemplary account of the painter, his era, his life work and influence which could not be better for a beginner.

He also explains that

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.



versation visit her website www.pilgrimagemedieval-ireland.com.

The Grand Pardon de Sainte Anne, the largest pilgrimage in southern Brittany

is held annually on July 26, the feast of St Anne, with religious services, picnics and dancing, many pilgrims wearing traditional costumes.

religious art

there are still many unresolved mysteries about his life, his career, his sitters and their identity, and his relations with other great artists of the day. The size of his book precludes very extended illustration, but it provides an excellent introduction which will lead to a long period of happy exploration for those who fall under his particular spell.

An annotated list of some essential books about Raphael for further exploration would have been useful.

A book of this kind is only

a departure, not a final stop.

There are seven paintings and drawing by Raphael in the National Gallery. They will be there to be explored another time; but in the meantime many will enjoy this encounter with a great painter until they are open again.

It is great to see a new book from Fr Collins, who has suffered ill health over the last few years. His friends and readers will look forward to more books from his ready and well-informed pen – or should that word processor in these days.

Stuck for something to read during lockdown? A suggestion...

Over the coming weeks some of our literary collaborators will give suggestions for 'lockdown' reading, books of all kinds to amuse and raise our spirits. This week, Des Egan on James Thurber...

I have always had a soft spot for cartoons, even to the point of proposing some cartoon-plays consisting of a single sentence, the rest of which is ironically implicit – as in the following.

Setting: Outside a wigwam, the Chief addressing a group of young braves: 'So there I was, minding my own business when... ' (curtain).

So, in all the welter of cocoon-reading, to cheer myself up I went from cocoon to cartoon, and (though I also love the work of the late John Glashan) to James Thurber especially, and his *Men, Women and Dogs* collection, from 1943.

Impression

I enjoyed it as much as ever. Who else can convey such an impression of character with so few tiny strokes? Who better saw through human pretension to its ironically



comic side?

Philosopher Roger Scruton suggests, in *Confessions of a Heretic*, that, there is a new kind of irony in Christ's judgments

and parables, which look at the spectacle of human folly and wryly show us how to live with it, and goes even further, to suggest that, the Christian religion has made

irony central to its message.

Detachment, compassion and amusement would seem to be in question there...all Christian concerns, surely? Distinguished Spanish novelist Javier Marias goes so far as to say (*Between Eternities*) that "there is no real greatness without irony".

Cartoons

Where better to come across such than in Thurber? He has given us in his short stories much to laugh at and think about – from *Walter Mitty* to *The Macbeth Murder Mystery*; but there is only time here to promote his cartoons. Rather than start analysing them, let them speak for themselves: here goes with two favourites. May they help you not to not to go cuckoo from being cocooned.

Desmond Egan's most recent book is *Last Poetry Collection: Epic* (The Goldsmith Press). Much of James Thurber's finest work can be found in *The Thurber Carnival* (Penguin Modern Classics, £9.99), currently available.

Cartoons from *Men, Women and Dogs* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co.); © James Thurber 1943.

A healthy soul in a healthy body

Tin Can Cook

by Jack Monroe (Bluebird Books for Life, £6.99) During this current term of trial, I was talking on the phone to a friend who is unmarried and lives alone and was finding life very hard. Feeding a single person economically – takeaways are costly – is difficult. He said he was very clever though at "opening a tin". Well I said that's not so bad and told him about this book.

Author Jack Monroe, having had a hard time of it when her son was small, is very much in to uncomplicated everyday cooking for healthy living. Foodies may balk at opening tins, but what do many of them know about depending on food banks.

Her book is to be warmly welcomed. It will appeal to all those who, for one reason or another, live alone: students, single parents, seniors, even clergy with no house-keeper.

You feed yourself out of a store cupboard which is independent of freezer and fridges, which in many places can now be important when there seem to be so many local floods and electricity 'outages'. Tinned food remains safe to eat for a life time.

She suggests a range of cans and dry goods that can be bought in advance and used from store: simply open the cans. She provides 75 recipes for every kind of meal from breakfast, through working lunch, to evening dinner with snacks on the side. All are tasty and attractive, and those we have tried work well.

