

YourParish App

Find out more:
www.yourparishapp.ie

**Connect with your parishioners
like never before**

Keep in touch with parishioners all week and offer them a great faith-building resource at the same time



The Irish Catholic

CLEAR THINKING

The referendum and personal conscience

Pages 14-15



CONSCRIPTION CRISIS

Paving the way to Irish independence

Pages 16-17



DAVID QUINN

Keeping your integrity in a corrosive atmosphere Page 10



Thursday, April 26, 2018

€1.80 (Stg £1.50)

The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

@IrishCathNews

www.irishcatholic.com

Pope Francis visit could help revive Stormont

Vatican should reconsider plans to skip North, urge Protestant leaders

EXCLUSIVE

Colm Fitzpatrick,
Greg Daly and
Martin O'Brien

The Pope could help towards resolving political tensions in the North of Ireland and bring about the re-establishment of Stormont, a prominent Protestant minister has said.

Dr Ken Newell, a former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland who played a significant role in the peace process, said he was "sad" that Pope Francis wasn't coming to the North of Ireland in August this year and that there has been a "serious miscalculation" by the Vatican on the issue.

He added that Pope Francis' attendance in the

North would help resolve underlying religious and historical differences as well as encourage the re-establishment of political institutions.

Animosity

"I would see his coming North as similar to the Queen's visit going South. I think she defrosted centuries of animosity by her gestures and I think that Pope Francis coming to the North would help to defrost attitudes on both sides – both Protestants and Catholics need their attitudes defrosted," Rev. Newell told *The Irish Catholic*.

"But also, most of all, if he had come to the North, he could have called for a getting back together again

» Continued on Page 2

On your bike...

Garda Sergeant Bernard Kilroy with Jack, Harry and Derek Reilly at the Diocese of Elphin Family Picnic Fun Day in Lough Key Park last weekend. See Page 13. Photo: Liam Reynolds



**LOUGH DERG
SEASON 2018**

Opens Saturday
5th May with

ONE DAY RETREATS



*One Day Retreats on Lough Derg offer an opportunity
for quiet and respite in the midst of a busy life*

ONE DAY RETREATS are on: Sat 5th, Sun 6th, Mon 7th, Tues 8th, Sat 12th,
Sun 13th, Tues 15th, Sun 20th, Tues 22nd, Sat 26th, Sun 27th & Mon 28th May



www.loughderg.org

The Retreat programme runs from 10.00am-4.30pm.

Not suitable for children.

Welcome refreshments and light lunch served. Fasting or walking barefoot is not required.

Admission €45.

Boats available from 9.15am and return from 4.15pm.

Booking Essential

Contact Lough Derg on
00353 (0)71 9861518 or
info@loughderg.org



Inside this week

Personal Profile
To be a Christian
is to be a rebel

Page 30



WMOF2018
On target
for 12,000
international
attendees Page 12



Foreign news
Nuns lead the
fight against
trafficking

Page 23



Managing Editor: Michael Kelly, editor@irishcatholic.ie
Features Editor: Mags Gargan, mags@irishcatholic.ie
Chief Reporter: Greg Daly, greg@irishcatholic.ie
Northern Correspondent: Martin O'Brien, martin@irishcatholic.ie
Newsroom: news@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874029
Books Editor: Peter Costello, books@irishcatholic.ie
Layout: Declan Moroney
Advertising: advertising@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874094
Accounts: accounts@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874020
Magnificat: magnificat@irishcatholic.ie
Office hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
9.30am–5.30pm
Shop: shop@irishcatholic.ie
Managing Director: Garry O'Sullivan

Annual Subscription Rates: Ireland €125. Airmail €145.
ISSN 1393 - 6832 - Published by The Irish Catholic,
23 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.
Printed by The Irish Times

Place an Advert

Phone 01 687 4094 or advertising@irishcatholic.ie

Michael Kelly's Editor's Comment returns next week

Cancer specialists reject 'no chemo for pregnant women' claims

Greg Daly

Leading oncologists have dismissed claims that pregnant women cannot safely be treated for cancer, and will be denied chemotherapy.

Rumours that chemotherapy is not an option for pregnant women with cancer have been rife during the referendum campaign around Ireland's constitutional protections for the unborn, but such rumours are unfounded, Dr David Fennelly told *The Irish Catholic*.

"Women who are pregnant can and do have chemotherapy," he said, continuing: "There are certain types of chemotherapy, and there are stages of the pregnancy where you have got to be

more careful with chemotherapy, (notably) so in the first trimester, but we occasionally do have to give chemotherapy in the context of a pregnancy."

Another oncologist, who asked not to be named, rejected claims that pregnant women with cancer must choose between having an abortion so treatment can begin, or delaying treatment until after birth.

"That's untrue – I've given lots of pregnant women chemo," he said.

"We don't like giving chemotherapy in the first trimester of pregnancy," he continued, "it runs an extremely high risk of foetal malformation, though after the first trimester it does not."

Such situations, he added, are highly unusual.

"The reality is that it seldom happens it's that acute because by the time people are diagnosed with pregnancy they're usually six or seven weeks pregnant, and when you're planning the treatment.

"So it would be a rare, rare situation where you thought there was an urgency about giving chemotherapy in the first trimester," he said, adding, "I have not ever found myself in any conflicted situation."

Dr Elizabeth Toy, Clinical Director for Cancer Services at the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Trust, told this newspaper that while caring for both patients can be difficult, many

treatments can be safely given during pregnancy.

"A multi-disciplinary approach to care is typical, involving oncologists, obstetricians, foetal medicine experts and paediatricians," she said. "These need to balance risks to both mother and child at all stages of disease so there may well be compromises in optimal treatment of cancer or the pregnancy to achieve this."

Noting that chemotherapy, unlike radiotherapy, is relatively safe after 14 weeks, she added: "There is more research needed on the effects of pregnancy on the biology of the cancer and also the relative effectiveness of chemotherapy during the state of pregnancy."

Vatican should reconsider plans to skip North

» Continued from Page 1

in terms of running the country instead of this. Now we don't really have a parliament in Stormont anymore. So, I'm thinking he would have called us back to a very important commitment to work together for the benefit of everybody in the North. I think that would have helped towards the reestablishment of the political institutions in the North," he said.

Rev. Newell also suggested that the Vatican needs to "reconsider the possibility" of a papal visit to the North in response to the Irish hierarchy's appeal and the northern bishops' major disappointment.

Echoing these comments, Bishop John McDowell, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Clogher and outgoing President of the Irish Council of Churches, said various Christian denominations would welcome the Pope, and his visit would help deal with current political problems.

"It was indeed disappointing to learn

that Pope Francis was unlikely to include a venue in Northern Ireland in his itinerary. I know that many people, including myself, from the Reformed Churches would have warmly welcomed, and were eagerly anticipating such a visit.

Presence

"Quite apart from the encouragement his presence and words would bring to many believers, there is also a feeling that the particular emphasis he places on the virtues of mercy, compassion and peace could help us deal with the many political problems which we currently face.

"Who knows, perhaps the Vatican authorities can be persuaded to think again," Bishop McDowell said.

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar has already affirmed, in response to questions from TDs in the Dáil on April 18, that the Government would like to facilitate a possible visit to Northern Ireland, and also recommended that the Pope meet with victims of clerical abuse.

Hopeful that the Pontiff will come to the North, former Irish Fianna Fáil politician and key actor in the Northern Ireland peace process Martin Mansergh said it would be a "missed opportunity" if the Pope doesn't visit, and that his attendance could create a space for ecumenical dialogue.

"The Pope's visit to the North isn't going to be seen in general terms as triumphalist, given there is a strong other community – that sounds a bit implausible to me.

"Pope Francis would obviously be extraordinarily sensitive, and I'm sure he'd meet the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh and things like that while he was there," Mr Mansergh said.

"My bottom line would be I think it would be a missed opportunity if he didn't go, barring some extraordinary circumstances that we can't foresee at the moment."

JOE WALSH TOURS

SHRINES OF EUROPE 2018

SHRINES OF FRANCE

19 JULY 2018 | 7 NIGHTS

- 1 night Lisieux and 1 night Paris | Half Board
- 1 night Nevers and 1 night Rocamadour | Half Board
- 3 nights Lourdes | Full Board

€799
pps

SHRINES OF EUROPE

17 JULY 2018 | 9 NIGHTS

- Option 1: Fatima, Santiago de Compostela, Santander, Lourdes
- Option 2: Fatima, Avila, Burgos, Lourdes
- Half board basis; lunch also included in Lourdes and Fatima

€879
pps



LEAVE A LEGACY FOR LIFE - SUPPORT THE PRO LIFE CAMPAIGN IN YOUR WILL

Contact us today to order a copy of our Wills Information leaflet

The Pro Life Campaign promotes pro-life education and defends human life at all stages, from conception to natural death. For more info visit www.prolifecampaign.ie



prolife
campaign

Pro Life Campaign
Suite 60, Clifton House,
Lower Fitzwilliam Street,
Dublin 2
info@prolifecampaign.ie
01 6629275

What do you think?



Let us know by writing to:

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

Summit prayer vigil on Reek to save Eighth

Susan Gately

Every day until Referendum day a group of lay people and clergy are climbing Croagh Patrick and spending 24 hours in prayer at the summit before the Blessed Sacrament for the preservation of the Eighth Amendment.

Tuam's Archbishop Michael Neary and Westport parish priest, Fr Charlie McDonnell gave their blessing to the venture which began on April 17. "We are following in St Patrick's Footsteps," said Dubliner Damien Richardson, one of the originators of the idea.

Over 30 lay people and five priests have taken part in the Perpetual Adoration rota so far, according to the organisers. Most days there has been Mass at the summit. "All we want to do is give people hope," said Mr Richardson.

Summit

The idea was the brainchild of three men – Damien Richardson, John Carlin and Tim Jackson – as they came away from a recent Loveboth rally in Dun Laoghaire. "We were thinking 'Can we do more for the Eighth Amendment?'" Mr Richardson told *The Irish Catholic*. "And we said, 'Like

St Patrick, let's pray for 40 days and nights at the summit of Croagh Patrick.'"

Realising it would be too difficult for any one person, they came up with the idea of a rota. Since then each day people have met in the car park at the base of Croagh Patrick around noon and climbed the reek together. Arriving at the summit around 3pm, they take over the prayer rota for 24 hours while others return down the mountain.

On average five to six people have slept in the chapel on the summit of the holy mountain each night. "A lady was up last week who was 72," John Carlin said.

"During the day you'd be blown away but at night time it's absolutely freezing," he continued. "There's no light, no electricity, there's nothing.

"It is primitive. It takes us right back 1,500 years, to when Christianity was established here – to St Patrick."

Anyone wishing to commit to a 24-hour shift in the 40 days and nights Perpetual Adoration on Croagh Patrick should contact John at 086-8389989.



Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother on a visit to a secondary school holding a photograph of Sr Clare Crockett.

Huge demand to see movie about young Irish missionary

Susan Gately

Such was the demand to see the film about Irish Missionary Sr Clare Crockett earlier this week that the Brunswick Moviebowl in Derry had to put on three extra showings of the documentary.

More than 1,000 people attended *All or Nothing – Sister Clare* on April 16 and 18. "I'm still getting phonecalls to see when we're showing it again," cinema owner Paddy Simpson, told *The Irish Catholic*.

The movie tells the life story of Servant Sister Clare Crockett from Derry, who died in an earthquake in Ecuador two years ago. "I was moved to see how Sister Clare's story is able to touch so many hearts and to see how she can bring so much hope to the young people," said Sr Kristen Gardner, Editor of *All or Nothing*.

Over 400 requests for the movie, from all over the world, have been made at: <https://www.sisterclare.com>

Fr Ray Kelly set for next round of Britain's Got Talent

Staff reporter

The parish priest of Oldcastle, Meath who bowled over the judges on ITV's *Britain's Got Talent* on Saturday night (April 21), is all set for the next round which will be shot in mid May.

Fr Ray Kelly (64) sang the REM song 'Everybody Hurts' to a packed auditorium. "It's a song that's near and dear to my heart. Being a priest you get in touch with a lot of pain and a lot of joy so it's a song I feel I can relate to," he told judges Simon Cowell, David Walliams, Alesha Dixon and Amanda Holden.

Earlier Simon Cowell joked with the priest, asking him if he did exorcisms: "Yeah, we can work on David [Walliams]. Do you want me to zap him now or later?" replied the priest.

Fr Kelly said he would like to be "the first singing priest to win *Britain's Got Talent*".

Simon Cowell led a standing ovation at the end of Fr Kelly's performance: "I wasn't quite sure what to expect, to be honest...but this is one of my favourite ever auditions."

All four judges voted Fr Kelly through to the next round.

Saturday's show was pre-recorded in January. "I only told a few members of my family the result. I had to keep my mouth shut," he told *The Irish Catholic*. In Mass in Oldcastle on Sunday last, Fr Kelly's parishioners gave him another round of applause.

JOE WALSH TOURS | 2018



SHRINES OF EUROPE

17 JULY | 9 NIGHTS

- **Option 1:** Fatima, Santiago de Compostela, Santander, Lourdes
- **Option 2:** Fatima, Avila, Burgos, Lourdes

€879
per person

FATIMA | FEAST OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

10 MAY | 7 NIGHTS

- Full Board at a 4* hotel
- Full religious programme

€799
per person

SHRINES OF FRANCE

19 JULY | 7 NIGHTS

- Visits Lisieux, Paris, Nevers, Rocamadour & Lourdes
- English speaking guide throughout the pilgrimage

from
€799
per person

SHRINES OF PORTUGAL

2 AUGUST | 7 NIGHTS

- 4 nights **Fatima** | Full Board
- 2 nights **Braga** | Full Board
- 1 night **Costa da Caparica** | Half Board

€825
per person

SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO & SORRENTO

22 JUNE | 7 NIGHTS

- Visiting Pietrelcina, birthplace of St. Padre Pio
- Guided tour of the ancient city of Pompeii

€929
per person

MEDJUGORJE, CASCIA & SAN GIOVANNI

30 AUGUST | 8 NIGHTS

- Half board basis
- Lunch also served in San Giovanni Rotondo

€995
per person

**FULLY
ESCORTED
TOURS**



E: info@joewalshstours.ie | www.joewalshstours.ie | 01 241 0800 | 143, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2 | [f](https://www.facebook.com/JoWalshToursPilgrimages) Joe Walsh Tours Pilgrimages [@JWTPilgrimages](https://www.instagram.com/JWTPilgrimages)

Bonded and licensed as a Tour Operator and Travel Agent by the Commission for Aviation Regulation in Ireland and the Civil Aviation Authority in the UK. T.O. 052 | T.A. 0689 | ATOL 5163 | ABTOT 5332 | E&OE

Worth ‘swimming against the tide’ for women and children – Gaelic star

Greg Daly

Ireland’s constitutional protection of unborn human life is a ‘human rights issue’ worth fighting for, one of the founders of Gaelic Athletes for Life has said.

“It is swimming against the tide in many ways,” Anne-Marie McDonough told *The Irish Catholic*, adding, “I’m definitely willing to stand up for what I believe in because it’s so important – it’s a human rights issue and in my lifetime I’ve never felt so convinced to fight for something.”

Ms McDonough, a teacher and former Galway Ladies’ footballer who won an All-Ireland medal in 2004, and who has represented Ireland both in soccer at underage level and against Australia in International Rules, joined Antrim footballer Patrick Gallagher, Derry camogie player Aoife Cassidy, the former Tyrone manager Mickey Harte, and Meath footballer Joe Sheridan in launching the pro-life initiative in Ballyfermot, Dublin, last weekend.

The group believes the Government’s proposal to repeal the Eighth Amendment is not inclusive, compassionate, or respectful, and has called for “a better solution than to cast away the rights of our unborn children”.

“I thought if our profile could be used for good then I was on board,” Ms McDonough said, explaining how individual members of the group have recorded videos to be shared online, with her feeling that it was important to speak out as a woman.

“Especially being a woman, this was important for me to also state that it was to protect the unborn, but also to protect women.”



Anne-Marie McDonough (on right) tackling Cork’s Valerie Mulcahy in the 2007 All-Ireland Ladies FC final.

Racecourse to host family day

Water zorbing, tag archery and an obstacle course will be among the activities for the family at the Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly’s family fun day this weekend.

Parishes from all across the diocese are invited to the April 29 event, which is built around the theme ‘We are family’ and is part of the diocesan preparations for World Meeting of Families 2018, being held in Dublin this August.

Other activities at Tipperary Racecourse on the day will range from a mobile farm for younger children to an exhibition of the ‘Fruits of the Family’ art project that

has been promoted through the dioceses’ primary schools, and will feature such aspects of diocesan life as the John Paul II Awards, eco-spirituality groups, cell groups, and more traditional groups such as Trócaire, the Society of St Vincent de Paul, and the Legion of Mary.

A youth walk on the day for those aged over 16 will start at the racecourse and finish at the Tipperary Famine Graveyard in time for a Family Liturgy which will be led by youth choirs from around the diocese.

i More information is available at www.cashel-emly.ie

Don’t lose our Penal Times heritage, warns scholar

Susan Gately

Precious symbols of Catholic faith are being lost to Irish heritage as awareness of Mass rocks disappears from living memory, a leading academic has warned.

University of Liverpool-based human geographer Dr Hilary Bishop, who has extensively researched Mass rocks, discovered that in Co. Cork alone there are at least 300 more Mass rocks than are recorded on the Archaeological Survey database.

She is dismayed that the rocks that “kept Catholicism alive” during the penal era are being lost.

“They are the symbol of Catholic heritage. They are what kept the Faith alive. If Gaelic communities hadn’t gone to the Mass rocks, the Faith would have died out,” she told *The Irish Catholic*.

Information about Mass rocks was passed down orally,



A Mass rock near Keem Bay, Achill Island.

because to have included them on 17th- and 18th-Century maps would have legitimated the Catholic Faith.

“I suppose there comes a point where certain generations are less interested in the sites and less interested in their religion and their heritage partly because a lot of them are not physically recorded anywhere so if somebody knows of one and doesn’t pass that information on, then the knowledge

of that Mass rock is lost,” she said.

While in Cork only a quarter of the sites were recorded, with three quarters potentially lost to popular knowledge, Dr Bishop does not know if this figure is replicated in other counties.

“In my opinion, based on my research in Cork, Mayo and Galway and the Diocese of Clogher, there are many more sites. The number recorded on the archaeological-

cal record is nowhere near the amount of potential sites in any of those counties,” she said.

Mass rocks tend to share a number of features, she explained. They would be near water, which could be ritually important for the saying of the Mass, and as a means of covering the footprints of the congregation; they would be “a special rock – something unique within the landscape”; they could have an engraved cross, a ledge and a reredos, for placing sacred objects.

Dr Bishop is appealing to the public to communicate any information they might have about the locations of Mass rocks to her via her website: www.findamass-rock.com

i Full interview with Dr Bishop in *The Irish Catholic* next week.

Knock the star attraction for Dublin Diocese



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin greeting pilgrims who attended the Dublin Diocesan pilgrimage to Knock on Saturday. Photo: John McElroy

YOUR LEGACY CAN CHANGE THE CHURCH IN IRELAND

PLEASE REMEMBER US IN YOUR WILL

ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE TO LOVE JESUS AND EMBRACE THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

NETMINISTRIES.IE
+353 74 919 0606

Our Lady in Medjugorje tells us that **abortion** is a very **grave sin** and those participating will be held responsible.

Our Lady also said, the aborted babies become the **little cherub angels** in Heaven.

Text or e-mail your friends.
(021) 4360000

vote NO

Bishop warns against ‘gender ideology’

It would be “imprudent” to start making legislative changes to allow teenagers to decide their own gender, an Irish bishop has said.

Introduced in 2015, the Gender Recognition Act would allow 16- and 17-year-olds to declare their own gender without parental consent.

According to *The Irish Mail on Sunday*, Bishop of Limerick Brendan Leahy has warned we would want “to be mindful of scientific research in this area”.

“The promotion of the gender ideology is a totally new scenario and it would be imprudent to start making significant legislative enactments that are not well grounded in research and reflection,” Bishop Leahy said.

Vanity – or Catholic fashion?



Mary Kenny

This is the season for clearing out our winter wardrobes, and digging out spring and summer clothes: a task which can prompt many reflections on our lifestyles and homespun philosophy about sartorial indulgence.

As I unzip the bags full of seasonal apparel, I wonder just how much time, money and effort is spent in the pursuit of vanity. Why do I have so many clothes? And why do I keep buying more? Vanity, vanity, all is vanity!

Or is it? Aren't the arts of presentation and costume seen as a signal of the selves we wish to be, or to aspire to? Isn't putting on fresh raiment considered a symbol of respect and even, possibly, purity in the Gospels?

Certainly, Donatella Versace, sister of the slain Italian couturier Gianni Versace – and now the guiding light of the Versace brand – considers that costume and fashion are very much part of Catholic aesthetic tradition.

● Leo Varadkar wants to introduce a new public holiday commemorating 'Republic Day', when this country became a republic in 1949. Would that be healing or divisive? Eamon de Valera was against declaring the 26 counties a Republic as he feared it would create deeper breeches with the North: he also thought Ireland should retain some link with the Commonwealth. Perhaps Leo should set up a Citizens' Assembly about it?

On May 10, at the famed Metropolitan Museum of New York, Donatella will open a dazzling new exhibition called 'Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination'. The exhibition will feature "Catholic-inspired" fashion from Versace, Balenciaga, Valentino, Christian Lacroix, Dolce & Gabbana and Chanel.

Orphanage

I knew that Coco Chanel had



Fashion from the 'Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination' exhibition.

taken her renowned black-and-white patterns from the convent orphanage in which she grew up (and where she learned to sew), but I hadn't realised there was such a wide span of 'Catholic couture'!

Donatella says there is. She and her brother Gianni grew up "very religious" and that "we knew how important Catholicism was to people". Their mother was a strong believer and today Donatella is, she told Luke Leitch in the Economist's culture magazine 1843, closer to the Church than Gianni could ever have

imagined.

The Vatican is supportive of the exhibition and is sending 50 precious ecclesiastical garments, which, Donatella says, shows that "Catholicism is more in tune with the times".

Yet Catholicism has always had an aesthetic side – witness the gorgeous costumes of Renaissance courts. I'd love to whizz off to Manhattan and see this stunning Versace-led exhibition, but I still wonder if my wardrobe-full of (somewhat cheaper) clothes is still a tribute to vanity?

The whole truth

We are not allowed to call individuals "liars" in print, unless we can prove – in a court of law, if need be – that the person has been seriously mendacious. To call someone a "liar" is to impugn their character and reputation.

However, on social media, anything goes. When I mentioned in a Tweet that I had witnessed an abortion at 23 weeks' gestation, at a London hospital, and that it was one of the most gruesome experiences of my life, I was called "a liar" by pro-choice Tweeters. It was said that my witness was "b*****"; I was described as "nuts"; it was claimed I got my information from "crypto-Christian", unreliable websites and not from my own two eyes. One Linda Robbins put up a cartoon image of the fibbing Pinocchio next to my name. Mind you, at least this Linda Robbins was using a real name: most of those claiming that what I said was a falsehood were hiding behind pseudonymous hashtags.

I can attest and prove in any court of law that this was what I witnessed, and that I am not lying about what I saw. But the accusations on Twitter go around the world like Ariel, and I have little redress against being quite unjustly branded a liar.

Yet I believe that a lot of the abusive anger on Twitter from pro-choice sources is really rooted in distress. In their hearts, most of them know what occurs at a 23-week abortion, and their way of coping with this extremely upsetting fact is to lash out at the truth, and anyone who speaks it.

4 weeks left to SAVE the 8th!



URGENT APPEAL

Please send what you can today to help us make sure Ireland VOTES NO to abortion.

Polls show that our campaign is working - we are changing hearts and minds for life, and WINNING votes. But we have just weeks left and we need to reach more people with the VOTE NO message. **Please send what you can afford TODAY, and let's win this battle together.**

Please help us continue the campaign to
Save the 8th. We need YOUR help today.

€25 ☐ €50 ☐

€100 ☐ €200 ☐

€250 ☐ €500 ☐

My gift of €

(Please make your cheque/PO payable to "THE LIFE INSTITUTE")

Name:

Address:

Email:

Please return this form to The Life House, 6 Gardiner
Place, Dublin 1 or CALL 01 873 0465 to make sure we
can keep this nationwide campaign going.

May God bless you for your generosity!



Please get in touch today by calling 01 8730465

or go to www.save8.ie / www.thelifeinstitute.net

Facebook: @savethe8th / @lifeinstitute

Catholic Mass is an offence to Christ, says Protestant society

Colm Fitzpatrick

Protestants should not attend a Catholic Mass under any circumstances as it brings shame on the Gospel, a traditional Evangelical Protestant society has said.

Writing in the April-June 2018 edition of the *Ulster Bulwark*, which defends and promotes historic biblical Protestantism, Rev. Peter McIntyre of the Clogher Valley Free Presbyterian Church, said that there can be "no greater assault on the Gospel" than the Requiem Mass and that Protestants should not at any time place themselves under the ministry of a Roman Catholic priest.

Doctrinal issue

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic*, editor of the magazine Wallace Thompson said: "There's a doctrinal issue here at the heart of all of this. And I suppose we're better to be open and honest with each other."

"I know within the ecumenical movement there's a variety of threads of opinion," he said, adding that many people find these doctrinal issues irrelevant but that it is important not to paper over those "fundamental differences".

1916 grandniece defends rights of unborn babies

Susan Gately

"The line in the proclamation 'to cherish all the children of the nation equally' is more relevant today than ever before," said Dr Judy Ceannt, grandniece to the Proclamation signatory Eamon Ceannt, at a gathering of republicans and trade unionists on the anniversary of the Easter Rising.

Speaking at the demonstration outside Dublin's GPO organised by 'Cherish all the children equally' and 'Trade Unionists for Life', Dr Ceannt noted how Taoiseach Leo Varadkar had said it was time "to put compassion at the centre of our laws" when calling for a yes vote in the upcoming referendum on the Eighth Amendment.

However, Dr Ceannt asked, "What is compassionate about killing the most vulnerable members of our society?"

The Carrick on Shannon GP continued: "Late abortions are gruesome and painful to the baby. Even at 12 weeks, during a surgical abortion you can see on the ultrasound that the baby is in distress until it dies."

Insistence

Gina O'Brien, a Cork City trade unionist, echoed Dr Ceannt's insistence that abortion is not health care, saying that abolishing Ireland's constitutional protections for the unborn would not make women safer in pregnancy.

"The reality is that a doctor, confronted with a perfectly healthy woman with a healthy pregnancy, can be asked by law to either kill the

unborn child, or ask someone else to do so," Ms O'Brien said, adding that it was a duty of the trade union to protect members working in the health service who might come under pressure to perform or assist with abortions

they oppose on conscience grounds.

Underlining the "inequality" of excluding men from the debate, she said many trade unionists supported the Right to Life but were forced to hide their views.

"Three years after the Marriage Referendum has society swapped one closet for another," she asked.

Sinn Féin Deputy Peadar Kirby said one of his difficulties with abortion "is that it discriminates".

"By definition abortion means inequality of outcome, one baby makes it to term and another baby doesn't," he said.

"If you are from a minority sector of society you are far more likely to be aborted."

Perfect pitch at Pro Cathedral



The Palestrina, the boys choir of the Pro Cathedral, joined with the Escolania de Montserrat last Thursday evening in the Pro Cathedral in a unique concert of two renowned boys choirs. The Escolania belongs to the Monastery of Montserrat and is one of the oldest boys choirs in Europe – it is a choir of sopranos and altos based at the Benedictine Abbey Santa Maria de Montserrat near Barcelona, Spain. Photo: John McElroy

Northern SVP members 'uneasy' with lack of pro-life stance

Greg Daly

Northern members of the Saint Vincent de Paul are troubled by the decision of the organisation's national leadership to avoid taking a stance in the coming referendum on the Eighth Amendment, *The Irish Catholic* understands.

"There is an unease," Ballymena conference president Mary Waide, said, continuing, "Our regional president is meeting the national council this Saturday. There should be something after that."

Stressing that she was speaking in a personal capacity, rather than on behalf of the regional board, of which she is a member, Mrs Waide highlighted how the organisation's rulebook requires members of the St Vincent

de Paul to protect all vulnerable people, including unborn human beings.

Section 7.2 of the *Rule of the International Confederation of the Society of St Vincent de Paul* affirms "the dignity of each human being as created in God's image", she said, noting how it calls Vincentians "to listen to the voice of the Church which demands their participation in creating a more equitable and compassionate social order, promoting the culture of life and the civilization of love".

In explaining the term 'culture of life', the *Rule* notes that "Vincentians are committed to promote the right to life from conception to the natural end of earthly life".

NEWS IN BRIEF

Catholic majority in NI predicted

Catholics could outnumber Protestants in Northern Ireland by 2021, a leading academic has suggested. The 2011 official census figures put the Protestant population at 48 per cent and Catholics at 45 per cent, while more recent figures from 2016 show 44 per cent of working age adults are Catholic and 40 per cent Protestant.

Paul Nolan, an independent researcher, best known for the three Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Reports, told BBC News NI it is likely that Catholics are close to outnumbering Protestants. "Three years from now we will end up, I think, in the ironic situation on the centenary of the state where we actually have a state that has a Catholic majority," he said.

Well-known priest's near-€1m will

The former editor of *The Furrow*, Fr Ronan Drury has left €890,712 in his will, it has been revealed. A native of Mullagh in Co. Cavan, Fr Drury celebrated a remarkable 68 consecutive Christmas Midnight Masses in his parish. He died on November 16, 2017 at age 93 in Dublin.

As Professor of Homiletics, he not only trained and inspired students in Maynooth, he supervised an annual course at the Irish College in Rome for students preparing for ordination.

He became editor of *The Furrow* – a pastoral journal – in 1977 following the death of the founding editor Canon JJ McGarry. He continued as editor up until his death.

BE MY VOICE

RENUA IRELAND

VOTE NO
#savethe8th

IMAGINE LIVING WITH THIS NIGHTMARE FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE...

Dear Fellow Pro-Life Catholic,

Imagine waking up the morning after the referendum and learning that we lost - by less than 10,000 votes! How would you feel?

I'd feel like I'd been punched in the stomach, couldn't catch my breath, couldn't stand up straight. And it would get much worse as I thought of how many babies will die because we lost by less than 1% of the vote!

For the rest of my life I'd be agonizing that "With just a little extra effort, we would have won. But now Ireland has abortion-on-demand. **And there's no going back!**"

My name is David Manly and I'm coming to you on a **VERY URGENT** basis for Family & Life, Ireland's oldest and largest pro-life organisation.

Abortion-on-demand referendum is going down to the wire

Not only is this referendum going down to the wire, it could be decided by a razor-thin margin, just as we've seen in past referendums. I'm talking about 10,000 votes - less than one percent! Imagine losing by a margin that thin and then having to live with it for the rest of your life!

Here's what will happen if we lose:

- Destruction of the family will accelerate. Some babies will survive abortion and be born alive, but they will be left to die. Some women will be injured and maimed by abortion "doctors."

- Abortion businesses will move into Ireland from abroad. Powerful elites will help the abortion industry avoid unwelcome scrutiny. Abortion will be falsely advertised as a "compassionate solution" to a crisis pregnancy.

- Abortion "clinics" will pop up in Dublin, Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Galway. Babies with disabilities will be singled out as prime abortion targets. Pharmacies will display and sell abortion pills as over-the-counter "medicine."

And making that all worse, there is this . . .

Children will grow up thinking that abortion is normal. When children start believing that, Ireland will have fallen into a culture of abortion, probably never to recover.

EMERGENCY action is required - here it is . . .

- There are **thousands of carefully-selected voters** yet to be called on, but our volunteers don't have the booklets and leaflets to distribute. **€6,000** is needed right now.

- It's critical that we put up another **1,500** posters in Dublin and Cork -- posters that will powerfully deliver our baby-saving message to **huge numbers of undecided voters**. The printing cost is **€7,500**.

- Another **€2,500** is required for fuel to keep our mobile billboards on the road in these final days. Taking the billboards off the road will mean that we fail to reach many **thousands** of undecided voters.

If we drop the ball on these last-minute campaign essentials, I can tell you exactly what will happen: Abortion on demand will squeak in by the narrowest of margins. Ireland will have the most liberal abortion law in all of Europe!

I won't mince words - your financial help is URGENTLY needed!

- If you can send €50 right now, then I'm asking you to sacrifice and make it €75 instead.

- Is €100 the amount you're thinking of sending now? If so, I'm asking you to find a way to rush €150 instead. Better yet, double the €100 you might be considering and make your cheque or credit card donation for €200.

- My wife and I have sent our cheque for €250. Will you match our gift and send €250?

- Support of €500, €1,000 and €1,500 will really help us meet the last-minute deadline. Will you send one of those amounts? Do your means allow a gift of €2,500? That could be the gift that puts us over the top!

There is ZERO time for delay

Even a single day of lost campaigning could mean losing the referendum by a heart-breaking paper-thin margin. So right now is the time to RUSH your last-minute help.

Abortion-on-demand is what we're staring at right now! If we lose, there is no going back! May I hear from you urgently, please?

Yours for the defeat of abortion-on-demand,

David Manly
Family & Life

PS Time is so short that you can call us with your vital last-minute support. The number is **01-8552145**. Whether by phone or post, please let me hear from you immediately!

One more thing: Please do NOT make the mistake of thinking that "I've already done my part." This battle is going right down to the wire. Keep praying and make one more financial sacrifice!

Clip and Post This Reply TODAY!

☐ YES! I'll help keep abortion-on-demand out of Ireland with a critical last-minute campaign gift to Family & Life.

Enclosed is...

☐ €50 ☐ €75 ☐ €100 ☐ €150
☐ €200 ☐ €250 ☐ €500 ☐ €1,000
☐ €1,500 ☐ €2,500 ☐ Other € _____

Please make your baby-saving gift payable to **Family & Life**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please charge my: ☐ Credit/Laser card ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Other

Card number: _____

Expiry date: ____ / ____ / ____ CVC Number (last three digits) ____

Signature: _____

Please return this reply to:
Family & Life
FREEPOST, 26 Mountjoy Square,
Dublin 1

You can also donate by phone:
01-855-2145

'Falsehoods' used to push unrestricted abortion – doctor

Greg Daly

Medical professionals are concerned they may be compelled to perform or facilitate abortions despite believing them to be profoundly wrong, according to a speaker at a pro-life medical conference.

Speaking to *The Irish Catholic* at the 'Medical Care and the Eighth Amendment' conference in Dublin, Dr Andrew O'Regan said doctors and other medical professionals are worried they could become "complicit in an act we believe to believe to be harmful for women and intentionally destructive for babies".

This issue transcends religion, the Killarney GP stressed: "You don't need to have any religious belief to know that abortion is harmful, and doctors, nurses and midwives of all faiths and none recognise this and are alarmed at the way the Gov-

ernment are proposing a radical and extreme abortion bill."

Maintaining that a truly compassionate approach to the issue would include the development of world-leading perinatal hospice care, a properly-funded free counselling service, and high level social supports, Dr O'Regan, a senior lecturer in general practice at the University of Limerick, warned against being influenced by emotive stories.

"The public are being force-fed a litany of falsehoods and exaggerations, instilling fear into the debate in order to push a radical proposal of unrestricted abortion for the first trimester of pregnancy," he added.

Noting how such 'hard cases' can drive the debate, he said: "In Britain there are almost 200,000 abortions every year – this is a fact – though abortion was brought in there for the most rare and hard cases only."

Repeal means the rights of the unborn would 'disappear'

Colm Fitzpatrick

Withdrawing the sole existing constitutional right to life from unborn human beings would be a "profound injustice", an Irish legal professional has said.

Barrister Benedict Ó Floinn BL, one of the signatories of a statement opposing the repeal of the Eighth Amendment said that he hopes the letter, which was signed by 100 legal professionals including two former High Court judges, would allow voters to reconsider their stance on the issue.

"We would hope that when people have an opportunity to

consider the point that they make that they then conclude with us that anything other than a 'no' vote would be a profound injustice," Mr Ó Floinn told *The Irish Catholic*.

He added that there is no ambiguity about the legal implications of the constitutional provision being repealed but that people on both sides of the debate perceive the meaning of those implications differently.

"Both sides are agreed that if the Eighth Amendment is repealed, then existing constitutional rights of the unborn will disappear.

"The other side describe that as a constitutional space

within which to legislate and we describe that differently but both sides are agreed that that's the effect of repeal – that those existing constitutional rights will be taken away and, in its place, will be legislation which we believe is unjust," he said.

Legislation

The group of 100 lawyers stated on April 19 that what is being proposed through the legislation if the amendment is repealed is "not simply abortion in exceptional cases but a wide-ranging right to abortion" as limitations in the legislation could be removed at any time without the con-

sent of the people.

Mr Ó Floinn said that there would be "uproar" in any other context if people's constitutional rights were removed and placed in the hands of politicians to legislate freely.

"If we were talking about any other area of rights that argument wouldn't be entertained.

"So for example, if it was suggested that adult people's right to life or a good name or property rights should be taken out of the Constitution and should be entrusted to politicians in legislation, there'd be an uproar."

Go beyond the traditional understanding of the Holy Trinity with this new exploration from Sr Anne Marie Mongoven O.P.



PRICE: €14.99
FREE P&P (ROI)

Trinity: A Story of Deep Delight delves into the mysteries of the Trinity through the investigation of dynamic literary images and reveals what the love between the Holy Trinity can teach us about loving each other and ourselves. The book is designed to be read by men and women who seek a fresh contemporary understanding of this central Mystery of Christianity. Written in pastoral and non-academic language, it reaches out to a wide audience.



columbia press

01 687 4096

SALES@COLUMBA.IE

WWW.COLUMBABOOKS.COM



The launch of the pro-life campaign LoveBoth in Dublin on April 18. Photo: Chai Brady

Bishop: teach sanctity of life with 'clarity and charity'

Staff reporter

Mothers and fathers who consider abortion in difficult circumstances should be treated with "tremendous sensitivity and support", an Irish bishop has said.

In an April 22 Pastoral Message, Fern's bishop Dennis Brennan said that individuals can find themselves in difficulties during pregnancy, pointing out that mothers may be abandoned, afraid, isolated or facing financial and relational problems. The bishop added that "the

unspeakable pain and darkness" experienced in pregnancy as a result of rape or incest is "profound".

"That a person might consider the termination of pregnancy as the only option they have in difficult circumstances challenges us all to discern an ever more supportive approach that lovingly penetrates the frightening and lonely places in which some mothers and fathers find themselves, especially in those cases where they believe they have no other choice but termination," Bishop Brennan said.

He stressed that the unequivocal teaching on the sanctity of life should at all times be delivered with both clarity and charity so that any doubts regarding the teaching of the Church in this matter are dispelled, while assistance and support are simultaneously extended to those distressed or in difficulty.

"In particular here, I ask priests to be instruments of mercy, dispensing freely the mercy of God, to any person who seeks to emerge from the regret they experience, in having had an abortion in the past," he said.

What do you think?



Let us know by writing to:

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

Stand Up For Life

Final Rally before the Vote!

There won't be any second chances to save the 8th Amendment.
The time is now.

**Saturday 12th May 2pm -
Merrion Square, Dublin**
(preceded by LoveBoth Canvass Blitz)



Now is the time.

If the 8th Amendment is repealed, Ireland will be a very different place - where abortion on demand happens and babies will die.

We all need to play our part in these final critical days before the vote. Please join the LoveBoth Canvass Blitz happening across Dublin from 11am - 1pm and then join us for the Rally in Merrion Square at 2pm.

There won't be any second chances to save the 8th Amendment. **This is our last chance.**

Me+3

Here's a challenge! Me+3 is about **EVERYONE** bringing 3 more people to the Rally who otherwise wouldn't come. We all know friends who are pro-life but have never attended a rally. Now is the time to get them on board. We need tens of thousands more people working to get No votes in the closing days. Me+3 will make a massive difference.

- Inspirational speakers and testimonies from home and abroad.
- Family friendly

To organise a bus or find a bus in your area telephone:

Amy 087 266 8702
Alice 085 761 9297
Kate 087 357 4998

To register for the Rally and Canvass see <http://www.loveboth.ie>

As with other events, placards will be provided on the day.

Organised by the National Vigil For Life Committee, Clifton House, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2



History is made by those who turn up!



Keeping your integrity in a corrosive atmosphere

Maintaining a religious ethos in a secular culture is a serious challenge, writes **David Quinn**

If the Fine Gael party were run by people who do not believe in Fine Gael policy, would it still be Fine Gael? Most people would say the answer to this question is No.

Likewise, with the Catholic Church. If it were run by people who don't believe in Catholic teaching, would it still be the Catholic Church? Outwardly it might seem so, but would it really



be true?

The question arises because of a new ruling by the European Court of Justice. This is an EU institution and its decisions are binding on Ireland.

Last week, it warned the Catholic Church in Germany

that it could violate anti-discrimination laws if it required employees to be religious.

The Church in Germany is a huge employer. It has 750,000 staff. How can it manage this? It's because there is a 1% Church tax

in Germany, so the main Churches there receive big money.

The court has now ruled that demands for church employees to have a 'religious affiliation' should be subject to judicial review. That is, it must be shown that a religious affiliation is relevant to the post in question.

On the face of it, this ruling isn't necessarily a bad thing. A cleaner in a Catholic hospital or school need not belong to any religion, for example. Their beliefs won't affect the ethos of their workplace.

“In an ideal world, every employee of a religious organisation would share the beliefs of their employer”

The religious affiliation of a clerical worker in a religious organisation probably won't have any direct effect either.

Mind you, it could be counter-argued that in an ideal world, every employee of a religious organisation would share the beliefs of their employer and reflect them not only in the workplace, but outside of work as well. This is because Christianity is ultimately an evangelical religion. We seek to draw people to the Gospel.

If it is commonplace to encounter people who work for the Church but don't believe in its teachings, that

is likely to have the opposite effect.

To return to the example of Fine Gael, Fine Gael is in the business of increasing its share of the vote. If too many of its staff supported other parties, that would not help it with its goal, to put it mildly.

If Fine Gael party headquarters insisted even its clerical staff were paid-up members of Fine Gael, would that be discrimination? In a way it would be, but on the other hand, there might well be a good reason, such as the one outlined above, as to why Fine Gael would want all its staff to be Fine Gael supporters.

(As a matter of interest, are all Fine Gael staff Fine Gael supporters? Is it a requirement of employment? It would be useful to know.)

In any case, following the ruling of the European Court of Justice (ECJ), the various Churches can no longer enforce this requirement.

Very well: we are forced to accept that the cleaning and clerical staff don't have to share the religion of their employer. But what about the doctors and nurses in a Catholic hospital, or the teachers in a school? Surely that is more relevant?

For example, a Catholic hospital will obviously be pro-life. That is to say, it will never kill the unborn, the old or the infirm in the name of 'choice'. What happens if a doctor or a nurse happens to think otherwise? Obviously, they won't be able to act on their beliefs in a Catholic hospital. They will have to go elsewhere.

The trouble is that over time, if too many doctors and nurses feel this way, it will begin to erode the ethos of the hospital.

Suicidal

We can already see this happening in Ireland, for example. When the so-called Protection of Human Life During Pregnancy Act was introduced in 2013, two Catholic hospitals, the Mater and St Vincent's, both said they would obey the law even though it authorises abortion in cases where a woman is deemed to be 'suicidal'.

Why did they do this?

Was it because a lot of their doctors agree with that law and it was too difficult to resist them?

We saw recently in Belgium that a group of Catholic nursing homes said they would be willing to carry out euthanasia. This is what happens when you employ too many key personnel who do not believe in your ethos – you lose your ethos.

The ECJ ruling still allows religious employers to tell their employees to “refrain from anti-Church behaviour” such as promoting abortion or racism. This would allow them to dismiss a doctor who was publicly campaigning for abortion.

But suppose that same doctor was divorced and remarried? It seems the employer could do nothing about that, unless perhaps the doctor was to start publicly attacking the Church's position on divorce and remarriage.

“Catholic schools already employ many teachers who don't believe in Catholicism”

What difference does the ECJ decision make to Ireland? Probably not much because the ability of religious employers to uphold their ethos has been attacked on every side anyway.

For example, Catholic schools already employ many teachers who don't believe in Catholicism. The same goes for Catholic hospitals. These employers, legally speaking, can really only act against those employees if they begin to publicly contradict their employer's ethos, or do so in the workplace.

In any case, even if Catholic schools and hospitals were perfectly free to employ only practising Catholics, they would be hard-pressed to find them in sufficient numbers.

The sad fact is that it is hard to maintain the Christian ethos of large Christian organisations when the societies in which they operate are becoming more and more secular.

“We are forced to accept that the cleaning and clerical staff don't have to share the religion of their employer”

The Iona Institute stands up for your values

Please support our work with a donation today

What they say about us

“I see David Quinn and Breda O'Brien [of The Iona Institute] as a fundamental part of our democracy”
- Author, Colm Toibin.

“I don't agree with them [David Quinn and Breda O'Brien], but I admire their guts”
- Sunday Times columnist, Brenda Power.

“My Blood was boiling watching David Quinn”
- Ray D'Arcy



MARIA STEEN
Iona Institute

DAVID QUINN
Director, Iona Institute

The Iona Institute promotes the place of religion and traditional marriage in Ireland.

You can help the valuable work of The Iona Institute by sending a cheque or postal order in pounds or euro to:
THE IONA INSTITUTE, 23 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, Ireland.

YourParish App

Catholic. Community. Connected.

