

The Irish Catholic

CHRISTMAS BOOKS

Food for the soul
Pages 32 & 33



FESTIVE JOY

Celebrating in the cloister
Pages 12 & 13



AMNESTY UNDER FIRE

Allegations of illegal donations
Page 4



Thursday, December 14, 2017

€1.80 (Stg £1.50)

The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

@IrishCathNews

www.irishcatholic.com

Plea for parishioners to look out for elderly neighbours

Offer people a lift to Mass in cold weather

Susan Gately and Greg Daly

Parishes have been urged to look out for the elderly and vulnerable during the cold spell, and use Church structures to boost rural solidarity.

Raphoe's Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ called on people coming to Christmas services to think of their neighbours and perhaps offer them a lift to Mass during poor weather, telling *The Irish Catholic*: "Some people are more confident than others about driving in winter conditions. It would be a sensitive thing for people who are confident to offer a lift to their neighbours to help them get to Christmas services."

Commenting on how "slippery underfoot" he had found it when heading to early morning Mass, Ireland's most recently ordained bishop said, "I felt for people going

to the daily Mass, who often can be quite elderly. It is very hard on them. I hope they'll be careful and look out for one another."

Similar points would have been made by many priests in their homilies over the weekend, Killaloe's Bishop Fintan Monahan said.

"I think an awful lot of priests would have mentioned it at the end of Mass," he told *The Irish Catholic*, noting how in Ennis there has been a strong emphasis in looking after elderly neighbours during the cold snap, along with those who are homeless, who freezing temperatures have left especially vulnerable.

The work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul is particularly important for helping those in danger of homelessness, he added, saying that

» Continued on Page 2

Sleeping out under the stars for the needy



Fr Michael Kelleher CSSR with a volunteer during a 24-hour sleep-out in Limerick to raise awareness of food poverty in the city and to raise funds for the Redemptorist Christmas Hamper Appeal, which last year saw over 7,000 hampers distributed to needy individuals and families by the Redemptorists in partnership with the Society of St Vincent de Paul and other groups across Limerick City and County. Photo: Seán Curtin/True Media

DAVID QUINN

When the dogs don't bark...

PAGE 8



NUALA O'LOAN

Time to ask what God expects of us

PAGE 9



FR RON ROLHEISER

The real tragedy of sin

PAGE 26



This Christmas, what if we all gave a little... so that Ireland's homeless and hungry could eat?

Your gift will help people right here in Ireland who are hungry and homeless this Christmas.

Give by 31st December and your donation will be doubled – doubling the good you do at no extra cost to you.

But only when you give by 31st December. Please qualify your gift for MQI's Christmas Match before it's too late.

Ring us on 01 524 0139 or give online now, www.mqi.ie.



Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services



Inside this week

John Allen

Challenging a Western view of the Church

Page 22



William Reville

Assisted dying: an unnecessary evil

Page 28



Family & Lifestyle

Warding off winter weather

Page 27



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: Hannah Le, hannah@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874020

Magnificat: magnificat@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874024

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

Re-finding the language of faith

There was a fascinating debate in Britain's House of Lords last week about education achievement and the need for young people to have access to equal opportunities.

The debate was extraordinary for its breadth and depth. While everyone agreed about the need for better outcomes the Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Justin Welby pointed out that a "major obstacle" to the education system is "a lack of clear internal and commonly-held values".

"We live in a country where an overarching story which is the framework for explaining life has more or less disappeared. We have a world of unguided and competing narratives, where the only common factor is the inviolability of personal choice. This means that, for schools that are not of a religious character, confidence in any personal sense of ultimate values has diminished.

Skills

"Utilitarianism rules, and skills move from being talents held for the common good, which we are entrusted with as benefits for all, to being personal possessions for our



Editor's Comment Michael Kelly

own advantage," the archbishop said.

Dr Welby went on to say: "The challenge is the weak, secular and functional narrative that successive Governments have sought to insert in the place of our historic Christian-based understanding, whether explicitly or implicitly."

“Is there anything other than rampant individualism, and if so, what guides choices?”

The archbishop's contention that Britain lacks an 'overarching story' could as easily be applied to many other countries – Ireland included.

The diminished place of the Church and the fact that many Irish people no longer see religious faith as something to be cherished means that the common set of values and ideas that

were once taken for granted can no longer be taken as a given.

The challenge for contemporary Ireland is to ask the piercing question of what fills that space. Is there anything other than rampant individualism, and if so, what guides choices?

Undoubtedly, young Irish people are – for the most part – altruistic and good-hearted in their charitable outreach and concern for the vulnerable. There are instinctive Christian values, even if people choose not to articulate these values using the language of Faith. The task for the Church is to try to help people to re-find the language of Faith. It's a remarkable thing that many young Irish people spend 14 years in Catholic schools but struggle to articulate anything resembling a coherent Faith.

Care for elderly during the cold weather

» Continued from Page 1

"Church structures have worked so well".

While people in rural areas might know each other better than those in towns, physical isolation can pose a real challenge, he added, and one that Church structures can help address.

"Parishes are doing it already in a very organised way in conjunction with community daycare centres, where if somebody doesn't turn up they make sure to

check in on them. There's a serious effort to make sure minibuses call in on people and make sure they're keeping well," he said.

"The whole thing is just being alert at this kind of year, and looking out for other people, but we get so caught up in our own thing we can forget to look out for other people," he said, adding, "it was probably different in the past, but nowadays we may not have as much time as we used to have, and we don't always think of other people."

Christian group welcome US embassy move

The Irish Christian Friends of Israel have "wholeheartedly" welcomed the US president's decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by moving the US embassy there.

The ICFI say that Donald Trump is being portrayed as making the decision executively, and note that the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act is a public law that was passed by the 104th Congress with over 90% of Democrats and Republicans supporting it.

They added that on June 5 this year the Senate unanimously passed a resolution commemorating the 50th anniversary of reunification of Jerusalem by 90-0. The resolution reaffirmed the Jerusalem Embassy Act and called upon the president to implement it.

The act also calls for Jerusalem to remain undivided and for it to be recognised as the capital of Israel.

See Page 16.



Follow The Irish Catholic on Facebook...



The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

SHRINES OF EUROPE

Two multi centre itineraries available to choose from

€100 OFF PER PERSON

OPTION 1:

Lourdes | Loyola
Burgos | Avila | Fatima

AVAILABILITY:

- 7 & 25 April
- 6 June
- 17 July
- 29 August
- 28 September
- 2 October

OPTION 2:

Lourdes | Loyola |
Santiago de Compostela | Fatima

- Return flights & private coach transport throughout
- 9 nights accommodation in a selection of 3 and 4 star hotels
- Daily breakfast and evening meal; lunch also included in Fatima and Lourdes
- Fully escorted by Joe Walsh Tours pilgrimage co-ordinator
- To avail of discount, you must pay in full by 15 January 2018



Joe Walsh Tours
www.joewalstours.ie
info@joewalstours.ie
01 241 0860

T.O. 052 | T.A. 0689 | ATOL 5163

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

Celebrate the nativity through drama and song

Final rehearsals are underway in Omagh, Co. Tyrone for what promises to be an inspiring evening to ponder on the true meaning of Christmas through music and reflection.

Christ The King Youth Choir and the Pope John Paul II award participants from Cappagh parish will present the traditional Nativity story through drama and song in Christ The King Church, Strathroy, Omagh on Friday 22 December at 7pm.

This is one of many services included in the Cappagh parish family retreat in preparation for the World Meeting Of Families to be held in Ireland in Summer 2018. Photo: Mary Rafferty



JOE WALSH TOURS

Want the ideal Christmas gift? Give the gift of travel...

€200 secures your place on any of the below pilgrimages & we offer flexibility to pay off your balance in instalments!



FATIMA ANNIVERSARY OF SR LUCIA

11 FEBRUARY | 4 NIGHTS

- Direct, return flights from Dublin to Lisbon
- Daily breakfast, lunch & dinner
- Full Religious Programme & led by Spiritual Director

SPECIAL PILGRIMAGE

€ ONLY €499

LISBON COAST ESCORTED TOUR

17 MAY | 7 NIGHTS

- Direct, return flights from Dublin to Lisbon
- Breakfast & evening meal served daily at hotel

€ €899 pps

SAN GIOVANNI MINI BREAKS

BANK HOLIDAY WEEKENDS | 3 NIGHTS

- 4 May, 1 June & 3 August
- Fully escorted Pilgrimage
- Daily breakfast, lunch & dinner included

€ €599 pps

SAN GIOVANNI & ASSISI

21 MAY | 7 NIGHTS

- 4 nights San Giovanni Rotondo | Full board
- 3 nights Assisi | Half board
- Visiting Siena & Cascia

€ €899 pps

SAN GIOVANNI & ADRIATIC COAST

5 JUNE | 7 NIGHTS

- 1 night Benevento | Full board
- 3 nights San Giovanni Rotondo | Full board
- 3 nights Alba Adriatica | Half board (also visiting Loreto)

€ €939 pps

SAN GIOVANNI & SORRENTO

22 JUNE | 7 NIGHTS

- 1 night Benevento | Full board
- 3 nights San Giovanni Rotondo | Full board
- 3 nights Sorrento | Half board

€ €929 pps

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

JOE WALSH TOURS GIFT VOUCHERS

GIVE THE GIFT OF TRAVEL THIS CHRISTMAS

We're making 100% personalised vouchers for your loved one this Christmas. Call us on 01 241 0800 or email info@jowalshstours.ie for more information.

100% PERSONALISED



Joe Walsh Tours

www.jowalshstours.ie
info@jowalshstours.ie

[f](https://www.facebook.com/jowalshstours) [i](https://www.instagram.com/jowalshstours) 01 241 0822

T.O. 052 | T.A. 0689 | ATOL 5163

Amnesty vows it will not comply with funding law

Greg Daly

Amnesty International has been accused of arrogance on a "grand scale" following a vow that the group will not comply with an order from the State's ethics watchdog to return the grant from a US-based pro-abortion lobby.

The Irish section of Amnesty revealed late last week that the Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPO) has instructed it to return the grant from the New York-based Open Society Foundation (OSF), deeming it to have been contrary to Irish electoral law.

"Amnesty International will not be complying with the instruction," executive director Colm O'Gorman said, adding that it would "deploy every means at its disposal to challenge this unfair law".

Failure to comply with

SIPO's instruction is a criminal offence under Irish law, which forbids 'third parties' from receiving foreign funding for political campaigns in Ireland.

Independent TD Mattie McGrath said Amnesty's reaction to SIPO's finding was "deeply alarming". "It has not only acknowledged receipt of a substantial grant totalling €137,000 for abortion reform in this State in direct contravention of the law, but it has also brazenly stated that it will not comply with the SIPO ruling," he told *The Irish Catholic*, describing this as "organisational arrogance on a grand scale".

Scrutiny

Arguing that the matter deserved immediate scrutiny from the Charities Regulator and – if appropriate – the Revenue Commissioners, Mr

McGrath said he would be asking the Minister for Local Government to come before the Dáil to clarify how best to tackle "flagrant violations of electoral law".

"The flaunting of the breach of electoral regulations by Amnesty Interna-

tional shows the very hubris we've come to see from them with their perversion of human rights by presenting abortion as a human right, when it's the removal of one," independent Senator Ronan Mullen told *The Irish Catholic*.

Fianna Fáil's Éamon Ó Cuív TD – a former minister with responsibility for electoral law – said "the law is clear on this issue and it is the job of SIPO to ensure the law is complied with."

"The purpose of the law is clear from its terms."

Labour Youth in social media outburst against Pope Francis



Chai Brady

The actions of Labour Youth in Maynooth have been condemned as "juvenile" and "disrespectful" after 'F*** the Pope' was posted twice from their official account.

An image of the Communications Officer of Labour Youth, Liam Haughey [pictured on left above], was posted with him holding a sign which read "I am pro-choice because...F*** the Pope".

The Labour Party released a statement acknowledging the posts, saying they were brought to the party's Gen-

eral Secretary but had since been removed.

A spokesperson wrote: "All sections of the Labour Party have been reminded to abide by our code of conduct for social media, and to treat all points of view with respect."

Offensive

Former Labour councillor Michael O' Sullivan said it was "juvenile and offensive", and that it does not speak for the party as a whole.

In a separate incident three pro-choice activists, not believed to be part of

Labour Youth in the university, posed in front of a statue of the Virgin Mary – where St John Paul II prayed during his visit to the college in 1979 – causing similar insult.

Pat Montague, who is the former Labour Party Youth Officer and has been involved in the party for decades, described the comments made by Labour Youth as having "no place in a modern pluralist society".

"I think it's a separate issue from Repeat the Eight, I think that it's an issue of basic respect for other people's opinions."



NEWS IN BRIEF

Pope appoints bishop for Galway diocese

Bishop Brendan Kelly has been appointed as the new bishop of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, it was announced on Monday.

Previously serving the Diocese of Achonry for a decade, the bishop said that he was still "somewhat in shock" at his appointment, as he had never expected to be shepherding another diocese.

Bishop Kelly was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Galway in 1971, and taught in Coláiste Éinde and Our Lady's College in Gort.

"I look forward to working again with the priests of Galway diocese, colleagues since the day I was ordained up to the time I left here 10 years ago," said Bishop Kelly, adding that the world needs the Good News "more than at any moment in history".

Tragic death of MMM in Africa

A prominent Irish Medical Missionary of Mary died tragically in Uganda on the day celebrations were planned to mark her 50 years of service in Africa.

Sr Maura Lynch, an obstetrician whose work had been honoured by the Council of Europe, was admitted to Kampala hospital after a fall last week. She became unwell while recovering from surgery, and passed away in the company of four of her MMM sisters and three doctors from Kitovo hospital.

Sr Maura spent 20 years at Angola's Chiulo Hospital before being transferred to Uganda's Kitovu's hospital in 1987. One of the founders of the Association of Surgeons of Uganda, many of those she trained now work across Africa.

 **CD Special Offer**

Treat Yourself or a Friend For Christmas

1. Cardinal Christoph Schonborn O.P.

- Let's Talk Family: Let's Be Family! - 4 cd set 25 euro

2. Living Laudato Si

Eamonn Conway, Dr Sean McDonagh,

Donal Dorr & more

- 8 cd set 35 euro

3. Faith Responding to Changing Times

Paul Vallely, Fr Gerry O'Hanlon SJ,

Sr Neillie McLaughlin RSM & more - 6 cd set 30 euro

4. Donal Dorr

The Call of Pope Francis to Care for our Common Home

- 3 cd set 20 euro

5. Where Now for Faith-Based Education -

Arch Eamonn Martin, Nuala O'Loan, Eamonn Conway, David Quinn,

Patrick Treacy and Jonathan Tiernan - 4 cd set 25 euro

SPECIAL OFFER -

P&P FREE In IRELAND on ALL orders

Contact: Eist, Tel: 0872789390 /

eist@eircom.net / www.eist.ie

CD's available in all leading religious bookshops and outlets nationwide

Cheap rate for world wide postage

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

❖ Capuchin Day Care Centre ❖

29 Bow Street, Dublin 7



Every day The Capuchin Day Care Centre provides 600 Meals for people who are homeless and each week 1000 Food Parcels for those on the poverty threshold.

Help Bro. Kevin continue providing this caring service.

Bro. Kevin or Therese 01 8720770
www.homeless.ie

Women's health is always important



Mary Kenny

The Fianna Fáil senator Ned O'Sullivan told *The Times* newspaper recently – the Irish edition of the London paper – that he had changed his mind about abortion after “having had the honour” of serving on the Oireachtas committing considering the Eighth Amendment.

Previously, he said, he had been pro-life. Now he wanted a new ‘pro-women’ law. “I have had a gradual realisation that abortion is a matter for a woman’s health and wellbeing,” he said.

Well, I think we should all be respectful of one another’s sincerely held views, and we should always listen to what others have to say, and reflect on it. But yet I do not believe that Senator O’Sullivan’s statement is accurate on one central point: 99% of abortions have nothing to do with health care.

Most abortions, as most abortion providers will admit when speaking honestly,

● Please use the Post Office at Christmas. Please! If they're not used, they disappear. The pleasant suburb of Donnybrook in Dublin has so much to offer – lovely food shops, an excellent bookshop ‘Hampton Books’ – but no Post Office any more. Use it or lose it!

are basically retrospective contraception. A pregnancy has been risked and is now not wanted. This is not a health issue: it is a decision about lifestyle.

In a very few unusual cases, the termination of a pregnancy may be considered genuinely on health grounds. In such cases, tragically, the mother is often moribund: for example, in an advanced stage of cancer. Though it might be mentioned that there are heroic mothers who refuse an abortion in this situation.

‘Wellbeing’ is something else, and there is no agreed

definition of what it means. It can be anything from a euphoric high after winning the Lotto to enjoying the companionship of a dog. But it’s not something that can be delivered by a health service, or the state – though welfare may be.

Pro-life people should be just as concerned for the health and welfare of women and mothers as anyone else. And I think most pro-life people are, as the ‘Love Both’ logo makes clear.

Management

The management of fertility is important for women’s health, for sure. Many and frequent pregnancies can put a woman’s health in jeopardy, and being pro-life should not mean that multiparous births are regarded as compulsory (a point Pope Francis made when he said, slightly jokingly, that there was no need to “breed like rabbits”).

The health of women and mothers should indeed be a priority in any jurisdiction, and Ned O’Sullivan is right to underline how important that health issue is. But he should also face the fact that, statistically, most abortion practice is not undertaken for health reasons at all.



Kindness at Christmas

I was really keen to see the lovely Christmas ballet *The Nutcracker* – music by Tchaikovsky – and so, earlier this month, I turned up at the Lighthouse Cinema in Dublin, where it was being streamed from the Royal Opera House in London.

I arrived at the

Smithfield location only to be told that the performance was fully booked out, and there were no seats available. Then a young woman appeared at my side saying: “I have a spare ticket – take it!”

Thrilled, I naturally said that I’d pay for it, but she said no, she

wouldn’t accept any money – it had been given to her anyway.

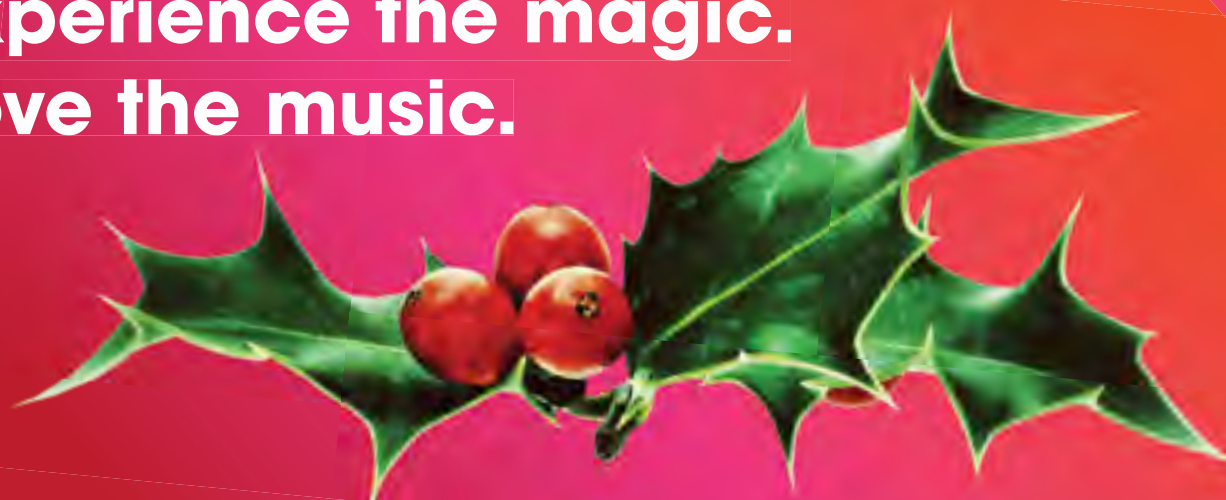
All I know about her is that her name is Grainne, and she had performed a graceful random act of kindness, in itself as memorable as the exquisite Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy herself.