Yet she also sees that her suggestions retain the vitamins and nutrients that are so essential to a healthy body, but with nothing that has had to be flown in from Kenya in the last day or two (or daily from Manchester, as is the case with the sandwiches in M&S).

In this time of lockdown, and indeed at any time, isolated individuals need to keep an eye on healthy eating. It is all very well getting freezer dinners, from say Wiltshire Farm, but what do you do in the outage and the flood? Be sure though to store these tins upstairs away from the flood plane!

Space precludes rambling on with sample ideas, but take it from here that all of this is clever and tasty and you won't regret the price of the book. If a child needs a cookbook to take to college in the autumn – whenever –



this is the one to buy.

We are constantly encouraged about mindfulness and developing our spiritual insights. But these fine things can only be achieved fully on a healthy diet. As the Roman poet Juvenal reminds us, *mens sana in corpore sano*, a healthy mind in a healthy body. The normal healthy soul also relies on a healthy body.

Visit the author's website, jackmonroe.com, for more information.

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Crossword Junior

Gordius 333



Across

- 1 Sounding like a dog (7)
- 4 A pig lives here (3)
- 7 You set it to help you wake up (5,5)
- 8 Use it to open a lock (3)
- 9 Against the law (7)
- 11 Just a single time (4)
- 13 Underground place for storing things (6)
- 15 In this place (4)
- 16 This cereal is used to make bread and drinks (3)
- 17 Cook something in a pan (3)
- 19 It's like a boot with wheels (5)
- 20 Test (4)

Down

- 1 Use chalk to write on this (10)
- 2 '____, steady, go!' (5)
- 3 There are sometimes pearls in this piece of jewellery (8)
- 5 A plus tells you to add, a minus tells you to ____ (4,4)
- 6 You might give one to dog to chew (4)
- 10 Insect which makes honey (3)
- 12 Part of your face (5)
- 14 Big (5)
- 18 You might spread it on your bread (3)

SOLUTIONS, MAY 14

GORDIUS No. 455

Across – 1 Alb 3 Black coffee 8 Bird of paradise 10 Eaten 11 Argot: opera 13 Backs 15 Abetted 16 Pelican 20 Drown 22 Ditto 23 Comic 24 Kedgeree 25 Malibu 26 Trojan horse 27 Net

Down – 1 Abbreviated 2 Baritone 3 Brown bread 4 Caprice 5 Osaka 6 Fringe 7 Ewe 12 Tennis court 14 Skein 17 Champion 18 Torpedo 19 Studio 23 Chase 24 Kit

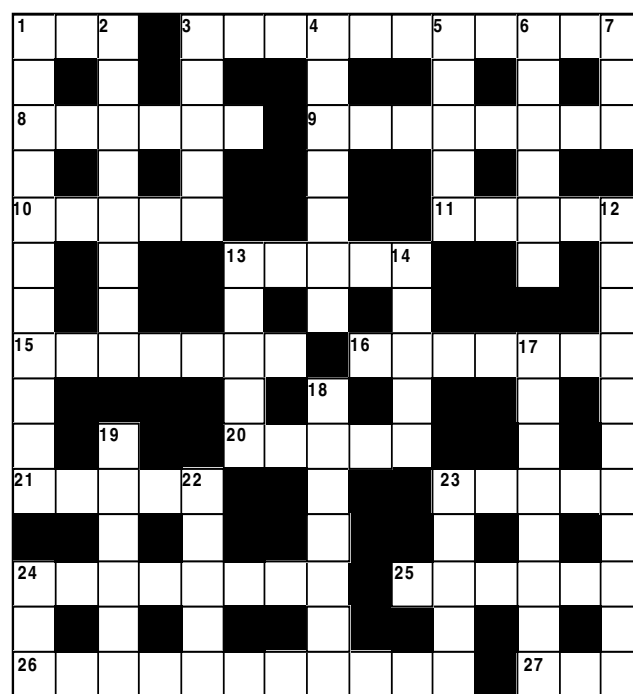
CHILDREN'S No. 332

Across – 1 Hole-in-one 6 Guilty 7 Abel 9 Sunflower 11 Emerald 13 Tired 15 Icing 17 Swan 18 Lily 19 Guess