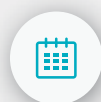
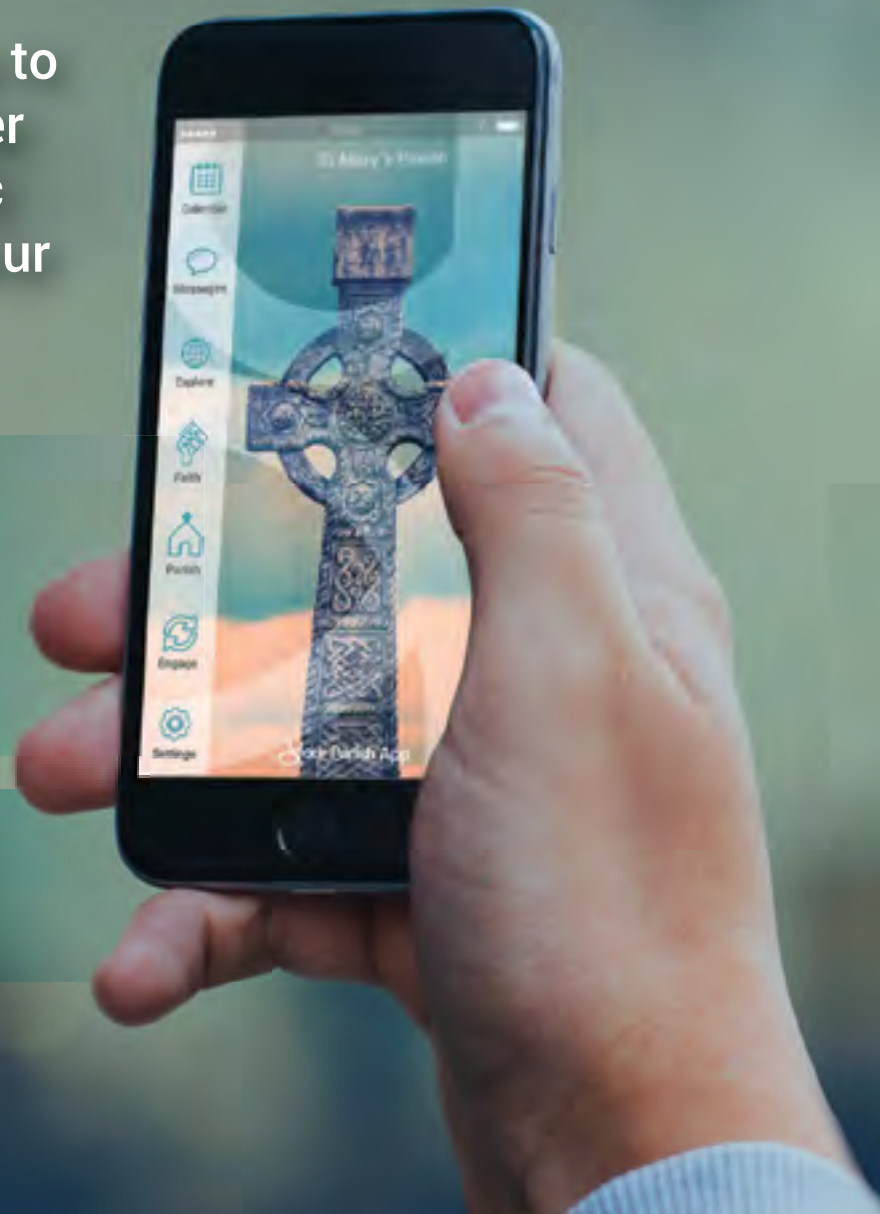
YourParish App is a premium Catholic app to stay connected with parishioners, wherever they are. It helps to build stronger Catholic communities, empowering you to reach your congregation and beyond.

"The app is great!" is the most frequent feedback we have received since we launched it on Easter Sunday. Young or old alike, they all seem to have mastered the app in no time."

– Fr John Carroll, Barntown, Co Wexford

"We are convinced that this could be of enormous benefit to the entire community"

– Shankill Parish



Calendar



Messages



News



Faith



Daily Reflection



Homilies



Readings



Sacraments



Parish



Parish info



Parish Staff



Newsletter



Schools



Engage



Prayer request



Volunteer



Donate

Learn more at
www.yourparishapp.ie

Contact
John at
info@yourparishapp.ie
to get on board

Available from:



Download on the
App Store



ANDROID APP ON
Google play

Milestone as WMOF2018 on target to have up to 12,000 international attendees

With just under four months to go until the opening of the World Meeting of Families 2018 in Dublin, the organising team has just announced another registration milestone with more than 17,000 people now registered for the Pastoral Congress which will take place in the RDS, Dublin from 22-24 August.

Figures show that 7,800 of those registered are based in Ireland and 10,100 of those are overseas registrations. The WMOF2018 is on target to have up to 12,000 overseas visitors which will mean that Ireland will have one of the largest international attendance figures of any WMOF to date and double the number of international delegates who attended the most recent WMF2015 in Philadelphia.

Registration for the Pastoral Congress of WMOF2018 is still available and people are invited to register now for one or three days of what promises to be a dynamic family event with world renowned speakers. See www.worldmeeting2018.ie for more.

Ticketing for Festival of Families and Closing Mass of WMOF2018

At the moment the tickets for the Festival of Families in Croke Park on August 25 and



Brenda Drumm

the Closing Mass in Phoenix Park on Sunday, August 26 are not directly available on general release. These tickets will not be available until the WMOF2018 has completed their consultations with the relevant statutory agencies on capacity, transport, security, safety and other issues. When these tickets become available they will be free.

Make a Difference – Volunteer with WMOF2018

The World Meeting of Families 2018 and the visit of Pope Francis to Ireland will attract hundreds of thousands of pilgrims to Ireland from August 21-26, 2018.

There is a full programme to be delivered over six days and the WMOF2018 will need the help of thousands of volunteers to make it all happen.

The WMOF2018 already has almost 2,500 volunteers registered but thousands more are needed.

Volunteers will have the opportunity to meet families from all around the world, learn new skills, witness



inspiring sessions, meet other great volunteers and be part of this historic event.

Those interested in volunteering are being encouraged to sign up now to be part of one of many different teams and areas of expertise including:

The Event Services Team will assist with the smooth running of a specific area. Volunteers could be in the welcome area, the entrance gates, the car parks, lecture venues or the grounds of the venues.

This will be the largest team and will include activities which vary from front of house (checking tickets in

venues, ushering and dealing with customers), pilgrim badge and bag distribution and backstage support, as well as behind the scenes.

The Hospitality/Meet and Greet Services Team will welcome everyone to WMOF2018 at the various points of entry. We need people who like people, who have big smiles and a willingness to help others.

The WMOF2018 Information Services Team will assist in the delivery of information to volunteers for pilgrims and WMOF2018 functional areas.

The Logistical Services Team will facilitate the smooth running of the

WMOF2018 venues. Logistics planning skills for team leaders and good levels of energy for the volunteers is what's required here.

The Media Services Team will assist the media and communications office in sharing the story of the WMOF2018 with the world. Volunteers will support the thousands of international media with a welcome, access to office space, refreshments, directions to get to the various areas, accreditation passes etc.

The Medical Services Team will be responsible for providing medical care to all pilgrims at WMOF2018. Medical staff will be on hand to deliver medical support or treatment. We need assistance in the rest and care areas to offer comfort and a cup of tea to those who may just need a rest.

The Pastoral and Liturgical Services Team volunteers will assist in the prayer spaces, the sacristy, the vesting areas, as Eucharistic ministers and other supports for the liturgical parts of WMOF2018.

Translation will be a key service as part of WMOF2018 and the Translation Services Team will assist with translations for various texts or help facilitate pilgrims from different language groups. Our official languages are English, Irish, French, Spanish and Italian but many other languages will also be represented.

The Transportation Team will ensure pilgrims and guests get to where they need to be, safely and on time. This team will be working in many locations around the city.

The Volunteer Services Team will assist with the planning, scheduling, administration, check-in, support, and

uniform distribution for the several thousand Volunteers that will make WMOF2018 happen.

Venue Team Leaders will be responsible for managing teams of volunteers who work at checking tickets and door reports. Correct stage set up for speakers before events, tidying and managing the floor is also key here.

Registration Team Leaders will liaise between staff and volunteers at the registration and ticket desks in the event venues, delivering a smooth and friendly service to the pilgrims arriving.

Family Area Volunteers will offer arts and crafts to our younger visitors, as part of a fun, bright space for families to hang out. Volunteers in the family area will work closely with the family area manager supporting the programme of activities to include our Tech Zone.

There is still a lot of work to be done between now and August so if you think you could give us some hours to help now with project management or advice in any of the areas we are working in, please let us know.

We are looking for volunteers as individuals or groups who can give between two to four days during August 19-28, 2018. Registration is typically online through our website www.worldmeeting2018.ie. However, where there are large groups volunteering from a company, club etc, we are happy to attend in person for an information session.

Don't miss the opportunity to be part of this historic event in Ireland.

Sign up now!

WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES 2018
DUBLIN, IRELAND
21-26 AUGUST 2018

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

- Like us on Facebook
- Sign up for our Newsletter
- Host a Pilgrim/Family
- Participate in your school or parish programme
- SPREAD THE WORD!
- Follow us on Twitter
- Become a volunteer
- Register for events

www.worldmeeting2018.ie



Listowel Presentation Primary school children visit the icon at St Mary's Church, Listowel. Photo: Denise Moran

Family fun picnic in Elphin is moment of welcome for asylum seekers

Susan Gately

Despite at times inclement weather, the Family Picnic Fun Day in Lough Key Forest Park last Sunday (April 22) was a winner. "One of the lovely things about the west of Ireland is that people are so used to the weather that they come out anyway, because [otherwise] you'd never come out," Bishop Kevin Doran of Elphin told *The Irish Catholic*. "They came out in their droves. All the car parks in Lough Key, including the overflow car parks, were full, so we're talking about a few thousand people anyway."

Mothers, fathers, children and grannies joined Bishop Doran and his Church of Ireland counterpart, Bishop Fer-

ran Glenfield at the fun-filled event in Boyle that was a true celebration of family.

"We had everything from the Castlereagh Brass Band, to various different choirs – the Sligo Gospel Choir and a choir set up for the occasion. The Focolare movement put on various games and activities for children and we had face painting," said Bishop Doran.

The event provided an ideal opportunity to welcome asylum seekers living at the direct provision centre in Sligo.

"They came and they brought the kids and the kids were like all the other kids, they were having a ball of a time. They were delighted to be there," said Bishop Doran.

It was also an ecumenical



celebrations. "We are very conscious as a community in the west that in every parish there are Inter-Church couples, so inevitably welcoming the families has an ecumenical dimension. So my colleague who is the Church of Ireland bishop of Elphin, Bishop Ferran Glenfield, joined me for a prayer movement and a reflection on the Gospel on the feeding of the 5,000 and we planted a tree.



Attracta, John, Lyla and Zac Rogers with Shirley, Damian, Kaitlynn and Donnacha Caslin at Lough Key Forest Park for the Family Picnic Fun Day. Photo: Liam Reynolds

Limerick's registration roadshow

The Diocese of Limerick was visited by the World Meeting of Families registration bus as part of the WMOF 'Registration Roadshow', which aims to recruit volunteers and register people for the event. On Tuesday, April 17

at St Munchin's Diocesan Centre in Corbally, there was a focus on getting schools and youth groups involved.

Later that day, it moved on to Desmond Complex, Newcastlewest to recruit and register people in the

parish, individuals and families.

Finally, the following day – April 18 at 10.30am – it arrived at the Redemptorists in Mt St Alphonsus and focused on people in all Limerick's parishes.

Inmates to get involved in WMOF build-up

Irish prisoners will get a chance to take part in discussion about family in preparation for the World Meeting of Families (WMOF) with their chaplains in the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin.

As the Icon of the Holy Family makes its way from Portlaoise church to Newbridge church it will stop off at Midlands Prison in Laois at the beginning of May and give

prisoners the opportunity to engage in the WMOF build-up. Bishop Denis Nulty, local clergy and chaplains will all be in attendance.

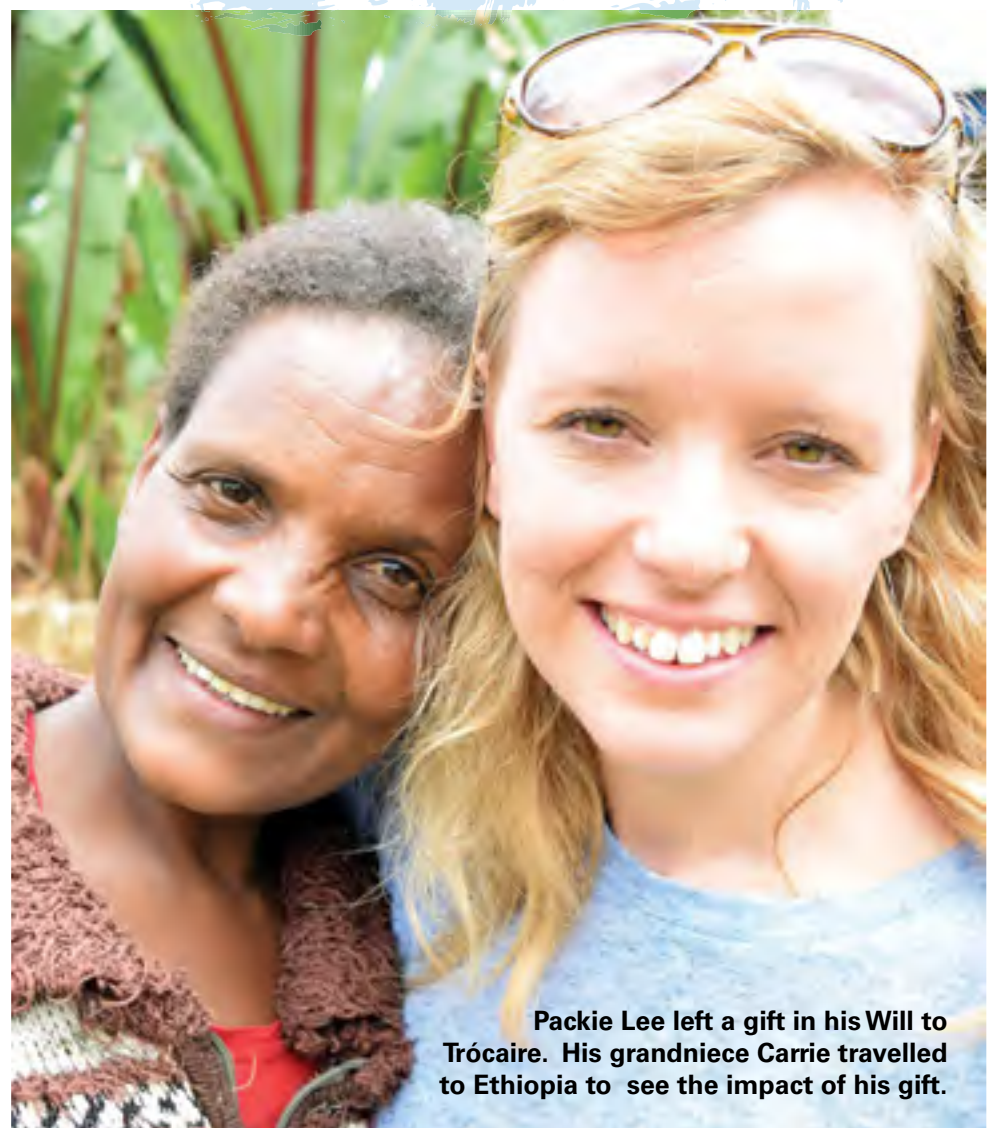
The Icon arrives in the diocese on April 27 with three liturgies being prepared for primary and secondary schools – one in each of the three churches it visits. It is also an opportunity for the schools to bring their petitions.

Please contact World Meeting of Families correspondent Chai Brady with photos, news or articles relating to your parish or diocese's WMOF2018 preparations and events for inclusion in the weekly update:

email chai@irishcatholic.ie • 01 6874020
Twitter @ChaiBradyIC



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



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

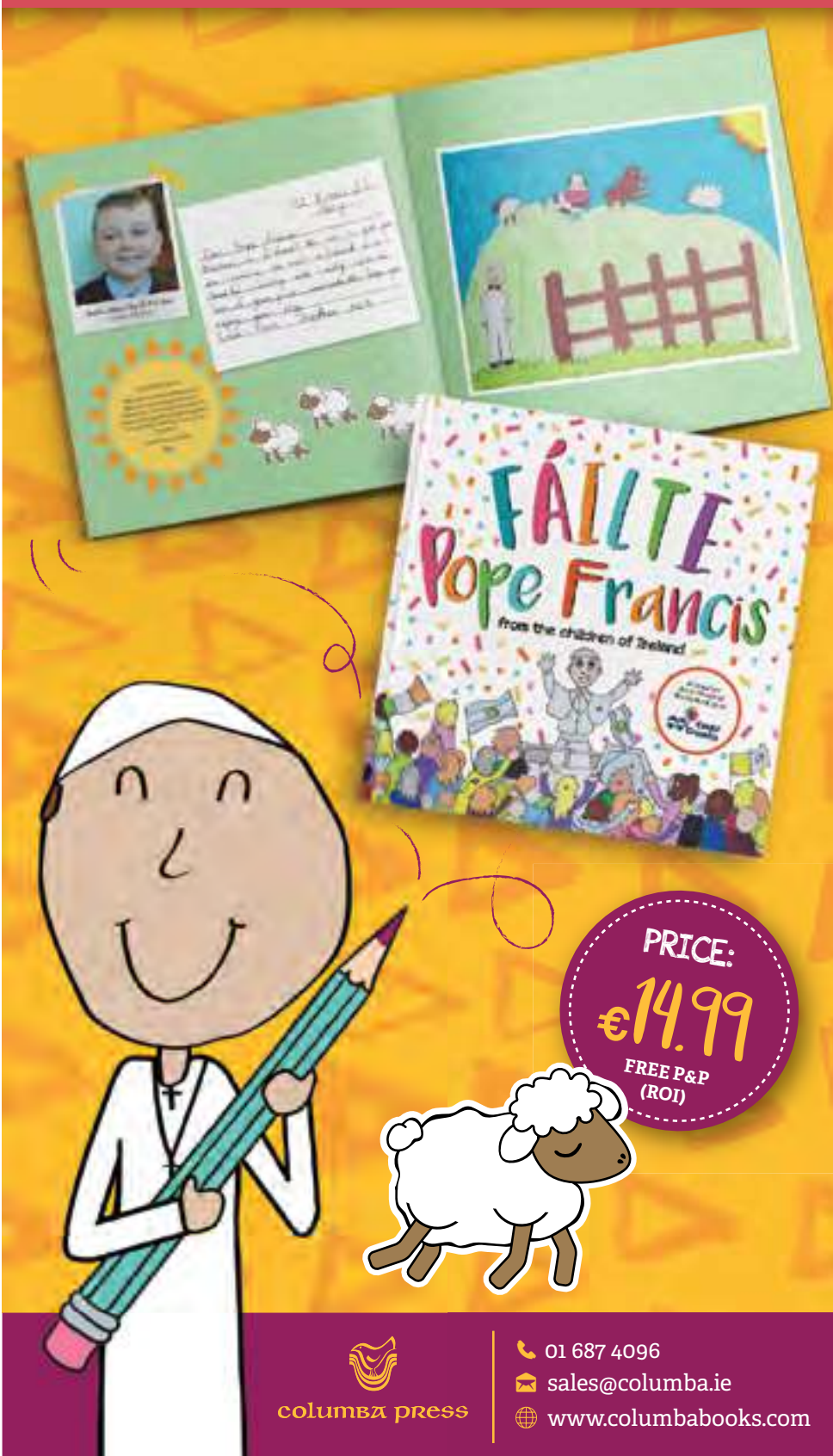
If you would like to know more about leaving a legacy gift to Trócaire please contact us on 00353 1 629 3333 or visit trocaire.org/legacy

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

Trócaire
Working for a just world.

Looking for a First Holy Communion Gift?

Written by children making their First Holy Communion, this beautiful book is a collection of drawings and letters welcoming the Pope to Ireland.



PRICE: €14.99
FREE P&P (ROI)

columba press
01 687 4096
sales@columba.ie
www.columbabooks.com

The referendum

As referendum day approaches, Catholics will be told by all and sundry that they should vote according to their consciences. In a Western democratic society like Ireland, which values individual freedom and personal autonomy above all else, there is little difficulty in accepting the central role of 'conscience'. Hardly anyone disagrees with that, because ultimately moral decision-making must be allowed to rest where it belongs – with the individual.

The Church must always teach publicly that abortion is gravely wrong. But that doesn't mean bishops can simply instruct Catholics to vote 'no' or relieve them of the responsibility of considering the issues for themselves. Moral authoritarianism is long past and rightly so. That said, the word 'conscience' can often be bandied about very loosely in popular and political circles, and can mean different things to different people.

What conscience means

It is important therefore for Catholics to know what the concept really means. Conscience is the name given to that in us which responds to the moral. It is an aspect of our consciousness, the one which is aware of the distinction between good and evil and which urges us to do good and avoid evil. It is not a merely subjective "gut feeling", nor on the other hand is it simply a mental exercise.

“The more a correct conscience holds sway, the more persons and groups turn aside from blind choices and strive to be guided by objective norms of morality”

It does draw on both the intellectual and the intuitive dimensions of the person in judging what is the right thing to do in a given situation. Ultimately, conscience involves weighing up a particular act in the context of what one already knows to be morally correct values. It is certainly not the simple freedom to do just what a person likes or wants.

Conscience and truth

Most importantly, there is an essential link between con-

science and moral truth. Conscience engages the person in an honest search to find the right and true answer. The person tries to ensure that the decision arrived at is, as far as possible, in accord with the objective truth, that is, what is true in and of itself regardless of whether we like it or not. As Vatican II says, "the more a correct conscience holds sway, the more persons and groups turn aside from blind choices and strive to be guided by objective norms of morality" (*Gaudium et Spes* 16). Hence, conscience is not just "doing what I feel is right". It always requires informing oneself about what is morally true.



science and moral truth. Conscience engages the person in an honest search to find the right and true answer.

The person tries to ensure that the decision arrived at is, as far as possible, in accord with the objective truth, that is, what is true in and of itself regardless of whether we like it or not. As Vatican II says, "the more a correct conscience holds sway, the more persons and groups turn aside from blind choices and strive to be guided by objective norms of morality" (*Gaudium et Spes* 16). Hence, conscience is not just "doing what I feel is right". It always requires informing oneself about what is morally true.

Alone with God

The Catholic understanding of conscience also sees it as humanity's most secret core and sanctuary – where the person is alone with God. Vatican II observed that in the

depths of her/his conscience a person detects a law which the individual does not impose on herself or himself, but which nonetheless holds the person to obedience. This voice of conscience summons the person to love good and to avoid evil, because in the heart of humanity there is a law written by God. This thinking reflects the teaching of St Paul's Letter to the Romans (2:14-15).

Our conscientious choices are not simply judgments to do or not to do certain things. Through our actions we are also deciding what kind of people we wish to be – just or unjust, faithful or unfaithful, truthful or untruthful, committed or uncommitted. We are deciding to accept or reject God's love and God's claims on us. In short, we are responding, positively or negatively, to God.

and personal conscience



Amy Grenhan, Sinead Slattery and Miriam Smith pose at the launch of the Love Both campaign in Dublin. Photo: CNS

Frailty of conscience

Experience teaches us that conscience can be frail and fallible. All sorts of factors can lead to a mistaken conscience: a deficient moral sense, false ideas, prejudices, social pressures, sin, and negligence. That's why the Catholic tradition speaks of conscience as being correct when it accords with the objective truth; otherwise it is called erroneous. In other words, even if I follow my conscience I could still be doing something that is wrong.

One must be true to one's deepest thought-out convictions. This principle means that one must follow decisions made in conscience,

even when, through no fault of one's own, it is in error. Hence Aquinas taught that even an erroneous conscience must be followed, that is, a conscience that is telling me to do something that is actually wrong, provided such a conscience is certain of itself. This is because not following a genuinely informed conscience would entail my not being faithful to what I believe to be the truth.

However, while one is always bound to follow one's conscience, that is to act in accordance with one's moral convictions, one may have committed a wrong in the process of arriving at one's conscientious decision in the first place. How? For

instance, by not taking the time or trouble to find out what is good and true. Or by having neglected or blanked out the memory of innate truths placed deep in our being by God our Creator. In such a case a person may not be without fault.

Cultural influences

Catholic Christians in the Western world do not live in a religious bubble but are deeply influenced by the secularised culture around them.

In that culture, there has slowly developed over the last 50 years a great societal blind spot about the brutal reality of legal abortion, just as in the

past there was a blind spot about slavery.

In regard to abortion, the West has gradually become morally blind from being accustomed to this evil. Abortion, previously regarded with horror or at least moral repugnance, is now even spoken of as a human right and bizarrely its wide availability is considered a sign of a tolerant caring modern society.

“To vote ‘yes’ would be completely at odds with the principle that innocent human life should always be protected by law insofar as possible”

The destruction of a vulnerable little human being is glossed over in the media

with soothing euphemisms which speak of tolerance and compassion. But the nice words hide the fact that a life is being ended.

This false thinking has subtly and gradually desensitised many Catholics, often unwittingly. The innate truth of the humanity of the unborn child has been blanked out in their consciences, or at least it has become quite blurred.

Their hearts may have become hardened over a period of time to the promptings of truth deep within themselves, sometimes because of the surrounding culture's overpowering but deficient moral sense.

Avoiding the truth

Yet, as the billboard says, the unborn child is 'one of us' – human as much as we are. Groups like Catholics for Choice who assert that Catholics should vote 'yes' with a good conscience always avoid this basic fact. Here we see the word 'conscience' misused as an alibi for a defiant inability to allow oneself to be corrected. The word is also being used to cover up an obstinate unwillingness to listen to what the Catholic tradition says about the sanctity of all human life in the eyes of God, as expressed explicitly in Vatican II's condemnation of abortion.

So Catholics thinking of voting 'yes' need to reflect on whether their thinking is being subtly shaped by the prevailing Western cultural bias that unborn life isn't somehow fully human and so not worth protecting. Not to sincerely consider this possibility could count as a culpable failure to inform one's conscience.

Our own cultural biases and flaws can be as deep seated as those we sometimes find so repugnant in the less developed world.

Imposing morality?

Some Catholics, while convinced of the humanity of the unborn and the moral wrongness of abortion, doubt whether abortion should remain illegal. They fear 'imposing' their conscientious viewpoint on others and thus legally restricting their moral choices. Abortion is often compared to gay marriage in this regard.

However, there is a fundamental difference. Unlike the issue of gay marriage, this abortion referendum relates to that most basic of human rights, the right to life itself. Voting

'yes' means giving to other people the legal power to destroy innocent life and also giving the Oireachtas the authority to decide on who lives and dies right up to birth.

“The word ‘conscience’ is also being used to cover up an obstinate unwillingness to listen to what the Catholic tradition says about the sanctity of all human life”

That is very different morally to other referenda like those on divorce and gay marriage. Deleting the Eighth Amendment will mean that the right to choose will completely trump the right to life itself. That indeed will be 'the last frontier' for Irish society.

So to vote 'yes' would be completely at odds with the principle that innocent human life should always be protected by law insofar as possible, a principle a good conscience will recognise and abide by.

Voting with a clear conscience

What has all of this to say to Catholics as they cast their vote? There is now no doubt that deleting the Eighth Amendment will be a vote to allow abortion, and not even a vote for a limited abortion regime.

The Supreme Court has decided that unborn life has no constitutional rights besides the Eighth Amendment. Voting 'yes' will go further than a simple deletion because it is also a vote to insert into the Constitution an effective right to destroy human life, and give the Oireachtas the authority to regulate that right up to birth.

It will be a vote that the humanity of the unborn will no longer be recognised at all in our most basic law and will be subject to passing political whims and party alliances.

We find it difficult to accept that a committed Catholic can vote with a clear conscience for such a direct, drastic and radical attack on innocent human life. And for a person who still has doubts after conscientiously studying the issues, surely the prudent and safer option is to vote 'no'.

“The destruction of a vulnerable little human being is glossed over in the media with soothing euphemisms which speak of tolerance and compassion. But the nice words hide the fact that a life is being ended”

CONFERENCE

5 YEARS TO SAVE THE IRISH CHURCH

BALLROOM, THE GRESHAM HOTEL,
23 O'Connell Street Upper, Dublin 1

Hotel parking
available

**SATURDAY
19TH MAY, 2018**

REGISTRATION STARTS AT 8.30 AM

SPEAKERS:

MARY MCALEESE - KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Former President of Ireland

FR BRIAN D'ARCY
Bestselling author, columnist and broadcaster

SR STANISLAUS KENNEDY
Social innovator and founder of Focus Ireland

FR MARK PATRICK HEDERMAN OSB
Author and former Abbot of Glenstal Abbey

FR JOE MCDONALD
Author of *Why The Irish Church Deserves To Die*

€35 PRICE
TEA & COFFEE
INCLUDED

ORGANISED BY **columba press**
WWW.COLUMBABOOKS.COM

CONTACT garry@columba.ie | 01 687 4028

The conscription crisis: blessing a national alliance

As turning points in Irish history go, the 'conscription crisis' that enveloped Ireland a century ago in the spring of 1918 was perhaps second only to the Easter Rising in terms of its impact upon public sentiment and political alignments during the 'Great War' of 1914-8.

It began at a time when it appeared as if the increased support commanded by the republican separatist constituency since the Rising might have reached a plateau some way short of dominance; by the time it had run its course, the same republican cause was set fair for its overwhelming electoral victory in the General Election held in December of the same year.

The immediate cause of the proposal to apply compulsory military service to Ireland was the breakthrough on the Western Front achieved by German forces during their 'Spring Offensive' of March 21-23.

This, in turn, was attributable to the effective collapse of the Russian army on the Eastern Front the previous year (a collapse that was part cause and part consequence of the Bolshevik revolution), which allowed Germany to focus all of its – by then hugely depleted – resources for an all-out assault in the West.

Allied with the German offensive were the monumental losses the French and British Armies had experienced since the beginning of the war, with the recent slaughter experienced by the latter at Passchendaele merely the most recent of a seemingly unending list of engagements as costly in human life as they had been practically fruitless in military terms.

Scale

The scale of the German breakthrough meant that the Allies became engaged in a desperate race against time, as they sought to slow down the Germans sufficiently to give time for the large number of American troops then in training or en route to France to arrive and reinforce their own pitifully thin forces.

In this situation the London Government proposed to extend to Ireland the conscription regime that had

The Church paved the way for the republican victory in Ireland's 1918 general election, writes **Gabriel Doherty**



initially been introduced in Britain via the Military Service Act of 1916.

Even had there been no domestic opposition to the plan, in military terms the suggestion had little obvious merit – for clearly it would take time that the Government did not have to admit large numbers of young Irishmen into the army, train them to the requisite standard, and ship them to France.

And opposition there certainly was – fuelled not least by the widely-held suspicion that the Government's principal motive in proposing conscription was not to augment its armed forces, but to remove from Ireland's scene the cadre of disaffected young men who had been flocking into the Irish Volunteers since that force had been reactivated following the release at the end of 1916 of those interned after the Rising.

“The party had been in near-constant retreat against separatist forces for control of Irish nationalism”

It is important to appreciate the scope of this opposition to the proposal, for it consisted of four of the most significant elements of Irish life at the time.

Politically speaking, the running in the campaign was made by Sinn Féin, officially a republican separatist organisation since its Ard Fheis the previous October. Its senior echelons were comprised of those who had consistently opposed the war since its outbreak, and (over a longer period) even voluntary recruitment into the British army, so it was entirely logical for the party to come

out very strongly against the conscription proposal.

More difficult was the position of the home rule party, which had lost its long-time leader, John Redmond, only a few weeks before.

His successor, the veteran John Dillon, found it all but impossible to reconcile the party's opposition to conscription with its consistent support for voluntary recruitment into an army that was fighting a war that was purportedly being conducted, in words used by Redmond at the outset of the conflict, in “defence of right, of freedom and of religion”.

Ever since that call to arms, and as a direct consequence of the horrendous losses suffered by the British Army since the advent of trench warfare on the Western front in late 1914 and the Gallipoli fiasco in 1915, the party had been in near-constant retreat against separatist forces for control of Irish nationalism.

The simultaneous collapse of the Irish Convention as a result of the rifts opened up by the conscription proposal marked the end of the party's last chance (albeit a slim one) to deliver on its historic goal of Home Rule for the whole of the Ireland, while the last vestiges of its long-standing association with the Liberal party were also dissolved.

Complications

The labour movement came out forcefully against conscription, which was not surprising as many of its members stood to be among those forcibly enlisted into the British Army. The position was complicated, however, by the existence of an Ulster unionist working class membership whose loyalism could not be ignored (although even, perhaps especially, in its Belfast heartlands the scale of wartime losses had hit such communities very hard indeed).

German soldiers haul a granatenwerfer – a type of grenade or mortar thrower – forward in support of advancing stormtroops in July 1918 during the final phase of the Spring Offensive. Imperial War Museums (Q 55372)



In addition, certain sectors of the union movement had done very well out of the war – perhaps most obviously the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, so comprehensively crushed in the Great Lockout of 1913, but which now enjoyed a crucial position at the heart of the strategically-vital railway network. Just how effective this industrial weapon could be if unsheathed was demonstrated by the success of the one-day General Strike against conscription on April 23, which paralysed the economy over most of the island.

And so to the Church, the fourth element in the equation, and in many respects the crucial one. The various Protestant denomina-



Archbishop William Walsh of Dublin.

tions came out in support of the proposal (albeit rather unenthusiastically), but the Catholic Church emphatically aligned itself with the anti-conscription cause.

This was a strikingly different situation from the early months of the war, when a significant proportion of the hierarchy and clergy had spoken out in favour of voluntary recruitment.

Even at this high point of enthusiasm, however, there had been no unanimity on the issue, and neither of the two most important figures within the hierarchy, Archbishop William Walsh of Dublin, and Cardinal Michael



Eamon de Valera.

Cardinal Logue, in particular, found the rise of Sinn Féin as a vehicle for whole-hearted republicanism impossible to stomach.

(In November 1917, having spoken out against the “ill-considered and Utopian” agitation sponsored by the party, he found himself on the receiving end of a riposte from Eamon de Valera that cited the late Pope Leo XIII to the effect that the Church did not “condemn those who, if it can be done without violation of justice, wish to make their country independent of any foreign or despotic power”).

The death, and funeral, of Thomas Ashe – which outdid even that of O'Donovan Rossa in size and magnificence – further consolidated this process of reconciliation, all the more when Archbishop Walsh publicly associated himself with the event by allowing his carriage to take its place in the cortege.

And thus to the conscription crisis itself. On April 9 1918 the Government introduced a bill at Westminster that (in addition to other provisions) extended the Military Service Act to Ireland, and promised that a home rule bill would accompany same – a proposal on which even the outraged Home Rule MPs present in the Chamber poured scorn. By doing so it unleashed a veritable tsunami of anger in Ireland that threatened, not only to scupper the proposal, but to undermine the very foundations of British rule in the country.

Literally hundreds of protest meetings took place over the following weeks, with Sinn Féin and Church figures prominently placed on podiums, and with such home rulers as could be found seated as inconspicuously as possible – where the assembled crowds tolerated their presence at all.

The fact that in the initial draft of the scheme younger members of the clergy would be liable for service seemed to indicate that the Government had abandoned all concern

for even moderate Catholic opinion in Ireland and gave succour to those who interpreted the Government's actions as being motivated by political rather than military considerations.

The hierarchy's standing committee, with Cardinal Logue at its head, responded the day after the Government's move by releasing a statement that described the plans as “unwarrantable” and a “fatal mistake”, which would exceed and compound all the mistakes made since the start of the conflict. The communique concluded with a warning to Government “against entering upon a policy so disastrous to the public interest, and to all order, public and private”.

It was the events of Thursday April 18, however, that better expressed the juncture of clerical, lay and secular opposition to the Government's plans.

At Dublin's Mansion House a meeting of leaders from Sinn Féin, the Irish party, the All-for-Ireland League (a small, largely Cork-based nationalist group) and the Irish trades union movement endorsed the taking of a pledge “solemnly to one another to resist conscription by the most effective means at our disposal”.

They then travelled to Maynooth, to meet and dis-

cuss the situation with the hierarchy, which had themselves just met and passed a resolution that described the proposal as “oppressive and inhuman”, and one “which the Irish people have a right to resist by all the means that are consonant with the law of God” – a formulation, of course, that could allow for the breaking of the civil law in certain circumstances. This pledge was administered at Masses the following Sunday, and was accompanied by a national collection to fund a campaign of resistance.

As things transpired such resistance did not become necessary. The German advance was halted in early July, and, exhausted, the forces went into a headlong retreat that was only halted by the armistice – in effect the surrender – of November 11.

Arrests

The British Government, therefore, had incurred all the odium of proposing compulsory service in Ireland, added to which were the widespread arrests without charge of leading republicans during the ‘German Plot’ crackdown in May, without adding a single soldier to the ranks of its armed forces – although, interestingly, levels of voluntary recruitment in Ireland increased significantly dur-

ing the concluding months of hostilities.

The support afforded to the anti-conscription campaign by the institutional Church, from its highest levels down, unquestionably benefitted the republican cause, as the tensions between it and the Church that had been so evident during the Fenian times all but disappeared (at least publicly) during these spring weeks – with the Home Rule party the obvious casualty of this process of conciliation.

The cause of republican separatism in Ireland had received, if not an *imprimatur* from the hierarchy, at least a *nihil obstat*. For many Catholic voters this removed any lingering doubt they may have had with regard to the bona fides of Sinn Féin, and thus opened up the path for the party to achieve its stunning victory in the General Election at the end of the year.

i Gabriel Doherty teaches in the School of History, University College Cork. A member of the national Expert Advisory Group on Commemorations, he has edited a number of books of essays on 20th-Century Irish history, including *The Home Rule Crisis, 1912-1914* and (with Dermot Keogh) *1916: The Long Revolution*.

Logue of Armagh (both of whom shared a low opinion of Redmond), publicly called for voluntary recruitment into the army.

The burial, on August 1, 1915, of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, with the veteran Fenian having been accorded full church obsequies in St Mary's Pro-Cathedral in Dublin, marked an important shift in the Church's position regarding the republican separatist cause it had historically condemned.

Even though Archbishop Walsh himself did not preside over the requiem Mass, the mere fact that he allowed the most hardline Fenian of them all to be given a Church funeral (something denied to some of Rossa's Fenian contemporaries), whilst rejecting requests for similar access to the pro-cathedral for the small number of Great War casualties who had died after being returned to Ireland, was a clear signal that the tide of opinion within the Church was turning fast, even at the elite level.

This change continued apace after the 1916 Rising, which was led by many of those who had organised the O'Donovan Rossa funeral, and/or, like Pearse, had had prior dealings with Arch-

bishop Walsh, even though a small number of bishops publicly condemned the event in the immediate aftermath of its failure.

Again, neither Walsh nor Logue were to be counted among their number, though both privately were very critical – but in an era when bishops were expected to speak out forcibly on matters of public concern, this relative passivity was itself capable of favourable interpretation by republicans.

Request

Further, the fact that it was the Bishop of Limerick who was the first major figure to speak out on behalf of those who had been ‘out’ in 1916, while contemptuously rejecting the request/demand from General Maxwell that he restrain republican-minded priests in his diocese, opened the floodgates for those whose sympathies were with the ‘rebels’, but who had been afraid to speak out while the post-Rising coercion was ongoing.

For the 18 months or so between the Rising and the conscription crisis this rapprochement between the republicans and the institutional Church continued apace – though

SEMINAR

A NEW START FOR IRISH CATHOLICS

REVEALING THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE INCARNATION

SPEAKERS:

DANIEL O'LEARY

WRITER, SPEAKER, PRIEST

“The Divine Beauty of your Human Heart and of all Creation”

SALVADOR RYAN

PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, MAYNOOTH

“Everyday Grace – recovering and revealing the astonishing and untold Secret of Incarnation”

BAIRBRE CAHILL

WRITER, SPEAKER ON FAMILY SPIRITUALITY

“The Home is a sacred place – family love is God's love incarnate”



INCLUDES A BOOK SIGNING:

**DANIEL O'LEARY'S
AN ASTONISHING SECRET**
AND REFRESHMENTS.

**SATURDAY
JUNE 30TH**

THE BALLROOM
IN WYNN'S HOTEL

10AM-1.30PM

REGISTRATION FROM 9.30AM



RSVP to info@columba.ie | www.columbabooks.com | +353 (0)1 687 4096

Out&About

Serving God and Waterford for 150 years



WATERFORD: Sr Mary Alice, Sr Stella, Sr Geraldine, Sr Rosalie, Sr Kathleen, Fr Cyprian, Sr Helen Mary, Sr Rose, Sr Benedict, Sr Imelda and Sr Sheila celebrate 150 years of the Little Sisters of the Poor in Waterford.



MAYO: L-r: Fr Richard Gibbons PP, Rector of Knock Shrine, Jim Deeds, Brendan McManus SJ and Fr Donal Neary SJ at the book launch of *Finding God in the Mess* in the bookshop at Knock Shrine. Photo: Fr Stephen Farragher



LIMERICK: Ewan Mc Loughlin, Evan Crowe, Donal Coughlan, Aidan O'Connell and Cathal Hayes from Doon CBS were confirmed by Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly at Doon Parish Church.

IN SHORT

€86,000 raised for Trócaire

Bishop Fintan Monahan paid his first official visit to St Caimin's School, Shannon, last week to meet with the Junior Conference of St Vincent de Paul.

On arrival Bishop Fintan was greeted by members of the school Conference of St Vincent de Paul, Ms Claire Knight, school principal, Sr Ena, chairperson of the Board of Management, Ms Niamh McDonald, teacher and area president of St Vincent de Paul in Co. Clare, and Ms Sharon Bulfin, school chaplain.

The gathering was an opportunity for Bishop Fintan to thank the school for their social justice awareness through their involvement with St Vincent de Paul and for supporting the work of Trócaire. Bishop Fintan presented Ms Bulfin

with a plaque on behalf of Trócaire in acknowledgment of the €86,000 that the school has collected to date for Trócaire.

Bishop Fintan spoke about his visits to Malawi and Kenya with the charity to see what donations collected in Ireland for Trócaire do in places where poverty, natural disasters and injustice have occurred, and how it changes people's lives for the better.

The gathering concluded with tea and coffee and a time to chat with Bishop Fintan.

Free concert by California College Concert Orchestra

A US college orchestra comprised of 66 musicians from Santa Barbara in California will play a free concert entitled the 'Three Rhapsodies' at Dublin's Christ Church Cathedral on Thursday, May 10 starting at

8.30pm.

The Westmont College Orchestra is an all-student ensemble from the college's music department and is conducted by Dr Michael Shasberger.

Founded in 2006 the orchestra performs American orchestral repertoire including the commissioning of new works from contemporary American composers.

They will perform works including Lord of the Dance by Ronan Hardiman, Irish Rhapsody No 1 by Charles Villiers Stanford, Uilleann Sunrise by Sean O'Boyle and Rhapsody in Blue by George Gershwin along with show-stoppers, The Magnificent Seven, Hoe Down and The Cowboys.

The orchestra is made up of college students aged 18-21 who tour every year. Recent overseas tours have included Italy, China, Hungary and Austria.

"These tours offer the wonderful and overlapping purposes of opening up the

world to our students, creating a deep sense of community among the participants and giving our musicians an opportunity to focus deeply on their craft," explains conductor Dr Michael Shasberger.

"This trip will add a unique chapter of collaborations with local musicians, cultural experiences and musical growth to the history of the orchestra," he adds.

Westmont College Orchestra will also perform at St Canice's Cathedral in Kilkenny on Saturday, May 12 at 1pm – the concert is included in the usual entrance fee of €4.50, seating is unreserved. To book in advance phone 056-7764971.

The Dublin concert is free but the event will be ticketed, so you must reserve your seats in advance at www.ChristChurchTickets.com

For further information contact Annette O'Meara – (087) 2110343, email: annetteomeara@hotmail.com

Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



ITALY: Archbishop Eamon Martin meets 100 seminarians from 30 countries at the international Sedes Sapientiae seminary in Rome.



WESTMEATH: Mullingar Deanery Pioneers made a presentation to Rita Clarke on her birthday, to mark all the tireless devotion, hard work and dedication she gives to the Deanery in such a quiet and humble way. Back row: David Colgan, Rita Clarke, Peter Fagan, Tom Riggs, Peter McCrum, Joe Connaire. Front Row: Bernadette Whelehan, Sr Sacred Heart Beirne, Joseph J Monaghan (Chairman) and Mary Riggs.



CLARE: The Junior Conference of St Vincent de Paul in St Caimin's School, Shannon, receiving a plaque from the Bishop of Killaloe, Fintan Monahan, on behalf of Trócaire. The award acknowledges the school's contribution of €86,000 raised for the charity over the years.



DUBLIN: Presentation Sisters hosting Sister Cafe at Third Space in Smithfield, Dublin.

ANTRIM

'Amoris: Let's Talk Family', a six-session programme, will continue in Clonard Monastery, Belfast, from 7.30-9pm, on May 1, 22, 29. To book your place, phone 00 44 2890 445950 or email reception@clonard.com.

ARMAGH

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

Adoration chapel, Edwards St, Lurgan, adoration weekdays, 9am-9pm.

CLARE

Mass and Anointing for people with disabilities and chronic illnesses in Ennis Cathedral on Wednesday May 16 at 2pm. The celebrant and homilist will be Bishop Fintan Monahan.

Youth 2000 prayer meeting every Friday at 7pm in the Poor Clare's Oratory, Ennis. Join other young adults for prayer and reflection followed by tea and chats in the Friary.

CORK

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

DERRY

Dungiven Parish: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Monday to Friday, 8am-noon and 3-9pm.

DUBLIN

Life to the Full (Jn 10: 10) Book Club, Thursdays in St Paul's Church, Arran Quay 7-8.30pm. Join others in their 20s and 30s to meditate, share and discuss life and Faith. Email st.pauls@dublindiocese.ie

Mass commemorating the 74th anniversary of Venerable Edel Quinn in St Saviour's Church, Dominick Street on May 12 at 6pm with rosary prayed before Mass.

Our Lady of Knock prayer meetings take place on the last Thursday of every month in St Gabriel's Nursing Home, Glenayle Road, Raheny, D5, from 8pm-9pm.

Avila Charismatic Prayer Group – 'If you only knew what God is Offering' Life in the Spirit Seminars – each Wednesday until June 6 at 8pm. Speakers include: Fr Brendan Walsh, Charles Whitehead and Fr Gerry Campbell. Avila Carmelite Centre, Bloomfield Avenue, Donnybrook. For more information call 087 6823543 or 086 3203512.

FERMANAGH

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

KERRY

'5 Ways to Pray for (and with) Your Family!' will explore old and new ways of prayer on May 9 from 10-11.30am in preparation for the World Meeting of Families. It will be held in the Parish Centre, Church of the Resur-

rection, Park Road, Killarney.

KILKENNY

First Saturday Devotions, Adoration, Rosary, Divine Mercy and Prayer for Healing from 7-9pm in St Fiacre's Church, Loughboy.

Traditional Latin Mass every Sunday at 5pm in St Patrick's Church, College Road, Kilkenny (opposite St Kieran's College).

LEITRIM

Padre Pio Healing Mass in St Patrick's Church, Ballinamore on Friday May 25 at 7pm. The celebrant will be Fr Sean Kelly, OFM Cap from Kilkenny.

LIMERICK

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

LOUTH

A Centre Prayer Meeting is held at Mount Oliver (near Ballymascanlon, Dundalk) every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm. Contact 00353 863623361 from NI or 086 3623361 from Rol.