GIFT CARDS

NCH

NATIONAL
CONCERT
HALL \ AN
CEOLÁRAS
NÁISIÚNTA

Experience the magic.
Love the music.



nch.ie 01 417 0000



Most mainstream journalists are little more than campaigners for pseudo-liberal agendas and Church leaders should challenge this, writes **Fr Andrew McMahon**

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin's latest public critique of Irish Catholics came in the course of a feature in the *New York Times* in early December, compiled by correspondent Liam Stack. Like the majority of portrayals of Irish life undertaken by English-speaking journalists, the *New York Times* account revolves around a familiar range of clichés largely devised, and regularly regurgitated, by the media here. Put simply: Ireland is gradually recovering from being, what the newspaper

terms, "a long a bastion of Catholic conservatism". This is media-speak for a dark and uninviting place, dominated by regressive thinking. According to the well-worn narrative, the battle for civilisation has, mercifully, made huge strides in more recent decades, with legislation for divorce and legalisation of 'same-

sex marriage' being among revered examples of such progress.

The struggle is far from over, however, and no less a figure than drag queen Rory O'Neill, aka Panti Bliss, is quoted by Stack to outline how disturbingly incomplete the project remains: "Young people go away, work, then come back a few years later,"

explains O'Neill, only to exclaim on their return: "My god, I can't get an abortion here."

Such shocking deprivation, the article implies, results from the stubborn remnant of this once-powerful Catholic culture which, while deservedly battered by abuse scandals for several years, has not only refused to leave the stage entirely but, distressingly, continues to yield power and influence.

This, the newspaper explains, is largely through its 'control' of schools and its ownership of hospitals, or the lands they occupy.

Hope

A glimmer of hope, however, derives from the real possibility that the Church's influence in Ireland may remain, quite literally, at that institutional level - its claim upon various sites of brick and mortar.

The true fidelity of so-called Catholics may, in reality, be much more dubious. It is in this context that the Archbishop of Dublin's observations are reported. While the *New York Times* points out how an alarming 78% of the Irish population continued to identify themselves as 'Catholic' in the census of 2011, Diarmuid Martin is quoted as qualifying this figure.

The figure for "true believers", according to the archbishop, is "closer to 20%". While this humble residue could presumably prove an irritant to the project of further enlightenment, it seems their days are well and truly numbered. With reference to those who are still faithful in attending church, in this country, Archbishop Martin tells the newspaper: "You know, I don't want to be nasty - but they're a dying breed. "The situation is changing"

he concludes "but Irish Catholicism hasn't changed with it."

Ireland has, of course, been 'changing' for some time now and there can be no denying that. Whether Catholicism should have 'changed with it' - to borrow the archbishop's phrase - depends upon how one evaluates the fruits of such change. A closer look at census details by the *New York Times* would have revealed, for example, that the rate of marriage breakdown in Ireland is now seven times higher than it was prior to the introduction of divorce legislation, despite claims back then that the measure would somehow safeguard the institution of marriage.

“The rate of marriage breakdown in Ireland is now seven times higher than it was prior to the introduction of divorce legislation”

Family life, meanwhile, continues to suffer destabilisation, with more than a third of Irish children now born outside of marriage. Increasing numbers of young people are being brought up in lone parent situations, typically without the presence of a father figure, and child poverty is on the rise.

The Children and Family Relationships Act and the passing of the same-sex marriage referendum, both in 2015, have combined to further undermine the traditional family unit in Ireland, with the potential to deprive future generations of children the right of access to their natural father and mother in their upbringing. And that's before we even contemplate the consequences of a possible

repeal of 'the Eighth'.

Serious commentary on Irish affairs would analyse both the merits and drawbacks of developments in society here and - against that bigger picture - assess the diminishing influence of the Church. While journalism presents itself as fulfilling this function, most mainstream journalists operate now as little more than campaigners for pseudo-liberal agendas.

When consulted around these issues, therefore, Church leaders might attempt - in some small way - to remedy this imbalance. It is disheartening when they fail to do so and appear to resort, instead, to indulging media prejudices and reinforcing highly debatable stereotypes.

The Archbishop of Dublin has proven himself astute in developing and maintaining a wholly positive image, within media circles, in otherwise hazardous years for Irish Catholicism.

He has appeared reluctant, however, to explore the scope this might have afforded him to offer a serious critique of the culture emerging in Ireland, in that same period.

Denunciations

There have been vigorous denunciations from him, over many years, of the scourges of clerical child abuse and, more recently, urban gangland crime. These, however, will inevitably be priorities with a sexually liberal and overwhelmingly bourgeois media and, to that extent, effectively amount to pushing at an open door.

Archbishop Martin has won widespread acclaim for a readiness to challenge Catholic culture and Church life within this country. A powerful and, perhaps, complacent Church may once have needed such challenges.

Now, however, it is a much-weakened and, often, maligned body. A different kind of leadership is necessary. Last Friday, December 8, the *Irish Times* marked the holyday by publishing a particularly tasteless article by Hilary Fannin, in which the columnist - in dialogue with her cat - poured scorn on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, concluding that her religious education had amounted to 'claptrap'.

It was just another example of the gratuitous denigration to which Catholic churchgoers, and their beliefs, are routinely subjected by influential elements of the Dublin media. When, against that backdrop, their archbishop uses the media to label them 'a dying breed', it can hardly be surprising that frustration is experienced and demoralisation reported.

1 Fr Andrew McMahon is a priest of the Diocese of Dromore.

Church leaders shouldn't indulge media prejudices



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin.

Your legacy could provide the future they deserve...



Photo: Jennifer Nolan, Malawi, 2016

Manuel Steven, Peter James and Chifindo Kagons pose for a photo in their village of Jambawe in Lilongwe, Malawi, which is supported by Concern's Livelihoods programme.

Concern's work makes the greatest difference when it can support people long-term - and when we have the funds in place to plan properly for the future.


Your generosity can empower people to find their own solutions to hunger, and lift themselves out of poverty. That way, parents can do the most valuable thing - build a more secure future for their children.

Remembering Concern in your Will is your chance to leave a lasting and life-changing legacy for the next generation.

➔ For more information, call Kevin Byrne on 01 417 7709 or visit concern.net/legacy

Concern Worldwide: Working with the world's poorest people to transform their lives. Place of registration Dublin, Ireland. Registered number 39647. Registered Charity No. CHY5745.

CONCERN
worldwide



**A MOTHER'S LOVE
CARRIED HER TO SAFETY.
NOW SHE NEEDS
YOURS TO SURVIVE.**

In East Africa, thousands of mothers and their children are struggling to survive the worst drought the region has seen in forty years.

With no food or water, mothers are travelling thousands of miles in fear across war-torn land to find safety at our Trócaire clinic.

Through your love this Christmas, you can help provide sanctuary, food, clean water and hope during these desperate times.

Help us save lives.

PLEASE GIVE WHAT YOU CAN

VISIT: TROCAIRE.ORG

CALL: 0800 912 1200

**URGENT
CHRISTMAS
APPEAL**

Charity Reg. No. NIC103321

Trócaire

UNTIL LOVE CONQUERS FEAR

When the dogs don't bark...



Failures to report Amnesty funding properly have exposed media bias, writes **David Quinn**

Decan Ganley hit public consciousness with a bang during the Lisbon Treaty referendum of June 2008. He was one of the leaders of the campaign against it and he established Libertas as his campaigning organisation. It spent a lot of money on outdoor advertising.

Ganley was immediately hit with a blizzard of questions about the source of his funding. How much of it was foreign? Was it in breach of the Electoral



George Soros.

Act which limits funding for political campaigns to €2,500 in a year from Irish donors, and to zero from foreign donors?

The Standards in Public Office Commission ('SIPO' for short), pursued Ganley to see if he was compliant with the

law. RTÉ and the *Irish Times* took a particular interest. They made sure the story was big and they pursued it to the bitter end. In the end it was established that Ganley and Libertas were compliant with the law and always had been.

The Irish media, which barked long and loudly at Ganley, would justifiably say they were acting in the public interest. As founder and head of The Iona Institute, I also get asked on a fairly regular basis by journalists whether Iona's funding is compliant with the law. The answer is, it is. If it was not, it would be a big story and Iona would be pursued by politicians, by journalists, and, no doubt, by the law itself.

It is a completely different story, however, if you are a pro-choice group. Then you can receive money from anywhere you like, you can break the law and the media watchdogs will barely growl, let alone bark or bite.

Causes

Three major pro-choice groups have between them received more than a quarter of a million dollars from an overseas foundation called 'Open Society'. Open Society was founded and is funded by the fabulously wealthy Hungarian-born, US-based George Soros, who funds numerous causes, including campaigns to liberalise drug laws and abortion laws.

The three organisations here in Ireland are the Abortion Rights Campaign, the Irish Family Planning Association and Amnesty International Ireland.

News of the funding came to light last year when documents from Open Society were leaked. They revealed that the three organisations had received the funds for the express purpose of overturning our pro-life law.

The document said: "With one of the most restrictive abortion laws in the world, a win there [Ireland] could

impact other strongly Catholic countries in Europe, such as Poland, and provide much needed proof that change is possible, even in highly conservative places."

How could it be argued that this intent was not political? How could it be argued that the funding was not in breach of the law on two counts, when it was far above €2,500 and it was from a foreign source?

News of the funding made it into the *Irish Independent*, but barely into the rest of the media. It was treated in about the same way as news of a minor celebrity dodging their tax liabilities – of passing interest only.

“SIPO has now told Amnesty that the Soros funding is in breach of the law and to hand it back”

In the event, and because members of the public complained, the Abortion Rights Campaign had to hand back the money. The Irish Family Planning Association is still in discussions with SIPO. Initially, Amnesty Ireland seemed to wriggle off the hook by describing its campaign against the Eighth Amendment not as a political campaign, but as a 'human rights' one.

SIPO has now told Amnesty that the Soros funding is in breach of the law and to hand it back. Incredibly, Amnesty is refusing to do so.

Its Chief Executive, Colm O'Gorman said in a statement (released on the day the media were distracted by the breakthrough in the Brexit negotiations), that Amnesty had been asked "to comply with a law that violates human rights, and we can't do that".

Obligations

O'Gorman said: "Ireland is targeting organisations purely for their work on human rights and equality issues. We believe this law contravenes Ireland's obligations under international human rights law, including the rights to freedom of association and expression."

He added: "International human rights law is clear that there should be no distinction between the sources of funding, whether domestic, foreign or international."

With that, he placed Amnesty above Irish law. Amnesty get to decide what law to obey and which to

disobey based on their own magisterial interpretation of 'human rights'.

There are, of course, times when your conscience will compel you to disobey the law. In Sweden, for example, doctors and midwives are compelled to perform abortions, and no pro-life doctors or nurses could possibly do that. But laws about funding are hardly on a par with this as a conscience matter.

To date, the Irish media have continued to treat this story as one of minor importance. Our politicians are not barking either. It might well be the case that the Electoral Act is too draconian when it comes to funding – in fact, I think it is – but breaking the law is a serious, and seriously newsworthy matter.

This is especially so when the issue is abortion, the funding amounts to over \$300,000 between the three organisations, the money has come from someone as major as George Soros, and the organisation refusing to obey the law is as important as Amnesty International.

If pro-life groups were in receipt of this kind of money from an American billionaire, there is no question that it would be treated as a major story. RTÉ and the rest of the media would be all over it. The pro-life groups would be fielding calls all day. There would be demands from politicians for accountability. Demands for legal penalties would be made. The boards of the organisations would be under immense pressure.

“Amnesty get to decide what law to obey and which to disobey based on their own magisterial interpretation of 'human rights'”

But the media are refusing to bark at Amnesty. The politicians are almost entirely silent. Our media like to complain of fake news, failing all the while to see that media bias is the functional equivalent of fake news. By not covering the Amnesty funding story properly, our media are engaged in what amounts to fake news and it simply makes their bias more unmistakable than ever.

i David Quinn's new book is *How we Killed God* (and other tales of modern Ireland).

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.

Nuala O'Loan

The View



Time to ask what God expects of us

Last week *The Irish Catholic* reported on the challenge by the former Abbot of Glenstal, Dom Mark Patrick Hedermann, to the negativity of the ACP. It also said that the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Diarmuid Martin, was reported in the *New York Times* to have said that: "I could spend all my time being concerned about people who come to church, but they're – you know I don't want to be nasty – but they're a dying breed."

It seemed an odd way to describe us, to say the least! I wondered, though, whether he was expressing a frustration similar to that of the ACP: that despite all their efforts the average age of priests is increasing and congregations are declining.

Today I read other words of Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, speaking at the ordination of a deacon, Tom Kouizer S.M. on December 9 this year. Talking of the missionary style of Jesus: preaching, healing and curing, he said that: "The first lesson that we have to learn regarding the missionary style of the Church today is that we have to know and understand the troubles, the sorrows, and the anxieties of the people of our times. Preaching is never just the repetition of disincarnated words, no matter how learned or eloquent. The preacher must know and identify himself with the suffering of his people."

Knowledge

He went on to say: "Your service as a deacon, Tom, must spring from a true knowledge of Jesus and you are called to bring this personalised knowledge of Jesus to the men and women of our time. The prime thirst of contemporary humanity is the thirst for God, the God of love, as opposed to the false Gods of our or any generation."

"The centrality of your life must be this Jesus whose love can overcome the limitedness and imperfection of your own self and permit you to work in your life and through you in the lives of others many signs and wonders as the Apostles did in their time."

Speaking thus of the thirst of each soul, recognised or unrecognised, for the God of love, and of the fundamental call to

bring the knowledge of Jesus to the men and women of our time, Archbishop Martin articulated in a few brief words his belief about what every priest or deacon is called to do. The media have not reported these profoundly important words as closely as they reported his other words.

I don't actually think that we are a dying breed. Figures show that in Ireland 3.7 million people identify as Roman Catholic – 78% of the population.

Patsy McGarry, of the *Irish Times*, told us in May this year that, in Dublin alone, people contributed some Euro 128,000 a week to Catholic Church Share collections which provide support services in the Dublin Archdiocese to parish communities in safeguarding, education and schools, repairs to buildings, financial management, human resources, communication and training people as catechists.

“These young people and so many more like them really are seeking the face of God”

All these people are supporting the Church in Dublin because they believe in it, and because they have heard about the needs in some parishes where church attendance and collections have dropped.

And the same story is replicated in dioceses across Ireland, north and south. Yes, I know that numbers are down. Yes, it is harder to convince people of the truth, and of the importance of each of them working at this gift of faith, thinking about who God is, listening to His word, and growing in faith and love.

Yet, there are those who do listen. Declan and I went on pilgrimage last month to Rome, with about 180 young people, just a small percentage of the 20,000 who have participated in

the Pope John Paul II Award, and who were celebrating the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Award, and their own participation in the bronze, silver and gold awards. They came from 10 dioceses. They were wonderful young people, strong and resolute in faith. They prayed and talked and sang, and yes, some of them shopped!

During the pilgrimage we spent an afternoon in the John Paul II lecture theatre at the Pontifical Urban University. The young people talked of their experience of the Award, of how they had been enriched; had taken an active part in the life of their Church, of their community and of society; of their growing awareness of the teaching and role of the Catholic Church in the world; of the opportunity to engage at a deeper level with Christ.

One of them told us of how he realised that younger GAA players in his parish thought it was 'cool' not to go to church, so he started wearing his GAA shirt to Mass, encouraging them to go too, and they did. Others talked of a huge variety of experience.

These young people and so many more like them really are seeking the face of God, yet one of them asked: "Is the Catholic Church in Ireland really dying?" He had heard it said. I responded, swiftly, that it will never die. It did not die through centuries of persecution, of the Penal Laws and it is strong enough to survive the march of secularism. We know this because Jesus told us: "Be not afraid. I am with you always."

They said they had enjoyed the experience of Rome, the sense that they really are part of the universal Church. They sought, too, something more – something to follow the John Paul II Award, to help them on their individual spiritual journeys as they moved on in their lives.

Being a young believer

in Ireland today can be difficult. They are facing the challenges of a society which seeks even to repeal the constitutional protection of unborn children. They need support, and they need to know that we believe that the Church will not die. We owe that to them. Change is needed in the Church in Ireland. Change is what brings life.

Change

The Church has changed utterly since I was a teenager. It will continue to

change. It will not die.

Derry's Fr Paul Farren and those who developed and volunteer with the John Paul II Award have done a great service to all those who have participated in the Award. That in itself is a massive achievement. The challenge now is to find a way forward with which young people can continue to engage, in parishes and colleges and universities. I don't know what that way forward will be. I am sure though that it can be done, if people within the Church

give of their time and their energy and, most of all, if they continue to affirm their belief in God, and to live as if it really matters.

We need, too, a positive dialogue. The news is still good. We need to remind ourselves of the authenticity of the teaching of our Church. We cannot be complacent. We must find new ways to be Church in the world today.

We should remember the words of Newman: "God has created me to do Him some definite service...I have my mission."

At this difficult time in the Church in Ireland, perhaps we should ask ourselves: "What can I do for this Church of mine which I love – in parish, in school, in community, in country? What does God want me to do?"



WILL YOU

REMEMBER SVP IN YOUR WILL?

With a gift in your Will to the Society of St Vincent de Paul you will help build a better future for people in need and create lasting solutions to tackle poverty. For more information call Nichola on 01 829 9026 or email legacy@svp.ie



Society of St Vincent de Paul

svp.ie

WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE HOLY FAMILY... IN THE HOLY LAND

10-18
OCTOBER
2018

TO MARK THE WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES,
THE IRISH CATHOLIC IS OFFERING A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT THE HOLY LAND AND
TRACE THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE HOLY FAMILY – JESUS, MARY AND ST JOSEPH.

PRICE:

€1395 INCLUDING
TAXES AND TIPS

VISIT BETHLEHEM, NAZARETH, JERUSALEM
AND OTHER SITES IN THE HOLY LAND
ASSOCIATED WITH THE HOLY FAMILY.

- Eight-night pilgrimage in four-star hotels
- Luxury air-conditioned coach throughout the itinerary
- Breakfast and evening meal served each day at hotels
- Full religious programme organised by Marian Pilgrimages
- Services of Marian Pilgrimages representative and professional English-speaking guide throughout the pilgrimage
- Full-day guided tour of Jerusalem including visits to the Western Wall, Dome of the Rock, Church of St Anne, Via Dolorosa, Holy Sepulchre and Shrine of the Book
- Complete programme of sightseeing and visits to sites of interest in the Holy Land
- Boat trip on Sea of Galilee
- Return taxi transfers to Mount Tabor

EXTRAS:
Insurance €25
Single room supplement €320

To reserve your place:

Call Dublin (01) 878 8159 | or Belfast (028) 95680005 | or email info@marian.ie

WMOF2018 celebrates volunteers on International Volunteer Day

Brenda Drumm

On Tuesday, December 5, the WMOF2018 joined in the worldwide celebrations for International Volunteer Day. This day was designated by the UN General Assembly as a chance for volunteers and organisations to celebrate their efforts, share their values and promote their work among their communities.

The WMOF2018 used the opportunity to call for more volunteers to be part of next year's family gathering in Dublin. To date just under 1,500 people have signed up as volunteers for the 9th World Meeting of Families but thousands more are needed for this international Faith event.

Because volunteering requires Garda vetting and training, volunteering for WMOF2018 is only available in Ireland. If you are not a resident in Ireland you won't be able to register as a volunteer but you can still help us spread the word by promoting our volunteer drive.

The WMOF2018 also used International Volunteer Day to recognise and celebrate the contribution of volunteers and to say thank you to all those who have already signed up.

If you are a resident of the island of Ireland, why not consider volunteering for WMOF2018, either as an individual or as part of a group? No previous volunteering experience is necessary and we have roles for everyone, from logistics to liturgical, from translations to transport, among others. For more see www.worldmeeting2018.ie/volunteer.

Let's talk family, let's be family during Advent!

This year's online Advent Calendar from the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference is a joint initiative with the World Meeting of Families.

The calendar provides a special focus on family as part of ongoing preparations for the hosting of the World Meeting of Families 2018 in Dublin next August. There are family prayers and suggestions for acts of kindness or charity that family members are being encouraged to take on during the month of December.

The calendar went live simultaneously on the



Some of the volunteers who have already signed up for WMOF2018.

Catholic Bishops and the World Meeting of Families 2018 websites on the first Sunday of Advent.

Launching the 2017 online calendar, Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland said: "The season of Advent marks the beginning of the Catholic year and the time of spiritual preparation for the Lord's coming at Christmas. It is a time of waiting, conversion and hope.

"Advent also prepares us for the second coming of Christ at the end of time. As Christians, we must always be prepared for the coming of the Lord - "You must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect" [Mt 24:37-44]. Preparation does not happen at once but over time and so each day of Advent amounts to a period of time which allows us to journey and reflect on the joy of the Gospel. Our online calendar is a helpful resource in this journey."

Archbishop Eamon continued: "Advent offers us a perfect opportunity to reflect on the Gospel of the Family as we continue our preparations for the World Meeting of

Families 2018. Pope Francis has described the family as the first school, the nearest hospital and the best place to grow old.

This Advent, many parishes are continuing to reflect on the Amoris Programme and the Amoris: Let's Talk Family, Let's Be Family pastoral programme for the WMOF2018. The season of Advent offers all of us a period of time out to reflect on the gifts of our families and what they offer to us in our parishes, schools and in society.

"I particularly welcome the inclusion this year of content from Pope Francis' recent Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (*The Joy of Love*) in the 2017 Advent Calendar. I invite everyone during the Advent season to visit our online calendar, which will highlight the themes of love in the family as well as mercy and peace. 'Let's Talk Family and Let's Be Family' this Advent," said Archbishop Eamon.

You can follow the Advent Calendar on the World Meeting of Families website worldmeeting2018.ie and on catholicbishops.ie

Host A Family programme

At previous World Meetings a tradition has developed of hosting pilgrims and families travelling from distant places like Peru, the Philippines and Ecuador, in order to defray the cost of travel which can be quite significant.

The presence of families from abroad is an important expression of solidarity with families here in Ireland, coming as they often do from countries with a strong missionary connection with Ireland.

Offers of accommodation are now being sought in family homes in the greater Dublin area for overseas pilgrims and in areas with good public transport links to the city centre.

Applicants interested in hosting pilgrims or a family in their home are invited to email volunteer@worldmeeting2018.ie and place 'Host a Family' in the subject line.



WMOF2018 Christmas icon card for family homes

● A special Christmas card for family homes is now available from the WMOF2018. The card is based on the 'Icon of the Holy Family' - which is currently journeying to each of the 26 dioceses of Ireland - to encourage reflection and prayer in preparation for the World Meeting of Families. More than 700,000 of the cards will be distributed at Christmas Masses across Ireland.

The 'Icon of the Holy Family' is accompanied by petition boxes, enabling families to write intentions and prayers. Contemplative communities around Ireland will pray for the intentions collected during the coming year.



Celebrating
61
Years
THE MOVING CRIB

THE MOVING CRIB



NOW
OPEN

BEST FREE ATTRACTION IN DUBLIN!

A NATIVITY ATTRACTION THAT STILL DELIGHTS AFTER 61 YEARS.
COME & SEE FOR YOURSELF AT 42 PARNELL SQUARE D1 THIS CHRISTMAS.

★★★★★ Highly Recommended ★★★★★

Nov 28th 2017 - Jan 7th 2018

Mon-Fri 2pm-6pm • Sat & Sun 11am-6pm
Groups 10am-6pm every day
(01) 874 5465 crib@stmartin.ie
www.stmartin.ie/crib



 @movingcrib
 /StMartinDublin

● Registration for all WMOF2018 events is open via worldmeeting2018.ie. Pilgrims can now register for the main three-day Congress from August 22-24; for the Festival of Families on Saturday, August 25; and for the closing Mass on Sunday, August 26. There are currently more than 1,500 people registered to attend the WMOF2018 events next August, with considerable interest from overseas groups.



Susan Gately finds an authentic experience of festive joy

Christmas in the Redemptoristine monastery in Dublin is a thing of joy. "It's a huge event in the community," Sr Lucy, Superior at the monastery tells me and I can feel the sheer happiness oozing from her. "We are like an extended family, though only God could have put us together. It is a beautiful time of the year."

The offaly woman who worked for 15 years in the Bronx before entering the order as a late vocation, has been the Superior of the monastery for two years. There are 15 women religious in the enclosed contemplative community who live a life centred around the Liturgy of the Hours, the Eucharist, personal prayer and contemplation.

Much of their day is lived out in silence and from the time they enter the order, they remain within the grounds of the St Alphonsus Road monastery in Dublin. They support themselves financially by producing altar breads and candles.

So how different is Christ-

The entire monastery gathers around Sr Máire Bríd as she received her Redemptoristine habit earlier this year.



Sr Gabrielle with new arrivals Rocky and Toby.



Christmas in the Clo

mas in an enclosed cloister? At one level it is like the Christmas ordinary people live – exchanging presents, telling stories around the fire, savouring a turkey dinner, catching up on old friends – but at another it is completely different.

"We don't get caught up in the commercial stuff," says Sr Lucy. "We live the month of December soaking up the meaning of Advent so on Christmas Eve we are bursting with joy. Christmas begins on Christmas Eve night."

Altar breads

The sisters moved into the modern monastery in May 2000 after selling off the old monastery and a parcel of land. The new building with the cloister and an enclosed

garden at its centre, comprises of a reception area and parlour, a kitchen and refectory, a community room, bedrooms, offices, a scriptorium (like a library), the candle room and a beautiful circular chapel and sacristy. Down a corridor from the main building is the altar bread department where the sisters work each day producing, packing and dispatching the altar breads.

When the monastery was built, Sr Gabrielle, its former Superior, had the idea of putting a video camera in the chapel so that ill or infirm sisters could follow mass and the prayer services each day from their rooms.

Out of this came the live webcam which broadcasts the sisters' prayers and masses 24/7 on the internet. (see www.churchservices.tv/redemptoristines or www.rednuns.com/webcam). Through the live stream which is always on, this enclosed community has become part of the lives of tens of thousands of people all over the world.

“The sisters live December in joyful expectation”

Does this not break the enclosure? "People join us for prayer from all over the world and it is not at all invasive and we are not even conscious of the camera. They pray with us and we pray for them...all united in one praying family," says Sr Lucy. During their nine-day novena to our Lady of Perpetual Help in October, 21,000 people joined them from 46 countries, and they have webcam stats that an Irish company would be proud of. On December 7, for example, they had over 1,300 viewers.

Many requests come



Sr Ali, Sr Maura and Sr Monica.



Sr Maria, Sr Jacinta and Sr Ali.

in each day for specific intentions on line and all are replied to, says Sr Lucy, and they receive many prayer intentions at their shrine to Our Lady of Perpetual Help and "in other ways too".

The sisters live December in joyful expectation and waiting, trying to hold onto the liturgical time of Advent – getting ready, waiting for Christ. Then a day and a half before Christmas, they "spring into action".

The Christmas decorations go up on Christmas Eve – a Christmas tree in the reception and community room, and cribs "all over the place". The largest crib is in the Cloister and has been in use since 1859.

Christmas really begins with the 8pm vigil Mass on Christmas Eve in the circular chapel which is packed to capacity and decorated with

beautiful floral arrangements which are brought in just as the mass begins. Members of the public sit or stand behind a low wooden barrier, marking the enclosure. The sisters sit or kneel in front of it. A number of the sisters have formed an "ensemble mini orchestra". Sr Maura is on flute, Sr Maria is on organ, Sr Gabrielle plays harp, Sr Ali plays violin, Sr Petra is on recorder and Sr Lucy on cello. "Nessun Dorma is our signature tune. We'll probably play that this year. All our gifts are for the community," says Sr Lucy.

They are not meant to go outside the enclosure but after the vigil and Christmas Day masses, they break the silence and the enclosure to greet all their local friends. "Charity comes first," Sr Lucy explains. Many of their friends from the community give them gifts – things to

eat, turf for the fire, maybe a bottle of wine.

By the time Mass is over and they have said all their goodbyes to their friends it is 9.30pm or 10pm. "We meet in the refectory and chat about the Mass, maybe over a cup of tea or hot chocolate." Then it is time for bed. The great silence begins at 10pm and even with the excitement and joy of Christmas, they try to observe it.

On Christmas morning, probably like many a house in Ireland, there is no sleep in. The sisters rise at 6.30am and are in chapel for 6.55am meditation. "Is it different in any way on Christmas morning?" I ask. "It is different because Jesus Christ is born in the world, that is our focus," says Sr Lucy. "You are just bursting with joy. There's no other way you can be."

“We try to listen to their pleas. It is not easy in the world”

They have morning prayer at 7.25am and then at 8am, tuck into the first feast of the day – a breakfast prepared by the Slovak, German and Czech sisters featuring samples of their national cheeses and sausages. Meals are normally eaten in silence. "On Christmas morning we wish each other a happy Christmas before breakfast and embrace each other. Everybody is in festive mood, and then we eat our breakfast in silence," says Sr Lucy.

At 9.10am they retire to the chapel for 'The Little Hour' (part of the divine office) followed by Mass at 9.30am. Fr Pat O'Donoghue, "a gorgeous, praying priest", says the Mass. He is much loved by the nuns. "God sent him to us," comments Sr Lucy.

After Mass once again there is the exchange of greetings with members of

RAG

RAISING HEARTS AND GIVING HOPE

Festival of Faith Conference
Galway City

Saturday 10th February 2018
at Ardilaun Hotel

Opening Address at 10am by Papal Nuncio
Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo.

Speakers: Breda O'Brien, John Waters, Dr. John Monaghan and others
Conference concludes with concelebrated Mass, graciously led by
Papal Nuncio at Galway Cathedral.

Save the date!

Tickets €25.00, to include light lunch plus morning & afternoon tea/coffee
Tickets available in early January, from The Abbey Church shop, Galway
Enquiries to findfk@gmail.com or to Tom on 087 6209090

facebook.com/raisingandgiving/



Sr Gabrielle and Sr Maura.

Sr Lucy and Sr Gabrielle.

ister

the public.

"People bring us gifts. We try to hear what they are feeling out in the midst of the madness of the world. We try to listen to their pleas. It is not easy in the world," says Sr Lucy.

At 11am they watch the Pope's message to the Christians of the world – *Urbe et Orbe* – on TV and

then await their traditional visitors – confreres from the Order – the Provincial of the Redemptorist priests, Fr Dan Baragry CSSR with a couple of brother Redemptorists. Sipping coffee and eating mince pies, the entire community sits around the fire in the community room catching up on the news and

work of the Redemptorist men – who is back from the missions, how the Fathers living abroad are doing.

Departure

After the departure of their priest friends, the sisters have a light lunch – usually something given to them as a gift. "We might have quiche – a

dish we consider a luxury, and then we scatter". The sisters from abroad Skype their families. Sr Lucy checks the turkey which she put in the oven at 6am to "cook slowly". Some sisters take care of the older or infirm nuns who need "a lot of care".

By 2pm nearly all the women are back in the kitchen. Each has her own task. Sr Margaret makes the soup. Sr Gabrielle prepares the starter. Sr Mura whips the cream. Others peel potatoes or vegetables. They work in silence, except for the odd "Will you check on that gravy?" Sr Jacinta, now aged 90, carves the turkey. She has lots of experience – she has been doing it 70 years!

"Do you ever fight in the kitchen?" I ask. I mean there are a lot of cooks – plenty of potential to "spoil the broth". What if the turkey gets burnt or the potatoes overcooked? I put the questions to Sr Lucy and she remains adamant and serene. "No. There is an absolutely wonderful atmosphere. It is not sheer silence. We'll ask things like 'How is it going? Is that hot enough? It's great!'"

At 4.30pm, the Redemptoristine nuns return to the chapel for Solemn Evening

Prayer which lasts thirty minutes, after which they adjourn to the refectory for Christmas dinner. The youngest member of the community, Máire Bríd, a novice of 28, reads the Gospel of the day.

I ask Sr Gabrielle, former Superior of the monastery, if they 'take a drink' with Christmas dinner? Yes, some do, she replies. Christmas dinner is eaten slowly and while there is great merriment, it is also a solemn time. They savour the meal, taking time to chat between courses. "This is a table of fellowship," explains Sr Gabrielle. "It is an extension of the Eucharist."

Presents

After Christmas dinner they open their presents.

"Do you buy presents for each other?" I ask. An emphatic "NO" is the rejoinder from Sr Lucy, but they do exchange gifts. Sr Maura, for example, is "great at making things". Last year she moulded two-inch-high figurines which she painted in the Redemptoristine habit colours.

On the face of each figurine she stuck a picture of the face of the sister for whom it was destined. Meanwhile, Sr Gabrielle made gifts of

candles, one for each member of the community. Some gave theirs away to family members. They receive gifts too from the staff who work with them in the altar bread department.

After dinner comes the big wash up and then they move into the community room next door to sing carols around the open turf fire.

There are 40 Redemptoristine monasteries around the world and it is customary at Christmastime for each monastery to write a letter updating the other communities on the life of that particular monastery. As the nuns, sated after their wonderful meal, sit around the open fire, Sr Lucy or one of the others, reads out some of these letters and like in an extended family, they enjoy hearing news of the order – the deaths, illnesses, novices, projects, joys and sufferings.

After recreation, usually around 8.30pm, though it could be later, the sisters pray the Solemn Night Prayer in the chapel. Afterwards some of the sisters might go to bed, others might stay up. "Sometimes people give us a DVD and we might look at that."

"Charity comes before anything else."



© Sightsavers/Julia Gunther

Will you join our sight-saving team this Christmas?

Eight-year-old Suborna was in desperate need of a miracle. Over the past few years the cataracts in her eyes had caused her sight to slowly deteriorate, and could have left her permanently blind.

Tragically, Suborna tried cupping her hand around her eye to help her focus – but this didn't help. In fact, her sight was so poor, her mother feared for her education. "She cannot continue in education because her eyesight is too bad," she said.

Suborna was one of the lucky ones. Thanks to generous supporters like you, she received her miracle cataract operation and her life has completely changed. Her parents were over the moon, and her father said: "I am confident that Suborna will do better at school now. I will do anything to make sure she gets an education."

Our incredible team of doctors and nurses work tirelessly to help save the sight of children like Suborna, but they badly need the support of one very important team member – you. By donating today, you could help provide the sight-restoring operation that can give children like Suborna the chance of a brighter future.

So please, give a gift and join our team of miracle workers this Christmas.

Make A Miracle happen this Christmas please give a gift today.

Your gift of €36.00 to Sightsavers would be enough to provide a sight-saving cataract operation. Donate at www.sightsavers.ie or call 01 6637666

 **Sightsavers**

Sightsavers, 1st Floor, Spencer House, Spencer Row, Freepost FDN5241, Dublin 1

Registered charity number CHY 15437.

Out&About

Thinking outside the box in Galway



GALWAY: Excited children prepare for the Shoe Box Appeal in Glenamaddy Parish Church with Fr Paddy Mooney PP.



KILDARE: Msgr James O'Brien, Bishop Brendan Kelly, Prof Caitriona Ní Dhochartaigh, Archbishop Michael Neary and Bishop Philip Boyce launch the Irish language Roman Missal in Maynooth University.



CORK: Sr Karen Kent, John McLaughlin, Bishop John Buckley, Ruth McLaughlin and Pamela McLoughlin from Veritas at the launch of Sr Karen Kent's book *55 Ways to Connect with Families in your Parish* in St Columba's Church, Douglas. The launch began with an advent prayer based on ideas in the book.



LIMERICK: Ann O Byrne, Dr Brendan O'Keefe, Prof Michael Healy, Prof. Gerry O'Brien, Finian McGrath, Ann Bourke and Paul Bailey pictured at the 'Working to support Children and their Families' Inaugural Progressing Disabilities Services (PDS) conference in Limerick which brought together 300 parents and staff to share learning and good practice in the provision of disability services. Photo: Brian Arthur



MAYO: Representatives from Attymass, Co. Mayo, receive their Pride of Place award. Included are Dr Christopher Moran, Chairman Co-operation Ireland; Tom Dowling, Chairperson, Pride of Place, Cllr Gerry McMonagle and Michael Garvey, CEO IPB Insurance. Photo: Lorcan Doherty

Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication

ARMAGH: The Chamber Choir from St Catherine's College, directed by Dr Eunan McCrees, perform during Advent celebrations in the Market Place Theatre.



KENYA: Irish missionaries in Kenya visit the Irish embassy in Nairobi for an event celebrating their contribution to the development of the country.



ROME: A group of 180 pilgrims from 13 dioceses throughout Ireland, led by Bishop Donal McKeown, gather in Rome to celebrate 10 years of the Pope John Paul II Award.

IN SHORT

Families are biggest influence in children's lives – Bishop Buckley

Bishop John Buckley of Cork and Ross said that schools and teachers can never have the same influence as family in children's lives, and described a new book as being a useful resource for priests and lay people in preparing for the World Meeting of Families next

year.

Karen Kent's *55 Way to Connect with Families in your Parish* provides practical ideas for involving families in the Church throughout the year.

The book takes in all the key events in the Christian calendar from Advent at Christmas through to Lent and Easter and also covers selected feast days and secular events.

Bishop Buckley referred to Pope Francis' description of the family being "the nearest hospital, the first school for the young and the best home for

the elderly". He said that many of our social ills today can be traced through a weakening of family relationships and criticised the Government for not promoting the importance of the family.

Bishop Buckley said it was similar to the blind spot that had us denying the property bubble some years ago.

"No school, excellent though our schools are, and no teacher, dedicated and conscientious though our teachers are, will have the same influence on young people as the home has," he added.

ANTRIM

Advent evenings at Clonard Monastery in Belfast on Tuesdays, December 12 and December 19, starting at 7.30pm. Reflecting on the Gospels for Advent using art (*visio Divina*), guided meditation, prayer, video and song. Sign up by emailing reception@clonard.com or phoning 00 44 2890 445950.

ARMAGH

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

Adoration chapel, Edwards Street, Lurgan, adoration on weekdays from 9am-9pm.

CORK

Life in the Spirit Seminar in Knockavilla Community Centre (Innishannon/Knockavilla parish). Introductory night on Friday February 2 at 7.30pm, followed by 7 weeks Life in Spirit Talks, Friday, from February 9 to March 23 at 7.30pm. Speakers include Fr Brendan Walsh, Brigid Haran, Tom O'Dwyer, Sr Bridget Dunne, Janice Carrig, Marie Beirne, Chona Evans and Noel Byrne. Tel. 087 4589133.

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

Medjugorje prayer meeting in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament every Wednesday night at 8pm in Holy Trinity Church, Father Matthew Quay. Prayers for healing first Wednesday of every month.

Maria Vadia and Fr John Keane will lead a day of Prayer, Praise, Worship and Healing in Rochestown Park Hotel, Douglas on Sunday March 4 in 2018, commencing at 9am and concluding with Holy Mass at 5pm. Registration not required. Contact Celia on 087 2405568.

CLARE

Abbey Cluster Christmas Reconciliation Service on Monday December 18 in Ennis Cathedral from 7.30pm to 8.30pm.

Parish Carol Service in Friary Sunday December 17: 7pm. Celebrate this occasion as a family to help us have the "real" Christmas atmosphere in our lives and homes.

On Baminelli Sunday (Baby Jesus Sunday) every year, families bring the figure of the Baby Jesus to St Peter's Square in Rome for the Pope to bless. On Sunday December 17 parishioners are invited to bring the Baby Jesus from their home to any mass in Ennis Parish to be blessed by the celebrant.

DERRY

Dungiven Parish: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Mon-Fri, 8am-noon and 3-9pm.

DUBLIN

Divine Mercy Devotions in the Church of Three Patrons, Rathgar every First Friday at 7pm. Mass, Benediction, chaplet & blessing with relic of St Faustina. Confessions available.

The Dublin 15 Faith and Justice Group welcomes new members and currently meet on the first Friday of the month in Hartstown Church. Contact Fr Joe 087 6632944.

Divine Mercy Mass and holy hour takes place at 7.30pm every Tuesday in St Saviour's Church, Dominick Street. Also daily Divine Mercy prayers at 2.30pm at the shrine with the relic of St Faustina.

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.

Life to the Full (John 10:10) book club for young adults meets every Thursday from 7-8.30pm in St Paul's Church, Arran Quay (Smithfield) to meditate, share and discuss life & faith. Refreshments provided. www.facebook.com/lifetothebookclub

FERMANAGH

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

KERRY

The Alliance of Two Hearts First Saturday vigil of adoration and reparation in Caherciveen parish church at 3pm: Divine Mercy chaplet, Adoration, rosaries. Mass at 7.30pm.

KILDARE

A centring/contemplative prayer group meets in the Old Baptistery of St Michael's parish church in Athy every Thursday at 8pm. For more info ring Dolores at 086-3474679

OFFALY

Clonmacnois Christmas Prayer Vigil in Cluain Chiarain Prayer Centre on Friday December 15. Mass at 9pm. Adoration and Prayers follow until 2.10am. Enquiries Dave: 085 7746763.

ROSCOMMON

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

SLIGO

Latin Mass in Carraroe on the last Sunday of each month at 3pm.

WATERFORD

Exploring St John's Gospel with Fr Michael Mullins, Tuesdays 8pm-9pm in the Edmund Rice Centre.

WICKLOW

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

Eucharistic adoration, St Mary & Peter Church, Arklow, every Tuesday & Friday 2-7pm & Sunday 2-5pm.

St Patrick's Prayer Meeting on Thursday evenings at 8pm in the De La Salle Pastoral Centre, Wicklow. Come for prayer, scripture, music and a cuppa.

World Report

IN BRIEF

Child refugees from France need UK support

UK Catholic leaders urged the British government to accept more child refugees from northern France after reports that hundreds of young people are being forced to sleep outdoors in low temperatures.

An English and Scottish bishop said the situation of migrants waiting in the French port of Calais for the opportunity to cross the English Channel into the UK has become increasingly perilous since the clearance of an illegal migrants' camp known as 'The Jungle' a year ago.

They urged the government to relax rules that limit the number of child refugees the UK will accept from France.

'Forget wounds of the past' – bishop

An African bishop has called on the people of South Sudan to work together for peace as internal conflict and starvation are affecting millions of people in the embattled country.

Bishop Eduardo Hiiboro Kussala said: "We are never defined by our past but our present, as no matter how hard the past, you can always start again."

"We wish to forget the wounds of the past and move ahead towards peace," he said at the Interstate Governors' Strategic Intervention Conference for Peace.

After the separation from Khartoum in December 2013, ongoing civil conflict erupted between President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar, which has resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and the creation of millions of internally displaced people and refugees.



WORLD MISSIONS IRELAND
SPIRITUAL & PRACTICAL SUPPORT WORLDWIDE

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

©Missio

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 Maurice Hogan SSC
National Director WMI
64 Lower Rathmines Road, Dublin 6, Ireland.
Web www.wmi.ie | Tel +353 1 4972035

WORLD MISSIONS IRELAND

Charity No. CHY2318.

Church ignored as US embassy relocation sparks violence

Following days of violence and backlash after US President Donald Trump's decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, the Vatican appealed for "wisdom and prudence" to prevail.

The announcement sparked anti-US protests throughout Asia and the Middle East, including a four-day protest in the Palestinian territories, Reuters reported. An Israeli security guard in Jerusalem was in critical condition after he was stabbed by a Palestinian man at the city's bus station.

Palestinian protestors also clashed with police outside the US embassy in Beirut in a series of violent demonstrations.

Soon after the US's decision Christian leaders in Jerusalem said it could have dire regional consequences.

"We have been following, with concern, the reports about the possibility of changing how the United States understands and deals with the status of Jerusalem. We are certain that such steps will yield increased hatred, conflict, violence and



Palestinians burn a US flag during clashes with Israeli troops near the West Bank city of Ramallah.

suffering in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, moving us farther from the goal of unity and deeper toward destructive division," the Christian leaders said, just hours before Trump announced the US was recognising Jerusalem as the capital and relocating the embassy.

Appeal

They appealed to Trump to take their viewpoint into consideration, as did the leaders who met at Camp

David in July 2000 to decide the status of Jerusalem. The Christian leaders said their "solemn advice and plea" for the president was to continue recognising the international status of Jerusalem.

"We ask you, Mr President, to help us all walk toward more love and a definitive peace, which cannot be reached without Jerusalem being for all," they said.

"Any sudden changes would cause irreparable harm. We are confident

that, with strong support from our friends, Israelis and Palestinians can work toward negotiating a sustainable and just peace, benefiting all who long for the Holy City of Jerusalem to fulfil its destiny."

The Christian leaders include Catholic and Orthodox patriarchs as well as the Franciscan custos of the Holy Land.

The Vatican has consistently called for a special status for Jerusalem, particularly its Old City, in order to protect and guarantee access to the holy sites of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

"The Holy See is attentive to these concerns and, recalling the heartfelt words of Pope Francis, reiterates its well-known position concerning the singular character of the Holy City and the essential need for respecting the status quo, in conformity with the deliberations of the international community and the repeated requests of the hierarchies of the churches and Christian communities of the Holy Land," said a Vatican statement.

Rohingya refugees heartened after Papal visit to Bangladesh

Expectations are high among refugees in makeshift camps in Cox's Bazar days after Pope Francis met with 16 Rohingya refugees in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh.

On his way back to the Vatican, the Pontiff admitted he wept during his encounter with the Muslim refugees who have fled from religious persecution in Myanmar's neighbouring Rakhine State. "I have told the Pope about what we have been through," 25-year old Sayeda Khatun said in the Rohingya language days after the meeting.

She said Pope Francis assured her that "he would do everything possible

to help us and to bring a peaceful solution" to the conflict in their homeland.

In an earlier interview after meeting the Pope, the refugees said the pontiff promised to convince world leaders to help ease the tension in Rakhine State.

Justice

Foyez Ali Majhi whose village was razed to the ground by soldiers said the Pope assured them that he would try to help get justice for the Rohingya.

According to the refugees, Pope Francis promised to convince world leaders to help facilitate an end to the

persecution of the minority group, who number about 1.1 million.

He also vowed to tell the stories of their persecution on the international stage as he reiterated his appeal for continuous support for those living in refugee camps.

Muhammad Abu Sayed, one of the leaders at the Nayapara refugee camp who met the Pope, said people were eager to hear about their meeting.

The 35-year-old from Maungdaw in Rakhine said the Pope, aside from promising prayers, vowed to "work with world leaders and do whatever possible" to help the Rohingya.

Almost 80 inmates baptised in Argentina

Seventy-eight prisoners were baptised, confirmed, and received their First Holy Communion in an Argentine prison.

The inmates are entering the Catholic Church after working with the Diocese of San Isidro's prison ministry, which operates in the greater Buenos Aires metropolitan

area.

The ministry has been active since 2007 in both male-only and mixed gender units of the Buenos Aires Province prison system.

With the pastoral support of Bishop Oscar Ojea of San Isidro and Auxiliary Bishop Martín Fassi, the ministry is led by Sister María Cristina

Albornoz and served by 20 volunteers.

The sacraments were administered to 68 men and 10 women during a Mass celebrated by Auxiliary Bishop Fassi.

In his homily, the bishop encouraged the inmates to take the same path as Jesus, uniting their lives to him.

"Jesus was rejected. But just as he did back then, he comes to us to change our mentality. He comes to us to bring a new way of thinking," the bishop said.

The prison ministry offers catechesis, Mass, and other sacraments. In addition, it offers workshops in pottery, weaving and gardening.

Christmas

GIFT GUIDE



The Irish Catholic 3 Month Subscription

There is no better time to gift *The Irish Catholic*, the best selling Catholic weekly newspaper in Ireland! Now bigger and better with **36 pages of up-to-date news**, views, analysis, and commentary about the faith.

Price: €35

Deliver your gifts to your home at no extra cost.
FREE P&P
on all products (ROI only)



Olive Wood Ornaments

Pack of 12 Ornaments

These beautiful ornaments, carved by Christian families in Bethlehem, are a perfect addition to your Christmas Tree.

Price: €19.99

Pope Francis 2018 Calendar

The 2018 calendar is filled with beautiful images of Pope Francis accompanied by thought-provoking quotes from the Holy Father. An ideal Christmas gift.

Price: €9.99



Rosary Companion

This perfect pocket companion serves as a step by step guide to praying the Rosary, complete with beautiful imagery and insightful spiritual commentary.

Price: €3.75



Prayers for the Moment

In this exquisite, leather bound book, Fr Peter John Cameron – the editor in chief of Magnificat, presents 50 prayers to help celebrate your joyous occasions and ease your struggles.

Price: €19.99



Bethlehem Star Ornament

175mm (wide) x 70mm (high)

Celebrate Christ's birthplace with this beautiful, olive wood ornament from Bethlehem – a perfect highlight to your tree!

Price: €7.99

Irish Personalities

Deliver your gifts
to your home
at no extra cost.

FREE P&P
on all products
(ROI only)



How We Killed God David Quinn

For almost 25 years, David Quinn has charted the turbulent relationship between modern Ireland and the Catholic Church. From the controversies that have raged about Church and State, the abuse scandals and the right to life, this book is a very different take on nearly a quarter of a century of tumultuous change in Irish society.

Price: €16.99 (Paperback)



All Will Be Well Fr Paddy Byrne

Midlands priest Fr Paddy Byrne has become one of Ireland's top advocates for a new, inclusive, and merciful model of Church. In his first book, he draws on years of parish ministry and pastoral care to outline the challenges we face, while offering hope and inspiration to readers, leading them towards what he sees as a positive future.

Price: €14.99 (Hardback)

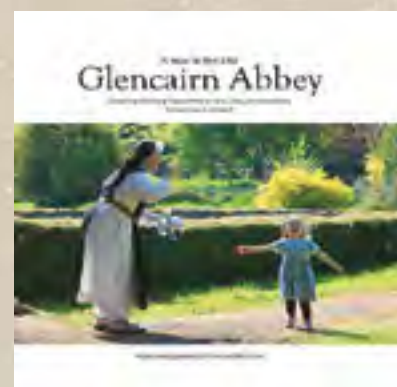
Picturesque Ireland



Native Irish Dogs Shane McCoy and Colin White

When it comes to dogs, Ireland boasts a broad and diverse range of breeds which origins are uniquely Irish. From the iconic Irish Wolfhound to the lesser-known Glen of Imaal Terrier, the native dogs of Ireland are ancient breeds with diverse histories and mythologies.

Price: €16.99 (Paperback)



A Year in the Life Glencairn Abbey

Photography by Valerie O'Sullivan

Through a series of images and words, we get a rare insight into the daily life of the Sisters of St Mary's Abbey in Glencairn, the only Cistercian monastery for women in Ireland. Their lives are a true, monastic journey fulfilling the motto of St Benedict *ora et labora* (prayer and work).

Price: €24.99 (Hardback)



Where I find God Cora Guinnane and Joanne O'Brien

Where I find God is a thought-provoking book where some of Ireland's finest thinkers share where they have found, and continue to find, the divine in their lives. The book includes contributions by Mary McAleese, Brent Pope, Sr Stanislaus Kennedy and Fr Peter McVerry amongst others.

Price: €24.99 (Hardback)



The Celtic Songlines with Dónal Lunny

David Forsythe

Based on the RTÉ programme *The Celtic Songlines*. Dónal Lunny travelled to all of Europe's Celtic nations from the Hebrides in the north to Galicia in the south visiting the Isle of Man, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany as well as Ireland. Along the way he met with musicians, historians and folklorists who helped build a fascinating picture of what Celtic musical identity means in modern Europe.

Price: €19.99 (Paperback)

You will find the order form on the last page of the Christmas Gift Guide. Alternatively you can buy these products at

www.columba.ie and www.currach.ie

Daniel O'Leary Bundle



**Buy 2
for only
€24**

The Happiness Habit Daniel O'Leary

Written for all who believe in humanity and are ready to nourish the divine beauty of their hearts. Beautifully crafted and lovingly presented, it is the perfect gift to give someone you care about or yourself.

Price: €12.99 (Hardback)

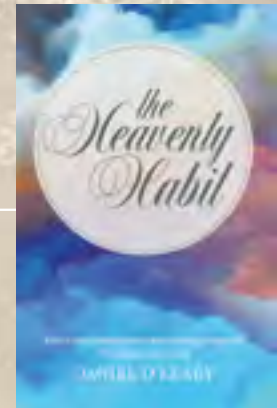


**Buy 3
for only
€32**

The Healing Habit Daniel O'Leary

A sequel to the bestselling *Happiness Habit*, this new book is a tonic for your spirit, a healing for your heart and a setting-free of your precious mind. The ideal present for anyone in need of a breath of fresh air this Christmas.

Price: €12.99 (Hardback)



**NEW
release**

The Heavenly Habit Daniel O'Leary

The *Heavenly Habit* continues in the same style as the previous two books, but attempts to build on them, raising the awareness of the reader to the spiritual in their lives. This book can be read in one sitting or dipped into on occasion.

Price: €12.99 (Hardback)

Mindfulness and Wellbeing

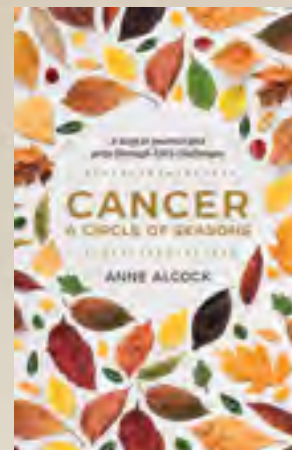
Deliver your gifts
to your home
at no extra cost.
FREE P&P
on all products
(ROI only)



Surprised by Fire Martina Lehan Sheehan

Interweaving psychology, mythology and spirituality, this book takes the reader on a journey towards transformation and healing. The author's vibrant creativity and inspiring wisdom will work wonders on all of our flattering and wayward hearts, telling us that we are no longer victims and giving us glimpses of the enchanted place we one day hope to inhabit.

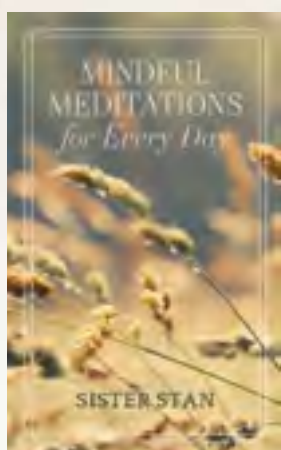
Price: €14.99 (Hardback)



Cancer, A Circle of Seasons Anne Alcock

What do you do when life hits you a sucker punch, such as a cancer diagnosis? Do you talk? Do you journal? Do you pray? When Anne Alcock was diagnosed with breast cancer, she did all of those things. This book is her way of helping anyone to reflect creatively about their life experiences.

Price: €14.99 (Hardback)



Mindful Meditations for Everyday Sr Stan (Stanislaus Kennedy)

Sr. Stan encourages and informs us how to carve out ten minutes for reading, meditation and prayer. Reading this will bring a greater understanding of how you have been blessed and will sow new seeds of love, hope and gratitude in your heart.

Price: €12.99 (Hardback)



Harvesting Hope with Anthony de Mello John Callanan SJ

Do you wish prayer would flow like a river without any need for forced thought? Using Anthony de Mello as his spiritual starting point, John Callanan looks at the areas of hope and fear which come into our lives from the stresses and strains of every day life to find a new liveliness in your prayer.

Price: €14.99 (Paperback)

You will find the order form on the last page of the Christmas Gift Guide. Alternatively you can buy these products at www.columba.ie and www.currach.ie

History & Politics



All The Risings Kevin Kenna

An intriguing compilation of the major risings in Ireland's history – nine principal occasions on which resistance was made to the dominant forces who controlled the country's destiny. From the Battle of Clontarf in Dublin in the year 1014 up to the 1916 Easter Rising, this book is an excellent overview of the main events that have shaped Ireland's history.

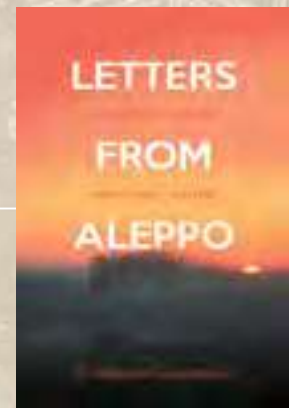
Price: €14.99 (Hardback)



Martin Luther His Challenge Then and Now P. Fintan Lyons

Five hundred years ago, Martin Luther published his 'Ninety Five Theses', sparking a movement that challenged many beliefs and practices, which changed the world forever. Explore the mind of the man who dared question the Catholic Church, in a time when questioning the Church could bring dire consequences.

Price: €14.99 (Hardback)



Letters from Aleppo Fr Ibrahim Alsabagh

A day-by-day account of the incredible story of Father Ibrahim Alsabagh, a Franciscan friar and parish priest living in Aleppo, Syria, during the Syrian Civil War. Written as bombs fell, his story tells of the tragedies of the Syrian people, but also of their unwavering faith and hope in the middle of madness.

Price: €14.99 (Paperback)

MY CHRISTMAS GIFTS

(Please state the number on the left side of each item.)

TIC & MAGNIFICAT PRODUCTS

- ___ - Irish Catholic 3 Month Gift Subscription - Ireland - **€35**
- ___ - Pope Francis 2018 Calendar - **€9.99**
- ___ - Olive Wood Ornaments - **€19.99**
- ___ - Bethlehem Star Ornament - **€7.99**
- ___ - Prayers for the Moment - **€19.99**
- ___ - Magnificat Rosary Companion - **€3.75**

COLUMBA & CURRACH BOOKSTORE

Irish Personalities

- ___ - How We Killed God - David Quinn - **€16.99**
- ___ - All Will Be Well - Fr Paddy Byrne - **€14.99**

Picturesque Ireland

- ___ - A Year in the Life: Glencairn Abbey - **€24.99**
- ___ - Native Irish Dogs - **€16.99**
- ___ - Celtic Songlines - **€19.99**
- ___ - Where I find God - **€24.99**

Daniel O'Leary Bundle

- ___ - The Happiness Habit - **€12.99**
- ___ - The Healing Habit - **€12.99**
- ___ - The Heavenly Habit - **€12.99**

Mindfulness and Wellbeing

- ___ - Surprised by Fire - **€14.99**
- ___ - Mindful Meditations for Everyday - **€12.99**
- ___ - Cancer, A Circle of Seasons - **€14.99**
- ___ - Harvesting Hope with Anthony de Mello - **€14.99**

History & Politics

- ___ - All The Risings - **€14.99**
- ___ - Martin Luther. His Challenge Then and Now - **€14.99**
- ___ - Letters from Aleppo - **€14.99**

Deliver your gifts
to your home
at no extra cost.

FREE P&P
on all products
(ROI only)

I want my items
Gift-wrapped

Gift-wrapping Prices
1 item: €2
3 to 5 items: €6/all
6 to 10 items: €10/all

Buy 2
for only €24
or
Buy 3
for only €32

How to order your gifts



1
Choose your items.
Don't forget to
select the quantity
of them.



2
Fill in the form with
your personal
details and method
of payment.



3
Cut the form,
insert it into an
envelope and post
it to us.

MY DETAILS

Name _____
Address _____
Phone Number _____
Email _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT

PAY BY: Cheque/Postal order for € _____
payable to: **Columba Press**

PAY BY CREDIT CARD: Visa MasterCard Debit

Card No: _____
Exp date: ___/___/___ CVV No: _____

Any doubts? CONTACT US ON

+353 (01) 687 4096
sales@columba.ie

POST IT TO:

The Irish Catholic Gift Guide
23 Merrion Square North
Dublin 2, Ireland. D02 XE02





Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie

Human rights – something to shout about



Protesters shout slogans as they are detained by the police during a demonstration to mark UN Human Rights Day in Srinagar, India. Photo: CNS

Australian Catholics must be ‘spiritual flamethrowers’

Young Catholics must set the world on fire with their Faith, Sydney Archbishop Anthony Fisher told about 20,000 young people gathered in a former Olympic Stadium.

“You must be spiritual flamethrowers. You must have the awesomeness of an Australian bush fire, without the destruction,” he said at the opening of the Australian Catholic Youth Festival.

The opening of the three-day event included US Catholic singer Matt Maher getting bishops dancing in the aisles with young people.

Australian Aboriginals sang and danced, Maronite Catholic drummers mesmerised the crowd and Father Rob Galea, a popular Australian singing priest, challenged any bishop who was brave enough to join him on stage for some spiritual “surfing”.

Sydney Auxiliary Bishop Richard Umbers accepted the challenge and joined Fr Galea, jumping side to side in surfer poses as they belted out lyrics glorifying God.

Archbishop Fisher, the Australian bishops’ delegate for youth, told reporters: “Right from the start you could sense the Holy Spirit among them (young people). A lot of them have doubts and questions and probably struggles in their lives, but you really saw a good side of young Catholic Australia this morning.”

An hour earlier, Archbishop Fisher’s speech to the opening plenary was interrupted repeatedly by cheers.

He said many people who knew Mary would have wondered at her claims of being visited by an angel, her out-of-wedlock pregnancy and what might seem like religious fanaticism.

History

“You’d have to say this girl’s life won’t amount to much,” he told the packed stadium. “Actually, she’s the most famous woman in history.”

He told the youths that by saying yes to God, as Mary had, young people could also allow God to make something great out of them, too.

He reminded them of Pope Francis’ challenge to young people at the last World Youth Day in Poland to have a faith that “opens new horizons for spreading joy”.

“To every young woman and man here this morning I say: Open your eyes and hearts and minds to new horizons,” Archbishop Fisher said.

This comes as a bill recently passed in the country changing the legal definition of marriage from being between “a man and a woman” to “between two people”.

The parliamentary vote came after a two-month postal survey which concluded last month, with nearly 80% of Australia’s voting eligible population participating. Of the 12.7 million people who voted, 61% voted in favour of same-sex marriage.

The poll was legally non-binding, but it did initiate the introduction of a bill in parliament. Last week the piece of legislation was passed through the upper house, the Senate, 43-12.

Christian morality should influence US foreign policy - Rubio

A US Senator stopped short of specific legislative proposals during a Christian conference, but spoke openly of religious faith as he offered support for beleaguered Christian communities under threat from ISIS in the Middle East.

Senator Marco Rubio said: “I’m a deep believer that our foreign policy should be

infused with our most deeply held values. Not to impose it on other people but to ensure that in everything we do, we protect the rights of others to also fulfil their God-given rights.”

Rubio spoke on the last day of the Archon International Conference on Religious Freedom in Wash-

ington, sponsored by the Orthodox Order of St Andrew, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The senator’s own faith journey has taken him from the Catholicism of his early childhood to Mormonism, then to a Baptist megachurch, and back to the Catholic Faith again.

When he ran for the Republican presidential nomination in 2016, he was often criticised, by both Catholic media and conservative evangelicals, for appearing to be less than authentic about the matter, but he’s long been comfortable mingling the language of Christianity with politics.

Vatican roundup

Pope appoints new archbishop for Paris

Pope Francis has named Bishop Michel Aupetit of Nanterre as Archbishop of Paris, succeeding Cardinal Andre Vingt-Trois.

Archbishop Aupetit, whose diocese was west of Paris, was often named as a potential successor to Cardinal Vingt-Trois, who headed the Paris Archdiocese for more than 12 years.

The 66-year-old was a doctor for 11 years before considering priesthood. He said he once dreamed of being a “travelling missionary”.

“As soon as I embrace sedentary life with delight, I have to go somewhere else,” he wrote in a letter addressed to the Catholics of Nanterre. “And again, the Church gives me a new mission.”

Archbishop Aupetit was ordained priest in 1995 for the Paris Archdiocese. In addition to his parish positions, he served as a high school chaplain from 1995 to 2001. From 1997 to 2006, he taught bioethics at Henri-Mondor University Hospital in Creteil. He was vicar general of the Paris Archdiocese, 2006-2014.

He was ordained an auxiliary bishop in Paris in 2013, before being appointed to Nanterre the following year. In March 2017, he became president of the Family and Society Council of the French bishops’ conference.



Polish Christmas tree in Vatican

A Nativity scene and Christmas tree, like those displayed in St Peter’s Square, are visible reminders of God’s benevolence and closeness to all men and women, Pope Francis said.

“Every year, the Christmas Nativity scene and tree speak to us through their symbolic language. They make more visible what is captured in the experience of the birth of the Son of God,” Pope Francis said in a meeting with delegations from Poland and Italy, responsible respectively for the 2017 Vatican Christmas tree and Nativity scene.

The centrepiece of the Vatican’s Christmas holiday decorations is the towering 92-foot spruce tree.

Praying is key to Christian unity say leaders

In interreligious meetings Pope Francis met with the president of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), focusing on common prayer as the key to Christian unity.

Recalling his own visit to the Swedish cities of Lund and Malmo last year for the shared commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the Pope said praying together purifies, strengthens and lights our way forward. Prayer, he insisted, is the fuel for our ecumenical journey.

Through prayer, the Pope continued, we are able to see the painful divisions of past centuries in a new light, abandoning our prejudices, purifying our memories and looking to the future with confidence. He added that by praying we are called to recognise the gifts of our different traditions and receive them as our shared Christian heritage.

In his words to Pope Francis, president of the LWF, Nigerian Archbishop Musa Panti Filibus also gave thanks for the past 50 years of progress “from conflict to communion”, acknowledging in a special way the importance of praying together to commemorate the Reformation anniversary.

Letter from Kenya



John L. Allen Jr

As a broad generalisation, it's probably accurate to say that on-the-ground experience of the developing world often issues a fairly stiff challenge to the way Americans think about things, including the Catholic Church.

Think Catholicism is in decline? Visit much of Africa and parts of Asia, where the biggest headache is keeping pace with breakaway growth. Think Christians can't be at risk in places where they're a majority? Consider Latin America, where Mexico and Colombia routinely rank as the most dangerous spots on earth to be a Catholic priest.

Roman Catholicism today is a far-flung global religion with 1.3 billion followers, more than two-thirds of whom live outside the West. In the 21st Century, considering other perspectives in thinking about the Church isn't just a courtesy, it's a survival strategy.

Earlier this year, I made that point after visiting Lebanon. The same truth was reinforced this week as my *Crux* colleague Inés San Martín and I were in Kenya, visiting Mombasa, the country's second city on the gorgeous Indian Ocean coast, and Lodwar, an impoverished and scorching hot town of 50,000 in the largely desert north and the hub for the pastoralist and still largely isolated Turkana people.

Poverty

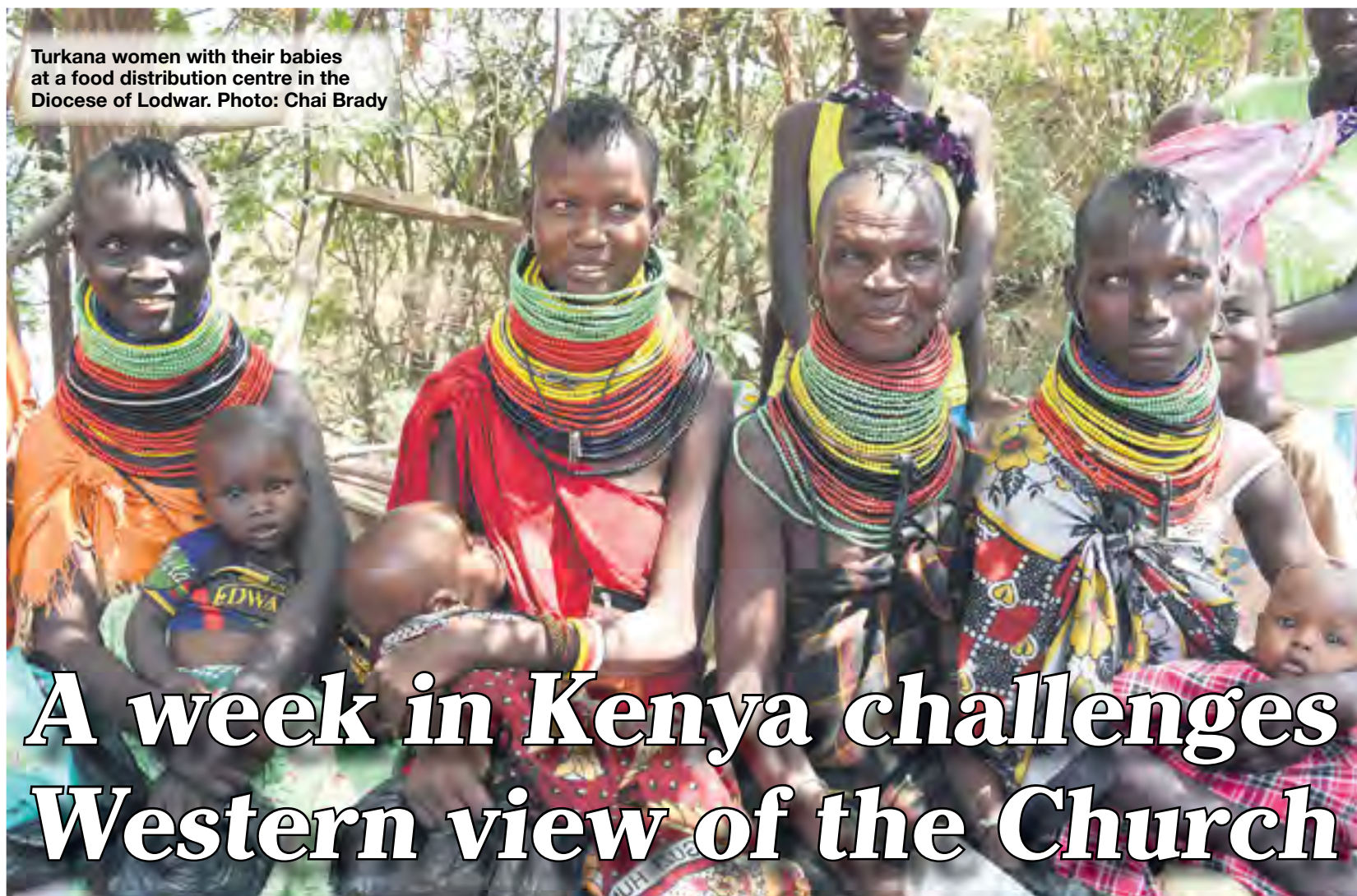
It was a dazzling, exhausting, and revealing experience, and far too multi-layered for a quick synthesis. Nevertheless, here are three initial take-aways.

Suppose I told you I know a Kenyan prelate who's devoted his life to serving the most impoverished area in a country known for chronic poverty, who cares deeply about the environment and the impact of climate change on matters such as access to safe drinking water, and who's risked his life to act as a peacemaker between competing tribal groups in massive refugee camps.

Many Americans probably would say, "Sounds like a real liberal."

Now suppose I said I'd

Turkana women with their babies at a food distribution centre in the Diocese of Lodwar. Photo: Chai Brady



A week in Kenya challenges Western view of the Church

met a Kenyan prelate who belongs to Opus Dei, who puts a strong emphasis on seriousness about priestly life, who thinks the spiritual basics and bringing people to the Faith are vitally important, and who has little interest in what's bubbling on the theological avant-garde. The reaction probably would be: "That's a classic conservative."

All of the above is true of Bishop Dominic Kimengich of Lodwar, and he's hardly alone. He laughed gently when I asked him if he thinks of himself as "liberal" or "conservative," looking at me and eventually saying: "Here, those categories just don't apply."

Africa is often considered a fairly male-dominated environment, and so is the Church here"

Or, take Archbishop Martin Kivuva Musonde of Mombasa.

One minute, Kivuva will brag about a recent film produced by the archdiocese defending traditional marriage, and the next he'll light up discussing the latest efforts to promote inter-religious harmony and peace. That's a keenly progressive cause in Mombasa, a religiously mixed city in

which Catholics, Muslims, Pentecostals and Evangelicals, followers of traditional religions, and Hindus all have significant footprints, and all today are under the shadow of cross-border threats from the Al-Shabaab terrorist group in neighboring Somalia.

In Kivuva's eyes, there's nothing predestined about religious conflict. The real battle lines, he says, don't run between Muslims and Christians, but between moderates and radicals – and, Kivuva warned, there are radical instincts in all traditions.

By reputation, Africa is often considered a fairly male-dominated environment, and so is the Church here. Yet our experience this week suggests that much of the future of African Catholicism depends on its women.

In Mombasa, we visited the Holy Family Centre at St Martin's Catholic Church, which abuts the largest slum in the city.

Breaks

Though the parish doesn't currently have a school, it's got a centre serving children outside school hours and during breaks, and it sees the full gamut of challenges – alcohol and drug addiction, victims of human trafficking and prostitution, kids abandoned or marginalised

because they're HIV-positive, and just basic poverty.

The centre is run by a member of the Daughters of Divine Love, an order that's been serving in the parish since 2004, named Sr Pauline Andrew.

When we arrived on Tuesday, she'd organised a pumped-up reception featuring traditional songs, dances and dress.

She looks up from the architect's plans as if the question were impertinent"

The centre draws children from several of the tribes that make up the city's complex ethnic patchwork, making it a sort of laboratory experiment in co-existence.

Sister Pauline has bigger plans, hoping to see the centre grow into a full-blown primary school served by eight members of her order, who would live in a nearby convent she's also working on getting built.

At the moment, she and another nun commute 14km every day back and forth to work at the parish, and Sr Pauline said that won't work when the school is up and running.

Standing with Sr Pauline

where the second floor of the new convent is supposed to go as soon as she has the money, I asked why she's chosen to do such bone-crushing, emotionally draining work.

She looks up from the architect's plans as if the question were impertinent, says simply "this is where God wants me," and launches back into a detailed explanation of her plans to model small-scale, sustainable urban agriculture by using land at the school and convent to grow crops.

Formation

Meanwhile in Lodwar, I visited the Bethany Guest House and an adjacent formation centre for aspiring nuns, members of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd of the Immaculate Conception, an order founded under Kimengich.

There, I met Sr Giovanna, who runs the formation centre, and Sr Magdalene, who heads the guest house. They spoke passionately about forming the next generation of women religious to go out and evangelise, teach and serve.

They also described their aim to teach these young girls trade skills for self-reliance, so they can pass them on to others.

Sr Magdalene walked us through the formation centre, explaining what's been done already and what will need to

be done in a hurry. Here too, growth is one main challenge – they've got five young women in formation now, with another eight expected to arrive next year.

Sr Magdalene, too, projected a calm determination when asked about all the different ways such an undertaking could go off the rails.

"This is what the Church needs from me," she said of seeing the effort through – as if the church needing something, and her then delivering it, is axiomatic.

Say what you want about these women and their dreams, but one thing is for sure: terms such as "subservient," "uncritical" and "second-class citizen" simply don't apply.

Several international Catholic organisations are involved in supporting the work of the Church in Mombasa and Lodwar, including Miseror in Germany, Missio Aachen, the Pontifical Missions Society, and others. Our trip, however, was sponsored by Aid to the Church in Need, a Papal foundation devoted to supporting the persecuted and suffering church around the world, and so it's their footprint here that's clearest to me.

John L. Allen Jr is Editor of *CruxNow.com*

Young US migrants fear deportation and separation



Rhina Guidos

Supporters of young people who came to the US without documents as children descended on Washington early this month, risking arrest and seeking attention from lawmakers during what they believe is the last window of opportunity this year to pass legislation to help them stay in the country.

Supporters came from California, New York and places in between, with signs, drums, guitars, photos and thoughts of loved ones, taking out their worries and frustrations, venting their hopes for passage of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors, or DREAM Act, at a rally near the US capitol.

In September, President Donald Trump announced he was ending the Deferred Action for Child Arrivals program, or DACA, that allowed some 750,000 to 800,000 young adults who were brought into the country as children and who met certain conditions to attend school, work and even have a driver's license. Though he ended the program, he urged Congress to find a solution before the first of the programme's permits expire as early as March.

That expiration date and what will happen when it arrives has many young adults and their loved ones worried, said Vamba Fofana, national executive vice president for the Union of Liberian Associations in the Americas in New York, who attended the day of action and demonstration at the Capitol.

Since the youth had to provide the government information about where they work and where they live to apply for DACA, many young adults who benefited from it now worry the information they gave will be used to deport them, Fofana said.

In limbo

Some of them don't know whether they can remain in school or at work, or drive since those documents are at peril.

"Obviously, they are in limbo," said Fofana, whose organisation was part of a larger group that included workers' movements, Faith groups, including many Catholics, and students at a mass gathering to show support. "We feel we can collectively put pressure on Congress."

Supporters want a solution by the end of the year. Though little has been revealed, some speculate that Democrats are seeking to negotiate DACA as part of a spending bill that must be approved by December 22 or the country will face a government shutdown.



A woman participates in an immigration rally for Haitians in New York City after the Trump administration announced that Haitians with Temporary Protected Status must leave the country by July 22, 2019, or face deportation. Photo: CNS

Republicans have publicly said they do not want to include legislation benefiting immigrants as part of the spending bill, setting up a political showdown over immigration just before Christmas.

As some lawmakers and congressional staffers passed by the demonstration on December 6, some attendees sang "Trump can't grab this dream, we shall not be moved..." to the tune of 'We Shall Not Be Moved', a popular civil rights anthem, just outside Union Station, a main transportation hub for politicians going in and out of Washington en route to the capitol. The song expresses resiliency in adversity because of faith in God.

“Supporters worry that any negotiations to help will ultimately end up hurting family members”

"We're here to join in solidarity," said Fofana. "We think (the youth) have a future in this country, a country immigrants have helped advance."

Bob Fulkerson, state director and co-founder of the grass-roots organisation Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada,

said this is a unique time. And it is probably, he said, about as close as supporters have ever come to a successful legislative solution to help the youth but it can't be done while putting in place actions to hurt other immigrants, including carrying out plans to end programmes such as Temporary Protected Status.

The TPS program, as it's popularly known, has been around for 27 years and provides a work permit and reprieve from deportation to immigrants from some countries recovering from conflicts or natural disasters.

In November, the Trump administration wiped out TPS, effective July 2019, for about 59,000 Haitians who benefited from the programme after a devastating earthquake on the island in 2010. TPS programmes for El Salvador and Honduras will also be up for renewal in early 2018, and Trump's chief of staff, John Kelly, has signalled that he wants to end those programs.

Arrested

Nevada's Fulkerson, who was one of hundreds arrested on December 6 for refusing to disperse from the steps of the capitol as he demanded Congress take action, said this is the time for lawmakers to do something but without seeking to

hurt others.

A variety of polls from major news organisations show a majority of the US public favours finding a solution to help the youth, who serve in a variety of careers, including in the military and as teachers in public schools. Many are enrolled in college.

Supporters worry that any negotiations to help will ultimately end up hurting family members, as deals are made to protect some migrants and not others.

“We work, we don't stand in the streets asking anyone for money, we're not lazy”

The situation of Casandra Mendez, a 17-year-old present at the rally with a group from Christ the King Parish in Glen Burnie, Maryland, illustrates the complexity of immigration problems one family can face.

While Casandra is a US citizen because she was born in the US, some of her siblings and her parents, were born in Mexico and do not have documents. Though her brother may benefit from the passage of a DREAM Act, it doesn't solve the looming threat of deportation for other family

members. If it passes the measure would create a path of citizenship for DACA beneficiaries.

She said she attended the rally hoping to influence immigration relief at least for her brother, who was finally able to enroll in college at age 25 with help from DACA and wants to open a business.

Casandra lives with memories of disappearing family members, including a group deported from Buffalo, New York, because someone saw them clearing the snow in the streets and called immigration agents to have them deported, she said. She finds it hard to understand, she said, the hateful sentiments.

"We pay taxes, which is more than what some US citizens (who protest taxes) do," she said. "We work, we don't stand in the streets asking anyone for money, we're not lazy."

Concepcion Morales, another Christ the King parishioner who attended the event, said it was important to show up and support members of his community, particularly because so many are experiencing fear. He said Congress can alleviate some of the fear.

"They have to act," he said.

📍 Rhina Guidos is a writer with CNS.

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

Why the nostalgia for the old Missal?

Dear Editor, There seems to be a kerfuffle as to whether or not to revise the translation of the Mass in English. When I learnt Latin, I was told that Latin was a dead language because it never changes. Vernacular tongues are living and change, so when we use living languages in liturgy, we accept that they must be revised on an ongoing basis (and that this costs money). Only the Roman Missal in Latin is set in stone.

I am not going to defend the 2011 version of the Mass in English, but am at a loss to understand why nostalgia abounds for the missal it replaced. Having departed considerably from the Latin original, it was so clearly out of

sync with the Mass in other modern European languages and even with Mass in Irish (which to me was a model translation), it was embarrassing.

I understand some have hailed the "noble simplicity" of the older translation, but I am more inclined to use the term banality. In addition, there seems to be a very condescending view of the reading ability of the lay faithful among some clerical opponents of the current translation.

There may be a sound of the theology manual rather than the riches of English literature to the new version, but it must be recognised the Church no longer has the sort of integrated scholarship (theology, languages and

literature) at its disposal that it had 40 years ago. The contrast between the original Irish translation and its revision is a case in point.

Finally, the Word of God in Scripture by necessity must be accurate, so might I suggest that the Revised Standard Version, translated from Greek and Hebrew originals, be preferred for use in Church than the popular Jerusalem Bible, translated as it is from the French Bible de Jérusalem. Once again, the Irish translators of Scripture followed the RSV model and remained faithful to the original.

*Yours etc.,
Peadar Laighléis,
Laytown, Co. Meath.*

We can surely do a better job with the liturgy

Dear Editor, Your front page announcement on Mass changes (IC 30/11/17) will be of interest and concern to most churchgoers.

Certainly, a new issue of glossy publications should be avoided at all costs - and cost is the operative word here. Yet, it is vitally important that we get back to praying the liturgy in a language that we are familiar with. The time has come to drop the 'vouchsaferies' and the 'YouWho' clauses;

indeed, relative clauses no longer belong in spoken English - we can leave that kind of thing to Cicero.

There is really no need for either great expense or great delay in providing improved texts. Is there any real need for the extensive multiple choice we now have in our texts? Take the collects (and matching offertory and communion prayers) - we have hundreds of them. And we hardly need the 30 prefaces now available to

us. Church leaders must be aware that some priests, put off by the turgid and bombastic language of the Missal, are now substituting their own sometimes quirky compositions no better than the originals.

As regards printing costs, all we need is a simple folder or soft cover booklet - something more elaborate than a Sunday leaflet; it might run to 5,000 or 6,000 words.

It's worth a try - in the

above or some modified form. Oscar Wilde modified the old proverb "what's worthy doing at all is worth doing well" to "what's worth doing at all is worth doing badly".

We can modify this still further: "what badly needs doing is worth doing badly" - and without delay.

*Yours etc.,
Matt Carpenter MHM,
Rathgar, Dublin 6.*

A horror brought home

Dear Editor, Last weekend a Pro-Life Campaign conference was held in Dublin, where the headline speaker was Abby Johnson, a former director of an abortion clinic in Texas.

One could hear a pin drop as she spoke of witnessing, through an ultra-sound scan, a baby being suctioned apart by the abortionist equipment and at one point leaving the back-bone swirling around in his mother's womb. While this was happening she stood idly by, observing. Many listeners shed tears while some left the room gutted by the reality likely to befall Ireland.

Such eye witness accounts bring home to us that horrendous horror so sanitised and steadfastly avoided by the Oireachtas Committee whose intention is to delete the 'right to life' of the unborn from our Constitution, 'ach sin scéal eile'!

*Yours etc.,
Gearóid Duffy,
Lee Road, Cork.*



More pressing issues than Mass translations

Dear Editor, Your article on possible revisions to the Mass texts cited several sources stating that mainly due to cost considerations the Irish Church will not be revisiting the new liturgical translations that were introduced six years ago (IC 30/11/17). While cost would undoubtedly be a significant issue to any proposed change, surely the merits of the new translations need further unwrapping and explaining to the faithful. I am involved

in my parish assembly for the past several years and have yet to hear a single objection raised about the new translations. That's not to say that there are not people out there who dislike them. The article refers to "ongoing complaints from some parishioners (around the country) about some of the texts of prayers used at Mass".

I would respectfully urge them to read what Bishop Robert Barron has to say about the new translations.

They are, the bishop says, more courtly, more theologically-rich, and more scripturally-poetic and more in keeping with liturgical language to be used when addressing Almighty God, the Lord of Heaven and Earth. Bishop Barron was last week described by Austen Ivereigh in *The Tablet* as one of the most successful Catholic evangelists of the digital era.

While the concerns of those who are

uncomfortable with the new translations should be addressed, there are surely numerous other areas that require missionary witness and input from all of us.

Mass attendance, basic understanding of our faith, queues for Holy Communion but none for Confession, youth Evangelisation, etc. A full list would take up several letters.

*Yours etc.,
Don Cahalane,
Blackrock, Co. Cork.*

Christian? Then you know what to do

Dear Editor, About Greg Daly's article "Church urged to take lead on Refugees" (IC 30/11/2017) - there is no doubt about what we are called to do as Christians. I noted Bishop Kevin Doran's article on same in *The Journal.ie*, which along with the comments from Fr Alan Hilliard are a welcome response from the Irish Church.

Often homeless Irish people are pitted against asylum seekers and refugees, but those of us who call ourselves Christian should help both, not either/or. Old Testament and New Testament Scripture is very clear on this. Deuteronomy 10: 19 says: "You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." Hebrews 13: 1 says: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it." Matthew 25: 35 says: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

For the past 17 years, asylum seekers have been congregated and segregated in large hostels owned by private landlords who profited from the Government for their keep. Some have languished there for up to eight years waiting for a decision while losing valuable skills and talents.

I am happy to hear there is now a change in policy and people who have not had a decision on their case within six months will have the option to work. It is also good to know that the community will be enabled to extend hospitality and support.

If the Church and not-for-profit sector had been allowed to provide services from the beginning, a lot of money would have been saved and there would have been a lot less fear and anger toward asylum seekers and refugees. I hope we can put things right as well as helping "our own".

*Yours etc.,
Josephine Stroker,
Elphin, Co. Roscommon.*

Wooley language in the Mass

Dear Editor, If English grammar were really "closer to German than Latin" (Ireland will not revisit Mass changes, IC 30/11/17), we would still use the term Holy Ghost (*heiliger Geist*) - which seems to refer to an individual - rather than Holy Spirit (*sanctus spiritus*) - which is much vaguer and woollier. I don't recall laypeople being consulted about the change!

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

Not so meaningless after all

Dear Editor, I was surprised to read Mary Kenny describe our Euro notes as comparatively "vapid and meaningless" (IC 30/11/2017). The symbolism of the bridges, doors and windows on the notes should be obvious, with the architectural styles varying as the notes increase in value taking us through our shared European history: Classical, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, Art Nouveau and Modern.

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

Letters to the Editor

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

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

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

📷 Around the world



US: Firefighters battle flames as they try to keep a wildfire contained at a residence in Santa Paula, California. The Archdiocese of Los Angeles started a fund for victims of the wildfires that have raced through the archdiocese. Photos: CNS



US: Cardinal Donald Wuerl celebrates Mass dedicating the Trinity Dome Mosaic at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.



ISRAEL: Smoke rises as Palestinians protest in Bethlehem, West Bank, in response to US President Donald Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.



AUSTRALIA: Catholic musician Matt Maher performs during the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Sydney. An estimated 20,000 people attended the three-day event.



PARAGUAY: Pilgrims attend Mass outside the Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Miracles in Caacupe.



ITALY: Pope Francis prays during a service at a statue of Mary near the Spanish Steps in Rome.



The real tragedy of **sin**

The real tragedy of sin is that often the one who is sinned against eventually becomes a sinner,

inflicting on others what was first inflicted upon him or her. There's something perverse within us whereby when we are sinned against we tend to take in the sin, complete with the sickness from which it emanated, and then struggle not to act out in that same sick way. The ultimate triumph of sin is that, first being sinned against, we often become sinners.

We see this, in an elementary form, in the effects that certain sadistic hazing rituals have on those who undergo them. From high school football teams to college sororities to certain schools of military training, we see sadistic hazing rituals used as forms of initiation.

The interesting thing is that those who undergo them generally can't wait for their turn to inflict them upon someone else. Having undergone some sadism something sadistic arises within them.

Axiom

There's an axiom within certain schools of psychology which submits that every abuser was first abused. Mostly that's true. The bully was himself first bullied, the sadist was himself first victimised, and the bitter alienated outsider (whom in arrogance we label 'a loser') was himself first unfairly excluded.



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com

What produces an outsider? What produces a sadistic person? Indeed, what produces a mass killer? What must have happened to the heart of a man for him to put on military fatigues, take up an assault rifle, and begin to shoot helpless school children?

“Sin and blessing shape a heart, the former deforming it and the latter healing it”

Mental illness, no doubt, is often the factor, but there are other factors too, most of which we don't have the courage to honestly face. Our spontaneous judgment on the perpetrator of a mass shooting or terrorist bombing most naturally expresses itself this way: “I hope he fries in hell!”

What's wrong with that reaction is its failure to understand that this person was already frying in some private hell and this terrible acting-out is an attempt to get out

of hell or at least to take as many people as he can to hell with him.

What perpetrators of violence mostly want to do is to ruin heaven for others since they themselves feel unfairly deprived of it. This isn't everywhere true of course since mental illness and the mystery of human freedom also play in, but it's true enough to challenge us towards a better understanding of why some people have bitter, sadistic hearts

while others have gracious, loving ones. What shapes a heart?

What makes someone bitter or gracious?

Sin and blessing shape a heart, the former deforming it and the latter

healing it. Sin, our own not less than anyone else's, wounds others and shields us from having to own what's sick inside us because we have now inflicted our sickness onto someone else where it works at making that person ill. Blessing does opposite. It relieves others of the sickness that was unfairly inflicted on them, helps turn their bitterness into graciousness, and soothes the very root of their wounds.

“We should be much less smug and arrogant about those whom we label as ‘losers’”

And so we need to stop classifying people as ‘winners’ and ‘losers’, as if they alone were responsible for their success or failure. They aren't. Not many St Mother Teresas, I suspect, were traumatically abused as children. Not many St Francisces suffered debilitating ridicule as young children, were bullied on Facebook, or shamed for their appearance.

Cruelty and grace, as Leonard Cohen submits, both come upon us undeserved. And then they imprint themselves into our psyches and even our bodies. How we carry ourselves, our bodily posture, how we radiate spiritually, our self-confidence, our shame, our big-heartedness,

our pettiness, our ability to express love, our resistance of love, how much we bless and how much we curse, is very much contingent on how much we ourselves have been undeservedly blessed or cursed, that is, the various undeserved graces and cruelties we have undergone.

Admittedly, this is still coloured by the mystery of human freedom. Some St Mother Teresas do come from abusive backgrounds and some St Francisces did suffer cruelty and bullying as a child and yet became one-in-million wounded healers, turning the very sin against them into a powerful healing grace. Unfortunately, they're the exception, not the rule, and their greatness, more than anything else, lies in that exact achievement.

Challenges

There are many challenges for us in this: first, we must not let our emotions sway us into making the kind of judgements where we would like to see someone ‘fry in hell’; second, we should be much less smug and arrogant about those whom we label as ‘losers’.

Next, we need to learn that perhaps the ultimate human and spiritual challenge is to not let what we suffer from the sins and failings of others turn us bitter so that we in turn begin to inflict that same sin onto others.

Finally, and not least, understanding more deeply what's undeserved in our lives should lead us to a deeper gratitude towards God and towards all who have so, undeservedly, loved and gifted us.



Family & Lifestyle

The Irish Catholic, December 14, 2017

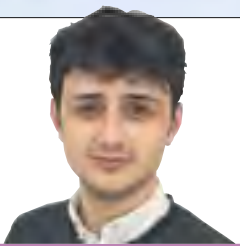
Personal Profile

Liberating lives with the humble spud

Page 30



Warding off winter weather



Colm Fitzpatrick explores the best ways to combat the season's cold weather

With the season of winter now firmly in place, it is important to now take the correct safety precautions to combat against inconveniences, illness and injury.

The winter weather boasts enticing imagery from Christmas gatherings to hot chocolate, but alongside these lucrative possibilities lies the threat of coldness and the negative consequences it can have. Protection from the winter elements requires well-informed preparation, taking into account the many areas of life that it can affect.

In response to these concerns the Irish government has recently released a *Be Winter-Ready* booklet, which provides practical advice on how to best prepare for the coming winter. In conjunction with this booklet is a campaign to make the public aware of where advice and help can be found and to reassure the public that preparations have been put in place to respond to severe weather conditions.

Campaign

Speaking at the launch of the campaign, the Minister with Responsibility of Defence, Mr Paul Kehoe, TD, said "The 'Be Winter-Ready' campaign is intended to give the public advice on the particular challenges that the winter period can present. This year's 'Be Winter-Ready' campaign is focused on health preparedness for older people including the promotion of influenza vaccination."

He added that older people are the most vulnerable groups in our

» Continued on Page 29



Family News



AND EVENTS

If it's Christmas, it must be Funderland!

Funderland is an inseparable part of Christmas for plenty of Dubliners, and this year things will be no different with the RDS extravaganza open from December 14 to January 17.

The Funderland Indoor Pavilion, housing Europe's largest indoor theme park, opens from 2-9pm on weekdays and from 12pm to 10pm on weekends

and during the holidays. It's packed with attractions from Germany including the Power Wave, Break Dance,

and the 'Around the World' Star Flyer, as well as old favourites such as the Funderland Loop, Ireland's only looping rollercoaster.

Other highlights include iSkate-on-Ice, Ireland's only outdoor skating rink – 1,000sqm in size, with a kiddie rink for young children, open from 10am most days – and a Christmas market where stallholders in wooden chalets sell everything from snacks and drinks to traditional craftwork.



SPARE THE TOYS: Children play better with fewer toys, a new study has suggested.

Researchers at the University of Toledo, Ohio, gave 36 toddlers either four or 16 toys and observed that children with only a small number of toys would play for longer periods and with more creativity than children with large numbers of toys.

"When there were 16, they'd just bounce from toy to toy, and they were sort of superficial in the way they explored it and then move on to the next," said Dr Alexia Metz, an associate professor of occupational therapy at the university.

"We decided to do the study because we have some reservations about little kids being referred to as attention deficit, when it may be that they're just immature in their development," Dr Metz told *Working Mother*, suggesting that an obvious strategy with children who seem easily distracted could be to simplify their environment.

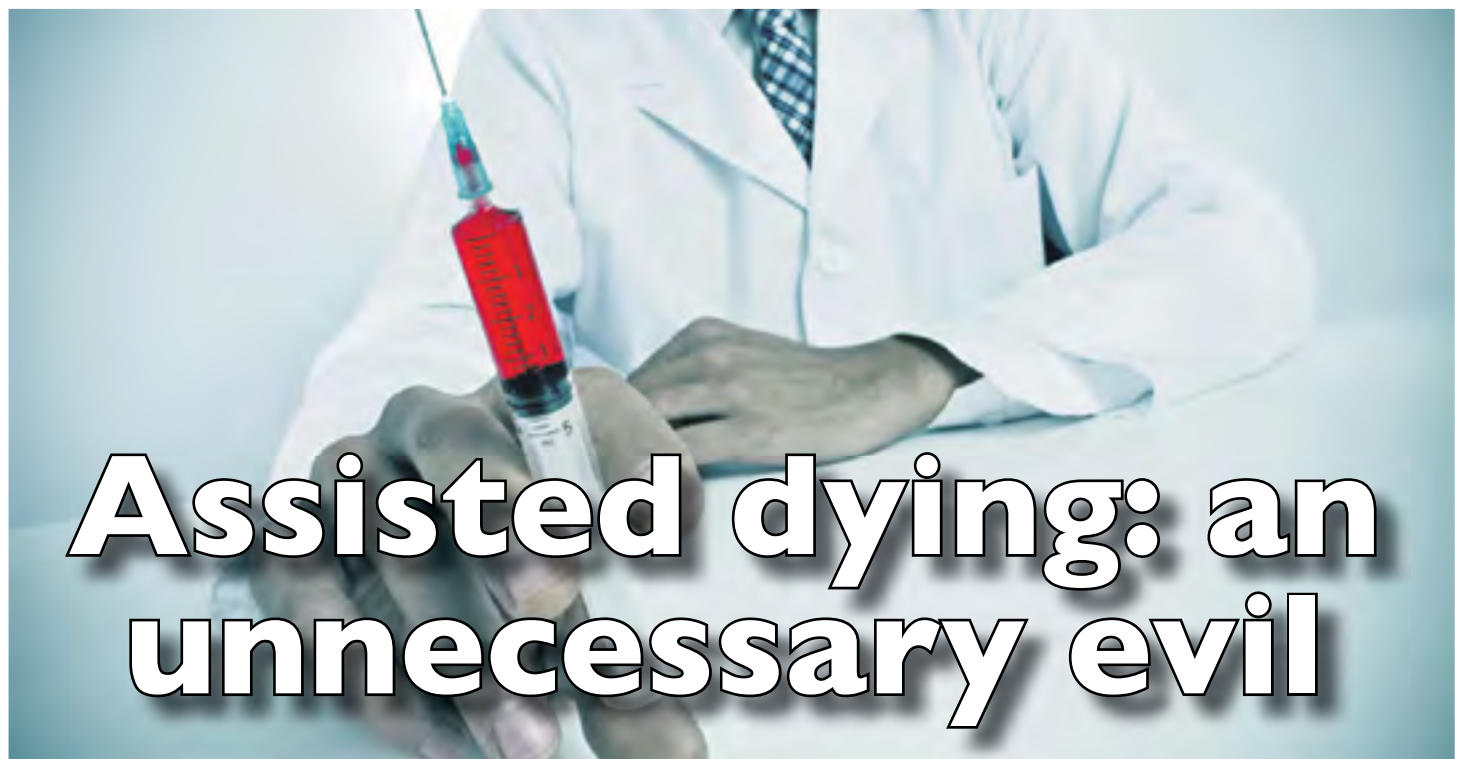
Recycling campaign gets a boost

Families struggling with recycling their rubbish have been given a helping hand by the Government through the publication of a national recycling list.

The list of suitable material is now simply paper, cardboard, rigid plastics, tins and cans, with explanations given of why some items we might mistakenly recycle – like disposable coffee cups and paper towels – might be better off binned or composted, while glass needs to be recycled separately in bottle banks.

Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Denis Naughten said that he hoped the list would improve "the quality of the material that goes in the recycle bin", as it will "help to ensure that these items are actually recycled, as opposed to being contaminated accidentally by householders and sent to landfill".

The full list can be seen at recyclinglistireland.ie



Euthanasia and assisted suicide are two practices that are growing in popularity worldwide, with the Netherlands having seen a recent surge in the demand for euthanasia, as reported in *The Guardian* last month.

Although euthanasia and assisted suicide are now legal in only a small number of countries, debate is ongoing in many countries, and starting in Ireland, on legalising these practices. In many cases, medical and public opinion favours such a change in the law.

The Catholic Church is opposed to euthanasia and assisted suicide on ethical grounds, as am I.

The word euthanasia, from the Greek, means 'good death' – death without pain – and entails deliberately ending a person's life in order to relieve suffering, e.g. by a lethal injection administered by a doctor. Assisted suicide, on the other hand, means to deliberately assist or encourage another person to kill themselves, e.g. giving a lethal medication to a terminally ill person knowing that they will use the medication to commit suicide.

Legal

Assisted dying is currently legal in four European countries: The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland; two North American countries: Canada and the USA (States of Oregon, Washington, Montana, Vermont and California); and Colombia, South America.

The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and Canada permit both euthanasia and assisted suicide. Colombia permits euthanasia and Switzerland and the States of Oregon, Washington, Vermont, Montana and California permit assisted suicide.

The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg require that candidates for euthanasia and assisted suicide must be suffering unbearable pain, with no prospect of improvement.



Science of life

Prof. William Reville

This suffering need not be related to a terminal illness and is not limited to physical suffering, for example the case of a 60-year-old man suffering from obsessive compulsive disorder.

He would spend hours each day cleaning a cupboard and then self-harm with a razor. He successfully applied for euthanasia to end his nightmarish obsession.

“It was as if the Dutch people needed to get used to the idea of an organised death”

In the five US states, the patient must be terminally ill and suffering greatly to be granted permission for assisted suicide. All assisted dying regimes require that the patient makes a voluntary request for euthanasia or assisted suicide.

The patient must be competent and well-informed. All assisted dying regimes also require medical certification that requests for euthanasia are valid and that the suffering is unbearable.

Only the Netherlands and Belgium permit euthanasia for patients under the age of 18. Competent patients as young as 12 may qualify, but only if parents or guardians consent.

One argument against legalising euthanasia and assisted suicide is that the incidence will increase rapidly and inappropriately once people get used to it, and experience to-date seems to bear this out.

In Belgium, prior to enabling legalisation in 2002, euthanasia incidence (illegal but not

prosecuted) was between 0.3% and 1% of all deaths but after 2002 the rate steadily rose to 4.6% of all deaths (2013).

The number of people euthanised in the Netherlands in 2017 will exceed 7000, a 67% increase since 2012.

The Levensende Kliniek, the only Dutch medical clinic specialising in euthanasia, has had 2500 requests for help to die this year and is struggling to recruit enough doctors to satisfy demand.

The clinic director Steven Pleiter describes the increased demand as the end of a "taboo" on killing patients who want to die.

Some Dutch professionals think things have gone too far. Theo Boer, a professor of ethics who supported the 2002 assisted dying legislation said: "Starting from 2007 the numbers increased suddenly. It was as if the Dutch people needed to get used to the idea of an organised death. I know lots of people who now say that there is only one way they want to die and that is through injection. It is getting too normal. In the beginning 99% of cases were terminally ill patients, with perhaps days to live, that's now down to 70%."

Valuable

Those who object to assisted dying on moral grounds believe that human life is so intrinsically valuable that it is always morally wrong to kill. It can also be reasonably predicted that many other bad consequences will flow from legalising assisted dying.

For example, normalising euthanasia and assisted suicide in cases of terminally ill patients in severe pain leads on to employing euthanasia in many other far less extreme cases and even to using euthanasia for social convenience, e.g nudging elderly people dependent on care from their children or relatives, towards euthanasia in order to remove the burden of their care from their carers.

Pressure to legalise assisted dying is growing in many countries. In the UK for example the majority of the population, including much of the medical profession, is in favour of assisted suicide. Pressure to legalise assisted dying has also begun in Ireland and will surely grow.

The argument for legalising assisted dying to deal with unbearable pain in terminally ill patients is motivated by the understandable desire to ease suffering and is a substantial argument. However I believe that the deliberate termination of a human life is unethical.

But, ethics aside, I also believe that assisted dying is a mistaken and unnecessary intervention.

I understand that palliative medicine can now successfully control just about any form/level of physical pain and psychiatry/psychology supplemented by pharmacology can ameliorate much psychological distress. This greatly dilutes the conventional argument for assisted dying.

“Only the Netherlands and Belgium permit euthanasia for patients under the age of 18”

Only absolute respect for the intrinsic value of human life can hope to withstand the liberal forces now calling for the universal availability of abortion on demand and assisted dying. In my opinion, if these liberal forces prevail, the acknowledged value of human life could well be reduced to the value we ascribe to any other useful commodity and that would seriously degrade the general quality of civilised human living.

William Reville is an Emeritus Professor of Biochemistry at UCC.

» Continued from Page 27

society and so more susceptible to the hardship that severe weather can inflict.

“The campaign highlights the whole of government approach being taken to winter preparations, it informs the public on what is being done and where they can source information”, he said.

The booklet categorises the advice under distinct headings such as health, road safety and schools, and then describes how to take the best measures to prevent the winter weather impact. It was launched alongside a dedicated website www.winterready.ie which also offers extensive information about tackling the cold.

Safety

Personal health and the health of others around you should be of primary concern this winter, which if ignored can lead to serious illness or death. The booklet advises that together with drinking water and planning medical appointments, to keep well and warm this winter by maintaining the heating at home.

For older people in particular, it is advised that they should not venture outdoors in severe weather conditions and make fall prevention precautions in the home by, for example, arranging furniture for ease of movement throughout the room or leaving a low energy light on at night-time. The public are asked to make a special effort to keep in contact with their neighbours and relatives, with particular concern for those living alone.

This was echoed by Mr Simon Harris, TD who said: “Irish people have a great sense of community and look out for their family and neighbours and that is particularly important at this time of year.

“I would ask everyone to make sure to call on older or disabled relatives and neighbours to ask how we can best help them if required and offer assistance in severe weather.”

“Sometimes the safest action to take is to close down our transport services”

Harris added that a priority for this winter is to increase uptake of influenza in ‘at risk’ groups and in health care workers. With influenza increasing in Ireland it is essential that people take up of the offer of the vaccine which is freely available at any GP.

Alongside medical problems, the booklet stresses that the home can also be affected by the winter weather through flooding, snowing and water leaks. When clearing snow from footpaths, it is advised to do so early in the day, using a shovel, and spreading salt afterwards. Frozen pipes are also a serious risk which can be combated by leaving the heater on for longer periods at lower settings and insulating all exposed pipes. Emergencies are always a possibility so keeping extra supplies like non-perishable food, essential medication and batteries can make all the difference.

Those with disabilities are asked



to reduce mobility, keep a list of phone numbers beside the phone including emergency services, and also consider wearing a personal alarm to alert family or neighbours.

The new Senior Alert Scheme enables older people or those of limited means to live securely by the attachment of a free personal monitored alarm which can be worn as a pendant or around the wrist like a watch, which is connected to a national Senior Alert helpline. When alerted, a local volunteer will respond, and in more serious circumstances, the emergency services will be contacted.

A more ubiquitous consequence of the winter weather are the effects it has on travel. Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Mr Shane Ross, TD said: “During severe weather, our priority is to keep open the national primary road network, important regional roads including public transport routes, and to minimise any delays or disruptions in our sea ports, our airports and on our railways.

“However, nature is more powerful than mankind and sometimes the safest action to take is to close down our transport services.”

In order to combat accidents on the road, it is advised to make use of public transport when possible, prepare your vehicle by, for example, checking tyres and headlights, and using the highest gear possible to avoid wheel spin. By keeping emergency equipment in your car like jump leads and first-aid kits along with listening to the local radio station for updates with information on weather and road conditions, you will be better prepared to face the harsh winter conditions.

Above all, Ross advised that gaining knowledge about the impact of weather is the key to preventing travel problems.

“Whatever is ahead of us, I would urge all transport users to be aware of conditions around them and to heed the safety advice being given to them. Winter ready is all about being prepared. For road users, I would ask that they and their vehicles are prepared for winter. The Road Safety Website – www.rsa.ie – has safety tips for all users and I would strongly urge all drivers to check these out in advance of winter.”

Business and farming industries can also be impeded by the unwavering winter conditions,

affecting practical operations. Considering how work disruption will be dealt with, creating a communications plan for customers and reviewing stock-piles can help alleviate some of the pressure that the weather will create.

Farmers are advised to herd out wintered livestock during daylight hours and be back before nightfall as well as clearing tracks around the farmyard. The more significant effects are the provision of feed and water for livestock and the freezing of equipment like milking machines and diesel in tractors. An awareness of these impacts can act as springboard to tackle these issues.

“Keeping supplies like non-perishable food and essential medication can make all the difference”

Although everyone will be affected by the harsh winter weather conditions this year, there will be an acute effect on homeless people, who have no protection from the ensuing coldness. Figures recently released by the Peter McVerry Trust revealed that there are over 8,000 people in Ireland currently experiencing homelessness, and it is they who will be most vulnerable this winter.

Speaking about this epidemic, Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Planning, and Local Government, Mr Damien English, TD said: “It is also important that we are ‘Winter-Ready’ with regard to homeless rough sleepers. Preparations are currently underway across all the major urban local authorities to ensure that additional safe and secure accommodation is available for rough sleepers during any periods of cold winter weather.

“Approximately 200 new emergency accommodation spaces will be in place before Christmas. These are additional bed spaces available for single homeless persons which will remain in the system for as long as they are required.”

All of the Ministers stressed that the key message that they wish to convey is “to be prepared, stay safe and know where to find help if you need it.”

📌 For more information about winter safety, see <https://www.winterready.ie/en>

Faith — IN THE — family



Bairbre Cahill

For weeks now, before Advent even started, I have found myself drawn to the image of John the Baptist. Now here he is, in our readings for the Second and Third Sundays of Advent. John [pictured in Caravaggio’s ‘John the Baptist in the Wilderness’], with his strange ways and his tendency to speak out, whether or not people welcome his message. John is driven by faith and will not be silent.

The Jewish priests and Levites are clearly rattled and demand of John, “Who are you? Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the Prophet?” In Ireland we would probably say, “Just exactly who do you think you are to be having an opinion on these things?”

John’s call to prepare a way for the Lord, to make his path straight provokes conversation. John is not a roads engineer – the path he urges us to straighten is the path of our own lives. It is a call to right living, to integrity, to relationship with God – signified by John baptising the people who come to him. John is challenging the system and although the people in power would like to dismiss him as a camel-skin wearing, locust-eating odd-ball, the ordinary people recognise the truth in his message and respond.

“We need to have the confidence to speak up, to ask the awkward questions”

The connection to John the Baptist came about for me through a few conversations with friends where the common theme that emerged was, “I feel like a voice crying in the wilderness”. We had been talking about faith and society.

I came away from these conversations thankful that I have friends who understand my struggles and an awareness of how important it is to continue to be that voice “crying in the wilderness”, speaking up for faith in a society that so often disregards it.

In particular, as we move towards 2018, I am very aware of how much the voices of women and men of faith need

to be heard in our society. There will be a referendum to remove the Eighth Amendment and so perhaps we all need to catch a little of the John the Baptist spirit in the run-up to that.

We need to have the courage to speak out. There will be people who will say, “Who do you think you are to have an opinion on this?” There will be a tendency to dismiss people if their opinions have a hint of Catholicism about them. John the Baptist wasn’t one to turn away from a challenge and neither should we.

The intention of the Government to remove the Eighth Amendment has



provoked a lot of discussion in our home. Our own young adults are quite clear that many people are following along like sheep, presuming that anything touted in the name of equality and

women’s rights must be a good thing.

And yet, when people are challenged as to why they see abortion as a right or why people with disabilities or a life-limiting condition should be considered unworthy of life then so often they struggle and stumble, and the bravado falls apart. So, we need to have the confidence to speak up, to ask the awkward questions, to open up the conversations that at least challenge people to think for themselves.

We need to begin with those conversations in our own homes, not to forcibly indoctrinate our children but to help them explore the issues from the perspective of faith and the perspective of humanity.

We need our voices to rise along with people of other faiths and indeed those who claim no particular faith but who see life as something to be guarded and protected from the beginning.

We will be assailed on every side with arguments that it is time for Ireland to ‘grow up’, shake off the shackles of the Church and embrace ‘choice’. As we gaze upon the Christ Child this Christmas, perhaps we could pray for the courage, conviction and commitment of John the Baptist – and then speak out.

Liberating lives with the humble spud

Personal Profile



Colm Fitzpatrick explores a charity with Irish-led zeal

Potatoes have often been regarded as the symbolic food of the Irish, providing taste, nourishment and sustenance. Harnessing onto their usefulness, a Dublin-based charity has started a global initiative to bring needed potatoes to some of the most impoverished countries in Africa.

Vita is a successful Irish NGO working with the world's poorest people in Ethiopia and Eritrea. It was established in 1989 under the patronage of St Teresa of Calcutta, and enables rural families to achieve sustainable livelihoods through agricultural programmes and access to services and markets.

Although it is a secular organisation, the values of the Catholic Faith, such as kindness and care are some of the key building blocks of the charity.

"The principles of *Laudato Si'* are embedded into our work", says Ciara Feehely, Head of Fundraising & Communications, adding, "we were founded within the Catholic faith although we are not a faith-based organisation".

Goals

One of the goals of Vita is to improve family nutrition and provide access to affordable food, water and energy for three million people by 2020, and millions more through partnerships.



Potato farming in Africa.

A unique way this aspiration is being achieved is through one of Vita's programmes called the 'Irish Potato Coalition', which is currently supporting 12,000 farmers in Ethiopia alone to substantially increase their yield.

The width and complexity of the task has been lightened by numerous organisations helping the cause: a knowledge transfer programme with Teagasc, the Ethiopian Research Centre, the International Potato Centre, leading Irish potato experts such as John O'Shea and the Dennigans, as well as the support of Sisters of Mercy Western Province.

"It's about collaborating", said Ciara. "The Vita-led Irish Potato Coalition is in seven countries. We have partners that can use our learning in other countries. We have created this learning and understanding and have also written a widely-available book."

After four years, many farmers have seen their yields increase three-fold improving the

communities and economy.

"It's been massively successful", said Ciara, adding, "farmers are no longer dependent on aid with the extra potatoes they can grow. Getting the seed right is everything. We started with a small amount of importing, but now we have a seed producers' co-op. They are now producing seeds that are pure, clean and disease free."

“The width and complexity of the task has been lightened by numerous organisations helping the cause”

One example of a farmer who has been impacted by this initiative is Tesfaye Tole from South East Ethiopia. With the help of a loan from Vita and the International Potato Centre, he had an increase in his potato yield and was able to buy a maize mill which produces a small but regular income. At planting and harvesting time, he

employs 15-20 labourers to help him and has rented out another half hectare. As a result, he put a metal roof on his house, bought a bed and has hopes for his children to attend college. The adaptability and plenitude of the potato means that it can become a steadfast in rural communities. "The potato is a very climate-smart crop, it doesn't need as much water as other crops, and grows relatively easy," said Ciara. "It's one of the most important food sources".

Vita also focuses on other methods by which rural communities can improve and become self-sustainable. It is the only NGO that works in Eritrea, providing mixed-generation programmes which are knowledgeable and emphasise technological transfer.

"We would describe ourselves as a next generation agency. We're totally different, this has never been done before. In Eritrea we fix wells rather than build new ones because it's much cheaper", said

Ciara. "In the last 13 months, we have fixed 222 community wells (water points) which meant over 230,000 people had access to clean water, which is a huge number." Vita ensures that all of projects are enacted through collaboration with local communities, local government and relevant stakeholders.

“Women provide the majority of the agricultural labour in sub-Saharan Africa”

Alongside environmental initiatives from the Vita Green Impact Fund which delivers carbon reducing and life transforming programmes in East Africa, Vita also focuses on women empowerment, by which women act as agents of change for development.

Numerous studies have shown that women are more susceptible to poverty, experiencing it at a greater level for longer period of time. With less access to the tools needed to escape poverty, and the lack of access to key instruments such as financial capital or education, women become more entrenched into female poverty.

Women provide the majority of the agricultural labour in sub-Saharan Africa, provide up to 80% of food in developing countries and are traditionally responsible for collecting firewood in the countries where Vita works. With the improved cooking stove projects, the time spent collecting firewood is reduced by half, allowing women to spend more time on income-generating activities.

"One of the abiding images is women carrying bundles of sticks," said Ciara. "We're about liberating women from that drudgery, that waste of life. There is a focus on women, because women are the drivers of change".

For information about Vita and the work that they do, see: <http://www.vita.ie>

Sweet Treats

Erin Fox



Rich and gooey with Christmas at its heart

Chocolate chestnut torte is just the Christmas dessert for those who can't stand Christmas pudding, mince pies, and fruit cake. Rich and gooey, the texture is closer to a brownie than a cake. As it's incredibly rich, a small slither will do the trick after a hearty Christmas dinner.

Including orange adds to the festive factor – as it's not Christmas until you've cracked opened a Terry's chocolate orange! – but you can omit the orange if you prefer.

You can use ordinary chestnuts for this. Just make sure you boil, rather than roast, them before adding them to the milk. But you can get cans of crème de marrons in specialist food stores all year round, and they're much quicker and handier to use.

Replace the brandy with dark rum for an even richer cake if you prefer.

If using whole chestnuts, make a slit on the outer shell, taking care not to cut the nut inside. Boil for 30 minutes, leave to cool and then peel

them from their shells. Roughly chop them before adding them to the pan with the milk.

INGREDIENTS

- 225g 70% cocoa solids
- 225g softened butter
- 225g caster sugar
- 4 medium eggs separated
- 225g crème de marrons
- Zest of 1 large unwaxed orange
- 175ml milk
- 2 tbsp brandy

Preheat the oven to 170 degrees. Grease and line an 8-inch spring form cake tin with baking parchment.

Start by whacking the chocolate against the surface. This will save you from having to break it up with your hands. Melt the butter and chocolate in a heat proof bowl placed over a pan of simmering water.

In another pan, heat the milk and the chestnut

puree until the milk reaches boiling point. Use a whisk to break up the chestnut puree until the mixture is smooth. As soon as the milk reaches boiling point, remove from the heat and add the brandy.

Whisk the sugar, orange zest and egg yolks in a large bowl and once the chocolate and butter have melted, pour this over the egg yolks and sugar, followed by the chestnut, milk and brandy.

In a clean, bone-dry, steel or glass bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form.

Gradually add the whites to the cake mixtures, folding in with a large silver spoon.

Gently pour the cake mixture into the prepared tin and bake in the oven for 45 minutes until wobbly in the centre.

The cake will be extremely fragile so leave it to cool in the tin for 15 minutes to let it firm up.

Serve with a dollop of fresh cream or vanilla ice cream while it's still warm.



TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Plight of carers difficult to stomach

Sometimes a programme gives you an unexpected but emotional punch. The impact of last week's **Prime Time – Carers in Crisis** (RTÉ 1, Tuesday) was immediate and heart rending, but it will have to go way beyond a passing discomfort for the viewer.

At least one of the carers said she didn't want pity or admiration but I couldn't help being impressed by the practical love these carers show to their loved ones with illnesses and disabilities. Many were frustrated and even angry, and when you see that those whose make the most fuss often get the quickest response the anger is not surprising – when channelled effectively it can get results, though it shouldn't have to be that way.

I suppose in the backs of our minds those of us not immediately in the centre of problems like this are aware that many people around us are facing hugely challenging situations, but programmes like this are a necessary wake up call, and they need to be frequent.

One of the issues highlighted was how aging carers themselves need care. In one case a woman with learning disabilities had now to offer a level of care to her mother who was receiving treatment for early Alzheimer's. Most of the



Barbara Dickson featured on *Fern Britton Meets*.

carers and cared-for were women, but the one male carer wanted to care for his wife at home – he wouldn't have it any other way. Yet a postscript told us that since the interviews were completed he had a stroke and his wife was now in a nursing home. Even more of a shock was the footnote that informed us that one of the women cared for had died unexpectedly a month after the interview.

Understandably people were not happy in the studio discussion that followed the filmed report. Finian McGrath, Minister of State

with responsibility in this area, was on a hiding to nothing, and while he came across as genuine, he doesn't control the purse strings, and his talk of strategies and task forces didn't go down well with the audience – we were treated to several telling reaction shots.

If the programme had any faults I thought there was no need for the sentimental background music, and I wondered about the intrusiveness of the filming of those with the special needs and disabilities.

Meanwhile, on BBC1, Sunday mornings at the

moment features **Fern Britton Meets**, an Advent series of one-to-one interviews with a religious faith element. Last Sunday Britton interviewed renowned singer Barbara Dickson, about life, music, faith and her conversion to Catholicism. I was never a great fan of her 80's pop, but recent performance footage was impressively mature – I loved the clip of her singing 'In the Bleak Midwinter'. I was surprised by the "terrible anxieties" she suffered in her heyday, especially in musical theatre.

She came to Catholicism in her 30s, partly through marrying a then "extremely lapsed" Catholic! Her conversion was like a 'coming home' for her, and now she felt connected to the world through her faith. Now 70, she is heading out on another tour in the New Year, but before that she will be at Midnight Mass, and is involved in the



Finian McGrath TD.

church maintenance and reading rotas in her parish.

Also with a Christmas flavour last Sunday's **Would You Believe? – The Secret of Christmas** had a warm and timely look at people preparing for Christmas. One man found caring for his turkeys therapeutic!

Hampers

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Cork prepared their hampers, a Corkman lit up his home rather dramatically for charity, a mother waited for her disabled son to be able to see the Christmas tree, a schoolteacher wrote an original carol to help her students understand the meaning of Christmas, a family did a "reverse Advent calendar" – adding an item to a hamper each day to give away, a homeless woman planned to stay clean and sober so that she could see her children at Christmas.

A female reverend invited a Muslim refugee for Christmas and they found common ground. A woman who had lost her husband found Christmases tough since the bereavement, but happily she was excited about this Christmas, and finally we saw children from Our Lady's Hospital, Crumlin on an Aer Lingus flight that was visited by Santa.

The programme was positive towards faith and humanity. A parting

PICK OF THE WEEK

THE REAL STAR OF BETHLEHEM: A SKY AT NIGHT CHRISTMAS SPECIAL
BBC 4 Sunday, December 17, 11pm

The *Sky at Night* team go in search of the potential causes of the Star of Bethlehem. Dallas Campbell goes in search of the historical and archaeological records that can shed light on the star's identity.

LUKE: MEEK SCRIBE OF CHRIST

EWTN, Sunday (night), December 17, 2.30 am
Historical background of the infancy narratives.

MYANMAR: THE HIDDEN TRUTH – PANORAMA
BBC 1, Monday, December 18, 7.30 pm

The treatment of Rohingya refugees in Myanmar has been described by the UN as a textbook example of ethnic cleansing, but could it be genocide?

comment summed it up – "the goodness of people is just fantastic!"

boregan@hotmail.com

Music

Pat O'Kelly



Sublime talents of John O'Connor honoured

Since 2012 the National Concert Hall has presented an annual Lifetime Achievement Award to Irish musicians of international renown. Not confined to what can be loosely termed 'classical artists', the award spreads its wings across a broader spectrum of musical genres.

James Galway, Veronica Dunne, Paul Brady and the Vanbrugh Quartet followed the first recipients – the ubiquitous Paddy Moloney and the Chieftains.

This year's honour fell on Dublin-born pianist John O'Connor [pictured] who received his accolade – a bronze replica of John Behan's original sculpture – from President Michael D Higgins during a recent NCH ceremony.

The actual presentation came at the end of a concert that, despite an element of formality, created an intimate and genial atmosphere with John O'Connor 'interviewed' by journalist, broadcaster and music lover Olivia O'Leary.

Other artists joined them and, between their musical offerings, contributed various anecdotes about their O'Connor connections over the years thereby giving the event its relaxing character.

Not surprisingly the musical proceedings began and ended with Beethoven,

a composer with whom John O'Connor has become almost synonymous since winning the prestigious Beethoven International Piano Competition in Vienna in 1973. An Austrian Government scholarship helped him study in Vienna with the distinguished Dieter Weber and be tutored by legendary pianist Wilhelm Kempff.

Here the opening movement of Beethoven's Appassionata Sonata was intense with the finale from his Third Piano Concerto, with the RIAM Chamber Ensemble, more light-hearted.

Mr O'Connor also duetted engagingly in Milhaud and Grieg with his contemporary, Veronica McSwiney and

prodigious twelve-year old pupil, Joe O'Grady. He imaginatively accompanied singers Suzanne Murphy and Tara Erraught in song and aria and gave sterling support to Ms Erraught and clarinettist John Finucane in Schubert's beguiling Shepherd on the Rock.

Students

Among former students, Finghin Collins was the commanding soloist in the opening allegro from Mozart's A major K 488 Concerto while the quartet of Dearbhla Brosnan, Orla McDonagh, Fionnuala Moynihan and Ray Keary elbowed together for Lavignac's giddy one-piano-eight-hands Galop Marche.

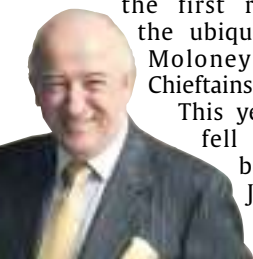
A French tribute came through a Fauré Nocturne sensitively played by Philippe Cassard, winner of the initial Dublin International Piano Competition in 1988. Established by O'Connor, who is still its chairman, the 11th triennial competition is scheduled for May 2018.

As well as his worldwide performing career, John O'Connor is revered as a teacher both at home and abroad and he is in global demand for his master-classes. Along with his work at the RIAM, where he was director from 1994 to 2010, he holds professorships at Shenandoah University, Virginia, Toronto's Royal Conservatory and Japan's Showa Music University. His

skill as juror is highly valued at many international piano competitions.

John O'Connor's highly-acclaimed recordings include the concertos and nocturnes of John Field, four volumes of Mozart concertos, sonatas by Haydn and Schubert and, naturally, Beethoven – sonatas, bagatelles and concertos.

His eagerly awaited Diabelli Variations CD was released last year on the Steinway & Sons label – STNS 30058 – with one reviewer finding it "humorous and mercurial, profound and awe-inspiring and displaying a fine balance between vigorous virtuosity and sublime restraint".





BookReviews



Peter Costello

Some terrific reads over

In this issue we present some suggestions for Christmas books for holiday reading or for presents, in the subject areas that interest our readers, from thrillers to theology.

Sleep No More: Six Murderous Tales
by P. D. James
(Faber & Faber, £10.00)

There are critics who think that a tale of crime is often better told as a short story, with the models of Conan Doyle, and many writers of the golden age in the interwar years when there were magazine outlets.

Now publishers prefer novels, but a few traditional minded writers still like the short effective form. One of these was the late P. D. James. This volume presents half a dozen of her stories, all well crafted in her usual careful and deeply insightful form. Her world was one with a moral vision too. Great seasonal entertainment.

A Legacy of Spies
by John Le Carré
(Viking, £20.00)

Le Carré's career runs back in time to the 1950s, the days of the coldest hours of the Cold War. He has moved from being a thriller writer into something far more profound, a chronicler of a Britain in decline.

In this book he revisits his own fictionalised past, as deeds done for the state in a perceived time of peril are now brought into question, at a time when perhaps different views and standards prevail than in the past. Echoes here of many real events of the present and the past, but also excellent entertainment.

Wikibeaks
by Dustin the Turkey
(Transworld Ireland, €10.99)

The fella who knows it all opens his beak at long last about the truth of what was going on in recent times.

This is as good as an old fashioned panto, and seeing as the new pantos are rubbish compared with the old ones, better to buy this and have a good laugh all round, warm indoors this Christmas. Not perhaps to everyone's taste, but then Dustin's beak has long been known for having given many a celebrity a nasty nip.

It is weird, given his taste for sounding off, that this is the feathered one's first book. With a ready supply of quills to hand we suspect it won't be the last.

Our Great Canal Journeys: A Lifetime of Memories on Britain's Most Beautiful Waterways
by Timothy West
(John Blake, £20.00)

Since the spring of 2014 there have been some eight series of television programmes featuring actor Timothy West and his wife Prunella Scales. Both had long and distinguished careers on TV, film, and stage.

But these films revealed a very different side of the couple. In recent years Prunella has been losing her memory, but she has by no means allowed it to limit the life that they lead together and with their family. When their family was young the holidays with their boys were taken afloat.

In each series they, from time to time, looked back over those yesteryears while they sailed around these islands, across Europe, and even as far as India. One very memorable trip was on Shannon-Erne system in the autumn of 2015 which was of special interest as it involved a visit to West's ancestral home. The current book puts all this together.

Their vitality and sense of humour, their sheer humanity, are to be treasured.

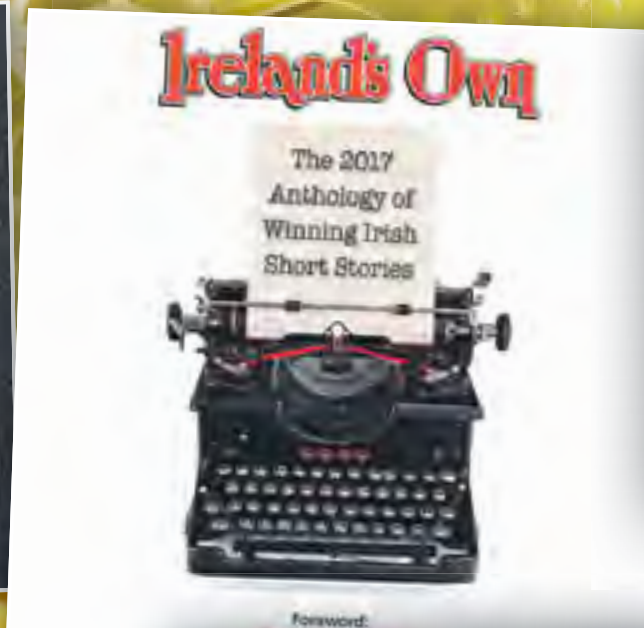
The Art of Hurling: Insights into Success from the Managers
by Daire Whelan
(€13.99)

This is less about sporting achievements than it is about man management and driving a business, any kind of business forward in times of great change and economic difficulty.

Whether the skills of team managers can be transferred to one's own business will be for readers to discover. But there is always great interest in reading how the more celebrated of the country's managers have succeeded. For the sports fanatic in the house, there's definitely some lessons for one's own life.

Half Hour Hero
by Roz Purcell
(Penguin Ireland, €28.00)

The hero is, of course, the cook at home. The idea of quick, simple recipes for the just-home from work couple is an excellent one. But the author does not quite



Timothy West and Prunella Scales.



Two of John Hall's Irish faces.



escape the trap of exotic and expensive ingredients.

Celebrity chefs still see themselves in the business of the fancy dish for instagramming, rather than the real world problem of feeding a family on a limited budget with ordinary kitchen cupboard ingredients. A bit more of the old-fashioned domestic economy is called for.

5 Ingredients: Quick and Easy Food

by Jamie Oliver
(Michael Joseph, £26.00)

Limited ingredients mostly out of the cupboard or an ordinary week's shop. Having tried them at home, readers can be



assured that some of the ideas in this book are real finds, and there is sufficient variety for there to be at least five of them to appeal

to every kind of taste.

Rick Stein: the Road to Mexico
by Rick Stein
(BBC Books, £26.00)

Every book Rick Stein does is to be treasured. Here, albeit starting high up in California, he explores the culinary experiences of Mexico proper. Hot stuff galore, but Stein always takes a real interest in the people he is travelling among, their history, and their culture.

What made the trips through the Near East and Asia so memorable is continued here. Given the choice add this to Jamie Oliver. But remember too many books spoil the broth too.

The Little Book of Lykke: Secret of the World's Happiest People
by Miek Wiking
(Penguin Life, £9.99)

The continuing saga of how to be happy the Danish way. Denmark is certainly an agreeable country, though Irish visitors will be struck by the contrast between the delights of the capital and the somewhat more brooding nature of the countryside.

This book is the companion to *Hygge*, which scored a huge success. But back in the early 20th Century, Ireland was constantly encouraged to learn to live like the Danes. We never managed it then. But perhaps now that we see ourselves as more truly European we might well be ready for Scandinavians designs for living as a whole. Just the book to put out on your newly bought Ikea coffee table, among your French cups filled with Italian coffee.

Brexit and Ireland: The Dangers, the Opportunities, and the Inside Story of the Irish Response
by Tony Connelly
(Penguin Ireland, 14.99)

Given what happened in the first week of December, this will have to be the stocking filler for the those obsessed with current affairs, and what the New Year will bring.

The Brexit madness affects everyone in Ireland, yet quite how it will evolve is clearly a mystery.

It has shown up the grim deficiencies of the elites who run Great Britain, but also perhaps the skills and virtues of the Republic's leaders. But the process has been and will continue to be full of surprises if not traps for boobies.

Author Connelly wrote this book during the summer but the kinds of information and views it contains will retain their value as we go forward, or at least try to go forward, all the while fearing we may slip back. Not a happy book perhaps, but still seasonal.

Fair Faces
by John Hall
(Mercier Press, €24.99)

John Hall is a professional photographer, but this book

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 Christmas season



is a labour of love. Across a range of events in rural life, including Puck Fair, he photographed hundreds of faces, the faces of people who have lived life to the full on the land, in the shop, and at the games.

This is not an exercise in nostalgia, but a study of the Irish nation. It is all the more powerful, many will be surprised to see, because the images are all in monochrome. Sometimes black and white seems to tell more of the truth about people than colour does.

The 50 Francis Street Photographer
by Susanne Behan
(Hachette Books Ireland, €19.99)

From the 1950s to the 1990s, John Walsh ran his photography business from a small shop on Francis Street in inner city Dublin. During this time he took thousands of photos of all aspects of Dublin life: funerals, communions, weddings, christenings, concerts, and other events.

Here, for the first time ever, the images from the 50s and 60s are brought together with the words of his granddaughter Suzanne Behan to present a uniquely nostalgic look at a lively part of a changing city. From religious processions and Dublin traditions, to when women drank in the snug and the 'good suit' came in and out of the pawn shop when needed, it is all here.

The Secret Life of Cows
by Rosamund Young
(Faber & Faber, £9.99)

The role of cows in Ireland and Irish culture since the Neolithic – what Irish person (no matter how far from the land) could resist the title?

Our ancient roads were a cow-and-a-half wide, and one had to pay for a wife with just so many cows, depending on who her people were. But these days we know a great deal more about the beasts than ever before.

This is not a new book, but a welcome reissue written by an actual farmer. And though she perhaps over-humanises cows, that is only to catch your interest for the really important stuff that we need to know.

There is lots in these pages for our well-fed selves to ruminate on through the holiday weeks.

Whatever you think about cattle raising, and indeed steak eating (the real reason for keeping the beasts and their fates are glossed over), this is still an entertaining and informative book.

Ireland's Own The 2017 Anthology of Winning Irish Short Stories
foreword by Bill Keane
(The Three Sisters Press, €14.99)

Amazingly, *Ireland's Own* continues its happy way into its second century. Here some of the stories that are enjoyed in every issue – an almost unique feature in the Irish media these days – are collected.

As with all magazine publication, some stories will have been missed even by regular readers, all of whom will be happy to have them here.

The ideal book to send to those pining relatives in foreign parts.

The Mixing Bowl: Second Helpings, introduction

The death of God – Irish style

How We Killed God...and Other Tales of Modern Ireland
by David Quinn
(Currach Press, €16.99)

Anthony Redmond.

Two guests who took part on the *Ryan Tubridy Show* on RTