

The Irish Catholic

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Thursday, September 23, 2021

€2.50 (Stg £2.20)

The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

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Prominent historian rejects claim partition Church service is political

Jason Osborne

A prominent historian who advises the Government about contentious commemorations has rejected claims by President Michael D. Higgins that an ecumenical service to mark partition is political in nature.

Dr Eamon Phoenix said next month's service in Armagh organised by the main Christian traditions on the island, which President Higgins has refused to attend, was about building bridges and rejected characterisations of the event as celebrating partition.

He insisted that the event was part of a framework based on "respectful and ethical" remembrance, and that such events are designed to be "inclusive to the maximum", rather than "contentious".

President Higgins declined to attend the service with Britain's Queen Elizabeth II next month which is due to be held in the Church of Ireland cathedral in the city and was organised by Church leaders including Primate of All-Ireland Archbishop Eamon Martin.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic*, Dr Phoenix – who is a member of the Taoiseach's expert advisory group of the decade of centenaries – said the Armagh event is organised in the same spirit as other recent commemorations. These events are intended to be "ways of bridge-building," he said.

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The long wait is over...



Keita Spilberga (9) celebrates after making her First Holy Communion at the Cathedral of Saints Patrick and Felim in Cavan. Keita, who is in third class at Crubany National School, has waited for over 16 months to celebrate her reception of the Blessed Sacrament for the first time due to lockdown restrictions. Photo: Lorraine Teevan.

JANE MELLET

Time to stand with the vulnerable

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FAITH IN FOOTBALL

Neymar offered money to keep quiet about God PAGE 3



MICHAEL KELLY

Remembering is not celebrating

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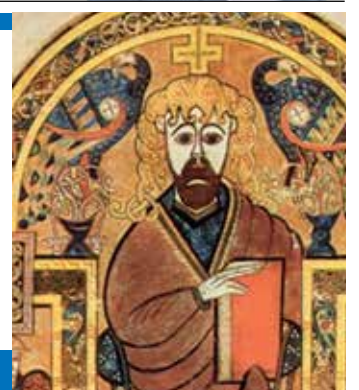
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Annual Subscription Rates: Ireland €165. Airmail €250. Six months €85.

ISSN 1393 - 6832 - Published by The Irish Catholic,

Unit 3b, Bracken Business Park, Bracken Road, Sandyford,

Dublin 18, D18 K277.

Printed by Webprint, Cork.

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It's not about celebrating Northern Ireland, but ethically remembering a painful journey

If the ecumenical service to mark the centenary of partition wasn't political to begin with, it certainly is now. The decision by President Michael D. Higgins to refuse to participate in the ceremony has thrust what was to be a modest event centre-stage.

It's still not entirely clear why Mr Higgins felt so uncomfortable about the event. Despite his earlier insistence, he has now conceded that the letter inviting him did not refer to him as the "President of the Republic of Ireland" but quite correctly as the "President of Ireland".

At the outset, it is important to note that the event was not billed as a celebration but merely a service to mark 100 years since the partition of the island and the creation of the northern state.

Archbishop Eamon Martin – one of the organisers – grew up alongside the border and leads a diocese that is split in two by the border. He is not unaware of the impact of partition historically and now.

“Northern Ireland was a state borne out of sectarianism and supremacy”

The creation of the northern state was catastrophic from day one for northern Catholics. They learned about their new status as second-class citizens almost immediately as thousands were forced out of their homes and many others were dismissed from their jobs.

Relentless

It was the relentless discrimination against Catholics – an issue little opined about in the then Free State at the time – that led to the emergency of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Asso-

Prominent historian rejects claim partition Church service is political

» Continued from Page 1

“I was surprised – as were many other people – when that [politicisation] became the gravamen of the president's objection.

“The whole idea of using that phrase [A service of reflection and hope, to mark the centenary of the partition of Ireland and the formation of Northern Ireland], which was picked up on by the Churchmen, was to equalise it, not to politicise it,” Dr Phoenix explained.

He said the Christian traditions were “always” going to be in a dilemma with the anniversary of the division of the island, as “once you say ‘partition’, to the nationalist/republican community, it raises the idea of coercion.

“If you say it to somebody from the unionist community, then it's the birth of a homeland outside of a Catholic, theocratic state,”

ciation (NICRA) with modest demands around voting, housing and education.

The Stormont administration – famously described by Prime Minister James Craig as a Protestant parliament for a Protestant people – set its face against equal rights for Catholics.

Just 50 years ago in 1971, state-sponsored Protestant mobs intensified their attacks on the Catholic community in the north forcing many thousands to flee to makeshift refugee camps just south of the border. Religious houses all across the Republic provided refuge from what could only be described as a process of ethnic cleansing only brought to an end when the authorities in London imposed direct rule and deployed members of the British Army to protect Catholic areas of the region from further violence.

This is part of the painful and catastrophic story of partition. Northern Ireland was a state borne out of sectarianism and supremacy

– and this is something that everyone acknowledges is worth recalling.

“I think the Church leaders were courageous in organising the ecumenical service”

A Christian service focused on reconciliation and ethical remembering seemed to me the perfect space in which to acknowledge the fact of the creation of the northern state as well as the pain this caused. I think the Church leaders were courageous in organising the ecumenical service, as Church leaders showed great wisdom all during the civil conflict in the North reaching across the sectarian divide. We know about people like Fr Alec Reid and Revd Harold Good, though I suspect that we will never know the full story of the many Churchmen who convinced paramilitaries that peace was in everyone's interest.

Terms

Ireland – north and south – must come to terms with painful episodes in our history. We must be a peoples and a nation at peace with ourselves and at peace with our past. The great genius of the – admittedly imperfect – Good Friday Agreement is the fact that it creates the space for parity of esteem. British identity and Irish identity sit side-by-side with every shade in between. No identity is exaggerated at the expense of another.

From my perspective as a Catholic born and raised in the North fully conscious of the suffering of my community, I think it is regrettable that in 2021 a simple religious ceremony of Christians gathering together to acknowledge a reality is controversial.

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Editor's Comment Michael Kelly



So-called 'peace walls' in Belfast are a painful reminder of divisions. Photo: CNS.

Neymar offered €500,000 a month to keep quiet about faith

Jason Osborne

Brazil and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) superstar Neymar reportedly receives €6.5 million a year for avoiding any “political or religious” propaganda that might ruin the club’s image.

The ‘ethical clause’ also stops the 29-year-old from expressing any “negative public comments about the club” and asks for “exemplary” behaviour from the footballer.

The clause also reportedly said that Neymar is required to be “courteous, punctual, friendly and available to fans”.

Neymar, a Pentecostal Christian, has regularly spoken publicly of his faith, saying that “life only makes sense when our highest ideal is to serve Christ”. He is famous for donning a “100% Jesus” headband after matches, such as after winning the gold medal at the 2016 Olympics in Brazil and after Barcelona’s Champions League triumph in 2015.

He grew up going to Pen-

iel Baptist church in his home of Sao Paulo with its pastor Newton Lobato revealing that the footballer tithes around €18,000 every year.

“Neymar, a Pentecostal Christian, has regularly spoken publicly of his faith”

Neymar has named fellow Brazilian footballer and devout Christian, Kaká, as his spiritual role model.

The contract clause was uncovered by the Spanish news outlet *El Mundo*, which leaked the forward’s contract with Qatari-owned PSG.

According to *El Mundo*, the deal sees Neymar earn over €500,000 a month from PSG, on top of his weekly earnings of over €570,000.

The ‘ethical clause’ was created to ensure “political and religious propaganda” don’t “damage the image and unity of the club”, *El Mundo* reported.



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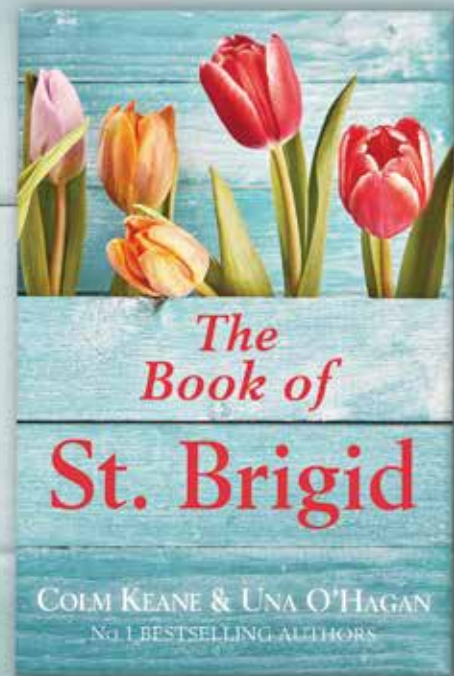
REVIEWS

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- Brendan O'Connor, RTÉ Radio 1



IN ALL BOOKSHOPS NOW

Bishops grant ICDLN rebrand wishes

Jason Osborne

The president of the Irish Catholic Doctors Learning Network (ICDLN) has said that he's "very grateful to the Irish episcopal council for their permission" to rebrand as the Catholic Medical Association (CMA).

Dr Keith Holmes of the CMA said the move was "big for us" and that it lends "us a

greater sense of legitimacy". "The issue was one of complying with Canon Law, and I think whenever you want 'Catholic' in your title, you need to go through the bishops," Dr Holmes told *The Irish Catholic*.

"It was important to us that while we had originally spoken with Archbishop Eamon Martin when we were setting up our initial organisation, when we wanted to

rebrand or rename as the Catholic Medical Association, we spoke to the bishops and they were clear that they had to legitimise it."

Healthcare

The CMA, initially the ICDLN, was set up in response to a need for a "greater understanding of the Catholic Church's position on matters relating to healthcare and the clinical practice of

Catholic doctors in Ireland today".

It sees Catholic medical professionals in Ireland come together to educate themselves on the science, medicine and professional issues behind the challenges facing healthcare workers in Ireland today.

Dr Holmes said the reason for the name change was two-fold: inclusivity and international precedent.

"People thought that it [the ICDLN] was a very clumsy title...but it also became very clear from our work thus far that there's a far broader appetite than just doctors, and therefore we wanted to be more inclusive," Dr Holmes said.

"There's that, and also, there are other Catholic Medical Associations in other countries, so it would create a sense of being more

in keeping with them."

The association is also preparing for an upcoming conference on end-of-life issues facing Irish medical practitioners.

"We've a very strong line up of speakers from the UK and Ireland, speaking about topics such as assisted dying, assisted suicide and euthanasia," Dr Holmes explained, the online-only event due to take place October 2.

DFA shows 'no understanding' of religious violence in Nigeria, says TD Carol Nolan

Ruadhán Jones

The Department of Foreign Affairs response to the independent TD's question about violence against Christians "reframes the issue out of all recognition".

Ms Carol Nolan asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs September 9 what Ireland is doing to address violence against Christians in Nigeria, "where 3,462 Christians have been hacked to death since January 1, 2021".

In response, the DFA said the conflict between Muslims and Christians "arises from differences of perspective regarding access to land".

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic*, Ms Carol Nolan said that describing the conflict as "predominantly 'resource based violence' is almost

to reframe the issue out of all recognition".

"Christians are being killed because they are Christians. Christians are being hacked to death in their thousands because of their faith. We need a blunt recognition of this fact," Ms Nolan declared.

The department's response "lacks anything resembling the kind of urgency or understanding that is required to tackle this issue effectively".

Ms Nolan said that the DFA's reply has been virtually identical over the last number of years.

"This suggests to me that there has been no real growth in understanding about the religious character of the violence... we need far more sustained foreign policy focus on this global crucifixion of Christian communities."

Church leaders urge Government to fully redress those affected by pyrite and mica scandals



Brandon Scott

Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland bishops, and a leading Presbyterian clergyman, have urged the Irish Government to offer complete and immediate redress to the thousands of people whose homes have been affected by the mica/pyrite crisis. Numerous family homes have been seriously damaged because defective building blocks were used in their construction.

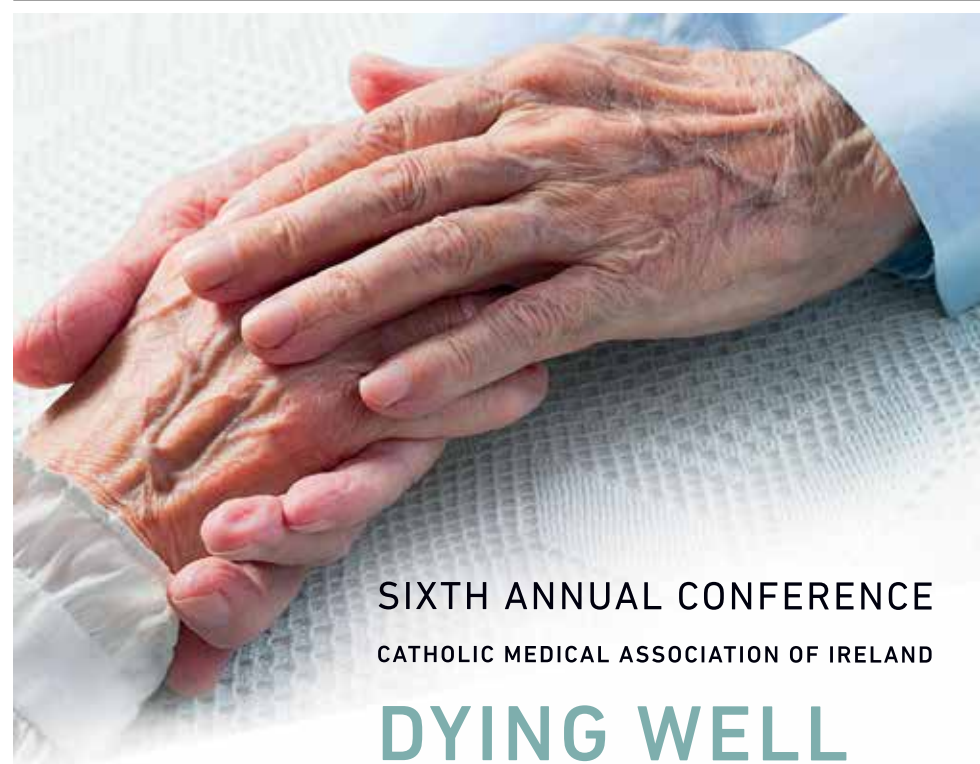
Their calls come after the Government announced that it would only be covering 90% the rebuild and repairs costs facing thousands of homeowners in Donegal and parts of Connacht and Munster. In their statement, the Irish Church leaders expressed their support for a full and unconditional redress scheme to be offered to those who are attempting to live with the consequences of insufficient building blocks.

"There appears to be a disparity in the way people in our region are being treated compared to those elsewhere",

the Church leaders exclaimed, "homeowners in Leinster were awarded 100% redress for the pyrite problems there. The citizens of Donegal, Mayo, Sligo, Tipperary, Clare and Limerick deserve no less. This is a matter of fairness, justice and compassion".

In addition to the Church leaders' support for a 100% redress to be made available to those affected, they also submitted a framework which they believe should be used throughout the duration of the proceedings and makes provisions for a 40-year, state-backed scheme, which guarantees full redress in the event of future problems.

The Church leaders warned that the "basic need for good housing seems peripheral to the agenda of our political leaders". "There may come a time for assigning responsibility for what has happened. One thing is certain, though: the homeowners are not to blame".



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CME POINTS APPLIED

Tuam: there is a social dimension...

Catherine Corless is greatly to be admired for her work revealing the extremely distressing facts about the Tuam Mother and Baby home, and she has now told her own story in an autobiography, *Belonging*.

Ms Corless rebuffs the suggestion, which was included in the report of the commission on Tuam, that "it was us, society, that should bear the brunt of what went on." The responsibility and the blame is not "society's", she says: it is the specific responsibility of those who ran the institutions. (This was the Bon Secours order and Galway County Council.)

Some 250,000 birth mothers in Britain are demanding an apology for coercive adoptions carried out there from 1945"

And yet, I cannot see how there *isn't* a social dimension – that attitudes, values, and economic imperatives held by wider society didn't play a part. Catherine Corless mentions how some children from Tuam were boarded out to uncaring farmers who used them as "slave" labour: this in itself is a social dimension.

Conditions

Catherine Corless' investigation of the conditions which prevailed at Tuam was a brilliant achievement, unveiling the shocking evidence that children died of malnutrition. Yet most historians and anthropologists would conclude that there is always a 'social dimension' involved in the way groups act or are treated.

The Catholics in Boris' background

Interesting details keep emerging about Boris Johnson's Catholic heritage. His mother, Charlotte, who died recently aged 79, was the daughter of Sir James Fawcett, lawyer and Catholic convert, who helped draft the UN Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 – that fine document affirming that "everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person".

Charlotte went to school at Mayfield in Sussex, the girls' school founded by Mother Cornelia Connolly of the Society of the Holy Child



Mary Kenny

It may not amount to 'responsibility' for distressing events or cruelties, but there has to be a social contribution. Human beings do not live in a social vacuum. It was the Marxist thinker, Antonio Gramsci, (whose grave President Higgins recently visited in Rome) who made that point: we are deeply influenced by the culture around us.

Stigma

A British social historian, Jane Robinson, has written a valuable book – *In the Family Way* – about how unmarried mothers and their children were stigmatised until relatively recently. She takes the thread through family, law, economics, culture, churches, municipalities – to explore this situation (which also involved consistently higher mortality rates for British infants born out of wedlock).

Some 250,000 birth mothers in Britain are demanding an apology for

coercive adoptions carried out there from 1945. But the question has arisen: who should apologise? So many agencies, with the backing of wider society, were involved.

"I cannot see how there isn't a social dimension – that attitudes, values, and economic imperatives held by wider society didn't play a part"

Catherine Corless may reject the theme that "it was us, society, that should bear the brunt". Yet we cannot erase the fact that wider society, and families themselves, did hold certain attitudes which are part of the picture of how the unmarried mother and her child were treated.

• Nobody really likes the border in Ireland – even Edward Carson was against it – but traversing it reveals interesting flexibilities. For example, drivers seem to adjust seamlessly to switching kilometres for miles on road signposts. It's not a problem to calculate in both.

From this I deduce that human beings can easily operate differing measurement systems. Pints or litres? Kilos or pounds? Use both metric and imperial, if they're handy. The metric system is official in the Republic of Ireland but people still go for a pint, or describe someone being six feet tall.

In Britain, the imperial system is now being re-installed, post-Brexit, but I think people will just mix and mingle. 'Two metres apart' is understood for social distancing, and I don't see a return to perches, roods and furlongs (though the racing community never discarded the furlong).

But dieters like losing 'stones'. A stone conveys that nice idea of a real weight off your back...



Baby clothing and other items hang from a tree at the former site of the mother and baby home in Tuam. Photo: CNS.



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Frank Duff's indirect influence on Vatican II hailed by biographer

Ruadhán Jones

The Legion of Mary founder believed the documents that came from Vatican II were “an endorsement of what the Legion stood for”, Frank Duff’s biographer said.

Historian Dr Finola Kennedy told *The Irish Catholic* that, while he didn’t “get up and speak” at the council, it is possible he had an “indirect influence”.

“At the end of the council, there was a request from the Vatican for the Legion’s handbook in all the various languages that were then

available,” Dr Kennedy began.

Evidence

“I don’t have any evidence that it had an impact on the documents, but certainly, the Church in the modern world (*Gaudium et Spes*) and items concerning the role of the laity would seem to endorse what Duff was already doing decades earlier.”

Dr Kennedy added that Duff himself, who attended Vatican II as a lay observer, “believed Vatican II was an endorsement of what the Legion stood for, that the Bap-

tism of the all the Faithful not just empowered but insisted that they were part of the spreading of the Good News.

“And that hadn’t been fully recognised for some decades, probably some centuries. At that time, the laity were just still to pay and to pray.

“They were not seen as intrinsic to the Gospel mission and that really only came out in the documents of Vatican II.”

The Legion embodied much of the thinking of Vatican II, she added.

Where the Legion was “exceptional”, Dr Kennedy continued, was “in what Paul VI said, ‘it chooses the little people’. If you look at the members of the first meeting, they were all unimportant by worldly standards”.

However, she pointed out that it also attracted members from “all ranks of society” including ministers and lawyers.

“Frank Duff’s genius was that he absorbed people from all levels of education and none,” Dr Kennedy pointed out.

PIH’s first conference seeks to set up young singles

Jason Osborne

Catholic youth group Pure in Heart is seeking to give young, single Catholics a place to meet “in a very safe and very friendly environment” with its first-ever conference, according to General Manager Helen Vysotska.

The ‘Pursuit of Love’ conference, to take place October 1-3, 2021, is set to offer both theoretical and practical experience, as it seeks to host talks on love and responsibility, the sacramentality of marriage, dating and chastity advice, and how to know whether he or she is the ‘one’.

However, a suspected highlight will be the speed-dating component, which Ms Vysotska said “is an attempt to get rid of the awkwardness” that often exists between young men and women in Catholic circles.

“Ireland has always been great in the past for brilliant ceilis and dance halls and all the rest of it, where young people could get together and have fun in a very safe and very friendly environment,” Ms Vysotska said.

“This is what we’re trying to create again,” she said.

For more information, email info@pureinheart.ie.

Pope welcomes ‘wise’ President Higgins to Vatican



Brandon Scott

Pope Francis thanked God “that Ireland has such a wise man as its Head [of State]”, during the latest encounter between the Pontiff and the president.

President Higgins met the Pontiff before meeting Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, who was accompanied by Vatican Foreign Minister Archbishop Paul Gallagher.

A Vatican statement disclosed that the two leaders spent their time together discussing a variety of issues currently impacting the world, such as migration and the protection of the

environment, with special emphasis given to Ireland, the efficacy of the peace process in the North and the upcoming 26th United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP26) in Glasgow, which Pope Francis is expected to attend.

During their fourth meeting, President Higgins presented the Pope with a Bata lascaire or a ‘Fisherman’s stick’ made on Inis Mór.

“Today, I did not just meet a man, a president, I met a wise man of today,” the Pope said.

Leaving, the Pope requested that President Higgins pray for him, to which President Higgins responded “Every day”.

Pride in St Mary’s...



St Mary’s University College in Belfast gears up for the return of their students with the launch of their Strathroy Dairy-sponsored new college training jersey. Wearing the new jersey are Antrim camogie and All-Ireland winner Maeve Kelly, Down under-20 goalkeeper Charlie Smyth and Derry footballer Ella-Rose Sainsbury.

Breda O'Brien

The View



Church history is a story of ups and downs



Pictured (l-r) Mairead Collins, Kate O'Hora, Anna Flynn and Eve Ryan Dundon of Presentation Secondary School, Thurles performing a dance of celebration at the recent launch of *Seeds of Hope* in Holycross Abbey. Photo: Arthur Ellis

Lack of time prevents me from doing as many talks as I once did (not to mention a worldwide pandemic.) I am not quite sure why I accepted an invitation to speak at the recent Holycross Abbey Novena but I am so glad I did. I was vaguely aware of Holycross Abbey but honestly, had no idea of how rich its history is. It is an inspiring story with particular relevance to our situation today. The short version is that in 1182, King Donal Mor O'Brien, endowed an already existing monastery or hermitage following the Celtic monastic rule with large tracts of land. From then on, it would be a Cistercian Abbey, following the Rule of St Benedict. The abbey was not without difficulties even in its earliest

centuries and at times, its survival even seemed in doubt. **New patron** The Norman settlers provided a new patron, James Butler, fourth Earl of Ormond. An ambitious scheme of rebuilding commenced, including inserting the great east and west windows, which are such a glorious feature. Within a century, the greed of Henry VIII meant that the monasteries were suppressed. A clever stratagem preserved Holycross for a while. In 1534, the Abbot, William Dwyer, resigned his office in favour of a married layman, Philip Purcell, which meant that Holycross became a provostry rather than a Cistercian abbey. Sadly, by 1685, a shortage of vocations left the abbey

with an abbot and one monk. With the death of Fr Edmond Cormack in 1735, the Cistercian link was broken and from 1740, people began to bury their dead within the abbey. **“The abbey was not without difficulties even in its earliest centuries and at times, its survival even seemed in doubt”** As the visitor leaflet says, “For three hundred years before its last restoration, the abbey was roofless and silent.” Now the story takes an extraordinary turn, described

in an absorbing account by one of the people most central to the story - Fr William Hayes, who was appointed as curate in 1966 and then as administrator. Like many other important ecclesiastical buildings, the abbey was in the care of the State and was not to be used for worship, although permission to celebrate Mass there for Michelmas in 1967 was readily granted. Fr Hayes was concerned about the damage rain was doing to the fine architectural features of the church and proposed to the Office of Public Works in 1967 that the building, then in danger of dereliction, be re-roofed with slates. **Astonishment** To his astonishment, the OPW representative at the meeting threw out the suggestion that the abbey be restored for use as the parish church.

“I was vaguely aware of Holycross Abbey but honestly, had no idea of how rich its history is”

Can you imagine that happening today? Firstly, it would have to be re-granted from the State to the parish. Secondly, this was the late 1960s, when emigration was high and money was far from plentiful. A somewhat stunned Fr Hayes brought the proposal back to Archbishop Tom Morris who was most enthusiastic about the plan. God's grace is evident in the restoration. Local families had been burying their dead in the Abbey for generations. All it would have needed was one family to refuse to allow the remains to be re-buried and the plan could have been derailed. All the families agreed to the exhumation. The chapter in Fr Hayes' book describing the archaeological excavation and reinterment is very moving, as one burial had only taken place three years before. The legal hurdles were also overcome, with the legislation proposing the restoration of Holycross Abbey as a building for worship being passed unanimously. Again, can you imagine that happening today? Long story short, after extraordinary efforts and fundraising, Holycross Abbey, which gets its name from having not one, but two relics of the true cross, was officially re-opened on October 5, 1975.

It was a ceremonial Church-State event, including the president, Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh, Cardinal Timothy Manning of Los Angeles, Cistercian monks, many of the Irish hierarchy and representatives of the Church of Ireland. **“For three hundred years before its last restoration, the abbey was roofless and silent”** Holycross Abbey remains a magnificent parish church and a jewel in the crown of Cashel and Emly Archdiocese. Fittingly, the diocesan pastoral plan, *Seeds of Hope*, was launched there in mid-September by Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly, again under the health and safety

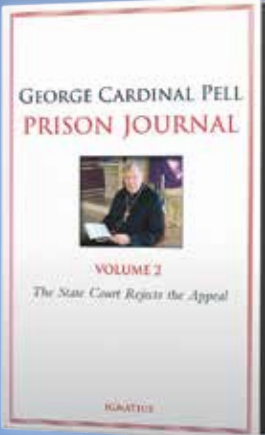
restrictions necessary during this pandemic. **Space** Standing in this beautiful, serene space, with Fr Celsus Tierney, PP, pointing out fascinating details, it was clear to me that faith in God can accomplish wonders. We all feel battered after the pandemic, which has taken lives and livelihoods. Yet standing there, the light streaming through the great windows, it was a reminder that God is in charge and all we have to do is cooperate with his grace. The abbey has risen from a desolate ruin to a living space of worship. Sure, this year, the novena was online but the Church can, with God's help and our cooperation, also rise again. Holycross provides us with both a historical perspective and contemporary inspiration.

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IC CPVT 2021

Principals facing ‘unacceptable’ stress levels, Catholic schools agency warns

Ruadhán Jones

Delays in responses from the HSE’s schools Covid-19 helpline have added to stress levels in an “extra-challenging” start to the school year.

“The HSE’s response times need to improve, it’s causing unacceptable stress-levels for principals,” warned Seamus Mulconry, General Secretary for the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association (CPSMA).

“Though it’s only September, principals have told me that it feels like November in

terms of work pressure.”

While there has been speculation around the restrictions easing for schools, Mr Mulconry said they have “not been informed of any changes” and will wait for discussions with the Department for Education.

Regardless, Mr Mulconry said he thinks “the HSE’s support and principal helplines need to improve”, though there have been signs that response times are picking up.

The message schools are keen to convey to the Government is to “put in the resources”, Mr Mulconry added.

“With speedy response times and the

necessary resources, we can manage the situation,” he continued. “But we need the resources.”

There was a 48% increase in the number of Covid-19 cases detected among children aged between four and 12 over the seven days to Sunday September 12, HSE data shows.

“It’s been an extra-challenging start and we have a long year ahead us,” Mr Mulconry finished.

Meanwhile, a Catholic secondary school’s body said that the return has been “going well” compared with last year, though there are still some issues.

“There are concerns obviously around Covid and cases in schools, but we’re hopeful that will improve in the coming months,” said John Curtis, general secretary of the Joint Managerial Board (JMB), an organisation representing voluntary Catholic secondary schools.

The effect of vaccination among 12-17-year-olds has been credited with the lower number of cases.

“We’re very pleased that so many young peoples among the 12-17-year-old cohort have taken up vaccines,” Mr Curtis added. “We believe this will continue to have a positive effect as we go on.”

Crosscare services stretched to capacity, says Archbishop Farrell



Staff reporter

The Archbishop of Dublin appealed to people to help ensure the social support agency can maintain all services in the coming months.

Archbishop Dermot Farrell said Crosscare’s services are needed “now more than ever”, as the diocese held its annual collection for the agency last weekend.

“As families face greater uncertainty and insecurity intensified by the pandemic, people who are homeless and in need continue to rely on Crosscare for shelter, food, help

and support,” he said.

“All who work in Crosscare take their work and responsibilities very seriously and I urge you to support them once again in this appeal.”

When the Covid crisis began at the start of last year, Crosscare services were stretched to capacity, a September 14 statement said.

Throughout last year, 750 people stayed in Crosscare Homeless Services, while 3,000 people who were homeless or at risk of losing their home were helped by their Information and Advocacy teams.

Lessons to be learned from Hungary – Senator Mullen

Jason Osborne

There’s a “real need for clear thinking” when it comes to Hungary, in order to “avoid the propaganda element that comes into play whenever Orbán is discussed,” Senator Rónán Mullen said following the Pope’s meeting with controversial Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* newspaper, Senator Mullen said that there are aspects of Mr Orbán’s Hungary “that we can learn from” and that we should be “unashamed” to

praise, highlighting the Hungarian government’s promotion of the family, and the financial incentives offered to couples to have children.

Tweeting recently, Senator Mullen said he doesn’t think Mr Orbán “is the demon that some make him out to be.

“Sometimes he’s a much-needed antidote to the group-think around the EU table.”

Senator Mullen said that following a meeting with Mr Orbán during which Senator Mullen put it to him about Hungary’s immigration policy and how it

can be communicated that “our brothers and sisters in the Muslim world...matter to us, too,” Mr Orbán responded that Hungary’s policy is that they want to give “first priority” to Christians and other minorities.

“In fairness to the Hungarians, my understanding is that their assistance to persecuted minorities doesn’t stop at Christians,” Senator Mullen commented, continuing however, “their help to the persecuted Church in places like Iraq has been absolutely exemplary”.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Missionary orders hope to provoke change with ecological conference

The sisters of Our Lady of Apostles and the Society of African Missions have launched the second Cork Conference on Intergenerational Climate Justice.

The October 21 conference is for “anyone interested in the climate crisis”, a press release states, with a particular emphasis on school class groups.

Justice and Peace officer for the OLA’s John

McGeedy said that they are “hoping to provoke thought, action and change” with the conference.

To register for the conference, visit www.intergenclimatejustice.ie. The closing date is October 7.

The theme of the conference is ‘Hope for the Future: System Change, Not Climate Change’.

Words ‘inadequate’ after tragic Kerry deaths, says priest

Fr Anthony O’Sullivan described words as “inadequate” to comprehend the deaths of a mother and son, who were laid to rest September 20.

Eileen O’Sullivan (56) and her son Jamie (24) were found dead at their home in Killeigh near Lixnaw two weeks ago.

The body of husband and father Mossie O’Sullivan (63) was found close to the house.

Gardaí are investigating the deaths as a sus-

pected murder-suicide.

“Words seem inadequate to comprehend this tragic loss of life,” Fr O’Sullivan said at the September 20 funeral.

He described Mrs O’Sullivan and her son as “kind, gentle and went about their lives with dignity”.

“Eileen was a diligent worker, Jamie was a skilled welder,” he said.

Catholic university to lead programme on modern slavery

The Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse at St Mary’s University, Twickenham will conduct research into how survivors of modern slavery experience support in Britain.

The study is one of five research projects announced by the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (Modern

Slavery PEC), following its call for research on survivor support and recovery.

“Although awareness of the plight of British nationals affected by modern slavery has grown in recent years, the specific needs of British Survivors have not been well understood. Our study aims to change that,” said Dr Carole Murphy, Acting Director of the Bakhita Centre.

The icing on the cake...

As a pre-First Holy Communion treat pupils at St Thérèse's Primary School, Lenamore in Derry enjoyed cupcakes prepared by the canteen staff on the eve of their First Eucharist in St Joseph's Church, Galliagh.



Did Christ bring a message or establish a new covenant?



Jesus cannot be reduced to a Buddha-like figure who came to bring a message of enlightenment, writes Dr John Murray

While it is perhaps good to see Dr Noel Keating encouraging “the Christian churches” (sic) to pursue contemplation, it is deeply worrying to see how he describes this contemplation and his background beliefs about Christ and his message (see ‘Be still and aware of God’s presence’ in *The Irish Catholic* September 16, 2021). Dr Keating says that he has “always resisted the doctrine of salvation, when understood as the saving of the soul from sin and its consequences”. Relying on personal experience trumping Catholic dogma, Dr Keating presents the Gospel as concerned entirely with each of us humans sharing Jesus’ consciousness of God’s loving presence within us. (Somehow, we are to share this consciousness in an unconscious manner, but that’s a problem for another day.)

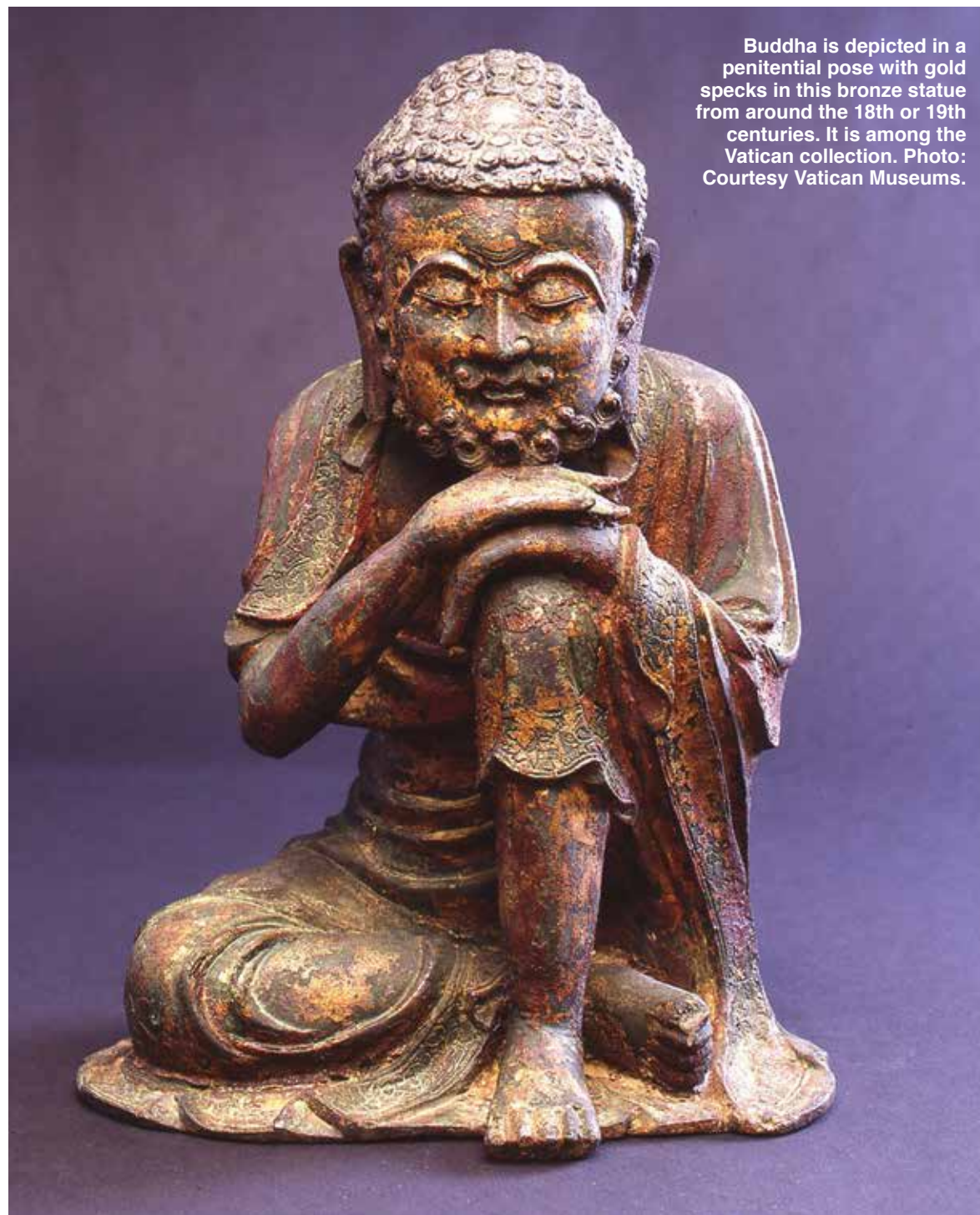
Approach

Dr Keating’s approach reflects an all-too-common tendency within Catholicism in recent decades to present Christian faith in a manner that ignores, downplays, or even denies sin, and which concentrates instead on human beings as naturally, intrinsically and entirely good. Our problem as humankind is not that we have been radically alienated from God by sin, original and historical and personal sin. Rather, it is that we are ignorant of our natural blessedness (what Dr Keating and others have called ‘original blessing’) and of the presence of God within us – the Kingdom of God within, so to speak. Rather shockingly, as seen in Dr Keating’s article and similar approaches to spirituality, this reduces Jesus to a (theistic) Buddha-like figure, who brought a message of enlightenment about our blessedness as human beings created by God and showed us how to find the Kingdom within us, just as he did, by contemplation. So, we are to believe in a Jesus who is a teacher and example of spiritual enlightenment, rather than the divine incarnate Saviour and Redeemer.

The Catholic and Christian faith believes in Jesus Christ as the divine Son of God, who became Incarnate “for us men and for our salvation” and who was crucified, suffered and died “for our sake”, as all Catholics publicly profess every Sunday at Mass. Of course, we believe in Christ as a teacher of truth, with a vitally important message. But at the heart of this message, this Gospel, is Jesus himself and what he was and did. And he did more than teach a message and exemplify a contemplative approach to life. He gave his life as “a ransom” for our sins (see Matthew 20:28). By offering the sacrifice of his life, Jesus established ‘the new covenant’, a new relationship with the Father (see Luke 22:19-20, Jesus’ words of consecration at the Last Supper, echoed in every Eucharistic Prayer). Thus, Jesus, in his very person and life and death, restored our relationship with the Father and ended the alienation caused by sin. We are all called to enter this new covenant relationship by becoming united with Christ and living according to the Holy Spirit.

“Dr Keating’s approach reflects an all-too-common tendency within Catholicism in recent decades to present Christian faith in a manner that ignores, downplays, or even denies sin”

Dr Keating quotes St Paul in Ephesians 3 to the effect that what Christ offers is deep knowledge. This reflects a somewhat ‘gnostic’ approach to the Faith, an approach that has been a constant obstacle to the Church’s mission since the earliest centuries. St Irenaeus was one of the first to write against this heretical distortion of the Gospel. The true Gospel message, centred on Christ as Redeemer and Reconciler, is clearly expressed throughout the New Testament. Dr Keating overlooks and implicitly denies this message. For example, on almost every page of his letters, St Paul writes about Christ’s salvific death, including in the very letter that Dr Keating quotes. Ephesians 1: 7-8 (RSV translation) says: “In [Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us.” Another example is found in 1 Corinthians 15, where we find one of the earliest expressions of Christian faith in Christ as Redeemer, namely, that Christ “died for our sins”. We can share in this forgiveness of sins through the Sacrament of Baptism (see Romans 6) and through the Sacrament of penance/reconciliation (see John 20: 21-23). There are many biblical passages that I could quote: the saving death of Jesus is at the very heart of the New Testament



Buddha is depicted in a penitential pose with gold specks in this bronze statue from around the 18th or 19th centuries. It is among the Vatican collection. Photo: Courtesy Vatican Museums.

(and prophesied in the Old) and at the heart of the Catholic Faith.

Understanding

Dr Keating claims that his way of understanding Christ and the Gospel is “the Franciscan approach” as presented by Fr Richard Rohr OFM, but I doubt very much that genuine Franciscans deny the Church’s belief in Christ as our Redeemer, substituting a Christ-as-Guru figure instead. None of us Catholics has the authority or experience to replace the true Gospel with a ‘nice’, sinless and Saviour-less, version. To do so would destroy the integrity of the Faith. It would be to deny the universal human need for God’s blessing.

If all Dr Keating, and others taking a similar approach, want to do is to warn us off a simplistic and inadequate understanding of Christ’s redemptive death, that would be fine. We are not called to believe in a harsh, vindictive Father-God who needs to be placated by punishing someone,

with Jesus the unfortunate one punished in our place. Certainly, a superficial reading of the Bible can lead to an unacceptable way of understanding the sacrificial death of Jesus. I would recommend that Catholics read what the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* has to say about the redemptive death of Christ, in order to get a deeper and accurate understanding – see paragraphs 599 onwards.

“Dr Keating quotes St Paul in Ephesians 3 to the effect that what Christ offers is deep knowledge”

One key idea is that to Christ’s freely chosen obedience the Father, which permeated his whole life and was displayed most powerfully in his freely accepting his death, makes up for humankind’s sinful disobedience (see CCC, par. 615, and

also Romans 5). Thus, Christ established a new relationship between man and God, which we are all called to enter and thus be saved in Christ. This is not exclusively a matter of sharing in new knowledge and consciousness, although it includes it (as we see so clearly in John’s Gospel: Christ is “the light of the world”). Rather, it involves also a sharing in the redemption from our sinfulness and sins that Christ won on the Cross.

Christian faith is not a message about a higher state of consciousness that Christ had and we can have too, naturally; but a message about what was done supernaturally in history by Jesus Christ to save us not only from ignorance but from sinfulness and sin (and their consequences). This is Gospel truth to be embraced, not resisted.

① Dr John Murray lectures in the school of theology, philosophy and music at Dublin City University.

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The Sunday Gospel

Fr Silvester O'Flynn OFM Cap.



Christian by name and in deed

The Sunday Gospels these weeks are about Jesus on the way to Calvary and how his followers are to take up their crosses also. Today's reading (Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48) is a challenge to be Christian not only in name but also in the way we live. Do I belong to Christ or to the rubbish dump?

The apostle John had a problem because "a man who was not one of us" was casting out devils in Jesus' name, so "we stopped him". But Jesus did not agree. "Anyone who is not against us is for us." Miracles of healing are not confined to the Catholic Church. Retreat centres host ways of meditating, breathing exercises and gentle movement which are not specifically Christian but neither are they anti-Christian. I know from experience in a retreat centre that people object to these retreats on the grounds that they worship a false god. These exercises are bringing great inner peace and healing to people. Inner demons of violence, addiction, anxiety and fear are being cast out. Remember what Jesus said: "Anyone who is not against us is for us." The apostle John wanted to stop the man who was healing because "he was not one of us." But years later, the more mature John in his first epistle wrote that "God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him". God's presence, love and power are not confined to any one Church.

People of the Kingdom

The mission of Jesus was to establish the kingdom or reign of God on earth. The Church was to provide the taskforce of this kingdom. However, as St Augustine noted, there are many who belong to the kingdom although they do not belong to any Church, while there are many who belong to the Church but not to the kingdom. In other words, it is not enough to be Christian by name if one is not Christian in behaviour.

In last Sunday's Gospel, Jesus held a helpless little child before the apostles to represent all the people who require care and support from true followers of Christian charity. In today's Gospel Jesus again speaks of his little ones, this time about the scandal of those who harm children in any way.

"Anyone who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones who have faith, would be better thrown



In the Sacrament of Baptism, a person is claimed for Christ.

into the sea with a great millstone round his neck." This must have been the strictest warning Jesus ever gave. Do not be an obstacle to the faith of anybody, but especially to the faith of an impressionable child. Perhaps Jesus could foresee the abuse of children by people who were trusted, especially by Church personnel. As Shakespeare wrote, "Lilies that fester small far worse than weeds". There is a Latin tag, *Corruptio optimi pessima*, corruption of the best is worst of all. It is only in recent times that the depth of hurt inflicted has been recognised. We must continue to pray for people who have been abused, as well as for true repentance on the part of anybody who has abused or hurt others.

Cleansing

Wherever there is corruption there is need of cleansing which, in very serious cases may require surgery. Jesus speaks of cutting off the sinful hand or foot and tearing out the sinful eye. He is not advocating self-mutilation in a literal sense. Sin does not reside in the hand or eye which is its instrument. Sin begins in the mind and the decision of the will. One of the beatitudes

tells us that the pure of heart see God. If a person's mind is filled with the light of Christ and one's will is directed by what God would want, then sin will not happen.

Christian feet are for going on a mission to bring the light, love and joy of the Gospel to others"

Hands are for welcoming, for serving, giving, caressing, comforting, and healing. Praying hands come together at the level of the heart and point towards heaven in adoration and praise. Such hands belong to Christ. But hands may be violent and destructive, thieving and deluding. Such hands are already cut off from Christ and destined towards the rubbish dump called Gehenna.

Christian feet are for going on a mission to bring the light, love and joy of the Gospel to others. But feet go in the wrong direction when marching with the echoing menace of terror and destruction: or when one runs away from responsibility.

Eyes are the windows

of the soul, letting in God's heavenly light in wonder, goodness and praise. But eyes might be smudged by the dirt of lust and hatred. As Jesus said, those who do evil hate the light and avoid it for fear their actions would be exposed.

Christian in name and in fact

In the Sacrament of Baptism, a person is claimed for Christ. Water is poured on the head as a symbol of life and the cleansing of sin. Then the Oil of Chrism anoints the person as a Christian, Christened as a member of Christ's body on earth. Today's Gospel reading is a challenge. To what extent am I a Christian not only in name but also in fact? And remember that there are many in the Church who are not agents of the Kingdom, whereas there are many who work for the Kingdom although they may not belong to any Church.

Fratelli Tutti

Pope Francis has given us a beautiful encyclical letter, inspired by his patron, St Francis, on our family unity as brothers and sisters. This is his closing prayer:

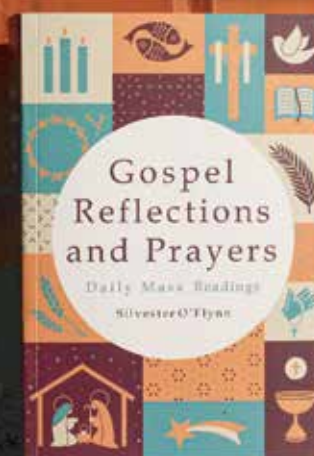
Prayer

O God, grant that we Christians may live the Gospel, discovering Christ in every human being, recognising him crucified in the sufferings of the abandoned and forgotten of our world, and risen in each brother and sister who makes a new start.

Come, Holy Spirit, show us your beauty, reflected in all your peoples of the earth, so that we may discover anew that all are important and all are necessary, different faces of the one humanity that God so loves. Amen.

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Pandemic can't beat the power of the Holy Spirit



While it has been hallowed turf for many generations, the famed home of Kilkenny hurling was transformed into a sacred space last week when 400 children received their Confirmation. Presided over by the apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Ossory Bishop Denis Nulty, the ceremony was planned for outdoors because of ongoing Covid-19 restrictions in places of worship.





The target of halving carbon emissions in less than ten years will be enormously disruptive and expensive, writes **David Quinn**

The Church is currently marking a month-long 'Season of Creation'. It began on September 1, and ends on October 4. September 1 was the start date because Pope Francis has declared that day each year to be a 'World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation'. October 4 is the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, who had a special love of nature.

The theme of the 'Season of Creation' this year is 'Restoring Our Common Home'. On their website, the bishops say that the season "celebrates the joy of creation as well as encouraging awareness-raising initiatives to protect the natural environment."

They state: "This year we celebrate this season mindful of the fact that our world continues to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic as well as a devastating climate and biodiversity crisis".

Conferences

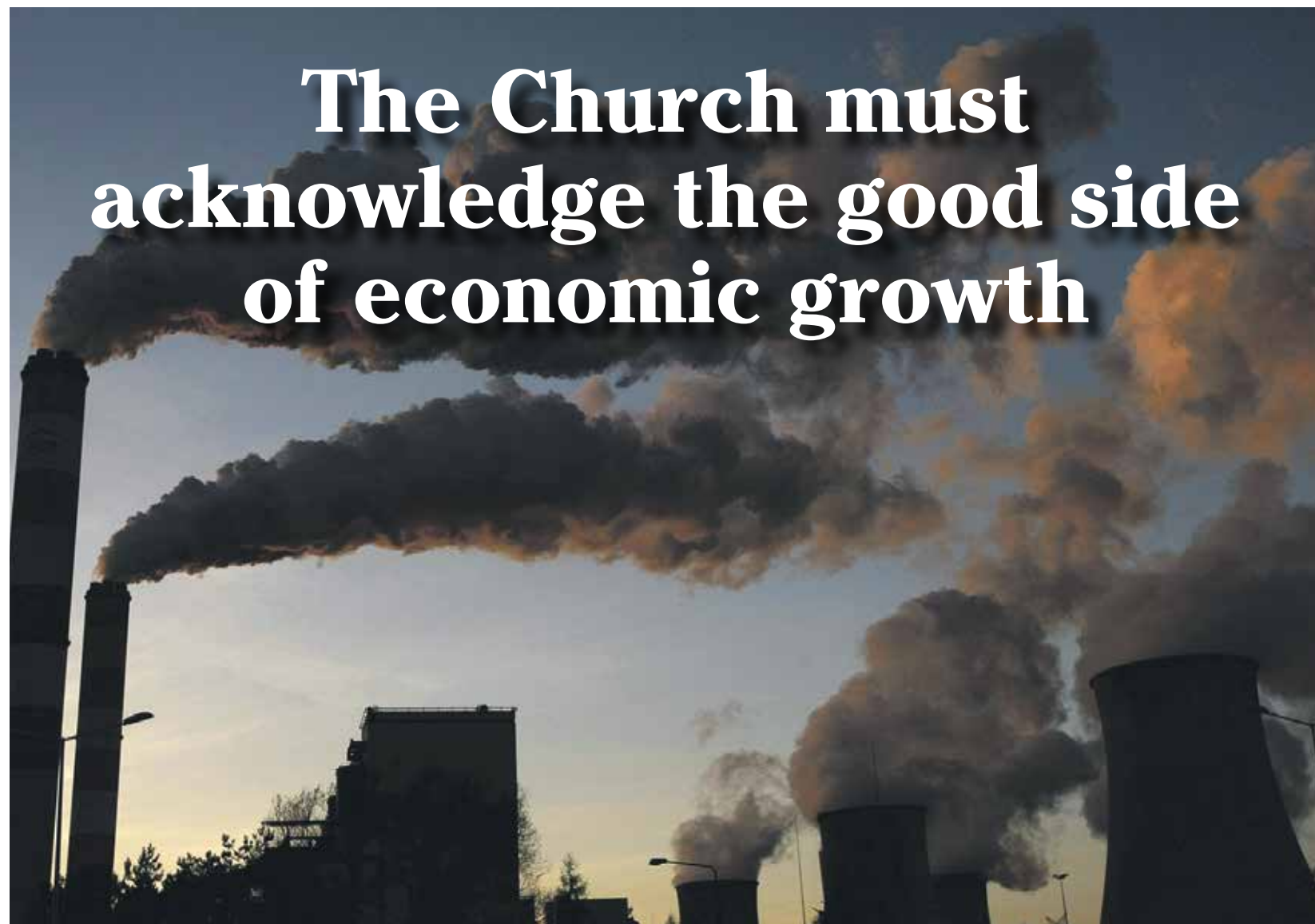
The bishops look forward to two UN Conferences on climate in the autumn, COP15 (on biodiversity, due to take place in China) and COP26 (on climate change, Glasgow).

They "hope that world leaders take the urgent action that is needed to restore our common home". They also urge Catholics to sign the 'Healthy Planet Healthy People' petition.

The main demand of the petition is that we limit the rise in global temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrial times. This is an extremely demanding target and would mean the most drastic cuts in our use of fossil fuels over a very short time-frame.

The UN Paris Accord of 2015 aims to keep global warming below two degrees, but ideally 1.5 degrees.

The agreement envisages the planet reducing carbon emissions effectively to zero by the middle of this century, which is only 30 years away. If



The Church must acknowledge the good side of economic growth

1.5 degrees is to be achieved, that target must be brought forward.

For its part, Ireland is aiming to halve our carbon emissions by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

The target of halving emissions in less than ten years will be enormously disruptive and expensive. The argument in favour is that if we don't hit the mark, and other countries also fail, the consequences are too grave to contemplate.

“Ordinary households are expected to buy electric cars in the coming years”

But here is a quick look at what halving our emissions by 2030 will mean. For one thing, there will have to be drastic changes to farming, and especially to our beef herd which emits so much methane.

Ireland provides excellent conditions for cattle farming, and we export 90% of our beef. We may have to throw away a lot of this natural competitive advantage to meet our targets. But it could have no effect on global warming, or even backfire, as countries like Brazil step in to meet demand for beef instead.

Ordinary households are expected to buy electric cars in the coming years. The Government wants one million electric cars on the roads by 2030. But electric cars are currently a

lot more expensive to buy than traditional cars and this would place a big financial burden on households.

In addition, homeowners are expected to retrofit their homes so as to better insulate them, and to switch from oil or gas heating. The cost of this transition will often run to tens of thousands of euros per household.

What should parishes do? The cost of retrofitting an average church and replacing oil-fired heaters would be astronomical. On the other hand, if churches don't do something like this, then they will be accused of being hypocritical, that is, of not making the sacrifices to reduce global warming that they preach.

Carbon taxes are set to soar, as electricity and heating bills rise anyway.

Energy

We will be switching ever more to renewable energy in the years ahead, but the wind doesn't always blow and the sun doesn't always shine, and therefore we will need back-up sources of energy, including oil, coal and gas. There are already warnings of power-cuts this winter on days when the wind isn't blowing and we can't import enough gas from overseas. Exploration for further gas off our shores has been forbidden.

When the Church comments on climate change, it must do so in ways that acknowledge the com-

plexities of what we face. For example, the Church is deeply committed, and rightly so, to reducing global warming and to reducing poverty.

But the fact is that the massive reductions we have made to poverty since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution two centuries ago have been powered by fossil fuels. If we had not used fossil fuels like oil, coal and gas, most of us would still live in grinding poverty today.

The developing world has a right to climb out of poverty as we have done and that cannot be achieved for the foreseeable future through renewable energy alone.

“The UN itself outlines several possible scenarios, from the most pessimistic to the least pessimistic”

Church documents should address this kind of dilemma. Claims made by some activists that we don't actually face this dilemma lack credibility.

Questioning any aspect of climate policy is perilous, because you run the risk of being denounced as a 'climate-change denier'.

But you can believe man-made global warming is happening, as I do, and still insist on asking the right questions and

on pointing out the complexities and dilemmas we face.

The Season of Creation is a good initiative, but the narrative it presents us with should avoid being overly simplistic and also beware of believing the very worst scenarios about climate change. Almost all scientists accept we face a grave situation, but they differ on exactly how bad it will be. The UN itself outlines sev-

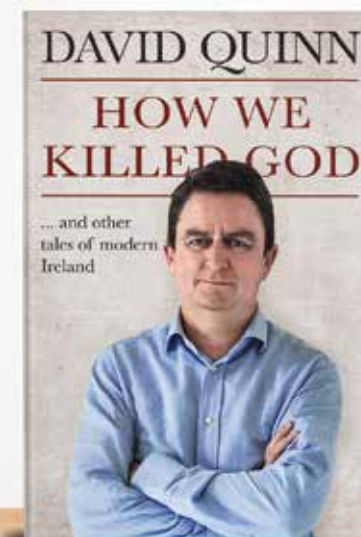
eral possible scenarios, from the most pessimistic to the least pessimistic.

Above all, the Church must address the issue of economic growth and how it has reduced poverty for so many people. It should give thanks for this, while at the same time urging us to balance poverty reduction and economic development with the needs of the planet.

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West Cork parish celebrates

Ruadhán Jones

Murragh and Templemartin parishioners marked the 200th anniversary of St Martin's Church with a series of events, including Mass celebrated by Bishop Fintan Gavin.

The bishop of Cork and Ross concelebrated the Mass with Fr Bernard Cotter PP, while several priests who had served in the parish attended the ceremony.

A bicentenary commemorative booklet, sponsored by Cork County Council and prepared by Sean Crowley, local historian and Donie Keane, retired school principal, was launched on the day.

An outdoor reception was held after the Mass.



A group of local children enjoying the celebrations, September 18. Photos: Jerry O'Mahony.



Bishop of Cork and Ross Fintan Gavin celebrated Mass in St Martin's church.



Teddy O'Mahony, Bishop Fintan Gavin, Eileen O'Donovan and Fr Bernard Cotter PP of Murragh and Templemartin.



The Canty family.



David Giles, Mary Giles, Caroline Canty and Fiona O'Mahony.



John Lordan and his son.



Marie Murray and her children.



EJ Power, Raymond Goggin and Murt Kennelly.



Christopher O'Donovan and Ruth Kingerlee.

centuries of Faith



Ronan Sheehan and Rev. David Bowles.



Ronan Desmond and Bishop Gavin, with Ronan's mother Noreen in the background.



Catherine Kelly with her daughter Grainne and her granddaughter.



Bishop Fintan Gavin, Ronan Sheehan and Mrs Mary Canty.



Imelda Sheehan and Mrs Breda Murray.



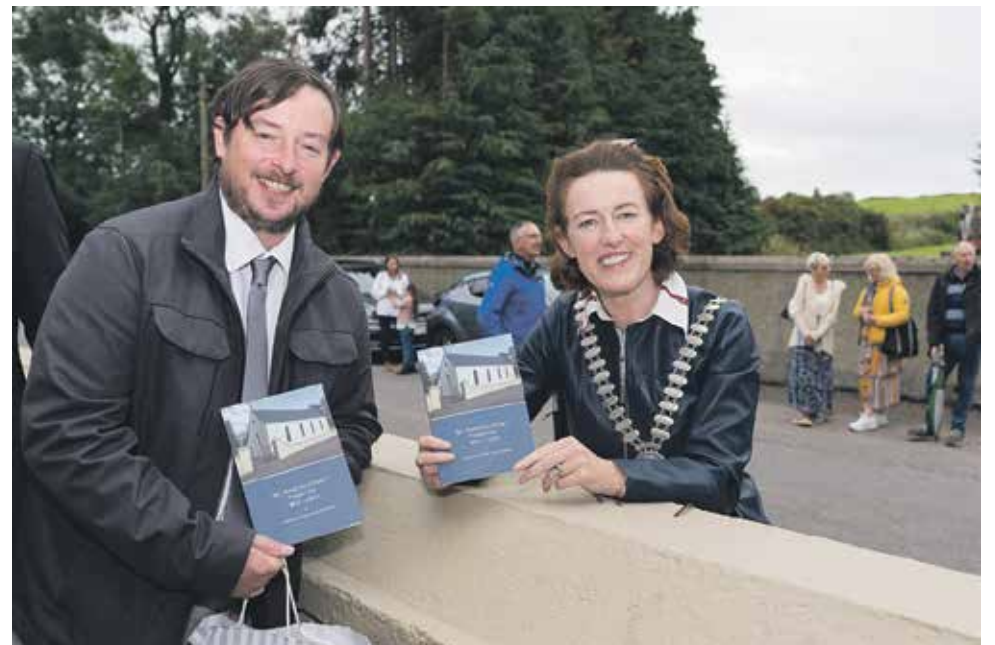
Bishop Fintan Gavin, Fr Bernard Cotter PP and Vincent Cruise.



A group of local musicians who provided music after the Mass.



The Desmond and Crowley families.



Conor Nelligan Cork County Council and Gillian Coughlan, Mayor of Cork County.



Out&About

Bike to school



CARLOW: Students from Presentation College Carlow examine a new cycle parking area – where they will be monitoring bike numbers – on the school grounds, September 15.



DUBLIN: Pictured after her recent Baptism in the Church of Our Lady of the Wayside, Kiltarnan is Grace Le O'Sullivan along with her mother Hannah and big brother Christopher. They are pictured with Huong Dzieciolowska with her son Andrew.



DUBLIN: Sr Mary Brigeen and Sr Mary Fionnuala of the Carmelite Monastery of St Joseph, Kilmacud, wear t-shirts from the Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association. The sisters completed a 5km run September 11, to sponsor them, visit www.fundraise.imnda.ie

IN SHORT

Bishop of Derry announces clerical changes

Bishop Donal McKeown announced September 14 the following clerical changes, most of which are effective from September 18.

Ardmore: Fr Dr James McGrory, PP Coleraine, to be PP Ardmore.

Coleraine: Fr Neil Farren, PP Ardmore to be PP Coleraine (Dunboe, Macosquin and Aghadowey).

Drumragh and Langfield: Fr Peter O'Kane, to return from the Irish Dominican Province to be CC Drumragh (Omagh) and CC Langfield.

Glendermott and Strathfoyle: Fr Roni Zacharias, on loan from the Archeparchy of Changanacherry to be CC Glendermott and CC Strathfoyle.

Limavady: Fr Chris McDermott, CC Drumragh (Omagh) and CC Langfield to be CC Limavady.

Holy Family Parish: Fr James Devine, to return from the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception to be CC Holy Family, Ballymagroarty.

Longtower: Fr Patrick Baker, CC Limavady to be Administrator, Longtower.

Melmount and Sion Mills: Fr Malachy Gallagher, CC Glendermott and CC Strathfoyle to be CC Melmount and CC Sion Mills.

St Eugene's Cathedral: Fr Ignacy Saniuta, on loan from Diocese of Vitebsk and CC Drumragh (Omagh) and CC Langfield to be CC St Eugene's Cathedral, as well as continuing his ministry to the Polish community in the Diocese of Derry.

Fr John P Forbes, Priest-in-Residence Badoney Lower to retire.

Fr Christopher Ferguson, Priest-in-Residence Three Patrons, has requested and been granted leave of absence from ministry from 16 October 2021 until 31 August 2022.

NI centenary service to open 'space for encounter', say Church leaders

The Church leaders will mark the centenaries of the partition of Ireland and the formation of Northern Ireland with a Service of Reflection and Hope, October 21.

The service in Saint Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh is being organised by the Church Leaders Group, as part of their wider programme of collective engagement around the 1921 centenaries.

The leaders said in a September 15 statement that they want to place "an emphasis on their common Christian commitment to peace, healing and reconciliation".

In a joint statement issued on St Patrick's Day the Church Leaders emphasised the need to "be intentional in creating spaces for encounter with those who are different from us, and those who may feel marginalised in the narratives that have shaped our community identity".

In doing so, the leaders hope "to face difficult truths about failings in our own leadership in the work of peace and reconciliation.

"The service will involve people from across the community, from diverse backgrounds and traditions, and with different beliefs and aspirations, coming together to pray for the healing of past hurts and to seek God's guidance in a spirit of hope for the future."

Edited by Ruadhán Jones
Ruadhan@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



HUNGARY: Thomas Kilduff, from the Lieutenancy of Ireland, Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem with fellow confreres and consoeurs from Hungarian, Spanish, Belgian Lieutenancies and Croatian Delegate at Mass celebrated on September 11 at the Hungarian parliament.



HUNGARY: Mr Kilduff meets Cardinal Peter Erdo of Hungary during the Eucharistic Congress, September 12.



LOUTH: Four transition year students from St Mary's Diocesan school volunteered to come down and help the Drogheda Augustinians in tidying the Garden of Remembrance, September 14.

WASHINGTON: Orla Keane, Ireland's deputy ambassador to the United States, reads the names of those of Irish descent who were killed on 9/11, at the end of the Mass at St Patrick's Church in Washington September 11. Photo: CNS



DUBLIN: Parishioners of St Fintan's Parish, Sutton, bid farewell to their parish priest, Fr Liam Lacey, who is moving parish to Dalkey, September 5.

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.



€6.49
was €12.99

The Happiness Habit

Daniel O'Leary

The Happiness Habit is written for those who are ready to nourish the divine beauty of their hearts. Beautifully crafted, it is the perfect gift to give yourself, or someone you care about.



€6.49
was €12.99

The Heavenly Habit

Daniel O'Leary

Nothing is beautiful or imaginative enough to do justice to the heavenly habit of a transforming grace. In this little book 10 artists offer their best efforts to capture the experience of that blessing.

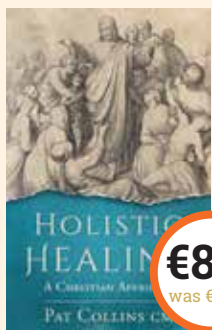


€6.49
was €12.99

The Healing Habit

Daniel O'Leary

Beyond current mindfulness projects, this little book is a tonic for your spirit, a healing for your heart, a setting-free of your precious mind. And therefore it carries the promise of a happier life.



€8.49
was €16.99

Holistic Healing

Fr Pat Collins

This timely book describes how the gift of healing has been rediscovered in recent years and stresses the therapeutic power of the Eucharist, while addressing questions like, 'why isn't everyone healed?'



€6.49
was €12.99

Sending Positive Vibes

Fr Bryan Shortall

Fr Bryan's memories and reflections are interspersed with prayers, stories of Saints, and rare insights into the lives of the priests and religious who work so tirelessly about us.



€12.49
was €24.99

A Flavour of Kylemore

Valerie O'Sullivan

Today Kylemore Abbey is one of Ireland's best loved visitor attractions. A cookbook with a twist, this book gives an exclusive peak into one of Ireland's most intriguing estates, along with the nun's own recipes!



€7.49
was €14.99

Wild Stories from the Irish Uplands

John G O'Dwyer

As a veteran hiker, John G. O'Dwyer draws upon his treasure trove of experiences to recount many captivating tales from times gone by, from saints and scoundrels to rescuers and rebels.



€12.49
was €24.99

Dublin a Photographic Essay

Eddie Mallin

Created over the past decade, this collection of photography includes images of Dublin's urban cityscape, its beautiful coastal seascapes and luscious parkland in black and white images.



€6.49
was €12.99

Mystics

Craig Larkin

The challenges and spiritual journeys of these saints are not only insightful to the reader, but also a source of guidance for those who seek to understand the mystery of God.



€7.49
was €14.99

Medjugorje and the Eucharist

Wayne Weible

The incredible apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Medjugorje are intimately linked with the Holy Eucharist. The heart of these pages are personal experiences that add to the reader's faith.

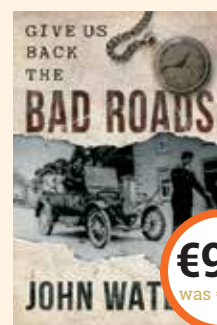


€4.99
was €9.99

Vicka Her Story

Finbar O'Leary

This is the fullest account yet given by the eldest visionary Vicka of her story and extraordinary experiences with Our Lady. Here, Vicka relays many of the Messages which the 'Queen of Peace' has given to her.



€9.99
was €19.99

Give Us Back the Bad Roads

John Waters

John Waters outlines the facts of his departure from Irish journalism and finds himself writing to his father as he looks back over the arc of his life and his escape from the ideological cesspit the Dublin media has become.



€4.99
was €9.99

The Church and the Rising

Greg Daly

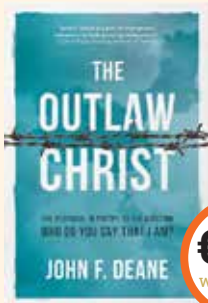
Discover multiple aspects of the 1916 Easter Rising, including information about the rebels' Catholic faith, the Church's reaction to the rising and the morality of revolution.

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The Outlaw Christ
John F Deane

In every age, the words and presence of Jesus Christ have given people belief and hope. This book follows poets in their search for the true Christ, from the 8th century up to our own day.



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was €14.99

Flight of the Earls
Liam Swords

A detailed but highly readable account of the event that saw 99 people embark to Spain. The Flight paved the way for the Plantation of Ulster, which led to a sectarian division that persisted for 400 years.



€7.49
was €14.99

Padre Pio of Pietralcina
Fr Francesco Napolitano

This revisited biography follows the saint from humble beginnings through his life of profound sacrifice and goodness. It recounts stories of the obstacles he overcame and the people he touched.



€12.49
was €24.99

Glenstal Abbey through the Seasons
Valerie O'Sullivan

Gain a rare insight into daily life of Benedictine monks based in Glenstal Abbey. From the sacred liturgical celebrations to the buzz at Glenstal Abbey school, this book captures a unique way of life.



€12.49
was €24.99

Glencairn Abbey
Valerie O'Sullivan

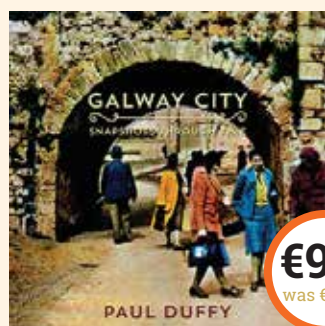
Through a series of images and words, we get a glimpse into the lives of the Sisters of St Mary's Abbey in Glencairn. Their lives are a true, living, monastic journey fulfilling the motto of St Benedict, *ora et labora*.



€11.49
was €22.99

Urban Sketcher's Galway
Róisín Curé

In this beautiful book, local artist Róisín Curé captures snapshots of life in the City of the Tribes in bold ink and vibrant watercolour. Her sketches show the beautiful details of Galway in all its colour.



€9.99
was €19.99

Galway Snapshots
Paul Duffy

Unique postcards share an intimate history of Galway City from 1890 to 1930. The shots range in type from tourist and promotional productions to true to life scenes from Galway's history.



€6.49
was €12.99

Early Irish Saints
Fr John Ó Riordáin

These short essays on well-loved saints present a very readable mix of historical fact and folklore. The introduction provides a useful commentary on what early biographers of saints saw as their function.



€7.49
was €14.99

What Have the Irish Ever Done for Us?
David Forsythe

For centuries, the Irish have had an impact on the world far beyond what would be expected from a tiny nation, and this book will open many people's eyes to their incredible achievements.



€6.49
was €12.99

Awakening Inner Peace
Sr Stan

Structured around the traditional Book of Hours, Sr Stan has designed this modern version to be more flexible, making it the perfect tool to discover spiritual comfort and spark prayerful inspiration.



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Food, Feast, Fast
P Fintan Lyons

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- ___ The Church and the Rising – Price (was €9.99) **NOW €4.99**
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World Report

IN BRIEF

New Belarusian archbishop welcomed amid ongoing repression

● Catholic leaders in Belarus welcomed a new head for its archdiocese after a nine-month interregnum, although some activists warned the new archbishop could be constrained in opposing repression in the former Soviet republic. Pope Francis named Auxiliary Bishop Iosif Staneuski, 52, of Grodno as archbishop of Minsk-Mohilev September 14. He succeeds Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz, who retired

in January after four months of government-imposed exile. Father Yuri Sanko, spokesman for the Belarusian bishops' conference, said Archbishop Staneuski has "always presented himself as a true pastor for everyone. As someone who lives entirely for the Church, he's a worthy candidate for this key position who'll be able to lead the Church toward new ways of developing".

Architect turns 67,000 Lego pieces into Vatican City State

● Rome wasn't built in a day, but Lego architect Rocco Buttliere had three months, which definitely gave him a running start over Julius Caesar. Working quietly in his Chicago-area home during the lull of the pandemic in 2020, Mr Buttliere cobbled together 67,000 tiny, plastic Lego pieces to create an improbably realistic 3D replica of Vatican City State. The 1:650 scale model is so faithful to the cobblestones shaded by

Bernini's colonnade that it even includes a tiny red tile marking the top-floor window of the Apostolic Palace from which Pope Francis recites the Angelus each Sunday. For a kid who began playing with his two older brothers' LEGO sets as child and who even brought his Legos to college while pursuing a degree in architecture, those 800 hours he spent last year were the cornerstones of one his greatest artistic achievements.

Guinean bishops express concerns after coup

● Catholic bishops in Guinea criticised the country's September 5 military coup and called for the unconditional release of deposed President Alpha Condé as well as all those arrested with him. "The conference expresses its deep concern for the political developments that have taken place in the Republic of Guinea following the coup d'état of September 5, 2021, and for their

consequences on regional peace and stability and condemns, with the utmost force, the military coup," the bishops said in a statement September 8. The regional Economic Community of West African States, commonly known as ECOWAS, suspended Guinea from membership after the coup and has threatened economic sanctions if the military does not release Mr Condé, 83.

Lebanon's Catholic schools face 'crisis with empty pockets'

● At the start of a new academic year, uncertainty clouds the future of Catholic schools in Lebanon. Amid the country's economic meltdown, Catholic schools have exhausted their resources, and their future is at risk. Of Lebanon's 330 Catholic schools, educating nearly 200,000 students, 80% of the schools are under the risk of closing, said Melkite Father Youssef Nasr, secretary-general of Catholic

schools in Lebanon. "We are facing this crisis with empty pockets," Fr Nasr told CNS. "We are under tremendous pressure." In-school learning in Lebanon has been disrupted for two years, first by nationwide protests that swept the country in October 2019, followed by Covid-19 lockdown measures.

Pope addresses Communion questions on papal flight

The debate about denying Communion to politicians who support abortion must be handled in a pastoral way, not by public condemnations that seek to "excommunicate" Catholics who are not in line with Church teaching, Pope Francis said.

During his return flight from Bratislava, Slovakia, September 15, the Pope said that while there is no question that "abortion is homicide," bishops must look take a pastoral approach rather than wade into the political sphere.

"If we look at the history of the Church, we can see that every time the bishops did not act like shepherds when dealing with a problem, they aligned themselves with political life, on political problems," he said.

The Pope told journalists that when defending a principle, some bishops act in a way "that is not pastoral" and "enter the political sphere."

"And what should a shepherd do? Be a shepherd. Not going around condemning," the Pope added. "They must be a shepherd, in God's style, which is closeness, compassion and tenderness."

"A shepherd that doesn't know how to act in God's style slips and enters into many things that are not of a shepherd."

The Pope said that he preferred not to comment directly on the issue of denying Communion in the United States "because I do not know



Pope Francis answers questions from journalists aboard his flight from Bratislava, Slovakia, to Rome September 15. Photo: CNS.

the details; I am speaking of the principle" of the matter.

When asked if he had ever publicly denied Communion to someone, Pope Francis emphatically said, "No, I have never denied the Eucharist to anyone; to anyone! I don't know if someone came to me under these conditions, but I have never refused them the Eucharist, since the time I was a priest."

But, he added, "I was never aware of anyone in front of me under those conditions that you mentioned."

Recalling his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii*

Gaudium, the Pope said that "Communion is not a prize for the perfect," but rather "a gift, the presence of Jesus in his Church and in the community. That is the theology."

Understood

However, Pope Francis also said he understood why the Church takes a hard stance because accepting abortion "is a bit as if daily murder was accepted."

"Whoever commits an abortion, murders," he said. "Take any book on embryology, those books on medicine.

At the third week of concep-

tion, many times before a mother even realises it, all the organs are there. All of them, even their DNA.

"It is a human life. Period," the Pope added. "And this human life must be respected. This principle is very clear."

He also recalled the reaction to his apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, and the debates surrounding giving Communion to divorced or remarried Catholics.

Some called it, "heresy, but thank God for Cardinal (Christoph) Schönborn, a great theologian, who cleared a bit the chaos," he said.

Catholic diocese rejoices as priest is freed day after kidnapping

A Nigerian Catholic priest kidnapped at his parish residence September 13 has been freed.

The priest's liberation was announced on September 15 by Fr Emmanuel Uchechukwu, chancellor of Kafanchan diocese, in northern Nigeria, reported ACI Africa.

"With hearts filled with joy, we raise our voices in a symphony of praises as we announce the return of our priest, Rev. Fr Benson Bulus Luka," Fr Uchechukwu said.

"Fr Benson was abducted by armed persons from his residence at St Mat-

thew's Parish Anchuna, in Zango Katf Local Government Area, Kaduna State, on Monday, September 13, 2021."

"Barely 24 hours after his kidnap, our beloved brother priest was released by his abductors."

Fr Uchechukwu, chancellor of the diocese within the Ecclesiastical Province of Kaduna, thanked those who had prayed for the priest's release.

"We want to thank all those that have offered prayers and entreaties for the quick release of our brother priest and others who are still in the dens of their

kidnappers," he said.

"We pray to God to hasten the release of those who are still in the hands of their captors."

Fr Uchechukwu encouraged priests to celebrate Masses of thanksgiving following Fr Luka's release.

Nigeria has experienced rising insecurity since 2009, when Boko Haram, one of Africa's largest Islamist groups, launched an insurgency seeking to turn Africa's most populous country into an Islamic state.

Mexican bishops announce march for 'women' and 'life'

In response to recent rulings by the nation's Supreme Court decriminalising abortion, the bishops of Mexico have called on the Faithful and people of good will throughout the country to join a march "for women and for life" to be held

October 3 in Mexico City.

In a September 13 statement, the Mexican bishops' conference encouraged the Faithful to invite people to the march "at Sunday Masses and by other means deemed appropriate," so that "as

many people as possible" attend.

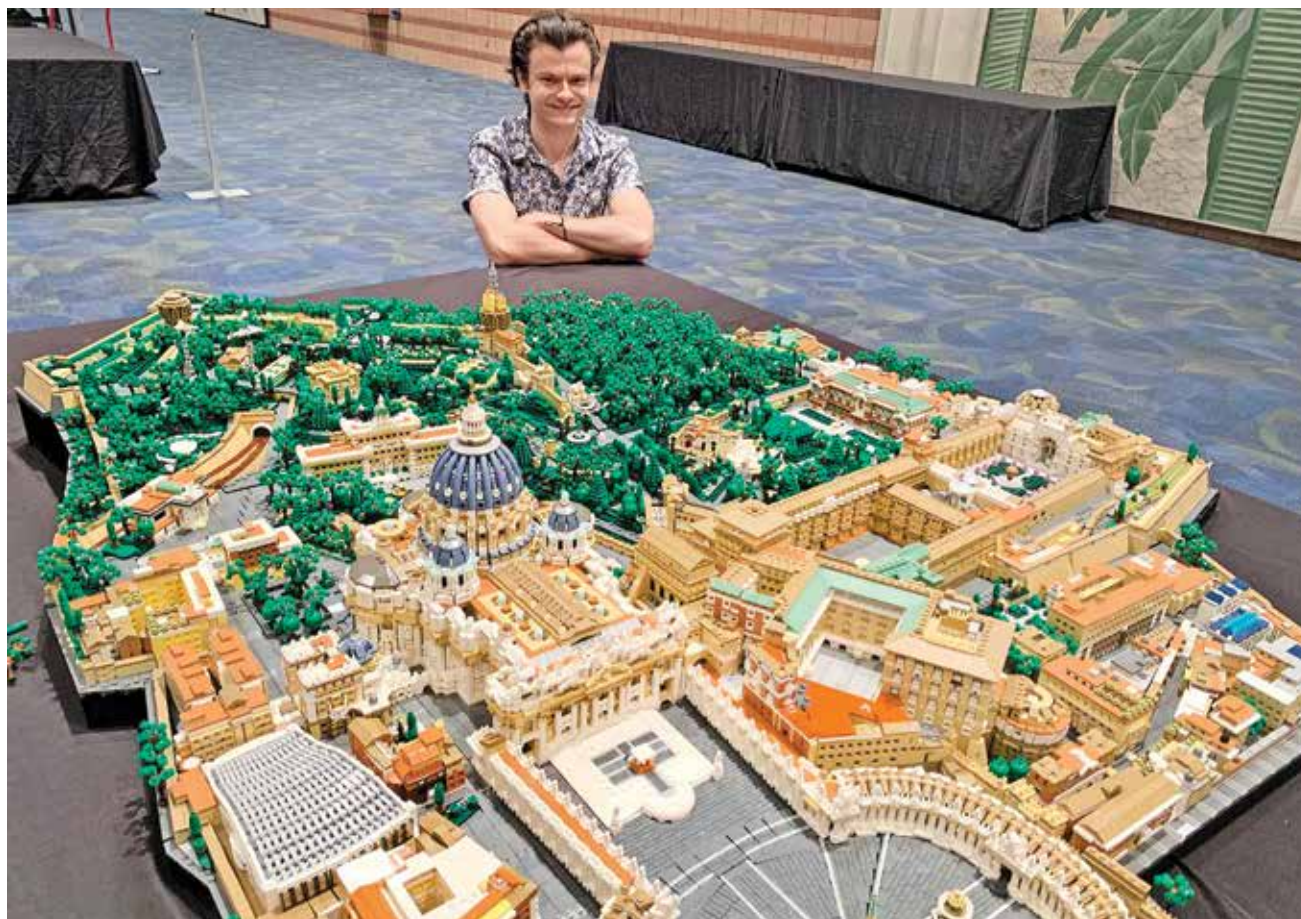
On September 7, the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation invalidated several articles that protected life from conception in the penal code of the state of Coahuila.

Two days later, the court ruled parts of the Sinaloa state constitution protecting life from conception to be unconstitutional. The rulings are expected to have wide-ranging effects throughout Mexico.



Edited by Jason Osborne
jason@irishcatholic.ie

A model city



Rocco Buttliere, a LEGO architect from Chicago, is seen next to the Vatican City State replica he created from 67,000 Lego pieces. Photo: CMS.

Court date set for Finnish MP facing jail after tweeting Bible verse

A court in Finland has announced the date of a hearing to determine whether a former government minister should be jailed after tweeting a Bible verse.

The Helsinki District Court said that the case involving Päivi Räsänen, a physician and mother of five, will be heard on January 24, 2022.

According to ADF International, a Christian legal group that is supporting her, Ms Räsänen could be given a two-year prison sentence or a fine for the tweet, after the Finnish Prosecutor General filed criminal

charges against her on April 29.

Ms Räsänen said: "I await the court proceedings with a calm mind, confident that Finland will respect the freedom of expression and religion enshrined in fundamental rights and international conventions.

"I will not back down from my conviction based on the Bible and I am ready to defend freedom of expression and religion in all necessary courts.

"I cannot accept that voicing religious beliefs could mean imprisonment. I will

defend my right to confess my faith, so that no one else would be deprived of their right to freedom of religion and speech."

The Prosecutor General charged Ms Räsänen, who served as Finland's interior minister from 2011 to 2015, with incitement against a minority group, arguing that her statements were "likely to cause intolerance, contempt, and hatred towards homosexuals".

The 61-year-old MP, who was chairwoman of the Christian Democrats party from 2004 to 2015, is an

active member of the Finnish Lutheran Church. But she questioned her Church's sponsorship of a LGBT pride event in 2019.

On June 17, 2019, she asked in a Twitter post how the sponsorship was compatible with the Bible, linking to a photograph of a biblical passage, Romans 1:24-27, on Instagram. She also posted the text and image on Facebook.

"The purpose [of] my tweet was in no way to insult sexual minorities. My criticism was aimed at the leadership of the Church," she told the journal *First Things* last year.

Live Action says Google's removal of pro-life ads 'unprecedented'

According to US pro-life group Live Action, the search engine Google cancelled its advertisements for abortion pill reversal services. The act is further evidence of Google's pro-abortion biases, a leading pro-life activist told CNA.

"In a dramatic and unprecedented move, Google has sided squarely with extremist pro-abortion political ideology, banning the pro-life counterpoint and life-saving information from being promoted on their platform," Live Action founder Lila Rose told CNA in a statement.

Ms Rose said that Google was no longer "hiding their bias", and that the censorship of the advertisements "baldly reveals that the corporation is in the pocket of the abortion industry".

On September 13, Ms Rose said, Google "disapproved" all of Live Action's advertisements for abortion pill reversal, claiming they were "unreliable" and contained false information. The advertisements had been running for over four months and had previously been approved by Google, she said.

Ms Rose disputed Google's label of "unreliable claims", noting that the abortion pill reversal regimen uses progesterone treatment that has been FDA-approved to prevent miscarriages. She said Google "obviously failed to understand" what abortion pill reversal actually entails.

Banning the ads, she said, will have "devastating" consequences for women and girls who may turn to the search engine after regretting taking the first dose of the medication abortion regimen.

Vatican roundup

Pope to lay associations: Be aware of the apostolic power you have

● Pope Francis opened his discourse to moderators of associations of the Faithful, ecclesial movements and new communities, gathered for a meeting organised by the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family and Life, by thanking all those present for being there. "And thank you for your presence as lay men and women, young and old, committed to living and witnessing to the Gospel in the ordinary realities of life, in your work, in so many different contexts – educational, social, and so on – this is the vast field of your apostolate, it is your evangelisation", added the Pope. The Pope noted that in the recent months of the pandemic, "you have seen with your own eyes and touched with your own hands the suffering and anguish of so many men and women...especially in the poorest countries, where many of you are present". The Pope further expressed his gratitude to them, because, he said, "you did not stop".

Resignation of German Catholic archbishop declined

● Pope Francis has declined the resignation of a German archbishop, the apostolic nunciature in Berlin announced. The nunciature said on September 15 that the Pope had asked Archbishop Stefan Heße to remain as archbishop of Hamburg, northern Germany, following a Vatican investigation into his handling of abuse cases, reported CNA Deutsch.

The nunciature explained that the probe had found organisational deficiencies and procedural errors by Archbishop Heße, but "the investigation did not show that these were committed with the intention of covering up cases of sexual abuse".

It said that "the basic problem" was a "lack of attention and sensitivity toward those affected

by abuse" within Cologne archdiocese's administrative apparatus. Archbishop Heße announced in March that he was offering his resignation to Pope Francis and requesting "immediate release" from all duties.

The archbishop made a brief declaration live on YouTube, saying: "I am of the firm conviction that taking responsibility is part of our duty to actively deal with this dark chapter in the best possible way and to move towards a better future for everyone, first and foremost for the victims themselves."

"I have never participated in any cover-up. Nevertheless, I am willing to bear my share of responsibility for the failure of the system," Archbishop Heße said.

Pope Francis thanks Mary for visit to Budapest and Slovakia

● The Pope's traditional visits to the Basilica of St Mary Major act like bookends to his Apostolic Journeys.

He pops in for a moment one or two evenings before he leaves to ask Our Lady's protection, and then zigzags across Rome for another stop on his way to the Vatican from the airport to thank her.

The same occurred last Wednesday afternoon as Pope Francis returned from Bratislava.

According to the Holy See Press Office, the Pope prayed for a while before the ancient icon of Maria Salus Populi Romani. He also laid a bouquet of flowers on the altar at her feet in gratitude.

"After landing at Ciampino airport, Pope Francis stopped to pray at the Basilica of St Mary Major, before the icon of the Mary Salus Populi Romani," said a press statement.

"Afterwards he returned to the Vatican."

The image of the "Salvation of the Roman people" is housed in the Basilica's Borghese chapel.



Letter from Rome



John L. Allen

Critics, supporters of Vatican's China deal have an 'Annie Hall' moment

There's a famous scene in Woody Allen's classic 1977 movie *Annie Hall* in which he and Diane Keaton are having separate sessions with a couples' counsellor, and their exchanges are shown on a split screen. When the therapist asks how often they're intimate, Allen says, "Hardly ever, maybe three times a week," and Keaton replies, "Constantly, I'd say three times a week."

The point is that often two people can look at exactly the same set of facts and draw diametrically opposing conclusions.

The thought comes to mind in light of a small news item out of the Vatican this week, one which didn't really make any waves against the backdrop of the latest papal press conference and Francis's words on abortion and communion, gay marriage, COVID vaccines, and so on.

Appointed

The news is that a new bishop has been appointed in Wuhan, China, under the terms of the controversial "provision agreement" signed by the Vatican and the Chinese government in September 2018. Bishop Francis Cui Qingqi, 57, becomes the sixth Chinese bishop named under the terms of the agreement, and the fourth since the deal was renewed by both Rome and Beijing last October for another two years.

According to Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni, Pope Francis appointed Bishop Qingqi as the bishop of the Diocese of Hankou/Wuhan on June 23 and his episcopal ordination took place on September 8 in Wuhan.

“For the first time since the Communist takeover in China in 1949, all the country's Catholic bishops are now both accepted by the government and in communion with the Pope”

On its own, the news probably would be of passing global interest since Wuhan is the city where the first Covid cases were reported and where some conspiracy theorists continue to believe the virus escaped from a research lab and the truth of the matter is being covered up by the Chinese government.

What has garnered more attention in the Catholic world, however,



A main street in Wuhan, China. A new bishop has been installed in China's Wuhan Diocese, which has not had a bishop since 2007. Photo: CNS.

is that Bishop Qingqi apparently is very much a government man. In 2016 he became deputy secretary of China's state-sponsored bishops' conference, considered by critics to be a rump organisation beholden to the state, and in 2018 he became the regional president of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association for Hubei, a body that effectively supervises and controls the Church on behalf of the government.

Since 2012, Bishop Qingqi has led a five-member "management committee" for the Diocese of Wuhan imposed by the government, a decidedly non-canonical form of ecclesiastical leadership, but one with which Bishop Qingqi obviously was willing to go along to keep the peace.

Same profile

Critics of the China deal note that Bishop Qingqi basically has the same profile as the other five prelates appointed under its terms, meaning clerics known for being close to the government and unlikely to rock the boat. They suspected from the beginning the provisional agree-

ment was nothing more than a tool for China's Communist authorities to extend their control over the Church and to muzzle critics of Chinese policies such as retired Cardinal Joseph Zen, and this string of new bishops has done nothing but confirm those reservations.

“On its own, the news probably would be of passing global interest since Wuhan is the city where the first Covid cases were reported”

Yet the Vatican architects of the deal likely will look at the same situation and draw a very different conclusion. What they would say is that for the first time since the Communist takeover in China in 1949, all the country's Catholic bishops are now both accepted by the government and in communion with the Pope.

Last October, as the deadline for renewal of the China deal was

nearing, I sat down with British Archbishop Paul Gallagher, the Vatican's Secretary for Relations with States and effectively the head of the Vatican diplomatic corps. In our conversation, he laid out the logic for the provision agreement.

Remember

“We have to remember, something had to happen,” Archbishop Gallagher told me. “Otherwise, we would have found ourselves – not immediately, but ten years down the line – with very few bishops, if any, still in communion with the Pope. If we don't begin now, that's the future.”

“The fact we have managed to get all the bishops of China in communion with the Holy Father for the first time since the 1950s, and that the Chinese authorities allow the Pope a modest say in the appointment of bishops but ultimately the final word, is quite remarkable,” he said.

Archbishop Gallagher readily conceded the arrangement is far from ideal. Among other things, he said it's extremely difficult to

vet candidates for bishops' jobs in China because the Vatican doesn't have an ambassador there, who usually collects information before an appointment is made, and other channels of communication are few and far between, especially ones not controlled by the state.

Nevertheless, he insisted it's the right choice to ensure the long-term future of the Church in China.

“It's extremely difficult to vet candidates for bishops' jobs in China because the Vatican doesn't have an ambassador there”

“Who knows what obstacles are ahead of us in the next few years?” he said. “We don't know. But as things stand at the moment, we do have, slowly, the possibility of moving forward.”

In other words, if upholders and critics of the China deal had therapy sessions this week, their exchanges about the new Wuhan bishop might have gone as follows.

Critic: “He's a government man, it's terrible.”

Upholder: “He's a government man, it's better than the alternative.”

And that, in a nutshell, is the crux of the debate.

“The news is that a new bishop has been appointed in Wuhan, China, under the terms of the controversial 'provision agreement' signed by the Vatican and the Chinese government in September 2018”



John Lavenburg

US-Mexico border facing a 'humanitarian crisis'

As thousands of migrants congregate underneath the Del Rio International Bridge, the Archbishop of San Antonio says the archdiocese will help however possible, but he fears an already overwhelming situation for the border city will get worse.

The number of migrants underneath the bridge grew to more than 8,000 last Thursday with some reports indicating more than 9,000. Del Rio Mayor Bruno Lozano said September 15 that there were at least 20,000 more migrants en route from Mexico.

"To hear the numbers in the past few hours it's really overwhelming," Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller of San Antonio told *Crux* Thursday afternoon. "For many years we have been serving migrants and refugees in Del Rio but now it is a bit overwhelming and the city itself does not have the capacity to absorb."

“The number of asylum seekers in Del Rio has steadily increased throughout the week with the majority coming from Haiti, with a smaller number arriving from Cuba and Venezuela”

Archbishop García-Siller noted that Del Rio is only a “small piece” of the Texas-Mexico border, therefore it doesn't have the infrastructure to process this high volume of migrants unlike other border cities like Brownsville, McAllen and El Paso.

For example, in McAllen the Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley Humanitarian Respite Center has a capacity of about 1,200 and of late has helped 800-900 migrants on a daily basis. There isn't a centre in Del Rio with that kind of capacity.

Dr García-Siller explained that it's also difficult for Del Rio to transport migrants inland to San Antonio, a city better suited to handle the processing, because it's “three and a half hours from here to there and there's not much in between.” He added that they're simultaneously trying to accommodate about 800 refugees from Afghanistan, further complicating the situation.

The number of asylum seekers in Del Rio has steadily increased throughout the week with the majority coming from Haiti, with a smaller number arriving from



Asylum-seeking migrants from Central America do their laundry in the public square of Reynosa, Mexico, near the Texas border, August 27. Photo CNS.

Cuba and Venezuela. Haiti has faced two tragedies in recent months: President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated in July, then a 7.2 magnitude in August that destroyed buildings and homes and killed thousands.

Humanitarian crisis

“This is a humanitarian crisis,” Dr García-Siller said. “To hear that people are coming not from the typical places – El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala – but they're coming from Haiti, Cuba and Venezuela means these people must be in desperate situations trying to find a better life.”

The archbishop said over the past few days people with the archdiocese have been helping prepare food for the migrants and will continue to be a presence.

“We will be open to do all that we can for people,” Dr García-Siller said.

He admitted, however, that in the coming days the response is likely going to take collaboration between different organisations – nonprofits, interfaith groups – to try and get a handle on the situation.

Dr García-Siller said another challenge will be a more complicated language barrier with people coming from Haiti that speak French. The Archdiocese of San Antonio is using a connection it established with people from the Congo to create dialogue with the migrants, he said.

“Dr García-Siller put the onus on the government for creating this situation by not working towards immigration reform”

The Texas and federal governments last Thursday went back and forth over how they were handling the situation. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott initially ordered state law enforcement agencies to shut down six points of entry along the southern border. Governor Abbott then released a statement an hour

later that the Biden administration had “flip-flopped” to a different strategy.

The Texas Department of Public Safety corroborated Governor Abbott's claim on social media claiming that the US Customs and Border Protection asked them to assist in shutting down ports of entry in Del Rio before being told that was no longer a part of the plan.

Department of Homeland Security

Dennis Smith, a spokesperson for the CBP, told the *Texas Tribune* that the agency hadn't been told to shut down ports of entry, and that they were coordinating efforts with the Department of Homeland Security, other federal, state and local partners to address the situation.

Dr García-Siller put the onus on the government for creating this situation by not working towards immigration reform. The House Judiciary Committee earlier this week approved measures for the forthcoming budget reconciliation bill that would be a

step towards immigration reform, though he questions politicians' real concern for the border.

“There's not been an attempt to resolve the situation, to think about the situation, to bring reflection and be critical about it, especially from the top,” Dr García-Siller said. “We don't see a real engagement and so for what is going on right now we need that kind of engagement if we want to do something.”

“But cautioned they will need to buy more infrastructure because the way it's going ‘this is not going to end’”

The archbishop said the archdiocese is finalising the purchase of property in Del Rio to create a new migrant centre, but cautioned they will need to buy more infrastructure because the way it's going “this is not going to end.”

Papal trip tests limits of being a 'pontifex'



Pope Francis meets with representatives of the Ecumenical Council of Churches and several Jewish communities of Hungary at the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest, Hungary, September 12. Photos: CNS.

Junno Arocho Esteves

On paper, Pope Francis' apostolic visit to Hungary and Slovakia is pretty standard as papal trips go: outdoor Masses, meeting with dignitaries, visiting poor and marginalised populations and of course, answering questions from journalists aboard the papal flight.

Nevertheless, issues such as vaccine scepticism, migration, same-sex "marriage," and denying Communion to Catholics who publicly support abortion attracted worldwide attention to what was believed to be a low-key trip.

The Catholic Church has not been spared the effects of the increased polarisation on the issues plaguing the world, a reality Pope Francis showed he was keenly aware of in his first two speeches in Budapest.

During his meeting with Hungary's Ecumenical Council of Churches, the Pope used the country's famed Széchenyi Chain Bridge, which links the eastern and western sides of Budapest along the Danube River, as a metaphor for how the Church should manoeuvre in an increasingly divided world.

Together

"The bridge does not fuse those two parts together, but rather holds them together. That is how it should be with us, too," the Pope told the ecumenical gathering September 12.

"A bridge unites. In this sense, it reminds us of the

concept, so fundamental in Scripture, of covenant. The God of the covenant asks us not to yield to separatism or partisan interests. He does not want us to ally ourselves with some at the expense of others. Rather, he wants individuals and communities to be bridges of fellowship with all," he added.

Metaphor

He doubled down on the metaphor when speaking to the country's bishops, urging the Church in Hungary to "be a builder of bridges and an advocate of dialogue."

“The bridge does not fuse those two parts together, but rather holds them together. That is how it should be with us, too”

The word "pontifex" means pontiff, but it also means "bridge-builder" and, throughout his visit, Pope Francis tried to put his words into practice in the hopes of showing that differences of opinions on hot-button issues do not preclude dialogue and engagement.

Among the many issues that put his skills to the test was his meeting with the Hungarian leadership, including Viktor Orbán, the country's outspoken prime minister who stands at odds with the Pope's views on immigration.

However, while media reports leading up to the

meeting envisioned a contentious tête-à-tête on immigration, the Pope deflated those expectations and said the discussions revolved around common ground issues.

Specifically, the Pope praised Hungary's environmental policies as well as government subsidies to encourage families to have more children.

Speaking to journalists aboard the papal flight back to Rome September 15, the Pope also said he spoke mainly with Hungarian President János Áder, while Mr Orbán and Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén occasionally "added some specifics."

"On migration, nothing, no. We didn't talk about it," he said. "It was a good climate. And it lasted quite a bit, I think 35-40 minutes."

In a September 13 interview with Hungary's Koszuth Radio, Mr Semjén said the Pope "was delighted that the number of abortions dropped, while the number of marriages increased in Hungary."

He also said the Pope was told that Hungary was "under attack from Brussels," the administrative centre of the European Union, because of the country's family policies, which some believe are discriminatory against migrants and same-sex couples.

"His Holiness said that 'family is a father, a mother, a child, period,'" Mr Semjén said.

Divisive

While divisive issues continue to shake both the unity of the world and of the uni-



Pope Francis accepts flowers from a girl as he arrives at the international airport in Budapest, Hungary, September 12. Looking on are Cardinal Péter Erdo of Esztergom-Budapest and Zsolt Semjén, deputy prime minister of Hungary, pictured behind the Pope.



Pope Francis exchanges gifts with Slovak President Zuzana Caputová during a courtesy visit at the presidential palace in Bratislava, Slovakia, September 13.

versal Church, Pope Francis' visits to Hungary and Slovakia aimed to show that a bridge is only as good as the chain that holds it together.

"The bridge has yet

another lesson to teach us," the Pope told members of the ecumenical council. "It is supported by great chains made up of many rings. We are those rings, and each of

us is essential to the chain." "We can no longer live apart, without making an effort to know one another, prey to suspicion and conflict," he said.



Pope Francis greets the crowd during a meeting with young people at Lokomotiva Stadium in Košice, Slovakia, September 14.



Pope Francis greets a baby during a meeting with the Roma community in the Luník IX neighbourhood in Košice, Slovakia, September 14.



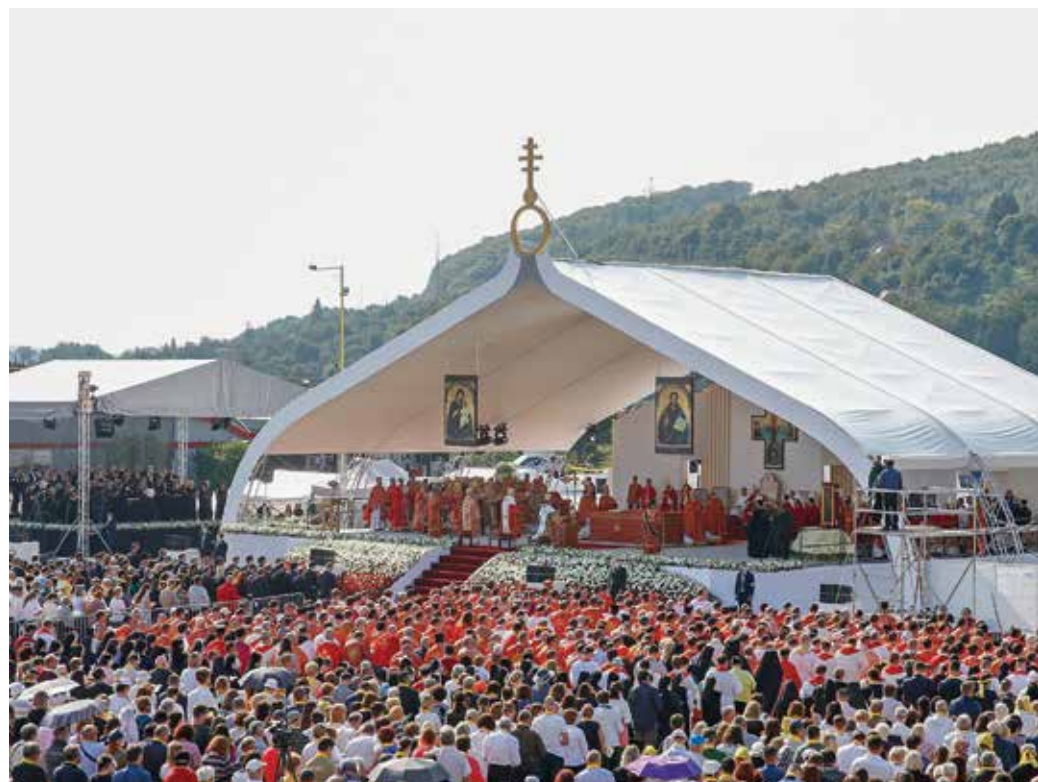
Pope Francis greets the crowd as he arrives to celebrate the closing Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress at Heroes' Square in Budapest, Hungary, September 12.



Pope Francis speaks during a meeting with the Roma community in the Luník IX neighbourhood in Košice, Slovakia, September 14.



Pope Francis meets with Hungarian President János Áder and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán at the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest, Hungary, September 12.



Pope Francis celebrates a Byzantine Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom at Mestská športová hala Square in Prešov, Slovakia, September 14.

Letters

Letter of the week

Review of abortion legislation must address alternatives

Dear Editor, In September 1983 the Eighth Amendment was passed by the Irish people with 66.9% support. Despite that clear decision, a large number of pro-abortion campaigners persistently ignored that mandate, not for three years, but for more than three decades.

In 2018, following a campaign in which the Irish public were misled by pro-abortion politicians and campaigners regarding the consequences of repeal, the Eighth was repealed and afterwards abortion on demand was legalised in Ireland. Despite this horrific outcome, pro-life advocates will continue to fight for justice and equality for

all people, born and unborn.

Three years later we can now see the deadly consequences of repeal. The numbers of Irish abortions have increased dramatically, and some babies have even lost their lives in horrific late term abortions in Irish hospitals. The abortion legislation has trampled on healthcare workers' right to freedom of conscience, and repeal of the Eighth is now being used as an excuse by pro-abortion campaigners to threaten freedom of expression.

The 2018 abortion legislation is now up for its three-year review. For this review to be genuine, fair and unbiased, it must be

willing to look at, and tackle, the outcome of the current liberal Irish abortion law, such as the increase in the abortion rate and the horrific consequences of late-term abortions on babies, women and medical staff. The review must also address the failure of the Government to provide women with unplanned pregnancies with positive alternatives to abortion. It must not just be a device to further promote and widen the availability of this deadly procedure in Ireland.

*Yours etc.,
Sean O Domhnaill,
Galway For Life,
Galway City, Galway*

Not all societal changes have been for the better

Dear Editor, There have been some terrific stories in the media recently about babies who were found on the street, adopted and then went on to have full and successful lives. The question needs to be asked, if such seemingly inconvenient pregnancies had occurred in our own day, rather than in the 1960s, is it likely that there would have been such happy outcomes? Clearly, some of the changes we have made to our society were not for the better!

*Yours etc.,
Eamon Fitzpatrick,
Strandhill Road, Sligo*



Pressurise Philippines' politicians to stop child marriage

Dear Editor, The article regarding child-marriage laws in the Philippines was harrowing to read [IC 09/09/2021]. I could never do the work that Fr Shay Cullen does as it would be far too upsetting but I support him wholeheartedly in his battle against the grave injustices, perpetrated by corrupt and evil people, against the children of the Philippines.

Considering it is 2021, we are in a modern era of human rights, science etc. how can it be that the sexual age of

consent in the Philippines is just 12 years of age? Fr Cullen has spoken on many occasions of the need to stop sexual tourism of paedophiles to the Philippines who specifically target children.

On this occasion he was speaking out against a bill against 'baby brides' which is being delayed by the country's House of Representatives. The bill would raise the age of consent to 16. It's horrific to think that children as young as 12 are being sold to men twice the age and more for 'marriage'.

As Fr Cullen describes it, "it's a cover for paedophilia" which has been going on for generations.

The global community should be putting more pressure on the Philippines to introduce this bill and to stop children being abused, this is not a time to turn a blind eye. I would like to include, as was included in the original article, the email addresses for two politicians who must be pushed to stop delaying this important bill. The email addresses are for: House Speaker Lord Allan Velasco at

speakerlordvelasco@house.gov.ph or lavmarinduqueph@gmail.com and Senate President Vicente C Sotto III at os_sotto@yahoo.com.

While some of the ruling powers in the Philippines have chosen to stay silent on the issue, that does not mean every one else should, especially for an outrageous, diabolic situation like this which seems to be happening under the international community's nose.

*Yours etc.,
Mary O'Reilly
Blanchardstown, Co. Dublin*

State can't shift blame on Church for housing crisis

Dear Editor, During the pandemic in particular, certain areas of Dublin looked post-apocalyptic. The streets were empty except for homeless people and the odd Deliveroo driver. The foodbanks were full and those afflicted with drug addictions roamed the streets asking any person that happened to be around for change. Without a doubt, the pandemic has exposed the sheer extent of the issue of homelessness and drug addiction.

Bro. Kevin says the Capuchins, who run the Capuchin Day Centre which feeds the homeless, are doing all they can to alleviate the housing and homelessness crisis on your front page [IC 02/09/2021]. This was a response to the Government asking the Church

to identify land that could be used for housing. It is bizarre that many, many politicians speak about the need for the separation of Church and State but then turn to the Church to ask for land. I believe this was a cynical move considering the letter was leaked to the media before it had even reached Archbishop Eamon Martin. I think they were trying to fuel the belief that the Church has huge swathes of land and shift the blame for the housing crisis, even though the Government has huge amounts of land that they are unprepared to use for social and affordable housing. It was even mentioned in the letter that some Catholic prelates had spoken out about the housing crisis,

perhaps this letter was hitting back against that criticism? If so, a very immature move.

The Church, in the past, present and future has helped those suffering from homelessness and addiction. It has continued to do this, whether that be by supporting the homeless on the frontline or even selling land so that it may be used for social and affordable housing. It is the lack of political will and ingenuity of subsequent governments for more than a decade that has caused the housing crisis to continue, don't point the finger at the Church!

*Yours etc.,
Seán Connolly
Cork City, Cork*

facebook community

Each week we publish a selection of comments from *The Irish Catholic Facebook page*

What are the criteria for a 'just' war?

Where ever there is riches to be gained, the elite will always find a reason for war. – **Patrick J Cowley**

This morning at 8am Mass our second lector (a retired US Army captain) was proud to pray for the military as one of the prayers of the faithful - especially since his old squad are currently on UN peace keeping duties on Israel's border. Since moving to the USA I've learned the expression "hate the war, love the soldier" which creates an environment in which we can sometimes waive our St Augustine philosophy of 'just war' and simply ensure that we provide Christian care for the returning warrior. I'm going to suggest that we suspend any judgment on recent conflicts and ask that you all say a prayer for IDF in the south and the Royal Irish in the north... along with the US and all soldiers who have to serve overseas away from loved ones. – **Conor Donnelly**

Sorrow, pain and heartbreak. – **Myra Grennan**

What do you think? Join in the conversation on *The Irish Catholic Facebook page*

Testing healthy children will raise anxiety levels

Dear Editor, I always enjoy reading Dad's Diary but was saddened to read how healthy schoolchildren are already having their school year disrupted. This is not the cause of the virus but rather NPHET/HSE policy of not allowing antigen testing. Parents could use these when they deemed it necessary, to find out if their children were infectious, instead of the HSE being in total control through PCR testing.

Irish school children have endured the longest total school closure of all EU countries. Compare this to Sweden, where, from the early stages of the pandemic, they mandated that all schoolchildren under 16 years continue to attend school (and without masking), in an effort to follow the science while keeping life as normal as possible for the children.

Surely testing healthy children for a virus they are at no risk from only serves to raise anxiety levels amongst children? Is this the type of society we want for our children?

*Yours etc.,
Ann Gillanders
Ballybough, Dublin 3*

Letters to the Editor

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

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

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

Around the world



▲ **LEBANON:** Cardinal Bechara Rai, Maronite patriarch, speaks during the opening of the annual conference of Catholic schools in Lebanon at College Notre Dame de Louaize in Zouk Mosbeh, September 15. Photos: CNS.

◀ **USA:** Seminarians sing during a Mass September 16, marking the 125th anniversary of the opening of St Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, NY. St Joseph's is presently educating 65 seminarians for priestly ministry in the Archdiocese of New York.



MEXICO: Migrants pray during an outdoor Mass in celebration of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees at Casa del Migrante shelter in Ciudad Juarez, September 19.



CANADA: A priest distributes Communion during Mass at St Francis Church in celebration of the Western Festival in Saint-Tite, Quebec, September 12. The Western-themed festival is held in September.



GUINEA: Prisoners who were detained after campaigning against ousted Guinean President Alpha Condé's third term react after they were released in Conakry, September 7. Catholic bishops in Guinea have criticised the country's military coup and called for the unconditional release of Condé as well as all those arrested with him.



SOUTH SUDAN: An altar server swings a censer in a procession during Mass inside the Protection of Civilians area inside the United Nations base in Malakal. Some 35,000 people live in the camp, protected by UN peacekeeping troops

Do we really believe that our prayers can stop a pandemic?



We need to pray even when that seems the most lifeless thing to do. That's a counsel from Michael J. Buckley with which we need to challenge ourselves daily. In the face of real life, prayer can often seem like the most lifeless thing to do. What difference does prayer make?

I will pray for you! Please keep me in prayer! Know that you have my prayers! We use those expressions all the time. I suspect not a day goes by that most of us do not promise to pray for someone. However, do we really believe our prayers make a difference? Do we really believe that our prayers can stop a pandemic, ease tensions within our communities, erase centuries-long misunderstandings among various religious denominations, cure someone dying of a terminal disease, bring our children back to Church, or help someone forgive us? What can prayer do in the face of our own helplessness in a situation?

Reality has different modalities. There is the empirical and there is the mystical. Both are real”

There is the empirical and there is the mystical. Both are real”

Jesus said there are certain demons that can only be cast out by prayer and fasting. I suspect that we find that easier to believe



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

literally, in terms of an evil spirit being cast out of a person, than we believe that our prayer can cast out the more earthly demons of hatred, injustice, misunderstanding, division, war, racism, nationalism, bigotry, and bodily and mental illness. These are the real demons that beset our lives and even though we ask for God's help in prayer, we don't often do it with a lot of confidence that our prayers will make a difference. How can they?

Easy habit

The long history of Judaism and Christianity has taught us that God is not in the easy habit of positively interfering in nature and human life, at least not in ways that we can see. Miracles do happen, perhaps by the millions in ways that we cannot perceive. But, if we cannot see miracles, how are they real?

Reality has different modalities. There is the empirical and there is the mystical. Both are real, though both are not equally observable as an action of God in history. If a dead body rises from its grave (the resurrection) or if a race of people walks dry shod through the Red Sea (the Exodus) that is clearly an intervention of God in our world, but if some world leader has a change of heart and is suddenly more sympathetic to the poor, how do we know what prompted that? Likewise, for everything else for which we pray. What inspired the insight that led to the discovery of a vaccine for the pandemic? Pure chance? A touch from above? You can ask that same question vis-à-vis most anything else we pray about, from the world situation to our personal health. What is the source of an inspiration, a restora-

tion to health, a melting of a bitterness, a change of heart, a correct decision, or a chance meeting with someone that becomes a grace for the rest of your life? Pure chance, simple luck, or a conspiracy of accidents? Or does God's grace and guidance positively touch you because of prayer, someone else's or your own?

“God is not in the easy habit of positively interfering in nature and human life, at least not in ways that we can see”

Central to our faith as Christians, is the belief that we are all part of one mystical body, the Body of Christ. This is not a metaphor. This body is a living organism, just as real as a physical body. Inside of a physical body, as we know, all parts influence each other, for good and for bad. Healthy enzymes help the whole body to retain its health and unhealthy viruses work at sickening the whole body. If this is true,

and it is, then there is no such thing as a truly private action. Everything we do, even in our thoughts, influences others and thus our thoughts and actions are either health-giving enzymes or harmful viruses affecting others. Our prayers are health-giving enzymes affecting the whole body, particularly the persons and events to which we direct them. This is a doctrine of faith, not wishful thinking.

Cynical

Earlier in her life, Dorothy Day was cynical about Therese of Lisieux (The Little Flower) believing that her isolation in a tiny convent and her mystical 'little way' (which professed that our smallest actions affect the events of the whole world) was pious naiveté. Later, as Dorothy gave herself over to symbolic actions for justice and peace that in effect seemed to change very little in real life, she adopted Therese as her patron saint. What Dorothy had come to realise through her experience was that her small and seemingly pragmatically useless actions for justice and peace, were not useless at all. Small though they were, they helped open up some space, tiny at first, which slowly grew into something larger and more influential. By slipping some tiny enzymes into the body of the world, Dorothy Day eventually helped create a little more health in the world.

Prayer is a sneaky, hidden antibiotic - needed precisely when it seems most useless.

“Jesus said there are certain demons that can only be cast out by prayer and fasting”

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, September 23, 2021

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Living the
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Building up your bones



Brittle bones, or 'osteoporosis', is the most common bone disorder to occur. It's most common in older, post-menopausal females, but it can affect adults of any age or gender. Reduced bone mass and increased bone porosity (the amount of bone not occupied by bone tissue) are the main symptoms, which means that bones lose strength and become more susceptible to fracture.

Because of this, osteoporosis is often left undiagnosed until later life, when a fracture brings it to attention.

In Ireland, it's thought that around 200,000 adults have osteoporosis. It's further estimated that one in two women



The cooler weather will soon enough be instilling a chill in our bones, but there's no reason why we can't strengthen them before then, writes Jason Osborne

over 50 and one in five men over 50 will endure a fracture as a result of osteoporosis in their lifetime.

With this in mind, what can be done to prevent, or mitigate, these effects? Oftentimes it's the case that we don't appreciate something until it's gone, and nowhere is this more apt than with our health. It's just the same with our bone health – our ability

to walk, run, lift and even stand is compromised if our bone health suffers, so it's worth taking into consideration the lifestyle choices that affect it.

Cycle

Just as with our skin, our bones are in a constant cycle of breaking down and building up, with all of our bones being totally remodelled every 10 years.

Many factors can negatively impact this process, which can lead to osteoporosis. Some of these are the usual suspects; smoking, excessive alcohol and caffeine consumption, a sedentary lifestyle, low body mass and, of course, a poor diet, especially one with a low calcium intake and a vitamin D deficiency.

The majority of instances come about as a result of lifestyle choices, things within our control, but not all of them. Some chronic disorders or medical conditions, as well as some medications (such as steroids) can also result in brittle bones.

If some of these things are outside of our control, more of it is within it, as mentioned. There

are a number of natural ways to build healthy, strong bones while you can. Particularly for younger people, it's important to put these stable foundations in place early on – peak bone density is reached around the early 30s, so having a good base to work with for the rest of your life is invaluable.

Perform strength-training, weight-bearing exercise

Getting moving is rarely unhelpful when it comes to maintaining general good health, and it's also the case

» Continued on Page 33

Family News



AND EVENTS

OUTCRY AS 1,400 DOLPHINS KILLED IN FAROE ISLANDS HUNT

The government of the Faroe Islands, an autonomous Danish territory, is facing an outcry over the culling of more than 1,400 white-sided dolphins in a day, in what was said to be the single biggest hunt in the northern archipelago.

"There is no doubt that the Faroese whale hunts are a dramatic sight to people unfamiliar to the hunts and slaughter of mammals," a government spokesman told AFP.

"The hunts are, nevertheless, well organised and fully regulated," he said.

Traditionally, the North Atlantic islands – which have a population of around 50,000 people – hunt pilot whales and not dolphins, the spokesman said.

"There are usually a few of them in the 'grind', but we normally don't kill such a large number," said a local television journalist, Hallur av Rana.

The "grindadráp" is a practice whereby the hunters first surround the whales with a wide semi-circle of fishing boats and then drive them into a bay to be beached and slaughtered.

SAUDI ARABIA CAMEL CARVINGS DATED TO PREHISTORIC ERA

A series of camel sculptures carved into rock faces in Saudi Arabia are likely to be the oldest large-scale animal reliefs in the world, a study says.

When the carvings were first discovered in 2018, researchers estimated they were created about 2,000 years ago, the BBC reported.

This was based on their similarity to reliefs at Jordan's famous ancient city of Petra.

But a fresh study puts the camels at between 7,000-8,000 old.

Precisely ageing rock sculptures is a challenge for researchers. Unlike cave paintings, say, there is often no organic matter to sample. Rock art of this size is also rare in the region.

Their age makes them even older than such ancient landmarks as Stonehenge (5,000 years old) or the Pyramids at Giza (4,500 years old). They even predate the domestication of camels, a catalyst for economic development in the region.

TIKTOK ROLLS OUT SUPPORT TO COMBAT SUICIDE SEARCHES

The BBC reports that TikTok has announced a set of features to help users struggling with mental health issues and thoughts of suicide.

The features include guides on wellbeing and support for people who are struggling with eating disorders.

There is also a search intervention feature that directs users to support resources if they look up terms such as "suicide".

The move comes as rival platform Instagram comes under fresh scrutiny over its impact on users' wellbeing.

In the announcement TikTok said: "We care deeply about our community, and we always look for new ways in which we can nurture their well-being."

"That's why we're taking additional steps to make it easier for people to find resources when they need them on TikTok."

Learn CPR: It can triple cardiac arrest survival chances



Every year in Ireland, there are approximately 2,500 out of hospital cardiac arrests, with a rising proportion of cases that occur outside the home having CPR performed by bystanders. The cardiac arrest of the Danish footballer Christian Eriksen on live television has highlighted the importance and success of rapid CPR and defibrillation. Indeed, the growing awareness about sudden cardiac arrests has led to an increase in the number of defibrillators around the country.

The 'Out of Hospital, Cardiac Arrest Report' for Ireland, published in 2020 sheds light on the number of cases nationally. In 2019, there were 2564 cardiac arrests with 68% occurring at home and affecting twice as many men as women. The vast majority (86%) had a medical cause though nearly one in six were as a result of other causes such as trauma, choking, drug overdose or drowning. About 50% of cases were actually in people under 68 years of age with nearly 10% in those under 35.

CPR involves giving chest compressions at rate of about 100 per minute to help maintain circulation

In younger people, structural problems in the heart (cardiomyopathies), genetic conditions that predispose to arrhythmias and viral infections (myocarditis) can lead to cardiac arrest. For example, the GAA player Cormac McAnallen died in 2004 from congenital long QT syndrome, a genetic condition that leads to abnormal sodium channels in

Medical Matters

Dr Kevin McCarroll



the heart increasing the risk of cardiac arrhythmias. However, there are often no underlying symptoms and it is estimated that up to 100 young adults die in Ireland every year from Sudden Arrhythmic Death Syndrome (SADS).

Increase

While the overall survival rate from cardiac arrest is low at 6.4%, it represents an increase on previous years. However, what's notable is the higher survival of 18% in those who collapsed in public versus 4% in private places. Importantly, it is estimated that on average, from the moment of collapse the chance of survival decreases by 7-10% per minute when CPR is not being performed.

The increase in the number of people who have CPR training probably also accounts for the rising proportion of 'bystander CPR' in cases outside the home. In fact, Ireland has one of the best rates in the world, with 84% of those suffering non-hospital cardiac arrests in 2019 being assisted by people close-by. Additionally, in 25% of cases, defibrillation was attempted before the arrival of emergency services. The importance of this is reflected by the fact that 49% who survived had their first defibrillation shock before

an ambulance arrived. The majority of young survivors also had good neurological function on discharge from hospital.

But what exactly constitutes CPR? CPR involves giving chest compressions at rate of about 100 per minute to help maintain circulation, as well as giving rescue breaths until emergency services arrive. In many instances of cardiac arrest, the heart doesn't just simply stop but goes into a type of spasmodic rhythm which prevents it from pumping blood around the body. In these cases, shocking with a defibrillator can revert the rhythm back to normal. Most devices are now automated (AEDs), and require only simple training to use. AEDs have become more accessible and there are now an estimated 8,000 - 10,000 public access AEDs in Ireland. Devices are positioned in public buildings and communal areas (e.g., shopping centres, sports clubs, open public spaces) for emergency use by any member of the public. Additionally, AEDs are also carried by community first responder groups as well as by An Garda and the fire service.



While many lives have been saved by good CPR, studies suggest that the public's perception of its success may

be overestimated which may reflect more optimistic portrayals of cardiac arrest outcomes on TV soaps and medical dramas. For example, a study in 2015 looking at medical dramas where CPR was performed 49 times, identified a survival rate of 69.6% which is far greater than its real-world success.

“The ‘Out of Hospital, Cardiac Arrest Report’ for Ireland, published in 2020 sheds light on the number of cases nationally”

Indeed, while the survival rate of CPR for cardiac arrests is greater in hospital (up to 15-20%) it isn't always appropriate for some patients with advanced heart or lung disease, where the likelihood of success is very low. Even when successful, cardiac arrest interventions may sometimes result in only a temporary prolongation of life or severe brain damage or disability. Indeed, in the UK in 2011, an 81-year-old female garnered media attention when she had 'do not resuscitate' tattooed on her chest so as to ensure that CPR was not performed!

There's no doubt though that CPR and AEDs for out of hospital cardiac arrests have saved many lives in Ireland. So bear in mind, if you witness a cardiac arrest and are able to perform CPR, you may double, if not triple, the person's chance of survival. It's a skill that is worth having!

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

» Continued from Page 31



when it comes to building up your bones. The best kind of exercise for bone health is weight-bearing or high-impact exercise – both of which promote the formation of new bone.

It's good for both children and adults, with studies in children noting that this kind of activity boosts the amount of bone created during the years of most bone growth. Similarly, studies in older men and women have shown its effectiveness in preventing bone loss, with older men and women who performed weight-bearing exercise showing increases in bone-mineral density, bone strength and size.

“Calcium received naturally through your diet is the ideal as it's better absorbed, but supplemental calcium can be used too to reach the recommended daily intake”

This exercising need not be anything extensive or extravagant – it can take the simple form of walking or jogging on the spot for at least 30 minutes a day.

Consuming calcium

Calcium is the most essential mineral when it comes to bone health, being the main one found in your bones. Because of the aforementioned cycle of bone breakdown and build-up, it's important to consume calcium daily to supplement the process.

Calcium received naturally through your diet is the ideal as it's better absorbed, but supplemental calcium can be used too to reach

the recommended daily intake (RDI) of between 1,000 and 1,300mg (the precise amount depending on your age, teens requiring around 1,300mg, older women around 1,200mg, the rest of us needing around 1,000mg).

This can be achieved by consuming a few portions of dairy throughout the day, with a glass of milk, cheese and yoghurt each containing about 200-250mg of calcium. There are other good options though, such as green vegetables, beans, nuts and oily fish.

It's worth noting that the amount of calcium your body absorbs at a given time can vary greatly, so it's a good idea to spread your calcium intake throughout the day.

Avoid low-calorie diets

Dropping below a bare minimum of calories isn't a good idea, especially if your goal is to develop your bone health and strength. It can slow down your



metabolism, and cause weight loss, which after a certain point is detrimental to bone development. Some studies have shown that diets providing less than 1,000 calories a day can lead to lower bone density in people of every weight category.

To build strong bones, and keep them strong, a balanced diet that provides at least 1,200 calories per day is to be aimed for, and should include lots of protein and foods full of vitamins and minerals.

Vitamin D

I wrote a column earlier in the year proclaiming the virtues of vitamin D, and not only because of its beneficial effects in relation to Covid-19. It is also important when it comes to bone building and maintenance, as it's required for the gut's absorption of calcium.

“It's worth noting that the amount of calcium your body absorbs at a given time can vary greatly, so it's a good idea to spread your calcium intake throughout the day”

Supplementing with at least 800 IU per day is recommended for those with osteoporosis, with a higher dosage of 2000 IU per day recommended during the winter months.

As is often said on these pages, maintaining good health is sensible practice at any time. Your bones will thank you for taking some simple steps to ensure they're strong and healthy to weather the winter.

Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



Can the tooth fairy get Covid? That was the perplexing question I had to ask myself, when my 7-year-old Covid patient lost a tooth. She and I recently spent 10 days isolating in the apartment at the side of our house, to protect the rest of the family. It was strange to spend all day and night in the presence of the very virus which we had all been avoiding so scrupulously for the past 18 months.

Just days after the kids returned from their summer holidays, there was a Covid outbreak in school. After some children in her class tested positive, the onset of a mild sore throat and headache prompted us to immediately get my daughter tested. It was a shock when the text came through confirming that she had Covid. When I went to tell her the news, she was playing happily on the swings. She came in and wanted to talk about it, she was understandably upset, and was struggling processing what it meant. I managed to assuage her worries. She felt quite well, but was most worried about not being able to play with her brother and sisters.

We soon found plenty of fun things that she could do, while keeping her distance from the others. The kids collected firewood and we lit a bonfire in the woods, where we cooked marshmallows, in a socially distanced manner. The kids found hide and seek games they could play outdoors, while staying well apart. She could also cycle her bike around the garden happily. She and I could go on the trampoline together, and for walks around the garden. All the normal rules around television and screen time were dropped for the duration. Yet she was not very sick, indeed, she was full of beans, so plenty of outdoor fun was vital.

She and I pretended that she was in a hotel, since her every meal had to be delivered to her quarters. Each morning, I was roused by the cry of “room service!” She soon became increasingly daring in her room service requests, and began asking for treats like a hot chocolate. I gave in more than I usually would, since I wanted to do all I could to make these strange days pass by more pleasantly for her.

We ate our meals together outside on the deck. We developed some nice routines in our little den, and it was lovely to spend so much time together.



The first thing in the morning, I would open all the windows and doors to ventilate her room. Although I was vaccinated, I tried to avoid too much exposure. Fortunately, it was early September and the days were still dry and warm. It was a strange time, living in close quarters with a Covid patient, and avoiding the rest of my family. I was looking after her full time, while also working from home and helping her to do a little school work each day. Of course, the other kids were also off school and preschool since they were close contacts. This meant we had four kids to manage at home. The older kids settled back into their all-too-familiar lockdown routines of online learning, but it was a long ten days.

As time wore on, each day soon blurred into the next. At last, we began counting down the last few days to our freedom. After one final night in captivity, we returned triumphantly to the house, where her recovery was celebrated with a breakfast of pancakes. That day, the rest of the family also had to have Covid tests. Thankfully, we all tested negative, which meant that everyone could return to normal life once again. The virus had made it into our home, but we managed our way through. As the delta variant makes its way through the nation's schools in the months ahead, many more families will have similar experiences. Thankfully, most children seem to bounce back from the virus with ease, and many barely notice they have it at all.

Living the Gospel values in university

Personal Profile



Ruadhán Jones

For some young people, and their parents, there can be a fear when the time comes for them to leave home and head to college. However, as Gerard Scullion learned during his time at Queen's University Belfast (QUB), being a person of Faith and a student need not be an antagonistic relationship.

Mr Scullion, who is going into his final year studying Law, tells me that he was very fortunate to have a strong faith background

"I was very fortunate that in my family there was a focus placed on the Faith from a very early age," he begins. "I was very aware of that, and as I grew up and as my siblings grew up, that's been nurtured, prayer and faith have always been at the centre of my family life. It was never forced on us, it just grew naturally to respect the Faith, understand its importance and the need for it.

“We try to engage in apostolic, social and charitable initiatives. We recently completed a hike up Croagh Patrick, last year we did our Bangor to Bobbio”

"As I've grown older and moved away from home, started university, I've become a lot more aware of that, having a strong faith, because you can't do it alone. As I've gotten older, that



Gerard Scullion

faith has gotten stronger, I've looked into it deeper, I've become more confident speaking about it."

When he first entered QUB, Mr Scullion said that he found it difficult to lead a life "in line with the Gospel values".

Drifted

"I've never really drifted away from the Faith, but I didn't really appreciate living a life that was in line with the Gospel values," he continues. "I found that very difficult the first months

of university. But as I got more involved with the chaplaincy and with the Knights [of Columbanus], it gave me the reassurance and the strength you know to live a life that is in accordance with the values of the Church."

However, as he explains, he was again fortunate to be supported in his Faith by Catholic communities on the campus, particularly the Catholic chaplaincy and the Knights of Columbanus, a Catholic apostolate for men.

"I was very fortunate at Queens to have the Catholic chaplaincy,"

Mr Scullion says. "It's been a presence there at my university from day one really. It's not a hideaway haven for Catholics to retreat to, it's a place where we can go for spiritual direction, where we can forge friendships.

"But when I go beyond the walls of the chaplaincy in Queens and see my friends who are more secular, I don't feel any less a Catholic. I don't feel embarrassed. What it's taught me is it's perfectly ok to be a university student and a person of faith. The two can perfectly coexist."

As to the Knights, Mr Scullion admits that he was initially wary of joining them, despite being encouraged by a friend.

“When I go beyond the walls of the chaplaincy in Queens and see my friends who are more secular, I don't feel any less a Catholic”

"I'd been recommended by a friend who had been at Queens," he says. "At the start I was very sceptical, it sounded a bit strange, but I became involved and I'm very thankful that I did. Because the Knights – ultimately it's a group of young men who come together, who want to share their love of the Faith, who want to deepen it and, most importantly, who want to share it with others.

"CK19, the council I'm based with, we're very fortunate that we're the only university council that I know of on the island of Ireland. Being at the chaplaincy at Queens, that gives us a really good platform to promote the order, promote our Faith, and basically to show that there is a Catholic presence on campus."

The Knights are involved in a wide range of activities, Mr Scullion explains: "We try to engage in apostolic, social and charitable initiatives. We recently completed a hike up Croagh

Patrick, last year we did our Bangor to Bobbio, which was an online fundraising initiative where we walked the distance of the founders of Columbanus from Bangor to Bobbio online.

Distance

"Each brother walked his own distance and it accumulated and we raised quite a good bit of money for St Vincent de Paul. We put on social events here in the Chaplaincy just for our own members of the council, because one of the values is fraternity. Whether that be coming together to watch a football match, going to adoration or something in the city, or just going out for a meal and a few drinks."

After finishing his law degree, Mr Scullion hopes to head to Dublin to complete a masters, before eventually training to be a solicitor. He hopes to be an ambassador for the Knights and their mission.

"You can move on then to councils in the pastoral area your parish is situated in," he says. "Or if as I said I do go down to Dublin, there'd be no harm in setting up a new council. That's what we're trying to do at the minute. One of the members in CK19, he's involved in the initiative trying to get more university councils set up.

“I've never really drifted away from the Faith, but I didn't really appreciate living a life that was in line with the Gospel values”

"The whole thing is about, especially with young men joining the order, it's about normalising the image. It has this very negative view of being a male exclusive boys club nearly and it's so much more than that."

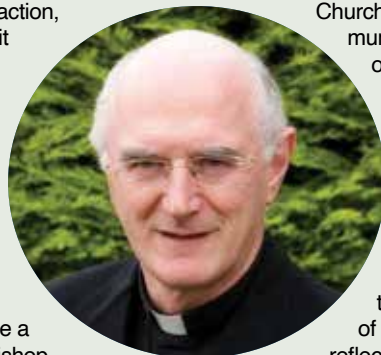
Living Laudato Si'

Jane Mellet



Lift voice of vulnerable and sign petition

The Season of Creation continues through September up until October 4 (the feast day of St Francis of Assisi, patron saint of ecology). This year many parishes are engaging in prayer, reflection and action, growing in deeper awareness of what it means to protect our common home. I was delighted to read Archbishop Dermot Farrell's first pastoral letter: 'The Cry of the Earth, the Cry of the Poor – The Climate Catastrophe, Creation's Urgent Call for Change', which was released at the beginning of this season. It is a compelling document which highlights the need for urgent action on the environmental crisis and invites each of us to embrace a deep nourishing eco-spirituality. Archbishop Farrell notes that "God reveals himself through the world", and thus, in the face of the "code red" that scientists have issued for the environment and for humanity itself, God is calling us, individually and collectively, "to work for the good of the planet and the good of all".



Archbishop Farrell notes that the "climate crisis is a societal issue. Addressing it – nationally and globally – requires a societal response. One aspect of this is the response of communities, and

Church is profoundly about community" (p. 49). We must all play our part as parish communities, school communities, families and individuals for this concerns the home we all share, our common home. While the environmental crisis can leave many of us feeling powerless and overwhelmed there is much that we can do. The Season of Creation offers us a time to reflect deeply on where we are being called to act, within our own net-

works, using our gifts and talents. "The Church – locally and globally – needs to become even more an agent of change" and this pastoral letter offers many practical suggestions such as adopting more sustainable lifestyles, setting up parish Laudato Si'

groups, reconnecting with our local ecology through rootedness and belonging in local community, developing and deepening an ecological spirituality, raising awareness and promoting biodiversity, welcome and respect for the vulnerable particularly those driven from their homelands by natural disasters, famine and war.

There is much to think about and to pray about in this first pastoral letter from the Archbishop of Dublin and its publication is timely in the run up to the critical UN Climate Conference this November in Glasgow. With Pope Francis expected to attend this UN conference, Catholics everywhere are being asked to help create the momentum that is needed for real change. So, this Season of Creation we would urge all parishes, schools, families and communities to sign the 'Healthy Planet Healthy People' petition by going to www.thecatholicpetition.org, adding your name and encouraging family and friends to do the same. This is one way we can lift up the voices of the most vulnerable, respond to the cry of the earth, and take a stand for future generations.

Jane Mellett is the Laudato Si' officer with Trócaire.

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



When corporations rule, democracy suffers

Last week I mentioned near death experiences in the context of Joe Duffy's interview with Jane Seymour. I never know what to make of these accounts – are they hallucinations resulting from medication or real glimpses of the afterlife?

Calls

That item prompted calls to **Liveline** (RTÉ Radio One, Tuesday) from listeners who had similar experiences. In one case a nurse attending to a man who had no detectable vital signs was told by him afterwards that he remembered her Irish accent as she continued to work on him even after a senior medic judged that he was gone irrevocably. One man in a coma thought he saw a white horse calling him to the next life with a collie dog urging him to remain, and a cranky mysterious nurse in his room. Joe Duffy called the nurse “definitely a hallucination” – I'd probably agree, though I think the host is wiser not to express such a definite opinion and instead leave it to the listeners to make up their own minds. He returned to the issue on Thursday when a few more callers recounted their experiences. It sounded like one man got a taste of hell, while a woman told of experiencing the love and presence of Jesus in her near-death experience.



Vivek Ramaswamy argues that corporate interference is harming democracy.

More mundanely, I haven't been watching much on GB News of late, I just find it too irritating too much of the time. When it launched a few months ago I thought Andrew Neil was its best and most credible presenter, with a nightly interview show. He didn't last long on air and now he has cut ties altogether with the new channel. On last week's **Question Time** (BBC One, Thursday) he said: “the direction they were going in...was not the direction that I had envisaged for the channel”. He was vague on specifics presumably out of respect or deference for his previous employers, though presenter Fiona Bruce did try to get him

to open up some more. Now the most high-profile face of GB News is Nigel Farage. His ratings are relatively high, but otherwise viewer figures are very low. This hasn't put off media mogul Rupert Murdoch planning something similar, yet another news channel, with Piers Morgan the main presenter mentioned so far. None of this is very promising.

Tiresome

GB News became tiresome in its constant harping on about ‘wokeness’, but one author that isn't keen on this phenomenon is Vivek Ramaswamy who was interviewed by Anton Savage, filling in for Pat on the **Pat Kenny Show**

(Newstalk, Friday). In his new book, *Woke Inc - inside corporate America's social justice scam*. He is concerned that corporate entities held too much power and that democracy is suffering as a result. It is ‘crony capitalism’ effecting change through the back door. They are pushing certain notions of what would improve us, but where there were competing visions of social good it should be the citizens, in an environment that values free speech, who get to debate and decide, not the big corporations. He instanced the woke censorship of the likes of Twitter and Facebook but it was broader than that. Further,

PICK OF THE WEEK

MY FAITH: IRELAND

EWTN Sunday September 26, 10.30am and Monday (night) September 27, 12.30am

Divine mercy – in the hearts of the Irish people. Fr Aidan Dunne speaks with Fr Owen Gorman about the devotion.

MASS

RTÉ One Sunday September 26, 11am

Fr Liam Lacey celebrates the work of Crosscare in a special 80th anniversary Mass.

POVERTY CHASTITY AND (DIS) OBEDIENCE

RTÉ One Thursday September 30, 11.20pm

This documentary is dedicated to the generations of Irish missionary men and women who devoted their lives to South Africa, standing in solidarity with its people and their struggle.

he wasn't keen on quotas as he felt they created a “culture of tokenism”. Where people did agree on what was desirable there shouldn't just be one approved way of working for this. One oblique remark made me think he might have had in mind that certain ways of tackling racism seem almost obligatory – e.g. ‘taking the knee’. It was a robust but courteous interview, though I felt Mr Savage wasn't sympathetic to Mr Ramaswamy's views.

Sympathetic

He was even less sympathetic when, on the Wednesday, he interviewed Dr Joe Pojman, of the Texas Alliance for Life about the recent Texas abortion law. I was concerned when he introduced the item with a reference to “abortion

care”. Now that's the language of one side of the argument and not appropriate for a presenter who is supposed to be impartial. Despite being under pressure, Dr Pojman stayed calm and reasoned and was crystal clear in his pro-life arguments. Mr Savage asked him if he was motivated by religion but he wasn't going to be put in that particular pigeonhole. He was coming at the issue from a human rights perspective, and no matter how many ‘hard cases’ Mr Savage put to him he kept coming back to the humanity of the unborn child, which of course is where we all start.

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Film

Aubrey Malone



Strong women from all walks of life

This seems to be women's month.

Annette is a musical romance about a couple who have a ‘puppet’ daughter with an unusual gift – she can sing in her mother's voice. *Rose Plays Julie* has a veterinary student looking for the mother who put her up for adoption years ago.

Gunpowder Milkshake features three generations of female assassins joining forces to protect a young girl from her enemies. *Herself* has a young woman escaping an abusive husband and trying to build a new life away from him.

Jennifer Hudson plays the legendary soul singer Aretha Franklin in *Respect*, a biopic of the soul singer who died

in 2018. She personally hand-picked Hudson to play her, telling her she'd win an Oscar in the part. Franklin lived a life and a half in her 76 years, first exercising her vocal chords in her father's church choir.

Yesteryear

What about women from yesteryear? Bette Davis is one of the most famous actresses in film history. Her 1940s classic *Now, Voyager* has been re-released on Mubi. It's one of those films you can watch over and over again – even to watch Paul Henreid lighting two cigarettes at the one time for her.

We shouldn't see it as a typical Davis vehicle. She specialised in playing difficult women



Jennifer Hudson as Aretha Franklin in the biopic, ‘Respect’.

like Margot Channing in *All About Eve* – and traumatised ones like the title character of *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane*. A romantic role like this was untypical.

She never cared how she looked. “I have eyes like a bullfrog,” she said, “and a neck like an ostrich. You have to be good to survive with that kind of equipment.”

A woman's liberationist before the term was coined, she paved the way for a generation of women who wanted to be evaluated for acting ability rather than their vital statistics.

Contracts

She shattered the ‘glass ceiling’ that kept them in dead end contracts. Olivia de Havilland usually gets the credit for this (she won a famous law case over it) but Bette did her bit too. Her battle against Jack Warner failed but it paved the way for others to break away from the stranglehold of the major studios.

She's still an icon today. Who can forget the way she croaked “What a dump!” in *Beyond the Forest*. Even better

was her putdown to a beau in *Cabin in the Cotton*: “I'd like ta kiss ye but I just washed my hair!”

Moving away from the “gentle sex”, *Father of the Cyborgs* is a documentary based on a 1990s doctor who enabled a paralysed man to operate a computer by planting electrodes in his brain. Dubbed the ‘Alexander Graham Bell’ of the decade, Phil Kennedy went on to experiment on his own brain with near-disastrous results.

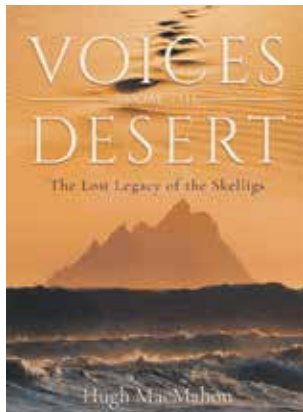
His research caused a lot of controversy around moral issues like eugenics, genomics, neuro-ethics and psychological autonomy. It provides food for thought for specialists in the field – if not the man in the street.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



Seekers after spiritual truth



Voice from the Desert. The Lost Legacy of the Skelligs

by Hugh MacMahon
(Columba Books.
€14.99/£12.99)

Skellig Michael is one of the most famous heritage sites in Ireland, which the Office of Public Works has made great effort to render more accessible to visitors. Having appeared in one of the segments of the *Star Wars* series it is now known world-wide. Let us hope that the ancient stones do not become worn down by the tramping feet of thousands, as is the case with Dún Aonghasa on Inis Mór.

Fr Hugh MacMahon is a retired Columban missionary who worked for many years in Korea and has long been engaged with other cultures. His earlier books deal, in fact, with Asia. Many people may pick up his new Irish book hoping that it might explain how life was lived by the ancient monks on that lonely

pinnacle out in the wild Atlantic. And indeed he does, but in an unexpected way.

Monks

He deals not so much with the monks on the island, but with the sources of their ideas about the purpose of monasticism. These derive from Egyptian Christian sources, notably through the writings of St John Cassian.

On the whole, as I have remarked before, Irish Catholics are so focused on Rome that the Eastern and Orthodox tradition remain a closed world to them, despite their influence on early Christian culture on our own island, that which claims to be 'orthodox', is certainly not Orthodox.

“It was John Cassian who is largely credited with introducing the monastic concepts of the East into Western Europe”

Fr MacMahon's text derives from John Cassian's own writings arranged in language that makes for easier understanding by modern readers. His version is engaging and enlightening, and will capture the interest of many enquiring minds in these days of change. One can see it

transferring naturally to television.

John Cassian and his companion Germanus made an expedition through the Egyptian desert, questioning the most revered teachers among the monastic communities in their isolated monasteries about what their purpose was, what they hoped for, and about theological matters such as the action of grace in moving the individual soul towards God, and many other ideas which became matters of controversy at the early Councils.

It was John Cassian who is largely credited with introducing the monastic concepts of the East into Western Europe, and by extension into early Christian Ireland in the 4th Century.

Hugh MacMahon has made an ancient classic greatly influential in its own time readily available to present-day readers.

Real purpose

This is engaging, but perhaps the real purpose behind the book is to take its readers back to a time when the institutional Church did not exist in the way it did later. Here was a faith driven from the ground up and not imposed (often sternly) from above. Hugh MacMahon sees this form of early Christianity as a model for the modern world to aspire to. It is this, I think, which gives the book its special interest, and which will make essential reading for many restless with what they often encounter in the parishes today.

He remarks that in early Christian Ireland an illiterate monk was to the Irish mind an impossibility. True enough. But one book should always lead the readers on to other books. The text as it is has one failing: there is no indication of sources, or of the essential books for further reading. This is a small matter which can be remedied in the further printings the book deserves to have.

Hugh MacMahon recently told an interviewer that his new book was written for those who want “to understand their Irish heritage and people wanting to know what Christian life was like before it became cluttered by later theologising and devotions”.

How Christianity brought us the secular

The Innocence of Pontius Pilate. How the Roman trial of Jesus shaped history
by David Lloyd Dunesbury
(Hurst and Company,
£25.00/€30.00)

Frank Litton

Stories we are told can win or lose wars. The Taliban's story – David vs Goliath in a 'holy' war – proved more telling than the United States' and its allies' story of a nation to be liberalised, democratised and made fit for a globalised world.

The Taliban story hardly promises liberation. It has no place for the secular and promises rule by divine instruction in the shape of Sharia law, harshly interpreted.

The Gospel story is at the heart of Christianity. It culminates in the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this enlightening study,

David Lloyd Dunesbury takes a central episode of the story, the trial of Jesus before Pilate, and follows its impact on how Europeans came to a view of the relationship between Church and state, between revelation and politics, completely different from that of the Taliban.

We learn how the Church developed and deployed the notion of the secular to shape its understanding of the relationship between Pope and emperor.

Meditations

St Augustine laid the foundations with his meditations on Jesus' response to Pilate: “My Kingdom is not this world”. He distinguished a ‘city of God’ from a ‘city of men’.

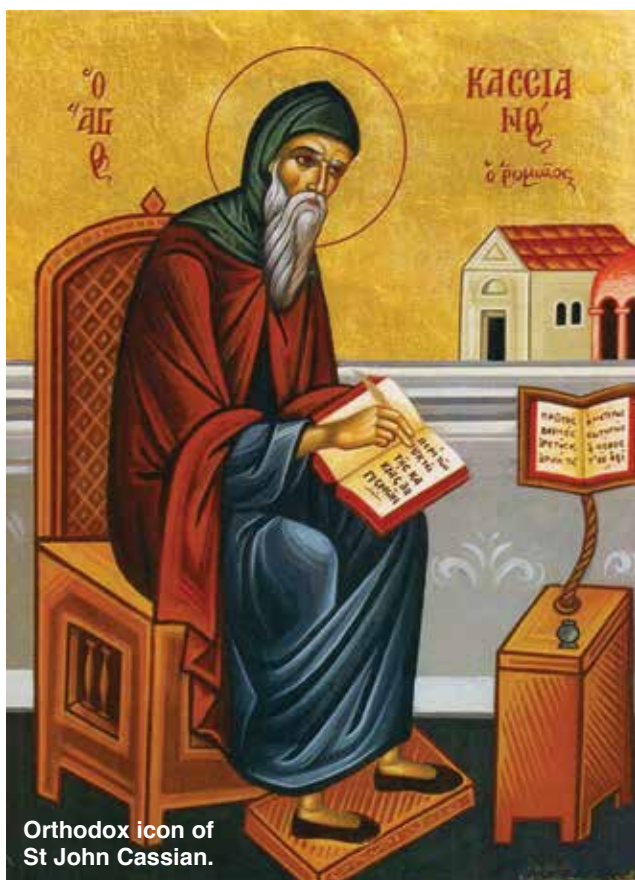
Christians inhabit both cities. From the perspective of the city of God, they see the dangers of the city of men with its

temptations to pride and domination. While they are encouraged to move the cities closer, they know as they pray ‘thy Kingdom come’ that the gap is not theirs to close.

We hear criticism of the secular and especially ‘secularism’ from the side of the believer. We should pay more attention to criticisms from the side of politics. Jean-Jacques Rousseau is a key figure in the history of western political thought and action. His understanding of democracy had a major impact, not least on the course of the French Revolution.

The distinction between a kingdom in the here and now, and a kingdom ‘not of this world’ divides loyalty, he tells us, and weakens the former. As Mr Dunesbury reminds us, he writes in the *Social Contract*, perhaps his most influential contribution, “Mohammed had very sound

“The political temptation to dissolve the secular and endow states with a quasi-religious mystique delivers calamitous consequences”



Orthodox icon of St John Cassian.

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.



Jack B. Yeats, *The Basin in which Pilate washed his hands* (1950). Private collection © Estate of Jack B. Yeats, DACS/IVARO, 2021. Photo: NGI.

views, he tied his political system together well, and as long as the form of this government subsisted under his successors, the Caliphs, the government was completely unified, and good for that reason”.

“In this enlightening study, David Lloyd Dunesbury takes a central episode of the story, the trial of Jesus before Pilate”

History is clear: the political temptation to dissolve the secular and endow states with a quasi-religious mystique delivers calamitous consequences.

Mr Dunesbury's wide erudition that stretches from ancient history to the political philosophies of Hobbes and Rousseau masters the complexities of the story, while his elegant, lucid prose guides the general reader through them.

We learn, for instance, how prejudice shapes interpretation. Mr Dunesbury traces the efforts to downplay the role

of the trial before Pilate as the focus was placed on the role of the Jews. This distracts attention from the political and legal dimension, while giving the religious dimension an entirely unjustified anti-Semitic slant.

Recent times have seen a number of books — I think especially of Larry Siedentop's *Inventing the Individual: The Origins of Western Liberalism* and Tom Holland's *Dominion* — that trace Europe's liberal democratic order with its respect for human dignity, the rule of law, and human rights to its roots in Christianity.

Convincing

It is a more convincing story than the melodrama that tells how the power of reason took on the evils of superstition and authoritarianism inherent in religion and won, delivering enlightenment to all.

Of course, it is also a more complicated story. It has to be given the consequences of original sin that are much in evidence throughout. David Lloyd Dunesbury gives us an important chapter in this story. As Europe becomes post-Christian, how much of its political culture will survive the cutting off of its roots?

Into the imaginative world of Jack Yeats

Peter Costello

The exhibition at the National Gallery of Ireland to mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of the painter Jack B. Yeats is one which everyone at all interested in Irish art — or indeed Irish culture in general — will want to see. The catalogue to accompany the show is also one to have.

Though inevitably some of the pictures are familiar (for instance *Bachelors' Walk*, *In Memory* where a young woman places a rose in memory of the civilians killed in the shooting on the quay after the Howth gun running episode in 1914, an incident that presaged many more shootings, many more deaths). These have long been loved.

But the special appeal of this show is the large number of Yeats' paintings that have been borrowed from private collections, and are rarely or never exhibited. There is then much that will be quite new even to long-time admirers of the painter, which give the show its very special appeal.

In my own case a print of *The Mail Car* hung in my bedroom as a boy, so that the strong style and vivid nature of Jack Yeats' imagination was imprinted on my own at a very early age.

Modern

Yeats has often been used to illustrate modern Irish history. I discuss many of the 'national images' in my own book *The Heart Grown Brutal*, about the literature of the revolution.

But the feature of this exhibition is, I think, its 'non-national' nature. The core of the exhibition is a revelation of the private world of Yeats' imagination, drawing largely on his childhood years in Sligo, but influenced (sometimes almost subliminally), by years in England as well. The joy he took in circuses and theatre and horses all that is here. But



Jack B. Yeats, *On Through the Silent Lands*, 1951. Collection Ulster Museum © Estate of Jack B. Yeats, DACS/IVARO, 2021. Photo: NGI.

so too is a prevailing sense of melancholy. The street life of Dublin also strongly appealed to Yeats in his last years.

“Jack Yeats was resolute in not discussing or explaining what he painted”

In the catalogue a most interesting graph traces Yeats' production of paintings over the decades, and reveals the extraordinary vitality of the painter in his 70s. In an almost Picasso-like frenzy he turned out picture after picture. True most of these were small canvases, but they are all filled with (to borrow a phrase from his brother the poet) “passionate intensity”.

However the graph is based on paintings completed: in those earlier decades Yeats did a great deal of graphic work, such as illustrations and his William Bird cartoons — so his unit production was greater than it might seem if we count only paintings.

Many images are little seen or 'new'. Take, for instance, *Grafton Street*, *Con-*



Jack B. Yeats, *That We May Never Meet Again*, 1954. York Art Gallery/York Museum Trust © Estate of Jack B. Yeats, DACS/IVARO, 2021

versation Piece, from 1924 in which a couple discussing the fashionable modes in a brightly-lit department store window (which I take to be Switzers) as evening closes in. Beside a small be-capped street urchin also gazes with longing into the fairy land of comfort and contentment. Note the date: the Dublin to which post-revolutionary peace had returned.

Explaining

Jack Yeats was resolute in not discussing or explaining what he painted. There are mysteries everywhere in his work.

The Yeats scholars working through the National Gallery have cleared the ground by cataloguing and arranging the paintings. Now perhaps the more critical work of exploring the private mythology of Yeats' imaginative world expressed in the all too often enigmatic titles he gave them.

“The core of the exhibition is a revelation of the private world of Yeats' imagination”

There is still a lot to learn, but this exhibition seems (to me at least) to open a portal to the beginning of a deeper understanding of the 'blue remembered hills' in his land of lost content. It will take time: do we even now fully understand the images of, say William Blake, to whom the poet Yeats devoted so much time, and who greatly influenced him.

Again this exhibition shows Jack B. Yeats to be Ireland's most interesting artist.

Everyone connected with the exhibition is to be congratulated on giving us all a marvellous revelation of the art of memory and association to enjoy in the post-pandemic future.



Jack B. Yeats, *Grafton Street. Conversation*, 1924. Collection Ulster Museum © Estate of Jack B. Yeats, DACS/IVARO, 2021. Photo: NGI.

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Dear Heart of Jesus,
In the past I have asked for many favours.
This time I ask for a special one. (mention here)
Take it, dear Heart of Jesus, and place it within your own broken Heart where your Father sees it.
Then, in his merciful eyes, it will become your favour, not mine. Amen.
Say this prayer for three days.
P.D.

The Miracle Prayer

Dear Heart of Jesus,
In the past I have asked for many favours.
This time I ask for a special one. (mention here)
Take it, dear Heart of Jesus, and place it within your own broken Heart where your Father sees it.
Then, in his merciful eyes, it will become your favour, not mine. Amen.
Say this prayer for three days.
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– Pope St Pius X, June 4, 1912

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– Pope St Pius X, June 4, 1912

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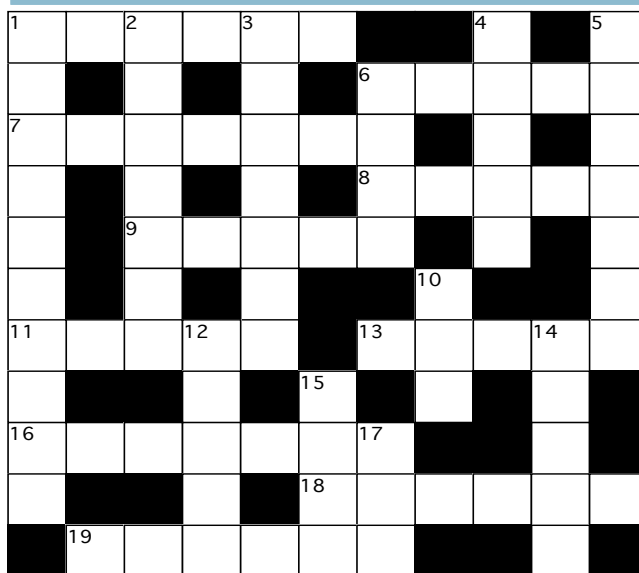
Trócaire

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One day, parents and their children will tell the story of how your legacy of love changed their lives. Thank you for considering a gift to Trócaire in your Will.

Crossword Junior

Gordius 401



Across

- 1 You may not be able to see the sun when the sky is like this (6)
- 6 Exactly the same (5)
- 7 Not anything (7)
- 8 It grows in a lawn (5)
- 9 Heats water in a kettle (5)
- 11 These birds are said to get up very early (5)
- 13 Discovers (5)
- 16 Sport played with a cue (7)
- 18 Large birds of prey (6)
- 19 Putting a question (6)

Down

- 1 Treat you might buy at a

fairground (5,5)

- 2 The tenth month of the year (7)
- 3 You can make these flowers into a chain (7)
- 4 A person can be called a _____ being (5)
- 5 'Specs' (7)
- 6 Hens lay them (4)
- 10 The team with the highest score will ____ (3)
- 12 Tap a door to ask someone to open it (5)
- 14 Set of twelve (5)
- 15 Eager (4)
- 17 Piece of torn clothing (3)

SOLUTIONS, SEPTEMBER 16

GORDIUS NO. 525

Across – 1 Tapestries 6 Trio 10 Santa Maria 11 Versatile 12 Weekend 15 Tonic 17 Ugli fruit 18 Avon 21 Penance 23 Deter 24 Smog 25 Evil 26 Cafes 28 Eclairs 33 Plunderer 34 Ranch 35 Seth 36 Floodwater

Down – 1 Tusk 2 Pentecost 3 Snack 4 Raven 5 Euro 7 Reign 8 Overcharge 9 Pastime 13 Elbe 14 Durable 16 Landscapes 20 Rembrandt 21 Preside 22 Coil 29 Curio 30 Arrow 31 Oral 32 Cher

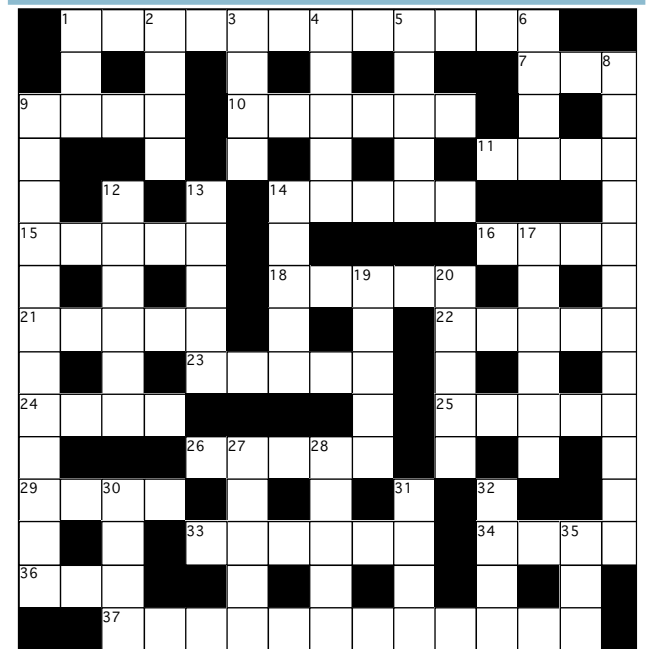
CHILDREN'S No. 400

Across – 1 Footprints 7 Agent 8 Candles 10 Catch 12 Name 14 Skeleton 16 Amen 17 Step 19 Disease 20 Head 21 Works

Down – 1 France 2 Overtake 3 Pitch 4 Iron 5 Tail 6 Aisle 9 Dinosaur 11 Seesaw 13 Ants 14 Smoke 15 Ended 18 Eels

Crossword

Gordius 526



Across

- 1 Washington Irving character who fell asleep for twenty years in the Catskill Mountains (3,3,6)
- 7 Leinster river seen finally in Dundee (3)
- 9 Pace (4)
- 10 Rarely (6)
- 11 Practise needlecraft (4)
- 14 Castor (5)
- 15 Jibe (5)
- 16 Type of fruit (4)
- 18 Friends can let off steam (5)
- 21 Burn the edges of something (5)
- 22 City in Emilia-Romagna, Italy (5)
- 23 Tall and thin (5)
- 24 The yellow part of an egg (4)
- 25 Encourage - with an ovum aboard? (3,2)
- 26 Three-dimensional representation of the earth (5)
- 29 Movie based on Dick King-Smith's book 'The Sheep Pig' (4)
- 33 Aim ale to upset Ms Earhart (6)
- 34 A skua disturbed some other birds (4)
- 36 Strong, alkaline liquid used in cleaning, etc (3)
- 37 Would this identify the nuptials of a cue ball? (5,7)

Down

- 1 Furrow or groove in the ground (3)
- 2 The one smoked by Sherlock Holmes was a calabash (4)
- 3 As well (4)
- 4 Coming from the Land of the Valleys (5)
- 5 Hangman's knot (5)
- 6 Adam and Eve's garden paradise (4)
- 8 Trainees rent out such performers (12)
- 9 Ostentatious possession to show one's wealth (6,6)
- 12 Ship's smokestack (6)
- 13 This metal may be 'stainless' (5)
- 14 Female adult (5)
- 17 Make angry (6)
- 19 Herb of the mint family (5)
- 20 & 27 It indicates a maximum rate of vehicular progress (5,5)
- 28 In an inferior position (5)
- 30 Make beer (4)
- 31 Female house servant (4)
- 32 Dry riverbed (4)
- 35 Cask (3)

Sudoku Corner

401

Easy

5	4			6			3	8
2						4		5
	1	9	8	5		2		
				9		7		
7		5	4		2	9		6
		6		8				
		2		1	8	3	4	
8		4						1
1	9			4			5	2

Hard

8				3				7
			1		9	8		
	2	3			6	9		
	8	6					1	
9								4
	1					7	8	
		5	6			4	2	
		9	8		4			
7				2				6

Last week's Easy 400

2	1	9	8	4	6	5	7	3
6	7	5	9	1	3	8	4	2
4	3	8	7	5	2	6	1	9
3	8	2	6	7	9	1	5	4
9	5	1	2	8	4	7	3	6
7	4	6	5	3	1	9	2	8
1	6	4	3	9	5	2	8	7
5	9	7	4	2	8	3	6	1
8	2	3	1	6	7	4	9	5

Last week's Hard 400

3	2	6	9	5	7	1	4	8
1	5	4	8	6	2	3	9	7
8	9	7	3	1	4	2	5	6
5	6	2	4	7	1	8	3	9
7	1	3	6	9	8	5	2	4
4	8	9	2	3	5	7	6	1
2	3	8	1	4	9	6	7	5
6	4	5	7	8	3	9	1	2
9	7	1	5	2	6	4	8	3



Notebook

Fr Vincent Sherlock

Punctuation in anticipation of the synodal pathway

SYNODAL PATHWAY... I am not sure whether that should be followed with an exclamation mark, a question mark or a full stop!

Synodal pathway! (Exclamation mark) That could work. I am prone to overusing exclamation marks and am not quite sure why. I like them. They suggest life, a bit of fun and wonder and, I like to think, engagement. So, I think it could work there. It would be great to think that the synodal pathway would be life giving, that there would be room for fun – the bit of banter over and back until something positive emerges, and certainly there is place in it for wonder: “I wonder what will come of this?”, “I wonder will my voice be heard?”, “I wonder will I find my voice at all?”, “I wonder how open I will be to some of the items raised along the way?”

Numbered

Wonder, with awe, in God’s presence is numbered as one of the seven-fold gifts so it is certain, it deserves its place on the journey envisaged by the Irish Church at this time. So, the synodal pathway! is through to the next round.

Synodal pathway? (Question mark) This seems to be a given.



The question and the questioning, the answer and the answering have to be central to all that, please God, might happen in the coming years. Real questions around life, faith, worship, roles, equality, ministry, reaching out to the lapsed, encouraging the young, affirming the aged and struggling and so much more will have to be asked and revisited.

The questions must be carefully prepared, prayed about and asked only if there is an openness to the answers received. Some of the answers will enliven, some will dampen the spirits, others will uplift while still more will confuse. Alongside all of this there may well be anger and frustration too, as some of the answers fall short of what some might hope for. Yes, the question mark most certainly has its place and is through to the next round.

Full Stop

Synodal pathway. (Full stop) Not so sure about that one. I am not sure a “full stop” would serve much purpose. The stop suggests lack of movement, inflexibility, closed minds, hardened hearts and no room for manoeuvre. It suggests an ending before there is even a beginning. “We are not discussing this, full stop” is hardly a good place to start any journey. Certainly, it would be a flawed way to enter a period of discussion and reflection around something as central to our lives as Church, its role and purpose in our lives. So, though it has its place, it seems to me the full stop is not going through to the next round!

But ... there is always a but! The full stop has merit too. It is about stopping, standing still and assessing where we have been and where we are going. It is about slowing things down, avoiding the rush and taking a breath. Maybe we should call it back before it is too late. Still though, ‘full stop’ is so final. Maybe there are other options open to us. ‘Synodal pathway;’ or ‘Synodal pathway,’ – the semi-colon and the comma know something about the full stop too and the need to take a break, take a moment so that the text does not run away with us or from us. Without closing any doors, they each invite a more measured pace that allows for pausing and reflecting. They, in their turn, allow us to look back at what has gone before and to ease into what is to follow. Yes, the comma, the semi-colon and maybe even the colon, have earned their place and are all through to the next round.

Punctuation is one thing, important and not to be ignored, but persistence will be the key, a willingness to walk slowly, think clearly, listen attentively and speak respectfully will combine to make something real of what could all too easily be a full stop!

Another option...

I heard a story once of a man who was correcting the Leaving Cert English Paper. One student’s script was filled with page after page of text that included no punctuation whatsoever. Each answer began with a capital letter and ended with a full stop with no use of punctuation in between. The final sheet of the answer book was filled with question marks, commas, semi-colons, colons, apostrophes, quotation marks, and any other punctuation mark the student could think of and underneath was written: “Dear examiner please stick these in where needed!”



The Pope with a Lebanese flag at his 4 August audience, at which he appealed for the people of Lebanon.



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