Down – 1 Hagrid 2 Leinster 3 Intended 4 Elbow 5 Solar 8 Sleeping: 10 Eel 12 Alive 13 Tail 14 Easy 16 Gas

Crossword

Gordius 456



Across

- 1 For starters, fruit is truly healthy (3)
- 3 Confuse a veteran - hew something to show what way the wind is blowing (7,4)
- 8 The park official is in a right rage (6)
- 9 Misbehaved, perhaps causing a delay, pup (6,2)
- 10 Discovered (5)
- 11 One who stands in for a doctor, for example (5)
- 13 The parade vehicle may be reconstructed aloft (5)
- 15 Yields a call for volunteers (5,2)
- 16 Telepathic (7)
- 20 He (golfer Ernie) identifies cads (5)
- 21 Over-economise (5)
- 23 & 24 It was placed on Our Lord's head during the Passion (5,2,6)
- 25 About the hare's home - improve it (6)
- 26 Everything but this might make the galley go under (7,4)
- 27 The closest star (3)

Down

- 1 Golfers' ancestors? (11)

- 2 & 23d Chet on Gueek? You can't be serious! (6-2-5)
- 3 Brandish (5)
- 4 The underground part of a faucet plant? (3,4)
- 5 & 13d It's not often on the cards that one is found in the palace toilet! (5,5)
- 6 Cue Dad might reconstruct to present as proof (6)
- 7 One's sixth sense (1,1,1)
- 12 Can this ship of old be described as a trader male? (11)
- 13 See 5 down
- 14 Onerous jobs (5)
- 17 Funny (8)
- 18 It's a good book, for a start-off! (7)
- 19 Edict (6)
- 22 Barker has a part in the Shampoo Chorus (5)
- 23 See 2 down
- 24 Producer of acorns (3)

Sudoku Corner

333

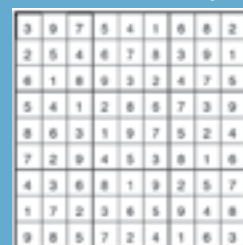
Easy



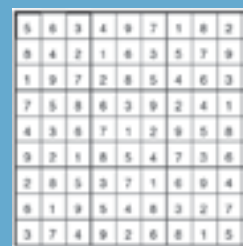
Hard



Last week's Easy 332



Last week's Hard 332



Notebook

Fr Martin Delaney



It's all about love, love, love...

LAST WEEK I had a very sad phone call from a colleague of mine in another part of the country. He has been a very dedicated priest for almost 50 years. For the last eight weeks he has been cocooning in his home unable to celebrate any kind of public Mass or have any of that normal pastoral contact with his parishioners.

In addition to being a priest, he is also a trained therapist and despite having those spiritual and psychological resources to call on he is clearly struggling with this present situation as we now head into week nine and a very unclear path ahead. He is struggling with feelings of loneliness but perhaps worst of all feelings around having no purpose anymore, of being worthless.

Conversation

Reflecting back on that conversation I thought perhaps my colleague's situation finds an echo not just in many more presbyteries around the country but also in the homes of other people who live alone or even those who don't live alone but are also struggling. While Zoom, Facetime and WhatsApp are very useful for both work and social interaction, they are no substitute for genuine human contact, especially with



those who are most important to us. As other countries begin to open up faster than we are, this can also bring a new level of anxiety and impatience. Italian grandchildren are running to hug their nanas and grandads, Spaniards are queuing for the barbers of Seville while we look like we are starring in an episode of *Reeling the Years* from the mid-70s.

There are a myriad of self-help techniques and coping strategies out there to assist people who are struggling through this period of isolation and lockdown. I'm also very aware of the importance of prayer at this time. Many Faith communities are finding ever increasing creative ways to keep their congregations in touch with each other and with their God. I thank God daily for the webcam in

our church which allows us to stay in contact.

Despite all the help that is available there are dark days, when we hit a wall, days when maybe the more healthy supports are not doing it for us and we just want to take to the bottle or to the bed or both! The only thing that helps me on days like that is to somehow force myself to go back to the 'why': why are we being asked to endure this extraordinary and unprecedented curtailment of our basic freedoms? The obvious answer is to protect ourselves from contracting the virus. However the more significant answer is that we are doing this to protect others, particularly the most vulnerable within our communities.

Sufferings

I found myself going back to a very old-fashioned Catholic idea which we don't hear much about these days, the notion of offering up our sufferings for the good of others. This idea is rooted in the Easter story of Jesus suffering and dying for us so that we could all share in his resurrection and in eternal life. This flies in the face of our modern culture where love of self is always put first and where my rights and

freedoms always take precedence over yours.

This pandemic has challenged us to look again at the notion of offering up our suffering for the good of others. But this idea *only* makes sense if somehow we are motivated by love. That was the unique element that Jesus introduced on Calvary. He endured that torture and death because he loved us, you and me. If there's no love involved, then the world is right: suffering is useless and pointless and should be avoided at all costs.

In the last line of the reading from St Peter last Sunday we heard: "It is better to suffer for doing right rather than doing wrong." Jesus picked up that theme in the Gospel: "If you love me you will keep my commandments."

That link is there between genuine love and living our lives in a particular way. Now Tony Holohan or the Taoiseach would never use this language of love to appeal to us at this time, but as people of Faith we can use that language in our present situation. In this time of pandemic the commandments are around social distancing, washing our hands etc.

But as this journey gets more

Words worth...

A lexophile describes those that have a love of words. An annual competition is held in the *New York Times* to see who can create the best original lexophile. Some of this year's submissions include:

- A thief who stole a calendar got 12 months.
- I got some batteries that were given out free of charge
- A dentist and a manicurist married. They fought tooth and nail.
- A guy who fell onto an upholstery machine last week is now fully recovered.

difficult for all of us the only way we can endure it is to constantly remind ourselves that the main reason we are doing this is because we love our families, our neighbours and our fellow human beings, enough to offer up whatever level of suffering this demands of us.



HELP TRAIN A YOUNG MAN FOR THE MISSIONARY PRIESTHOOD

YOUR EASTERTIDE GIFT TO OUR RISEN SAVIOUR

Each year THE LITTLE WAY ASSOCIATION receives numerous requests from Religious Orders in mission lands for help to train their seminarians.

It costs approximately €100 a month (€1,200 a year) to feed, clothe and educate a student for the priesthood

The great majority of young men who come forward to offer their lives to God, and His people, come from poor families. Their parents do not have the means to support them financially. The cost of educating and maintaining seminarians is often a heavy burden on the Religious Orders. It costs approximately €100 a month (€1,200 a year) to feed, clothe and educate a student for the priesthood. We appeal wholeheartedly, this Easter/Pentecost, to all readers to help train and support a candidate for the priesthood.

Any donation you can send will be most gratefully received, and will be sent without deduction, to help to train a young man for the priesthood.

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



MISSIONARIES NEED YOUR MASS OFFERINGS

Your Mass offerings help to provide the missionary priest's maintenance and assist him to extend the Kingdom of God upon earth.

We like to send a missionary a minimum of €6 or more for each Mass.

WELLS NEEDED

Missionaries constantly appeal to The Little Way for funds to sink wells in order to provide clean water, the lack of which causes much illness and many medical needs. On average, women in Africa and Asia walk around three hours every day to fetch water, often in scorching heat.

Can you help provide a well?

Your kind gift will be forwarded intact and gratefully received.



Crossed POs and cheques should be sent and made payable to:

THE LITTLE WAY ASSOCIATION
 Sacred Heart House, 119 Cedars Rd, Clapham Common, London SW4 0PR
 (Registered Charity No. 235703) Tel 0044 20 76 22 0466
www.littlewayassociation.com

- I enclose €..... to be allocated to:
- €..... **TRAINING FOR THE PRIESTHOOD**
 - €..... **NEEDS OF MISSIONARIES**
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 (Please state number _____)
 - €..... **WELLS AND CLEAN WATER**
 - €..... **LITTLE WAY ADMIN EXPENSES**

Please tick if you would like an acknowledgement

Name (Rev. Mr. Mrs. Miss) (Block letters please)

Address

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DONATIONS FOR THE MISSIONS ARE SENT WITHOUT DEDUCTION FOR ANY EXPENSES.