Mass in reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary will take place at 10am every first Saturday of the month in St Malachy's Church, Anne Street, Dundalk. Organised by the Legion of Mary, Presidium of Our Lady of the Listening Heart. Spiritual Director Fr Bede McGregor OP.

MEATH

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

ROSCOMMON

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

TYRONE

Life in Spirit Seminars in Sacred Heart Church in Omagh at 7pm every Thursday until May 17 with unique speakers and themes each evening organised by the Omagh Charismatic Prayer Group.

WATERFORD

Pentecost 9-day Novena for Life, starts Friday May 11-19, from 6.30-7.30pm each evening. Venue: Edmund Rice Chapel, Waterford.

Celebrate Pentecost Sunday May 20 with a Day of Praise and Healing with guest Fr John Keane beginning from 11am-5.30pm. Venue: Edmund Rice Centre in Waterford. Contact Word of God Outreach 0868590394.

WICKLOW

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



World Report

IN BRIEF

Mexican priest stabbed as he prepared for Mass

● A Mexico priest has been stabbed to death in his parish, in the latest attack on clergy in the heavily Catholic country. Fr Ruben Alcantara Diaz was attacked on April 18, just prior to the 7pm Mass at Our Lady of Carmen Parish in Cuautitlan Izcalli, the Diocese of Izcalli said in a short statement.

The priest was accosted by the assailant and was involved in a discussion prior to the attack, according to Mexican media. The assailant alleged abuse in his shouts and fled the scene, the newspaper *Reforma* reported. His whereabouts remains unknown.

The Catholic Multimedia Centre has counted 22 priests killed in Mexico since December 2012, when the six-year administration of President Enrique Pena Nieto began.

Threatened trees planted in Vatican

● The Vatican Gardens has branched out and added a small orchard to its hillside, becoming a safe haven for a number of endangered native Italian fruit and nut tree species.

If all goes well with weather and pollination, the eight new saplings planted behind St Peter's Basilica should be bearing fruit in just a few years.

The Italian tree conservation association 'Patriarchi della Natura' made the donation as part of its national effort to protect biodiversity by collecting and propagating native tree species that are threatened or in danger of extinction in their natural habitats.

WORLD MISSIONS
IRELAND
SPIRITUAL & PRACTICAL
SUPPORT WORLDWIDE



©Missio

You can support the work of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith (POF) in a number of ways:

Prayer
Leaving a gift in your Will
Regular donations
Mass stipends

POF is responsible for building much needed infrastructure in predominantly remote areas. Through POF, your support transforms lives and creates a hub from which the Young Church can flourish and grow, spreading the Good News of the Gospel. Priests in mission dioceses with a large number of outstations in remote rural areas cannot pay regular visits to the scattered communities of the faithful. They rely on the support of catechists and lay pastoral leaders, who travel long distances to lead prayer and minister the Sacraments. Funding received through POF enables the training of more catechists and pastoral leaders who are essential to the growth of the Church overseas.

☐ **YES, I want to help the Propagation of the Faith**
I enclose €

Name

Email

Address

Fr Martin Kelly CSSp
National Director WMI
64 Lower Rathmines Road, Dublin 6, Ireland.
Web www.wmi.ie | Tel +353 1 4972035

WORLD MISSIONS
IRELAND

Charity No.
CHY2318.

Pope appoints three lay women to Church watchdog

In an unprecedented move, Pope Francis has appointed three female academics as consultants to the Vatican's doctrinal watchdog, paving the way for women to have a more integral role in the Church's central administration.

The Vatican announced on April 21 that the Pontiff had named three women and two priests as consultants to the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF).

The women are Dr Laetitia Calmeyn, lecturer of theology at the Collège des Bernardins in Paris, and Dr Linda Ghisoni and Dr Michelina Tenace, respectively professor of canon law and professor of theology at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University.

Dr Linda Ghisoni was appointed last year to head the laity section in the Vatican's Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, while her fellow Italian Dr Tenace is a judge in the First Instance Court of the Vicariate of Rome.

She is a consecrated woman, as is Belgian Dr Calmeyn, who has in the past worked as a palliative care



Pope Francis blesses a woman during his weekly audience in Paul VI Hall at the Vatican. Photo: CNS

nurse and a religion teacher.

The historic new appointments mark the first time ever that women or laity have been appointed as consultants to the CDF.

Consultants

Fr Sergio Paolo Bonanni, also a professor of theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University, and Claretian Fr Manuel Jesús Arroba Conde, dean of the Institutum Utriusque Iuris at the Pontifical Lateran University, were also appointed as consultants.

The oldest of the Vatican's nine curial congregations, the CDF is the Vatican department responsible for protecting and promulgating the doctrine of the Church. It is headed by Archbishop Luis Ladaria Ferrer, SJ, and consultants include cardinals, bishops, priests, canon lawyers and lay theologians. The new consultants' role is to give advice on questions or matters pertaining to Church teaching.

Until the beginning of last year, all consultants to Vati-

can congregations had been men.

In January 2017, however, Pope Francis broke with tradition and appointed two women to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments: American Prof. Donna Orsuto, who teaches at the Gregorian University and is also director of the Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas in Rome, and Italy's Dr Valeria Trapani (Italy), who teaches in the Pontifical Theological Faculty of St John the Evangelist in Palermo, Sicily.

Bishop hopes Korea summit brings results

Bishop Peter Lee Ki-heon of Uijeongbu has been waiting years for this moment, with the leaders of the two divided Koreas poised to meet for a historic summit just inside South Korean territory on April 27.

Ucanews.com reported Bishop Lee, president of the Korean bishops' Committee for the Reconciliation of the Korean People, released a statement at the weekend expressing his belief that the summit would end decades of struggle and open a new era of peace on the peninsula.

"Now the Korean Peninsula is entering an important time of turbulence," Bishop

Lee wrote in the statement titled, "your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

"With the inter-Korean summit, as well as the ensuing summit between North Korea and the US, expectations are growing that the 65-year-long confrontation and struggle will end and a new era of peace will come," the statement read.

This will be the third major inter-Korean summit, decades after the Korean War ended in a cease-fire. It comes in the wake of former South Korean President Kim Dae-jung meeting former North Korean leader Kim Jong Il in Pyongyang in 2000, and former South Korean Presi-

dent Roh Moo-hyun following in his predecessor's footsteps by venturing to the North Korean capital in 2007.

But both of those meetings ultimately went nowhere, with the signs of rapprochement crumbling only to be replaced by threats of war amid occasional volleys of gunfire across the Demilitarised Zone that separates the two countries.

Bishop Lee said he expects the upcoming summit will bear more fruit, aided by the prayers of parishioners.

"Our prayers are making an incredible miracle through God, who makes the impossible possible," he said.

Former first lady Barbara Bush recalled for her 'unwavering love and devotion'



Barbara Bush.

Former US first lady Barbara Bush "was a model public servant and set a standard for her unwavering and loving devotion to both family and community," said Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston Houston in offering his prayers and "heartfelt condolences" to the Bush family.

Wife of the nation's 41st president and mother of the 43rd president, Mrs Bush died at home in Houston on April 17 surrounded by family. She

was 92.

"Her family's generous and compassionate decision to invite the public to her viewing to say their farewell touchingly demonstrates how much she has been part of the Houston community," Cardinal DiNardo said.

"Her tireless goodwill efforts and charity throughout Houston in recent years made a tremendous impact on countless families and individuals in need," he continued. "She

was bold and steadfast in her convictions and an inspiration to anyone in faithful service of helping others. May the glory of the risen Lord transform our sorrow into serenity.

"Pope Francis offers heartfelt condolences and the assurance of his prayers to President Bush and to all her family," Cardinal Parolin added. "His Holiness invokes upon all who mourn her passing the divine blessings of strength and peace."



Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie

Shelter from the storm



A Central American migrant arranges his belongings inside a Catholic church serving as a temporary shelter in Tlaquepaque, Mexico. Photo: CNS

German Church to review employment practices after European court ruling

The Church in Germany said it would review its employment system after top European judges warned it could violate anti-discrimination laws by requiring employees to be religious.

On April 17, the Luxembourg-based European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled that demands for Church employees to have a "religious affiliation" should be subject to judicial review.

Fr Hans Langendorfer, the German bishops' conference secretary-general, said the Church has "always ensured it does not impose disproportionate demands" on potential employees. He said that, in light of the ruling, the Church would "examine how far its recruitment practices should be adapted."

In a statement, Fr Langendorfer said

Germany's Catholic bishops welcomed the court's confirmation that Churches were still entitled to consider a job candidate's "attitude to religion," and that state courts could not "disregard their religious ethos."

However, he noted that Catholic conditions for professional involvement in ministry could now be legally challenged. The Catholic and Protestant Churches are among Germany's largest employers and have been allowed wide-ranging self-administration under religious freedom clauses in the country's 1949 constitution, or Basic Law.

However, Church institutions have faced legal action over alleged discrimination against non-Christian employees, notably at Church-owned hospitals and charities.

Young Europeans need 'support' to start families

Young people in Europe need political support to start families in countries with aging populations, a Catholic campaign group has said. While "young people want to form lasting relationships and have children," they "don't feel safe" to start families, said Antoine Renard, president of the Brussels-based Federation of Catholic Family Associations in Europe.

"Unless something is done rapidly, Europe risks a total demographic collapse," Renard said after the federation called on European Union governments to "put the family at the centre of national policies".

Young people are "often discouraged by inadequate and individualistic policies and cultures which are hostile to the family," the federation said in a statement at the end of its spring meeting in Vienna.

The European Union had 1.58 live births per woman in 2015.

Motion on papal abuse apology blocked

A conservative member of parliament has blocked a motion calling on the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops to invite Pope Francis to apologise for the Church's role in abuse at Indian residential schools.

However, Charlie Angus, a member of parliament, said the motion would come up for debate and a vote in the

coming weeks.

Mr Angus is seeking unanimous government support for a motion to call on the CCCB to formally invite Pope Francis to apologise in Canada, as requested by the 2015 report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

While the idea behind the schools was to promote

the greater integration of indigenous communities into modern Canadian life, the schools – many run by religious orders – led to a situation in which many children were taken from their families, lost their native language and cultures and often suffered abuse. The commission's report used the term "cultural genocide"

to describe what happened to aboriginal Canadians in residential schools.

Garnett Genuis, the lone dissenter on the motion, told journalists he refused to give consent because he thought parliament should not be "dictating" to any religious entity how to run its affairs or how to engage in reconciliation.

Vatican roundup

Pope calls German cardinal to Rome to discuss eucharistic sharing

Pope Francis has asked the president of the German bishops' conference to come to Rome to discuss pastoral guidelines for possibly allowing some non-Catholics married to Catholics to receive the Eucharist, the conference spokesman has said. Reports that "the document was rejected in the Vatican by the Holy Father or by the dicasteries are false", said Matthias Kopp, the conference spokesman.

Members of the German bishops' conference were asked to submit proposed amendments to the draft document by Easter; the heads of the conference's doctrinal and ecumenical committees and the president of the conference were to formulate a final draft and present it to the conference's permanent council this week.

Cardinal Reinhard Marx, conference president, had announced in February that three-quarters of the German bishops approved the development of pastoral guidelines for determining situations in which a non-Catholic spouse married to a Catholic could receive Communion.

During Pope Francis' visit to Sweden in 2016, Cardinal Koch, the Vatican's chief ecumenist, was asked about the situations in which such sharing would be permitted. In reply, he said a distinction must be made between "eucharistic hospitality for individual people and eucharistic communion".

Vatican hosts experts to discuss tenderness

Close to 100 financiers, philanthropists, artists, tech experts, physicians, politicians and religious leaders spent more than an hour in a Vatican meeting room last Friday talking about tenderness.

A project called 'Humanity 2.0', supported by the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, designed the day-long event to kick off a process of connecting people with different resources, but who all are committed to improving the lives of others.

During the April 20 meeting, the discussions moved from the concept

of tenderness to ways tenderness becomes action and to a multi-session discussion about the worrying state of maternal and prenatal medical care and ways to address it.

"Healthier mothers are an investment in the health and well-being of our communities and our world," Marie-Louise Coleiro, president of Malta, told the gathering. She particularly challenged Humanity 2.0 participants to brainstorm concrete ways to improve holistic care for pregnant women and new mothers who are migrants or refugees.

Pope remembers beloved bishop who served poor

The Church needs courageous men and women like Italian Bishop Antonio Bello of Molfetta, who imitated Jesus' closeness to the poor and the downtrodden, Pope Francis has said. Visiting the birthplace of the beloved bishop affectionately known as 'Don Tonino', the Pope said Bishop Bello's life and ministry "remind us to not theorise closeness to the poor but to be close to them as Jesus did".

"Don Tonino did not do this because it was convenient or because he was seeking approval, but because he was moved by the Lord's example. Out of love for him, we find the strength to rid ourselves of the garments that get in the way so that we can dress ourselves in service, to be 'the church of the apron, which is the only priestly vestment recorded in the Gospel'," he said.

Pope Francis arrived in the morning by helicopter in the town of Alessano, where Bishop Bello was born and buried.

Born in 1935, Don Tonino spent his first years of priestly ministry as vice-rector of a seminary while collaborating with the Catholic charitable organisation, Caritas.

Letter from Rome



Inés San Martín

World Youth Day, a massive gathering of young people from around the world that's become something like the Woodstock of the Catholic Church, was founded in 1985 for young people. Spokespersons say the January 2019 edition in Panama, however, also will be organised by young people themselves.

Among the novelties the January 2019 event will introduce are an app to track down saints, and a theme park to promote the reading of the Bible.

"The youth are the real protagonists," said Archbishop José Domingo Ulloa of Panama. "Us old folks are always doing things, but I can easily say that the team that is working on World Youth Day is all made up by young people."

Jokingly, he added that he had to "reinvent" the meaning of what being "young" is to be able to include himself in the task force that is putting together this World Youth Day (WYD), an event which has summoned millions to Brazil, Poland, Spain, Canada and the United States in previous editions.

Dr Ulloa and other members of the local organising committee for WYD spoke last week at Rome's Santa Croce Pontifical University, where they introduced some of the new ideas that the 2019 edition will incorporate in the week-long pilgrimage.

The new ideas include an app, JC go, inspired by Pokemon Go, that will reportedly be ready for download come August. With the app, people all over the globe will be able to "hunt down" saints, much like millions around the world searched for Pikachu and his friends some years ago. In addition, it will also give information on priests available for Confession and spiritual direction.

Theme park

They're also preparing a tent-like structure that will function as a *lectio divina* theme park, to promote the reading of the Bible, with the Archangel Gabriel welcoming the pilgrims as they go into the infrastructure, that will use artificial intelligence and top-notch technology to create what was described as a "unique" experience.

Scheduled to take place January 22-27, 2019, the Pope is expected to participate in WYD, as has been the case since the first international edition, back in the late 1980s in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

"Everyone is invited to participate in WYD, because we're



Pope Francis waves after registering for Panama's World Youth Day 2019 during the Angelus prayer in St Peter's Square. Photo: CNS

'Catholic Woodstock' won't just be for youth, but by youth

convinced that this is the hour of the youth," Archbishop Ulloa said. "And if it's not the time of the youth, we have to make it so because we all know that the transformation of the Church and of the world will come from them."

“Some priests exhibited ‘jealousy’ at the fact that they were being left out of the organisation”

The fact that the people organising this mega-event are in their 30s, however, does not mean that they haven't put in the hours.

Many of the volunteers working on the organising committee, both in Panama and around the world, are WYD *alumni*, so they understand the dynamics behind the event. Several went as a commission to the previous WYD in Krakow, Poland, back in 2016, to learn the ins-and-outs.

Most, if not all, of the over 200 young women and men from every continent – who speak 22 different languages – working on the social

media of Panama 2019 have been doing so at least since Krakow, but many of the people were inherited from the social teams of Madrid2011 and Rio2013.

In addition, at least three of the leaders of the organisation – Archbishop Ulloa, Víctor Chang González, executive secretary and Eduardo Soto, director of the communications team – are all showing grey hair, most of which were there before they joined the team. It's subdivided into over a dozen working groups, and is working closely with the government of Panama, which, together with the local bishops lobbied the Vatican to become the first Central American nation to host WYD.

Archbishop Ulloa acknowledged that putting the young at the centre of the organisation wasn't easy. Among the challenges were priests themselves, who exhibited some "jealousy" at the fact that they were being left out of the organisation.

"But, shoemaker to your own shoes," Dr Ulloa said, explaining that the ministry of priests is different, and that leaving the

organisation in the hands of the youth is the right thing to do, "even when they speak a language we don't understand."

"We have to be like Mary, take a leap of faith!" he said.

Young women and men, the archbishop insisted, can do much more than "moving chairs around at church," and that given the opportunity, they voluntarily give up their nights to hold meetings until midnight, after working for over eight hours in their day jobs.

“The more space given to young people, the more attention they will demand”

"I find it edifying to see how they've put the weight of organising this on their shoulders," he said. "We need to truly trust in our youth. When we trust in them, and when we love them, they accomplish incredible things."

Also at the presentation, part of a seminar on Church communications given by the Opus Dei-run university, was Mr González, executive secretary of the organising committee, who underlined that this is a historic moment for WYD because "for the first time" the universal Church is speaking not only about the youth,

but with the youth.

He was referring to the upcoming synod of bishops on the youth that was called for by Pope Francis and which will take place in Rome next October. As a set up for that gathering, hundreds of young people from around the world gathered in Rome last month and presented a document that will be used by the bishops when they meet in Rome.

Putting young people at the centre, Mr González said, is a "challenge" because the more space given to them, the more attention they will demand, for instance when it comes to pastoral attention, "but it's a challenge that we can turn to grace."

One of the complaints many in the northern hemisphere have expressed is the fact that next year's WYD will be held during a school period. However, organisers argued that for those in the southern hemisphere the usual August date has "always been a challenge," but nevertheless, delegations never failed to participate. Plus, Archbishop Ulloa explained, weather was a factor: January is a time of low rain, and it's the 'winter' season, with average temperatures in the mid-20s.

1 Inés San Martín is a writer for crux.com



John L. Allen Jr

Nuns lead the fight against trafficking

Though a sprawling network of Catholic activists, usually featuring determined members of women's religious orders, are helping to lead today's social and humanitarian crusade against human trafficking and modern-day slavery, they know they need the unique resources and powers of governments to turn the tide.

A Rome summit on consumerism has suggested that at least some governments around the world are listening.

"Traffickers are inventive, they make increasing use of technology, and they're very inventive," said Prince Jaime De Bourbon De Parme, Ambassadors of the Netherlands to the Holy See, summing up the observations of his country's law enforcement community.

"It's about money, lots of money, and governments have to be inventive as well in fighting it," he said.

Ambassador De Parme was speaking at an April 18 event sponsored by the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission, a body jointly sponsored by the Union of Superiors General and the International Union of Superiors General, the main umbrella groups in Rome for men's and women's orders around the world.

The event was titled 'Consumerism: A Push Factor in Human Trafficking', and was devoted to exploring how demand for prostitution and other illicit services often drives an illegal industry estimated at around €122 billion and believed to be the fastest-growing criminal enterprise in the world, now outpacing even the drug trade.

"Consumerism has a catalytic role in human smuggling, prostitution, forced labour, human trafficking and the drug trade," said Godwin George Umo, Ambassador of Nigeria to the Holy See and a former general in the Nigerian military who's written widely on corruption, terrorism and security issues.

Hopeful sign

One hopeful sign in the struggle against trafficking, Mr Umo said, is that it's essentially apolitical, attracting support from leaders from a wide variety of backgrounds and outlooks. To prove the point, he cited the fact that both Pope Francis and US President Donald Trump have flagged ending human trafficking as a social and political priority.

After tracing the growth of modern consumer culture, Mr Umo noted that one of its defining features is planned obsolescence: "You just get the Samsung 8, and within three months you see the Samsung 9 is out," he laughed.



When it comes to trafficking, Mr Umo said, consumer appetite is a major part of the problem.

"If there is no demand, there will be no supply," he said. "If people don't want these things, there would be no money to be made from them."

He also said that governments need to cooperate to crack down on perpetrators, because "a global problem requires global solutions". Mr Umo cited the recent example of a Nigerian police raid on a brothel using trafficking victims in Barcelona, Spain, and run by expatriate Nigerian nationals.

“The government of the Netherlands has come to the realisation that the country is a major destination of victims”

"The Spanish police got the tip-off, and our forces were able to make the arrests," Mr Umo said, showing photographs of false passports seized during the raid with which victims had been brought into Europe.

Mr Umo recommended five elements in terms of crafting effective anti-trafficking policies:

- Prevention is better than cure.
- Requires a global solution because it's a global problem.
- Funding must cover immediate, short- and long-term measures.
- Anti-consumerism campaign and sensitisation.
- Pope Francis: human and natural



Sr Redempta Kabahweza, a Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Africa, plays with two of the youngest sexual abuse survivors during a counseling session in 2017 at the Pope Francis Rescue Center in Malindi, Kenya. Photos CNS

environments are deteriorating together.

"Governments, churches, mosques, NGOs and the public should partner to ensure a holistic solution to the menace of human trafficking," Mr Umo said.

Ambassador De Parme, who recently helped launch a Responsible Mining Index to help trace illegal minerals extracted from conflict zones such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, told the Rome meeting that "today we're not talking about smuggling minerals around the world, but smuggling people."

He called modern-day slavery a "blight of society as a whole".

Mr De Parme said that in recent years, the government of the Netherlands has come to the realisation that the country is a major destination of victims, and has begun waking up to the need to combat the trade. One factor that's helped fuel the determination, he said, is the realisation that 30% of trafficking victims in the sex trade are actually of Dutch nationality.

"This is a massive problem that touches our sisters and daughters,"

he said. "It's a deeply rooted national problem."

Nevertheless, Ambassador De Parme acknowledged that the country's resources are presently strained in light of the real scope of what they're up against.

Positive measures

Still, he cited several positive anti-trafficking measures the Netherlands have adopted.

First, he said a law is under consideration to criminalise receiving sexual services for payment from anyone the client knows, or should have known, has been coerced into the act. It's clearly meant as a deterrent, he said, to reduce the demand for trafficking victims.

Second, he said, outreach programmes have been launched for victims, especially young boys involved in the sex trade. They're less recognised as potential victims of coerced prostitution, he said, and often counsellors and social services professionals aren't trained to respond adequately to the unique circumstances they face.

Third, the ambassador said,

detection tools are being developed to identify possible trafficking victims among persons with "slight or full intellectual disabilities," whom he described as being "especially vulnerable."

Fourth, he said that one new frontier for traffickers is the digitalisation of the trafficking trade, with the internet being used increasingly both to lure victims and also to offer illicit services for sale.

On the other hand, Ambassador De Parme said, "technology can also be used against traffickers." He cited the example of Rotterdam in the Netherlands, where police and citizens together are using webcams to scan potential pathways for trafficking victims online, and assess the risks that a particular location may be a hotspot for trafficking activity.

“Trafficking will never be ended...our goal is to minimise it”

In terms of ongoing challenges, he cited involving the medical sector to a greater extent in identifying potential trafficking victims; convincing the corporate sector to more aggressively monitor its supply chain to identify possible reliance on trafficked labour and raw materials; and what's reported to be a burgeoning new market for traffickers in illegally harvested organs and tissues.

"We just passed a law that every citizen is automatically an organ donor unless they indicate otherwise, whereas before it was always the other way around," Ambassador De Parme said. "We hope this will reduce the market for illegal transplants."

Overall, he said, the goal of the Dutch approach to perpetrators can be simply stated: "To make their life a hell of a lot more difficult."

Later, Nigerian Sr Dorothy Ezeh, a social pedagogist who works with young female victims of trafficking and prostitution, struck a sober note about the success of such efforts. "Trafficking will never be ended," she said. "Our goal is to minimise it."

Still, Mr Umo from Nigeria suggested that governments can at least play a robust role in that minimisation effort.

"This is something we cannot fail to address because it's at the very heart of so many problems today," he said.

With that, Mr Umo was out of the room on his way to the airport, leaving the headquarters of the Christians Brothers in Rome at around 11am, just one hour before a scheduled flight at noon – another way, he said, of showing that this government official is fully on board.

Letters

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

Letter of the week

Collins' recommendation makes sense

Dear Editor, Marie Collins' recommendation that clerics who have misled Pope Francis around abuse and cover-up in Chile should be removed from office (IC 19/4/2018) makes perfect sense.

At this stage, it is hard to see how anything else could constitute a genuine commitment to the cause of zero tolerance in the field of child protection.

The Pope's reference in his apology to what he called "a lack of truthful and balanced information" was

particularly telling in this regard. Was he advised to disregard the letter Cardinal O'Malley gave him from Chilean survivors, and told it contained nothing truthful? Did somebody tell him that the people of Osorno were "dumb" and being "led by the nose" by "leftists"? What information led him to do and say such things, and who provided him with such information? It looks like heads should roll, even if red hats are perched on them.

On the other hand, one person who

has come out of this affair looking as impressive as ever is Malta's Archbishop Charles Scicluna. Every time he's been called on to tackle issues of abuse and cover-up in the Church he has proven to be a model of clerical integrity, efficiency, and courage.

A red hat for the Church's most effective combatant against abuse is surely overdue.

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

It's important to be well informed for Eighth vote

Dear Editor, Being a young Catholic working in psychology I have received my fair share of good debates and dialogue around the upcoming referendum on the Eighth Amendment. I believe both sides of this argument have at some point put forward false information regarding what they call "facts". It is imperative that we in today's society inform ourselves to make an educated informed opinion considering the ease of social media platforms to promote false propaganda as true.

An agnostic friend of mine sent me a post from Facebook entitled 'Catholic teaching allows us to apply conscience to decisions on abortion'. The post from a group called 'Catholics for

choice' argues that it is an individual's conscience that rules supreme or our own perceived perception of reality versus what the Church/God teach.

What this means is that if I see it as "right" then it is no matter what anyone else teaches/says – very appealing to the individualistic framework of modern society that we currently live in.

I have seen my fair share of very well laid out arguments for abortion, but to use a platform masquerading as Catholic really takes the biscuit and only adds to the uncertainty of Christians seeking information regarding this very important referendum. Over in America the

organisation has been denounced by various bishops and I hope anyone reading this will do further research into the organisation and make up your own opinions.

I believe the referendum in its essence has been complicated to extraordinary lengths; every conversation I have had revolving this debate eventually comes down to the individual belief of when life begins and the rights entitled to that life. The responsibility is on all of us to inform ourselves and get the correct factual information available.

*Yours etc.,
Patrick Fitzgerald,
Castletroy, Limerick.*

Former President must decide

Dear Editor, Mary McAleese has not decided how she will vote in the forthcoming referendum.

In the 1983 referendum she was on the Pro-life committee with me in Navan. I would like to ask her today, what is the difference now? Is the baby in the womb any different in 2018 than it was in 1983? Is it not still a person?

The Church's teaching has not changed.

Finally, what will Mary say when she meets God? She should know – she cannot blame others to make excuses for herself.

*Yours etc.,
Jane McGurl,
Navan, Co. Meath.*



Pope's clarity so welcome in *Gaudate et Exsultate*

Dear Editor, Your decision to publish extensive highlights of Pope Francis' exhortation on holiness, *Gaudate et Exsultate* (IC 12/4/2018) is to be applauded. I was fascinated by the four pages of extracts from the document, as well as by David Quinn's and Austen Ivereigh's commentaries, and searched out and read the document online in full.

One thing that struck me about it was how fresh it is – recent weeks have featured stories about how young

Catholics at a conference in Rome doubted whether sainthood was achievable for all, or was a path to happiness, for example, but the Pope could hardly be more clear in saying not merely that both of these things are true, but how both these things are true.

I was taken too by how the Pope challenged those who cast doubt on different ways of serving God through others, or exalt certain causes as though other causes matter nothing

compared to them.

As such, Francis calls us to fight against the evil of abortion, saying "our defence of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of development".

At the same time, he says, "the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned

and the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery, and every form of rejection" are no less valuable.

Catholics, the Pope reminds us, miss the mark if we do not care for all of our brothers and sisters, born and unborn.

*Yours etc.,
Laurence Doyle,
Tallaght, Dublin 24.*

What of the saints?

Dear Editor, I cannot be alone in thinking that a notable absence from catechesis and homilies in recent decades is reference to the lives of the saints. When I was growing up in the 1970s, stories and episodes from the lives of those the Church holds up as heroic in virtue were legion. Undoubtedly, some of these were hagiographical in nature and often exaggerated in the extreme.

Nevertheless, they were wonderful tales that inspired us as young people to want to aspire to be saints. Pope Francis in his recent exhortation *Rejoice and be Glad* devotes considerable time to talking about the role of the saints in the life of the Church. He points out that the saints are not held up as people to be emulated because they were perfect or even that everything they said was true or worthy of belief. The Pope reminds us that saints are people who are conscious of their sinfulness and their consequent need of God, but didn't let this dishearten them. On the contrary, they embraced the Christian virtues so fully that the Church saw fit to raise them to the altars as people who could intercede for us before the throne of God.

In a world where we see so much that is wrong and so many people who are far from admirable, the saints would offer our younger people inspiring examples of people they would want to be like.

*Yours etc.,
Mary Kelly,
Letterkenny, Co. Donegal.*

Alternative to Al-Assad is worse

Dear Editor, In the rush to punish Syria's Bashar Al-Assad for alleged attacks using chemical weapons, many commentators have ignored the voices of the Christian leaders in the region who are calling for peace. Christians in Syria certainly don't want to see Mr Al-Assad – as awful as he is – overthrown because they know that the alternative will be much worse. While Mr Al-Assad and his Ba'ath party are secular in nature and leave the Christians to do their own thing, many of his opponents are Islamists determined to ensure that Syria becomes an Islamist state. It's a sad fact of the so-called 'Arab Spring' that it has brought nothing but misery to the tiny Christian communities in countries that the West likes to describe as being 'liberated'.

*Yours etc.,
Des O'Donnell,
Dungannon, Co. Tyrone.*

SVP has taken a position

Dear Editor, There is considerable disquiet amongst ordinary rank and file members of the Society of St Vincent de Paul that the leadership of the organisation has decided to take a neutral stance on the referendum on abortion. Of course, at one level one might say that the organisation is not taking a position – but the very fact of announcing that the organisation is not taking a position is, in fact, taking a position. People will read this accordingly.

Catholic social teaching calls us to be consistent on the fight for the vulnerable. This includes tackling homelessness, addiction, poverty and everything that is an assault on human dignity. There can surely be nothing more offensive to human dignity than the deliberate targeting of life at the most vulnerable stage – in the womb. This is a fight against what Pope Francis calls the 'throwaway culture' and the Society of St Vincent de Paul should be unashamedly on the side of the angels.

*Yours etc.,
Siobhan McNamee,
Clontarf, 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.

Around the world



SYRIA: A displaced man from Ghouta sits on a wheelchair in a Herjelleh shelter. Photos: CNS



USA: William Friedkin, director of the 1973 horror film *The Exorcist*, walks past the house in Washington where Fr Karras tumbled to his death in the movie. His latest work, *The Devil & Father Amorth*, is a documentary about the work of the chief exorcist for the Diocese of Rome.



USA: Chicago's Cardinal Blase Cupich, along with physicians, nurses, chaplains and students, attends a news conference at Loyola Medical Center. Cardinal Cupich called on Illinois legislators to pass a bill that tightens restrictions on gun shop owners and helps stem the flow of illegal guns into Illinois.



VATICAN: Tom Evans, father of the seriously ill child Alfie Evans, kisses Pope Francis' hand during a private audience in the Domus Sanctae Marthae. Evans pleaded for "asylum" for his son in Italy so he may receive care and not be euthanised in England. Pictured in the background is Bishop Francesco Cavina of Carpi, Italy.



CHINA: A man is baptised during a Mass on the outskirts of Xining in northwestern province of Qinghai. Christians must be willing to move where the Spirit leads them and not be benchwarmers on the sidelines of efforts to evangelise, Pope Francis said in his homily during morning Mass at the Domus Sanctae Marthae.



ITALY: A man enjoys his ice cream cone donated by Pope Francis at a Sant'Egidio soup kitchen in Rome. In honour of his name day, the feast of St George, the pope donated 3,000 servings of ice cream to soup kitchens and homeless shelters around Rome.



The shortcomings of a digital immigrant



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

Information technology and social media aren't my mother tongue. I'm a digital immigrant. I wasn't born into the world of information technology but migrated into it, piece-meal. I first lived in some foreign territories.

I was nine years old before I lived with electricity. I had seen it before; but neither our home, our school, nor our neighbors had electricity. Electricity, when I first saw it, was a huge revelation. And while I grew up with radio, I was 14 before our family got its first television set. Again, this was a revelation – and *manna* for my adolescent hunger for connection to the larger world.

Electricity and television quickly became a mother tongue, one lit our home and other brought the big world into it. But the phone was still foreign. I was 17 when I left home and our family had never had a phone.

“I’m the only person in my immediate religious community who still prays the Office of the Church out of a book”

The phone wasn't much to master, but it would be a goodly number of years before I mastered much in the brave new world of information technology: computers, the internet, websites, mobile phones, smart

phones, television and movie access through the internet, cloud storage, social media, virtual assistants, and the world of myriad apps. It's been a journey!

I was 38 when I first used a video recorder, 42 before I first owned a computer, 50 before I first accessed the web and used email, 58 when I owned my first mobile phone, the same age when I first set up a website, 62 before I first texted and 65 before I joined Facebook.

With email, texting, and Facebook being all I can handle, I still do not have either an Instagram or Twitter account. I'm the only

person in my immediate religious community who still prays the Office of the Church out of a book rather than off a mobile device.

I protest that paper has soul while digital devices do not. The responses I get are not particularly sympathetic. But it's for reasons of soul that I much prefer to have a book in my hand than a kindle device. I'm not against information technology; mainly, it's just that I'm not very good at it. I struggle with the language. It's hard to master a new language as an adult and I envy the young who can speak this language well.



What's to be said about the revolution in information technology? Is it good or bad?

Obviously, it has many positives: it's making us the most informed people ever in the history of this world. Information is power and the internet and social media have leveled the playing field in terms of access to information and this is serving well the developing nations in the world. Moreover it's creating one global village out of the whole world. We now know all of our neighbors, not just those who live nearby. We're the best-informed and best-connected people ever.

“Thanks to the electronic devices we carry around with us we can be reached all the time”

But all of this also has a pejorative underbelly: we talk to each other less than we text each other. We have many virtual friends but not always many real friends. We watch nature on a screen more than we ever physically touch it. We spend more time looking at device in our hands than actually engaging others face to face.

I walk through an airport or basically any other public space and I see the majority of people staring at their phones. Is this a good thing? Does it foster friendship and community or is it their substitute? It's too early to tell. The initial generations who lived through

the Industrial Revolution did not have any way of knowing what the effects of this would be long-range.

The Technological Revolution, I believe, is just as radical as the Industrial Revolution and we are its initial generation. At this time we have no way of knowing where this will ultimately take us, for good or bad.

But one negative that seems already evident is that the revolution within information technology we are living through is destroying the few remaining remnants we still retain in terms of keeping *Sabbath* in our lives.

The 13th-Century mystic Rumi once lamented: “I have lived too long where I can be reached.” That's infinitely truer of us today than it was for those living in the 13th Century.

Thanks to the electronic devices we carry around with us we can be reached all the time – and, too often, let ourselves be reached all the time. The result is that now we no longer have any time apart from what we regularly do. Our family times, our recreational times, our vacation periods and even our prayer times are constantly rendered regular time by our “being reached”.

My fear is that while we are going to be the most informed people ever we may well end up the least contemplative people ever.

But I'm an outsider on this, a digital immigrant. I need to bow to the judgments of those who speak this language as their mother tongue.

Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, April 26, 2018

Personal Profile

To be a Christian is to be a rebel

Page 30



A knot too difficult to tie?



Irish society has been transformed considerably in the last half-century or so: people are more likely to marry older; youth are more career-driven; and the likelihood of being able to afford and own a house is decreasing. All of these factors raise questions as to whether young people can still take the Sacrament of Marriage seriously today.

Recently, Archbishop of Armagh Eamon Martin said that Church teaching about marriage can often be perceived as out of date and out of touch with young people, but that marriage is still an achievable goal. He argued that social, political and economic factors actively discourage young adults from



Colm Fitzpatrick examines the value of marriage today

marrying and that we should be creating new frameworks where marriage is seen as more accessible and inviting.

"Why is it that so many young people will choose not to get married? Maybe because they can't get a hold of a mortgage, or because the benefit system suits them better to live as single people rather than as a couple with their children. Why is it that legislation on issues like

addictions, gambling, or a whole lot of areas where family life can be destroyed – why are these not priorities in social policy-making?" the archbishop said.

He also pointed out that a society "surrounded by a contraceptive, anti-birth mentality" is dissuading young adults from marrying, and that younger generations "resist becoming tied down by relationships, commitments or

attachments".

Indeed, according to the Households and Family Data from Census 2016, the number of cohabitating couples raising children has risen by over 15,000 since the 2011 census. The number of divorced people in Ireland has increased from 87,770 in 2011 to 103,895 in 2016, an increase of 16,125 persons. In light of these statistics, is it the case that young Irish people perceive marriage and the values it espouses, such as commitment, to be irrelevant?

Importance

For Fr Alan O'Sullivan O.P., Trinity College chaplain and author of *Self-Giving, Self-Mastery: St John Paul II on Men, Women and*

Conjugal Chastity, says this is not the case. Young people still value the importance of marriage, but it depends on how marriage is presented to them.

"I think it has to be presented in a beautiful and positive way and something that is enriching personally for them," Fr Alan says. He adds that even though the Church doesn't recognise civil marriage as valid, it still understands that it's a public commitment to each other and so distinct from cohabitation to some degree.

Echoing this view, Fr Seán MacGiollarnáth OCarm, parish priest of Dublin's Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on Whitefriar Street, famous

» Continued on Page 29

Family News

AND EVENTS

Kerry sci-fi festival

Families often debate about what movie is the greatest of all, and more often than not, *Star Wars* is part of the list. It's good news for fans of the movie then, as it will be theme of a céili in Portmagee's village square, Kerry, over May 4-6.



The Fáilte Ireland initiative is designed to capitalise on several *Star Wars* location shoots that have taken place along the 2,500km route, from Malin Head in Co. Donegal to Ceann Sibeal and Skellig Michael in Co. Kerry – and further afield.

There will be plenty of events throughout

the weekend ranging from drive-in movie screens to guided film location walks and even workshops about the puffins upon the latest movie's 'porgs' [pictured] were based. Traditional music, set dancing and singing will also be happening during this sci-fi inspired weekend. Best of all – admission is free!

THE PROBLEM-SOLVING SPOON:

Feeding a baby can be a troublesome task, with food often creating a mess over the floor rather than ending up in your child's mouth. In the hope of solving this problem, a revolutionary utensil is providing an easy, safe, and clean way for your baby to get all the nourishment they need.

'Squirt' isn't just an ordinary spoon, but also acts as a food dispenser. Simply fill the product's bulb with up to three ounces of baby food, and with one squeeze of the device, the food will come out.

It's designed for stage one and two foods, is dishwasher safe and makes it much quicker and easier to feed your child. This product is ideal if you're a parent on the go and it even comes with a spoon cap so that it stays clean.

Link found between memory and menopause

It is common knowledge that as you get older your memory begins to weaken, but new research suggests that a late menopause onset may benefit the memory skills of senior women later in life.

The study, led by Diana Kuh, from University College London, revealed that, on average, female participants could remember 25.8 words they were tasked to recall, but the number declined to 23.3 words by age 69.

However, women whose menopause occurred naturally and later in life had higher scores, being able to recall an additional 0.09 words per year.

"The difference in verbal memory scores for a 10-year difference in the start of menopause was small – recalling only one additional word, but it's possible that this benefit could translate to a reduced risk of dementia years later," said Kuh, adding that more research is needed to determine whether this is the case.

Nothing surpasses the greatness or dignity of a human person

What's abortion, Mammy?" is one question that many parents have been hearing over the past few weeks. With a referendum on abortion approaching rapidly, the arguments and passion around the subject are going to reach fever pitch leaving concerned adults struggling with how they should deal with it. Children are inevitably going to be wondering what all the talk and debate is about and while we may think that it goes over their heads, even quite young children will pick up bits and pieces of information. Just hoping that by saying nothing, the whole topic will just disappear isn't an option.

Teenagers will be totally au fait with the debates about the Eighth Amendment. If we, as parents, don't educate them about the issues and pass on our own unique perspective, inspired by our Christian faith, they'll be influenced by other, louder voices and often voices that aren't in keeping with the values we want them to embrace.

"I could see the worry in one mother's eyes as she whispered that her daughter was voting 'yes'"

I've been chatting to a lot of other parents recently about abortion and the right to life. I could see the worry in one mother's eyes as she whispered that her daughter was voting 'yes'. One woman I spoke to almost seemed nervous about taking some of the literature that I was offering her as she didn't want to make a fuss or spark off



A parent's perspective Maria Byrne

any major disagreements with other family members. Yet, these are conversations that we have to have. We can tailor our words or explanations to suit the character, personality and maturity level of each of our children but we must say something.

While children are very young, we want them to remain in their happy, carefree bubble for as long as possible, we are dismayed and distressed at the thought that any hint of the sad realities of life might reach their little ears. How can we pave the way for them so they retain their faith in everything good and loving and faith-filled while slowly helping them see that for every good life-embracing choice, there is another choice that leads to loss, pain and hurt for ourselves and others? When talking about abortion, we may feel that if we broach the topic, we'll be drawn into a situation where we'll divulge more information than we planned.

Details

However, this isn't solely about the biological details of reproduction or the hope that we can sum up all the ethical dilemmas of our time. Our starting point should be firmly focused on the dignity, worth and beauty of each and every human being. It doesn't matter if we're big or small, healthy or unhealthy, rich or poor, convenient or inconvenient.

Pope John Paul II said that "all human life, from the moment of conception, and through all subsequent stages, is sacred because human life is created in the image and likeness of God".

I saw a lovely, uplifting video recently which showed a little toddler, sitting on her mother's knee, looking at a book of pictures of an unborn baby around 12 weeks old. She was pointing out and naming all the perfectly-formed body parts. Even a tiny tot, speaking in babyish tones, could see the humanity of the child in its mother's womb. This is where our appreciation for life begins; sitting on our father's, mother's or grandparent's knee.

"Children get the idea that 'a person's a person no matter how small'"

There are numerous books and videos for children of all ages that can assist parents with these conversations. I saw a really lovely one on YouTube called *There's a House Inside My Mummy*, and while not anatomically correct, it introduces the whole idea of a baby growing and developing inside his mother. Written by Giles Andreae and Vanessa Cabban, the story's told from the perspective of an older brother awaiting the arrival of his sibling. It contains very

appealing lines like "it's very warm and cosy but because there's not a bed, there's a sort of giant bathtub where the baby sleeps instead".

Older children aged around seven or eight will understand the concepts of justice, equality and fair play. We pose the question "are there people who are bigger, older and stronger than you?" and then ask "are there people who are more important?"

Children get the idea that "a person's a person no matter how small".

In a recent article, a mother spoke of discussing abortion with her children and one child's comment was "I think everyone deserves a shot at life". This is a line that will appeal to teenagers too; is it just or fair to support "rights" which will strip the basic right to life of other human beings? If older children have moved away from their Faith, appeals to the humanitarian aspect might make them think. This is a human rights issue and one that concerns people of all faiths and none.

Our children, especially our college-aged or working young adults, are hearing all the arguments that are based on the idea that some members of our human family are less valuable than others. We have to risk having the conversation that throws, light, not heat on the subject.

We might feel nervous speaking; a prayer to the Holy Spirit will give us the strength and courage we need. If we remember the words of Pope John Paul II - "Nothing surpasses the greatness or dignity of a human person" we won't hesitate to pass this message on about how special each one of us is in the sight of God.

» Continued from Page 27



as the home of the bones of St Valentine, says that young people, even if they're marrying for socially conventional reasons, still value the sacrament.

"Yes. They do. If they're married in Church, the sacrament is there. If they participate in the sacrament, they are open to the blessings of the sacrament. Any sacrament is dependent to some degree on our own receptivity," he explains, adding that our receptivity and our willingness to cooperate with the Lord's will determines to some degree the fruitfulness of the sacrament.

"I think that people do take marriage seriously, I do. I agree that there are pressures and social structures and so on that might not make marriage as easy for people as we might like."

He points out that people in Ireland might delay marriage for housing reasons and because the dating culture of Ireland has changed drastically in modern times.

"What might be something that might delay marriage, I think in Ireland, is the housing crisis. It's a serious issue. More and more families are finding it difficult to find a home in which to live. And up until the first Celtic Tiger, I think most people had a reasonable expectation that someday they would have their own family home."

Fr Seán explains that there can be a 'fear of commitment' among young people"

"That isn't the case any longer. I know people in their late 30's and 40's who have been working for 15 years or more, and who aren't yet in a position to buy a house. That wouldn't have been the case before," Fr Seán says.

Alongside this logistic and economic problem, Fr Seán explains that there can be a "fear of commitment" among young people because they are worried or anxious about establishing their careers, which often leads to an unwillingness to commit to a partner at an early age. Consequently, this career-driven outlook means that people take a certain "trajectory" and

they may not realise this trajectory until they suddenly want to get married because of their age.

However, this does not mean that young people no longer see the value of commitment, but that other factors influence how they perceive it. For Fr Alan, society can reduce the notion of commitment to a purely emotional level and so relationships become more unstable given that "emotions are very changeable".

"[Commitment] hasn't been eradicated. I still think the nature, the kind of love that people are looking for of whatever [religious] viewpoint, they're still looking for commitment very deeply. A true commitment of the other person. But sometimes that gets confused with emotions," Fr Alan says.

Vulnerability

Similarly, Fr Seán suggests it's not that people no longer see the value of commitment but that younger generations are afraid of the "world of vulnerability" they are exposed to with dating. Dating is not dependent on effort found in sport or academic



work for example but has a much more personal element interwoven into it.

"There are a lot more personal factors involved, so you're vulnerable and rejection can happen. So, for that reason, people may be afraid to enter into that world," he says.

This fear of commitment has also been compounded by the increasing use of contraception which has had an effect on how people perceive sexuality and what they think sexuality is for, according to Fr Seán.

Both priests believe that there are ways in which we can improve young people's perception of marriage, but this requires good role models and educating people when they are young about the sacrament.

Fr Alan points out that young people today often look to celebrities as role models, in sport, music or literature, and their behaviour can have a profound influence on how young generations perceive marriage and sexuality. For him, we need to have "good" role models who instil positive values, and also encourage families to teach their children about the importance of marriage and commitment.

The people have a responsibility themselves for their own formation"

"The primary and first educators are the parents and that education is very often non-verbal. It's their own revealing of what marriage is and their own love for each other and their family. There can be formal catechesis then by lay catechists, by teachers of religion in Catholic schools, by the priests, by theologians – so there's different secondary inputs. But it primarily begins in the home," he says.

Fr Seán also believes that communities should promote the values of marriage, but that individuals also have responsibility to develop their own formation.

"It's the responsibility of parents, it's the responsibility of the church community who prepares the couple for marriage, the pastors concerned with their formation. The people have a responsibility themselves for their own formation. People themselves are the agents to some degree of their own formation," says Fr Seán.

"The more a particular family lives in the sacrament of marriage, the more it will spill over for the benefit of any children they may have."

Dad's Diary

Rory Fitzgerald



There is always a snake in the grass. A primitive, but crucial, part of the human mind is always alert for dangers. Parents immediately discover a heightened sense of awareness of all the dangers that their new baby faces in the world.

When we were expecting our first baby, I had a man over with a massive 20-tonne digger doing some work in our garden. He finished early, and I had a flash of inspiration: what we really needed was a trout pond, six foot deep and 20 feet wide, fed by the stream.

The digger driver, somewhat older and wiser, and with a brood of his own, looked at me askew. In his West Cork drawl he said, "Isn't your wife due any week now? Will she not be worried about the baby at all, falling into the pond?"

My wife was away, and I assured him there was nothing to worry about – it would be grand altogether. I couldn't see an issue. "You'll regret it!" he said with a knowing smile as he went about his work.

At the end of that day, the new pond seemed a thing of unutterable beauty. It was brimful of crystal clear stream water, deep enough to swim in, so in I dived. What a stroke of genius it was to have created a natural swimming pool in a single afternoon! It was a picture of paradise under the shade of sycamore trees, as ferns graced its banks.

A strange new certainty arises in parents upon the birth of their first child"

Three weeks later, when I brought my son home, it had transmogrified into a pit of death. An evil swamp purpose built to devour children, just outside our own home. I had no idea how my perceptions of danger would alter the moment I first held my son.

I remember, the day he was born, in the hospital, my mother smiling at me and saying: "You'll love him for ever, but you'll worry about him for ever too."

The thing was, these brand new parental danger sensors were not wrong: they were right. A deep body of water is lethal to a small child. Everytime someone left the front door ajar and my boy could not be seen I would almost have a heart attack and would run to the pond fearing the worst, with the words of the digger man ringing in my ears: "You'll regret it." It was drained before the second arrived.

Parents can seem over-protective.

Some can be of course. Yet the dangers children face are real. People sometimes scoff at the new and elaborate safeguarding procedures that

surround all activities with children these days.

Yet look what happened in the days before anyone considered the possibilities of child abuse, or before society stopped teachers beating children. Many adults today still bear the emotional and psychological scars of that negligence.

Instincts

The instincts parents have for their own children are generally very good. Good paediatric doctors and nurses will listen carefully to parents, and take account of their instincts, as they know that they can be a sound guide.

With that protective parental instinct comes a kind of ferocity when children are threatened. There is the phenomenon of hysterical strength, where a mother lifts a two-tonne car off her child.

We see the same protectiveness in animals, be it a herd of cattle with calves, or a ewe with lambs. A strange new certainty arises in parents upon the birth of their first child: the most placid person suddenly knows, deep in their heart, that they would without hesitation die for or – if necessary, kill – to protect their child.

Personal Profile



Chai Brady discusses the social justice work of an Irish friar

A scuba-diving Franciscan friar who has fought against human trafficking and drug abuse all his life says sometimes being a true Christian means breaking the rules.

Hailing from Ballygerdra, Co. Kilkenny, Fr Seán Cassin (69) now works as the CEO of the anti-human trafficking charity Dasatt, who operate in Ireland and Vietnam.

One of many turning points in his life was meeting a Franciscan friar while working as a residential social worker in Drogheda.

Hired by the Daughters of Charity he was charged with helping 15 young people, most of whom had been in State care most of their lives, get through education and obtain jobs and flats. While it was "tough" his friar friend always seemed to come back to work "refreshed and rejuvenated", Fr Cassin said.

"That really led me into the whole idea of the need to develop yourself spiritually in order to be able to give to other people," he told *The Irish Catholic*.

College

Fr Cassin became a Franciscan aged 27. He spent time in Rome in St Isidore's, a college which has retained an Irish Franciscan presence, when possible, for centuries. He pursued the idea of living the contemplative life.

It was there he began interacting with drug users who he would often see outside the college. It

To be a Christian is to be a rebel



Fr Seán Cassin speaks at a conference on human trafficking in the Loyola Institute in Trinity College, Dublin, last week. Photo: Issa Olwengo

was after a reading of Matthew 25:35-40 that he said: "It suddenly struck me that, hiding in this kind of contemplative zone, if I wanted to encounter Christ in some meaningful way I was far more likely to do so with the drug users outside the gates than I was hiding inside my monastery.

"I began to talk to the drug users and engage with them, really with a view to try and find them a place where they could come off drugs."

When he returned to Ireland, aged 31, he began wholeheartedly working with drug users, and later would establish Merchants Quay Ireland – who continue to work with drug users and homeless people in the capital. However, his style of care ultimately led to criticism from the Church.

He returned at the time of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s when the first deaths due to the virus in Ireland were being recorded. Starting with one room in the Franciscan friary on Merchants

Quay in Dublin inner city, Fr Cassin soon obtained the whole floor, and began working with families and people addicted to drugs. "It became swamped, so much so the poor friars had to move up a storey," he said.

“The Nuncio summoned the Franciscans to the nunciature to discuss the morality of needle exchange”

The friars were often asked to conduct Masses for people who had died as a result of the virus but weren't in their parish, as people "didn't want it known that their son or daughter had died from AIDS". Because Fr Cassin knew more about the virus, he was often asked to conduct the ceremony and visited people in hospital.

Illegally the priest brought

sterile needles and syringes from London to give to users. "I got into trouble with the Church, some parishioners reported me to the Papal Nuncio," Fr Cassin said, adding that they were also giving out condoms. The Nuncio summoned the Franciscans to the nunciature to discuss the morality of needle exchange and supplying condoms, and a committee was established at his behest, which Fr Cassin says came out in favour of the services they were providing.

"At the time I wrote to the bishop and said I had a dilemma, that I was working with people with AIDS, that I had been asked to perform a marriage of somebody who was HIV positive with AIDS and who wanted to be married and I wanted some advice as to how they should consummate their marriage: I'm still waiting for a reply."

After handing over the wheel of MQI, he worked with the Government on their national

drug strategy for 10 years while also being the Guardian of the Franciscan community.

Fr Cassin left Ireland to work in a shanty town in Mombasa, Kenya for six months after his work in Ireland. Huge amounts of heroin were being shipped into the port there, as it was largely unregulated according to the priest, who says it was then brought to Europe. As the heroin was being stolen and sold in the shanty towns, often by police and other authorities, Fr Cassin worked with both Christian and Muslim charities and helped them deal with the issue.

Fr Cassin is certified as a scuba diving instructor, a long-time hobby of his, which brought him to his next job in Nha Trang, Vietnam. He was tasked with teaching several people who couldn't speak English or even swim – who worked with a French company that was studying coral reefs – how to scuba dive.

English

It was soon after that he was asked to teach English with Franciscans for three months in Saigon, Vietnam's capital, which is where he met the ethnic minorities who had travelled from the highlands in the north – who are experiencing discrimination and are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking.

Foreigners aren't allowed to visit this mountainous area in the communist state, where several Franciscan parishes were established in secret. Fr Cassin "snuck in under the radar" which friars do by travelling in motorcycle helmets or in cars with tinted windows.

His experiences with human trafficking in Vietnam led him to establish Dasatt, in which he is still CEO, but is now looking for someone to take the reins.

"To be a Christian is to be a rebel. I think that to be faithful to our Christian calling means challenging people to see things differently, to do things differently, to be different," he said.



Green Fingers

Paul Gargan

Longer, warm evenings make gardening a treat

May can be the end of spring or the start of summer depending on what weather we are getting. Watching forecasters becomes part of the daily routine for gardeners. Longer evenings and warmer weather make all gardening tasks a pleasure.

The garden is changing almost daily. Trees come into leaf, shrubs burst into colour, new life seems to be everywhere. This also means the amount of work to be done increases.

Prune forsythia and ribes when they have finished flowering. It's just deadheading really. Follow the dead-flowered shoot back down till you find a side shoot that has not flowered and cut above it. Keep going till you have done the whole shrub. If it's an older shrub that needs rejuvenation, take out two or three of the thickest

stems as close to the ground as possible. This will encourage new young shoots for next year.

Summer perennials will be putting on a lot of growth. Some of the taller ones may need supporting. Now is the time to do this before it needs it. The support should be a half to a third the eventual height of the plant. Only use supports on plants that need it, otherwise you end up with a bed full of metal and plastic.

Cut back alyssum, arabis and aubrieta when flowering is finished. Just trim them with kitchen scissors to tidy them up.

Dig up and divide clumps of primroses and polyanthus after flowering. They have a short lifespan and division rejuvenates them and increases your stock.

If you have hedges that you keep very formal, cut them towards the end of the month, when the new growth is soft. It's easier to cut and less to

clear up. If your hedges are informal, natural or native, leave them to grow and be used by wildlife.

It's time to start thinking about mowing your lawn weekly or for best results every ten days. If there are weeds in your lawn, don't worry about annual ones, regular mowing will take care of them. For the perennial ones, dig up by hand and bin them.

Summer bedding is for sale everywhere you look, but unless you have a glasshouse or conservatory that is frost free, resist the temptation. We may still get frost and any night temperatures of 3° or below will kill them. If you can store them frost free by all means plant up your hanging baskets, window boxes etc. Refill them with new compost. The top of the planted container should be 3cm/1in below the rim. For watering, plant them so they are full with root balls almost touching. This way they will fill out quicker and give an amazing display till first frost. Don't put them out until June.



TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Fresh slants on familiar stories are welcome

It was good to see **Unreported World** back on Channel 4 last Friday night – these short documentaries highlight various unfamiliar stories from around the world, often focusing on justice issues.

The first episode in the new series featured the inspiring and moving story of a free ambulance service and voluntary paramedics serving the vulnerable in Mogadishu, Somalia. With Al-Shabaab militants warring with the Government, they risk life and limb to get victims of terrorist bombings to hospital and also cater for more regular medical emergencies. At times they even have to haggle with hospital staff to get treatment for people who can't afford the asking price.

One girl had a difficult pregnancy, with her unborn baby's life in danger, but they got her to hospital on time and in gratitude she named her child after the ambulance service – Aamin.

Omar, one of the paramedics, asked why he did this work, said it was because "no-one was taking responsibility". His supportive wife worried about him every time he went out, but there was "so much suffering" to be relieved. "My heart is too much broken," he said, and unfortunately a footnote to the show told us that after the filming he was injured in an explosion.



Fr Ray Kelly's appearance on *Britain's Got Talent* was featured on Newstalk's *Pat Kenny Show*.

Positivity in challenging situations was also the theme on the **Ryan Tubridy Show** last Thursday when the host interviewed Fr Tony Coote of Mount Merrion parish. Fr Tony briefly told his vocation story – drawn by the caring work of priests he came across in his youth, and then explained how he had recently been diagnosed with Motor Neuron Disease.

He is involved in organising the Walk While You Can event – a sponsored walk through Ireland next August. He said that more research was required and that funding was needed for supporting those with this disease – even

for simple things like getting a downstairs bathroom. He was positive and thankful for each new day, wasn't angry or feeling sorry for himself, but was frustrated with the developing physical limitations. Texters paid tribute to Fr Tony's work as a priest, one saying that he had the "x-factor".

Performance

Britain's Got Talent recently featured another priest, Fr Ray Kelly, the singing priest from Oldcastle. His soulful performance of REM's 'Everybody Hurts' was replayed on last Monday's **Pat Kenny Show** (Newstalk, and it was impressive. The audience

obviously thought so too, and Simon Cowell said it was "one of my favourite ever auditions...everything we've been waiting for".

On the same show, Pat Kenny interviewed Arlette Lyons of Terminations For Medical Reasons, campaigning for repeal of the Eighth Amendment. The story of her challenging pregnancy was sad and emotional, but I wondered if she was concerned that her group's cases were being used to make thousands of healthy babies vulnerable to abortion – for any reason up to three months and for vague reasons (British-style) up to six months. The question wasn't asked.

It seems to me that the *Pat Kenny Show* is now more campaigning than journalism. We've had three pro-choice doctors (Drs Boylan, Murphy and Kenny) and now two pro-repeal items in a row, featuring women that have had



Ryan Tubridy.

PICK OF THE WEEK

VANIER WAY

EWTN, Sunday, April 29, 4pm

Ten students from the Jean Vanier Catholic Secondary School visit the L'Arche community in Trosly-Breuil, France.

EXODUS: OUR JOURNEY TO EUROPE

RTÉ1, Sunday (night), April 29, 1.30am

Exodus follows the journeys of people attempting to reach Europe, escaping war, poverty or persecution.

THE STORY OF THE JEWS

BBC4, Tuesday, May 1, 9pm

Simon Schama's history of the Jewish experience ends with an examination of how the Holocaust and the creation of Israel have fundamentally changed what it means to be Jewish.

abortions.

On Wednesday of last week the show had an interview with a woman who had a medical abortion (pills) in Manchester – again, it was a sad and traumatic story, but also a pro-repeal item, though with gruesome off-putting detail.

At the time of writing this has not been balanced by a pro-life personal story, and the show has still not featured an interview with a pro-life doctor or obstetrician, despite previously having those interviews on three occasions with the pro-choice doctors.

Last Friday the show gave cause for concern again, when the review of the week featured one pro-life person (Peadar Tóibín) and two pro-choice people (Sen. Catherine Noone and journalist Ian O'Doherty).

Of course they'll say there was more than the Eighth being discussed (though it was first and prominent) and while O'Doherty said he wasn't on one side he said he'd be voting "pretty much" on Sen. Noone's side and was avowedly pro-choice ("reluctantly"). He did regard the issue as "the most profound moral question of this generation" and suggested that Noone's points about "compassion" could just as easily be pro-life arguments.

If we can't get balanced and impartial coverage of such a crucial issue on such a high profile show, our democracy is in serious trouble.

boregan@hotmail.com

Music

Pat O'Kelly



Barry scales new heights with *première* of Organ Concerto

Described as 'unpredictable' and 'anarchic' as well as having 'expressive intensity', it may not be surprising to find Gerald Barry's compositions have something of a controversial streak in them.

Born in Clarecastle in Co. Clare in 1952, Barry's introduction to music came from hearing Handel's opera *Xerxes* on the radio.

He was immediately 'switched on' but, without a piano at home, the local priest suggested he try the church harmonium.

There was no turning back. Barry admits the poor harmonium "didn't know what hit it". He also played occasionally in Ennis Cathedral where the sacristan, taking an aver-



Gerald Barry.

sion to his endeavours, would 'switch off' the power. Barry was undeterred.

Following his time in UCD the young musician travelled to Amsterdam for organ lessons with the renowned Piet Kee and studied composition

with Peter Schat. Moving to Cologne he attended the composition classes of the contentious Karlheinz Stockhausen and Mauricio Kagel and later came under the influence of Friedrich Cerha in Vienna. While he secured organist positions in Cologne, Barry decided his career path definitively lay in writing music.

Credit

One of our leading composers with a prolific output to his credit, Barry's several operas include a marvellous adaptation of Wilde's *The Importance of being Earnest* in which Lady Bracknell is sung by a *basso profundo*. An excellent production, by Northern Ireland Opera, was

seen at Dublin's Gaiety Theatre as well as in Belfast, Cork and Derry in 2013.

But Barry's music receives extensive performances throughout Europe and America.

His *Organ Concerto*, which had its première in Birmingham on March 7, and was heard in London earlier this month, will be part of the RTÉ NSO's concert on Friday, May 4 with the brilliant UK artist Thomas Trotter at the NCH console. Currently Birmingham City Organist, Trotter is also organ incumbent at St Margaret's Church, Westminster.

Writing about his concerto, Barry tells us it includes a solo for harmonium – a reminder

● Barry's new work reminds me of another organ concerto – that of John Buckley, which inaugurated the Kenneth Jones instrument in the NCH in 1991. The soloist on that occasion was Peter Sweeney, who played and recorded the colourful work with striking panache. Sadly Peter died on March 18, aged 68.

Dublin-born, he was an outstanding musician whose organ playing had an unusually flamboyant character. Following his degree from TCD, Peter studied under virtuoso Lionel Rogg at Geneva's Conservatoire where he gained that institute's top award.

Organist for a while in Dublin's Gardiner Street, Peter spent 11 years in Christ Church Cathedral. Organ teacher at DIT, he was involved with The Irish Times/RTÉ Music in the Classroom series for over a quarter of a century. May his soul rest in peace.

of his early days in Clarecastle. *The Angelus* makes its presence felt while the 'instrumentation' calls for 21 metronomes.

There is also a fight for

atonality against tonality triggered by the photo of a cat with a quizzical expression. Known to the composer and named Blue Gadoo, the feline lives in New York!

BookReviews

Peter Costello



Recent books in brief

Make My House a House of Prayer: Reflections on the Family Rosary

by Gabriel Harty OP
(Veritas, €3.99)

This little book is by a veteran Dominican priest now in his 90s. Known as 'the Irish Rosary Priest', he has passed his vocation establishing prayer groups all over Ireland. The key element of his new publication is one which will make it relevant to the up-coming events later in the year.

He has written a commentary on each decade of the Rosary with reflections on the family. These can be read as part of a devotion, or on their own. Over the centuries many Irish people have found themselves vitalised by the Rosary.

As devotion it is not perhaps as common as it was. Fr Harty hopes, clearly, in the course of this exciting year to change all that.

Monasticism: A Very Short Introduction

by Stephen J. Davis
(Oxford University Press, £7.99)

This is another in a very excellent series, which provides many readers with a first step or two in exploring important themes in life, philosophy, and religion.

Stephen Davis is Professor of Religious Studies, specialising in the history of ancient and medieval Christianity. At the turn of the present century he lived in Egypt for four years, where he was a professor at an Arabic-language theological seminary in Cairo.

Now director of the Yale Monastic Archaeology Project, in 2013 he initiated a project to catalogue the collection of Coptic and Arabic manuscripts at the famous Monastery of the Syrians in Wadi al-Natrun, Egypt.

In a very short space he manages to cover not only the origins of the monastic idea in Egypt, but to trace out its history since then referring on the way to other cultures too. Nor does he neglect the renewal of the idea in more recent times.

Though many Catholics think of monasticism in relation to the centuries of the European high Middle Ages, for Irish readers this book, which explores the actual origins of the monastic idea in Egypt, is very relevant to Early Christian Ireland as well.

Interrupting Silence: God's Command to Speak Out

by Walter Brueggemann
(Hodder & Stoughton, £10.99hb / £8.99pb)

Silence, according to the old saying, is golden: this applies to the contemplative silence of the monastery, the silence of awe in the presence, or apprehension of the numinous.

But here the well known Biblical scholar and minister in the United Church of Christ, a denomination rooted in the Puritan and German Evangelical traditions of the United States, writes of a different kind of silence, and what he has to say will be of interest to all Christians.

The silence with which he is concerned is the silence of those who have been cowed, abused, or outcast. He urges people to consider their own times of silence. Were they wise to be silent? Or should they, in the presence of evil, anger, and wrong-doing, have spoken out firmly on the side of goodness, compassion, and virtue?



Kerry: the beautiful kingdom



Kerry: The Beautiful Kingdom
written and photographed by
John Wesson
(O'Brien Press, €24.99)

Peter Costello

John Wesson is an English profes-

sional photographer who divides his time between Derbyshire and Valentia Island in Kerry. Though this is his first book I suspect we can expect many more.

He has a fine eye for both the beauties of the landscape, hard to avoid in the Kingdom, but also

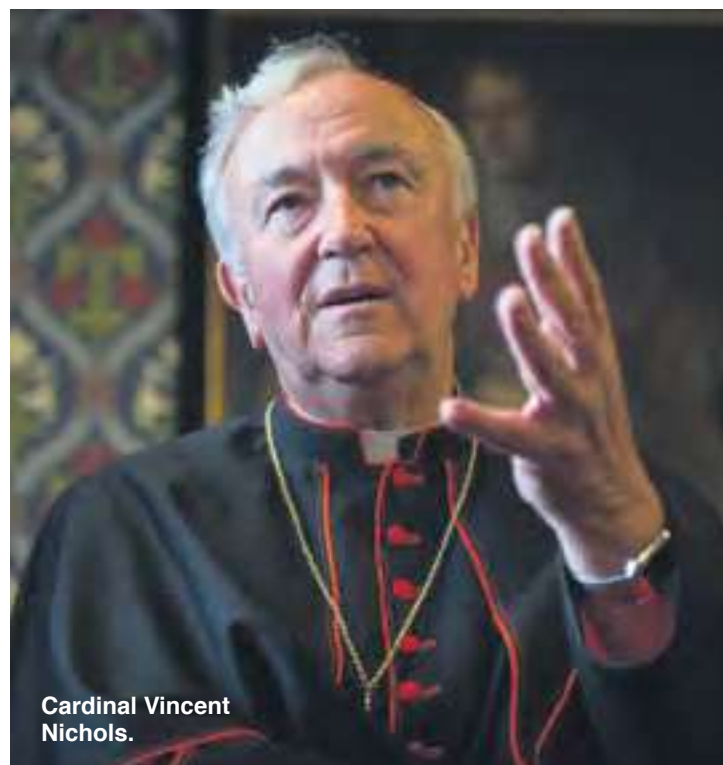
(and this is less usual) for the fashions, foibles and fancies of the local people.

Unlike many of those who produce these kinds of book, his outsider's eye sees aspects of land that the locals might take for granted and not really notice, but

he also sees what really appeals as well to the stranger's taste.

If you have friends or relatives abroad who know Kerry at all, this is the book to send them, to remind them of all they are missing by not actually living down there.

A voice for the Church



Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

Faith Finding a Voice
by Cardinal Vincent Nichols
(Bloomsbury, £12.99)

Peter Costello

The new book by the Cardinal Archbishop of London will undoubtedly find a wide audience. How encouraging it is, too, that a senior prelate sees it as part of his mission to devote time to composing such a book. It does not happen everywhere.

His hope is for the emergence in our present day society of a more informed and compassionate Church, a hope shared widely by many.

"We are asked," he writes, "to be both creative and imaginative, in order that Faith may find in our time its true voice: the voice of love."

However, the book is no easy read. It calls for quiet reflective attention and thoughtful understanding.

The book falls into four parts. The first part lays a ground work in the revelation of God and the mystery of Christ. Here, for instance, a Renaissance altar piece is used as an image to promote our understanding of a sense of mission.

The second part deals with education and life, not so much in a mere social sense, but in the sense of life in communion with the divine.

He draws here on the insight of the Venerable Bede and St John Henry Newman.

Dialogue

The third part reflects on religious dialogue between Catholics and other Christians, and with those of other faiths.

In chapter eight, for instance he recounts his personal experiences of Singers Hill Synagogue in Birmingham, the Yad Vashem Memorial in Jerusalem, and the Catholic Community in Gaza –

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.

The great Maria Edgeworth, a good and brilliant lady

Maria Edgeworth's Letters from Ireland

selected and edited by Valerie Pakenham
(Lilliput Press, €40.00hb, €25.00pb)

Peter Costello

The landed gentry and the great houses of Ireland have not had a great reputation in general. But many of those for whom the traditional nationalist narrative has long sufficed, might well have their minds, if not changed, at least refined by reading this wonderful book edited by Valerie Pakenham (otherwise Lady Pakenham and wife of Thomas Pakenham the historian and tree enthusiast).

Valerie Pakenham's home at Tullyally is a neighbouring property made famous across Europe by Richard Lovell Edgeworth and his eldest daughter, the author Maria Edgeworth.

“In these pages Maria and her father come across in all their intellectual passions, but also as real human beings”

It was her novel *Castle Rackrent* (1800) which was credited by Sir Walter Scott with inspiring him in 1805 to attempt something of the same kind of portrait of national manners and history in his own first novel *Waverley, or 'tis Sixty Years Since*

(1814), a sympathetic account of the last Jacobite rebellion.

Thus was the great European literary tradition of the historical novel invented, a major literary genre not now perhaps in such vogue as it once was, but the importance of which as whole for European culture was explored by Georg Lucacs in *The Historical Novel* (1937). This invention is one of Ireland's great cultural achievements.



But Maria and her father were also pioneers in child-centred education and in the creating of books for children.

I have to admit that when I first visited Edgeworthstown House back in the 1960s – when it was still a

convent – it seemed an unremarkable house set in a flat dreary countryside.

Today it is a nursing home and admits no casual visitors. A small museum and literary centre in the town itself is devoted to Maria Edgeworth. But in this book something of the extraordinary intellectual, social, and emotion vitality of Maria and the other Edgeworths is revealed.

Passions

Far better than any biography can often do, collections of letters such as this one present a very vivid, lively and in the end deeply insightful view of a person. In these pages Maria and her father come across in all their intellectual passions, but also as real human beings.

It was an extraordinary household, for Richard Lovell was much married and the stalwart Maria was the eldest of 22 children all living in the same home. The place was a living advertisement for the joys, benefits, and the pains, of family life.

So I have to admit that the superficial view of my younger self, by going by appearances, missed the true scale of what was achieved in the way of living and thinking at Edgeworthstown House. Readers of all kinds will be grateful to Valerie Pakenham for all the work that has gone into this well assembled and beautifully illustrated book.

Not to know about Maria Edgeworth is not to know important things about Ireland.

and for the single soul

three instances of dialogue in difficult situations, the outcome of conflict of long standing.

The importance of *caritas*, one of the four kinds of love, that loving concept of charity (which seems to be so often misunderstood) as part of the hope of all humanity, is emphasised.

“The emphasis is on what the individuals can do, on their identity as ‘missionary disciples’”

However, much of what is discussed and reflected on in these early parts, find its summary in the fourth part which deals with the ministry of the Church in the modern

world from the Papacy down through the bishops, priests, deacons, and those in consecrated life to the People of God, to the laity, those on whom the whole structure actually rests.

Throughout the book the Cardinal advocates the “necessity of theological and religious literacy for the common good of society”.

Though the Church may seem to be working through a framework which functions, or seems to function, it has also to work in the “real world” in which many find that religion seems to be at a discount.

The emphasis is on what the individuals can do, on their identity as “missionary disciples”. All too often many seem to think the hierarchy will solve it, while others think that only a return to the 12th Century will save a



world which hardly knows what happened 30 years ago.

The Cardinal does not make light of what faces people of Faith. That their calling was ever an easy one is an illusion. They must work with their family, their

friends, and the neighbours, but mostly with those who may have no Faith at all in the past, the present, or indeed the future.

That voice of love of which he speaks, will become the important voice, hopefully, for Catholics can only live out the matters of Faith with a hopeful heart and a sense of the fullest charity.

Caveat

A caveat might be entered: One feels that this book has been put together from articles and talks made over recent years, pulled together by a common theme. But the presentation of his ideas might have been better served if it had been made into three shorter, more impactful books.

Certainly the last part, focused on the ministry of the Church, might well stand alone.

The World of Books

By the books editor

Brexit changes coming to Irish bookshops

We may be about to see major changes in the way the major books shops in Ireland – mostly now the property of British companies – are run. Quite how all of this will work out for readers anxious to stay in touch, not just with Britain, as these companies imagine, but with Europe itself post-Brexit, is not clear.

Already there is an easing-out of the foreign language newspapers and journals. *Figaro* went some years ago, *Le Monde* seems under threat – as are the Italian, German, and Spanish papers.

Le Nouvel Observateur, published in Paris, the largest selling news magazine in France, was dropped by Easons a few weeks ago – its shelf space is now taken, surprisingly enough, by *Gay News* – published in Britain.

While I am all for serving the perceived needs of minorities as a good thing, it seems that those who wish to read European papers and books are, it now seems, a minority too.

Easons remains an Irish company (so far). Though one which like W. H. Smith in Britain, has a preference for the meritorious and popular (such as adult colouring books and those silly Enid Blyton and Ladybird pastiches) which boomed for a short season and then lost 50% of their sales. (Smith's it seems now makes more money out of it travel and tourism business than from books.)

But Waterstone's in the UK are pursuing a trend towards making their shops seem more like independent stores rather than all part of a chain. However, the tale is still told about how their head office, then in Leeds, contacted the Dublin shop to say they should reduce or give up selling books in Gaelic – figures showed these simply did not sell.

“One suspects staff see little difference between Ireland and the UK – Eire is, so to speak, just another province”

It had to be explained that in Dublin (where both schools and universities all taught and studied Gaelic) they were a major retailer in the section. One fears more of this kind of cultural blindness arising from English perceptions in post-Brexit times.

The same problem, by the way, arises with the Sky TV channel. When we got the service installed at home I asked whether it got “foreign channels”. Only later did I realise I asked the salesman the wrong question.

Like the foolish person I am, I meant by “foreign channels” channels such as ARTE, Deutsche Welle, RAI and so.

“Oh, yes,” I was assured, “there there are plenty of foreign channels.” And so there are, in one sense. Sky carries stations from India, Pakistani, Bangladesh, Nigeria and such of Commonwealth communities, with large populations in Britain.

But Europe was limited largely to TV5 Monde.

I felt cheated, as we so often are these days when the internet lets us down, there is little an individual can do. The staff rarely pass on complaints to the right level, and top management are not really interested. One suspects they see little difference between Ireland and the UK – Éire is, so to speak, just another province.

When I suggested to the staff that this was poor planning for post-Brexit arrangements for an Ireland which would remain in the EU, he admitted this was the case. But it seems to be no-one's job to think about it.

So many of our books and other related cultural goods come from Britain that there ought to be wider concern that the post-Brexit studies of ‘Little England, Right or Wrong’ will spill over here. As a strongly pro-European nation we are far too heavily influenced by Anglo-American culture, with its sharp divides and raucous styles of cultural debate.

Irish Catholics in particular are more like to be influenced by America than they are by France or Germany. This cannot be a healthy thing for our own cultural values going forward. We have to realise that EWTN is not the final word in Catholic broadcasting, far from it. Our needs are best served by the widest range of European books, magazines, journals and television.

Classifieds

The deadline for advertising in the classifieds is 10.30am, the Friday before publication. Contact the Classified Team on 01 687 4094 or email advertising@irishcatholic.ie

Please make a little room in your will for people who are homeless

Contact our Fundraising Department in strictest confidence

FOCUS Ireland

Tel. 01 8815 900
Email: info@focusireland.ie
www.focusireland.ie

LITTLE FLOWER PENNY DINNERS

Little Flower Penny Dinners have been providing meals and services to the homeless and the elderly for over 100 years.

Please help us continue and donate what you can on our website www.LFPD.ie

or by phoning us with your credit/debit card details or by post to Little Flower Penny Dinners, 11 Meath St, D8

Phone 01 4536621 or 01 4546795
e-mail: srbrigid@littelflower.ie

Remembering

**MEMORIAM CARDS
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
CARDS & NOTELETS
BOOKMARKS**

Samples / Information

KENNEDY PRINTERS
BANTRY, CO. CORK, IRELAND
Tel. 027 50102
www.kennedyprinters.ie
email: info@kennedyprinters.ie

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.

B.M.

Celebrate the WMOF and the Pope's visit with Us in a colourful way.

Bunting packages
300m - €235 (+2 flags 3ftx5ft)
INCLUDING VAT AND DELIVERY
more options on www.thumbtack.ie
00 353 1 627 2485
Windmill Distributors

Follow the Irish Catholic on Facebook

 The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

National Pro-Life Prayer Rally

Saturday
May 5th 2018
Limerick

For the protection of the 8th Amendment and Our Unborn Children



A DAY OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE, WHERE WE AS A NATION COME TOGETHER TO BEG OUR LADY TO INTERVENE FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE 8TH AMENDMENT AND HER PROTECTION FROM THE EVILS OF ABORTION

Dedicated to Our Lady of The Rosary of Fatima, with First Saturday Devotions, Holy Mass at 12.00 noon followed by Public Rosary Procession. Assembly Sacred Heart Church, The Crescent, 11am. Concludes 2:30pm.

"Only Our Lady of the Rosary can help you"
Our Lady at Fatima.

Please pray for the beatification of
Little Nellie of Holy God

"May God enrich with every blessing all those who recommend frequent Communion to little boys and girls proposing Nellie as their model"

— Pope St Pius X, June 4, 1912

Please remember

THE IRISH HOSPICE FOUNDATION

when making your Will so that everyone, everywhere will have access to hospice care one day.

Tel: 01 679 3188
E-mail: info@hospicefoundation.ie
www.hospicefoundation.ie

 The Irish Hospice Foundation

 **Mary Matches**

Meet singles who share your values
Speed Dating | Mingles for Singles

Coupon Code: Love2018
www.marymatches.com

St Therese Pilgrimages

Celebrate the Feast of St Faustina by staying at
Divine Mercy Shrine, Krakow
from 4th-9th Oct 2018

Price **£499/€559**

Contact Danny 02890245547
Daniel.morgan5@btconnect.com
ALL PROCEEDS TO CHARITY

SERVICES

ALL UNWANTED home waste removed. Cookers, fridges, beds, suites, wardrobes, carpets etc. Removed and disposed of in a proper manner. No job too small or big. Contact Tommy, 087 6406015.

HOLIDAY FLAT

Holiday flat for up to 5 adults available near beach in Lampaul-Plouarzel. The flat is self-contained with two double

bedrooms. The flat consists of a kitchen with kettle, microwave, and fridge freezer, a dining table, and the bathroom is newly fitted with a shower and toilet room. The walls are nicely decorated with photos from Brittany. Cleaning facilities are in the bathroom. Long stay possible. 400Euros per week. The landlady, who lives downstairs, is German and likes to sing little Bavarian songs and, if you like, can cook Bavarian meals with a pint of lager. Churchgoer welcome. Please phone on Tel 0033/298841105 if interested.

BÓTHAR

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



Please consider adding GOAL to your Will.

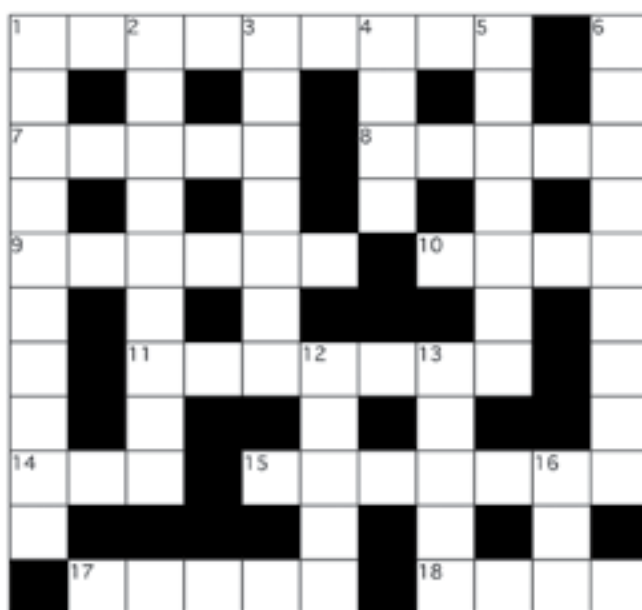
41 years on we continue to deliver lifesaving support to the most vulnerable people in our world. Leaving a gift in your Will is priceless.

Let me tell you more about what your gift could do. Contact Courtenay, in confidence, on 01 2809779, cpollard@goal.ie or drop me a note at Carnegie House, Library Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

Leisure time

Crossword Junior

Gordius 228



ACROSS

- 1 These animals are trained to help blind people (5,4)
 7 Tests (5)
 8 A huge cattle farm (5)
 9 Sounds (6)
 10 The light around a saint's head (4)
 11 She's a movie star (7)
 14 It's blue on a sunny day (3)
 15 Tumbling (7)
 17 The third month of the year (5)
 18 Female pigs (4)

- 2 Not real; made-up (9)
 3 Simplest (7)
 4 You use them when rowing a boat (4)
 5 You might wear them on your feet in the summer (7)
 6 You carry books and copies in this (9)
 12 Get as far as (5)
 13 When the shops sell things at lower prices (5)
 16 January 1st is ____ Year's Day (3)

DOWN

- 1 It's made almost completely out of glass (10)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

GORDIUS No.347

Across – 1 All-important 7 Was 9 Cask 10 Off the cuff 11 Rely 14 Fried onions 15 Nouns 16 Bore 18 Cramp 21 Noble 22 Asian 23 Sushi 24 Hint 25 Minus 26 Space bar 33 Fiddle 34 Posy 37 Dormer window

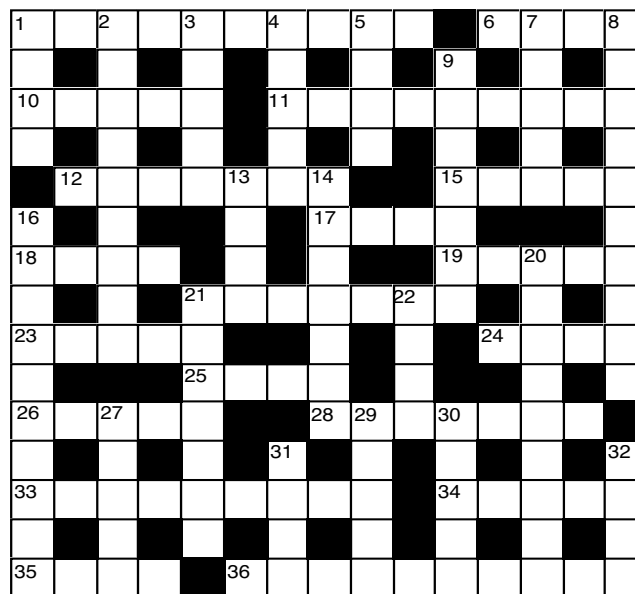
Down – 1 Aga 2 Lake Tahoe 3 Moon 4 Offer 6 Twee 8 Spy Wednesday 9 Corn on the cob 12 Durban 13 Ashes 14 Facts 19 Abide 20 Palms 27 Priam 28 Coder 30 Ford 31 Peri 32 Spud 35 Saw

CHILDREN'S No.228

Across – 1 Rectangle 7 Air 8 Village 9 Wales 11 Army 13 Flamingo 17 Ace 18 Unlucky 19 Imp 20 Tame 21 Archer
Down – 1 River 2 Collar 3 Alarm clock 4 Grew 5 Earl 6 Grasshopper 10 Attic 12 Court 14 Mayor 15 Neigh 16 Plum

Crossword

Gordius 347



ACROSS

- 1 Had a party to deter cable destruction (10)
 6 Priest of Islam (4)
 10 & 11 Latin hymn causing spaniel upset (5,9)
 12 Frontiersman? There's one in the jetty (7)
 15 Without company (5)
 17 Leave undone (4)
 18 Transport from the dacha, ultimately (4)
 19 Eat away - there's nothing in chopped deer (5)
 21 Book of hymns made from a broken stapler (7)
 23 The last letter of the Greek alphabet (5)
 24 Just the mystic to consult, right? (4)
 25 Sport played on horseback (4)
 26 All this worker needs, literally, is a break! (5)
 28 Type of inflammable gas (7)
 33 Lock moths up here in Sweden (9)
 34 Beniamino was a famous tenor from the first half of the twentieth century (5)
 35 Some contessa keeps providing rice wine (4)
 36 Play the piano aggressively to get paper money (5,5)

DOWN

- 1 Slang for police officers (4)

- 2 One's position east or west of Greenwich (9)
 3 Creature found even if both A and C are off? (5)
 4 Stone found at the entrance to the field (5)
 5 Ova (4)
 7 Ostentatiously virile (5)
 8 Were there ever only three such soldiers? (10)
 9 Smoked fish served by a novice in a hat (7)
 13 Flightless birds of Australia (4)
 14 Pickled herring (7)
 16 This broom's broken, causing a health problem (10)
 20 Make a thing rove around until next morning (9)
 21 Hungarian red pepper (7)
 22 The longest river entirely in Spain (4)
 27 Booth (5)
 29 Is Mr Abramovich from the Eternal City? (5)
 30 Heathen who may have a pang of upset (5)
 31 Maltese island mentioned in the 'Archipelago Zoology' report (4)
 32 Snip upwards? Fasteners must be provided (4)

Sudoku Corner

229

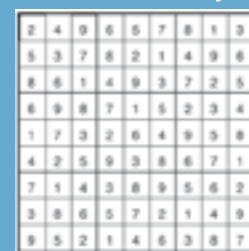
Easy



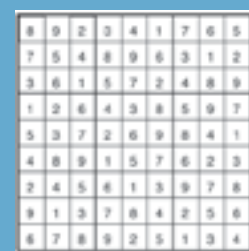
Hard



Last week's Easy 228



Last week's Hard 228



MQI
 Merchants Quay Ireland

Imagine just for today you are homeless. Hungry. You have no money and no phone.

Join us for Tea and a private Tour of our homeless centre. See confidentially how Merchants Quay Ireland uses donations and legacies to bring relief and hope. All welcome. to find out more visit www.mqi.ie

Ring Emma Murphy at 01-5240965 to be included on the guest list for the May 10th tour.

Giving Family & Life a gift in your Will is a hugely inspirational, lasting and dignified way to leave a loving mark on countless lives.

A gift in your Will ensures that the most effective pro-life/pro-family organisations will continue working for the kind of society we all desire.

Remember, everything we do to save babies and strengthen the family relies on you and our other generous friends.

For further advice or to avail of our Solicitor's free Wills service, please contact us today on **01-8552790**

Family & Life
 Ph: 01 8552790
 email: fandl@iol.ie
 26 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1
www.familyandlife.org

Will the MSC Missions

Missionaries of the Sacred Heart work in poor parishes in Africa, Russia and Venezuela

Please remember them in your Will

Contact:
 Mission Support Centre, Western Road, Cork.
 Tel: 021 - 4543988

www.mscomissions.ie

Trócaire is working for a just world and an end to poverty.

Please remember this work when making your will

If you would like further information please contact Trocaire, Maynooth, Co. Kildare

trócaire
 Working for a just world

01-629 3333
info@trocaire.ie
www.trocaire.org

The challenge of changing times (and priests)

DISAPPOINTMENT is a fact of life for nearly everyone who lives on this planet. It's simply part of the human condition. We are occasionally disappointed in friends and family, and by people in the other circles in which we move – including our parish. Priests can be disappointed when the parish they are moved to doesn't measure up to expectations, and parishioners can experience the same feeling each time a new priest presents himself – or when the familiar one is moved.

Take the fictional parish of Ballyblaa, a small rural community in the west of Ireland. Priest A is appointed to the parish by the bishop. Fr A is a relaxed cleric, who takes things in his stride. He might appear a bit untidy, maybe even seem a bit lazy, but he encourages parishioners to take on some of the roles traditionally filled by priests and the parish steams along at a gentle pace. Delegation is his *modus operandi*. Committees flourish and responsibility is diffuse: at least some of the people feel the parish is theirs to lead and take care of. Already, in his being there, Fr A has sparked disappointment.



Some people miss the 'great priests of the past' who were indeed all things to all men and never needed lay people to help them carry out their mission. Others resent the ones who have become involved: "Busy-bodies who should mind their own business" is one verdict on Fr A's version of lay participation. Too much delegation, or delegation to the 'wrong' people arouses resentment. The disappointed parishioners



stir up controversy and opposition to Fr A. The bishop hears and wonders if Ballyblaa might be due a change of priest. And indeed Fr A is moved and Fr B takes his place, who turns out to be an entirely different kettle of (clerical) fish. **Services** Fr B is a well-turned-out and committed priest, who works night and day to improve his church. He presents himself as a professional, smartly dressed and

keen on improving every aspect of the parish plant. The formerly disappointed parishioners rejoice in his appointment, but those who were happy with Fr A are now the disappointed ones. Lay parishioners to whom Fr A had given leadership positions now have their services dispensed with and Fr B takes over more and more. Now the parish has experienced two sets of disappointed people. Inevitably, Fr C will replace Fr B, with more disappointment resulting. The general question concerns what parishioners do with disappointment. Do they drift elsewhere, stay and fight – or opt out entirely? Truly loyal parishioners have to be really hard-wearing people, able to put up with a lot of change, some of it not to their liking. The sad truth is that Ballyblaa will one day have no priest. How will its parishioners cope with that ultimate change? And which parishioners will loyally cling to their community, gritting their teeth in the face of this ultimate disappointment, yet striving to keep it alive for a very uncertain future?

Plan for tomorrow or 20 years hence? Is it better to involve lay people in the life of the Church and parish – or not? Successors can very easily dispense with lay ministers previously recruited and formed, so are people better off if they are never involved? Or does the experience of involvement in parish life benefit people, for the years ahead when priests will be much scarcer? Is it worthwhile to sow seeds that will bear fruit in 20 years time, or should one acknowledge that many may be hurt bitterly in the meantime? I don't know the answer but I often ask the question.

WHAT SPARKED THIS REFLECTION?: This was inspired by a letter received from a lay woman who lived in a parish I served in, long years ago. She wrote: "I don't miss parish involvement at all at this stage. I was disappointed and disillusioned for a while, but that's in the past. For a brief period, we shared your vision of parish/church and it was good, but I doubt if I'll ever see it again. That's sad but realistic. Lay people aren't really wanted and women are another step behind in the Church, so it's better to face facts and move on gracefully..."





HELP TRAIN A YOUNG MAN FOR THE MISSIONARY PRIESTHOOD

YOUR EASTERTIDE GIFT TO OUR RISEN SAVIOUR


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

It costs approximately €80 a month (€960 a year) to feed, clothe and educate a student for the priesthood

The great majority of young men who come forward to offer their lives to God, and His people, come from poor families. Their parents do not have the means to support them financially. The cost of educating and maintaining seminarians is often a heavy burden on the Religious Orders. It costs approximately €80 a month (€960 a year) to feed, clothe and educate a student for the priesthood. We appeal wholeheartedly, this Easter/Pentecost, to all readers to help train and support a candidate for the priesthood.

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

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



MISSIONARIES NEED YOUR MASS OFFERINGS

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

We like to send a missionary a minimum of €5 or more for each Mass.

WELLS NEEDED

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

Can you help provide a well?

Your kind gift will be forwarded intact and gratefully received.

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

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

I enclose €..... to be allocated to:

€..... **TRAINING FOR THE PRIESTHOOD**

€..... **NEEDS OF MISSIONARIES**

€..... **HOLY OFFERINGS**
(Please state number _____)

€..... **LITTLE WAY ADMIN EXPENSES**

☐ Please tick if you would like an acknowledgement

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

Address

To donate online go to tinyurl.com/lwadonations

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

IC/04/26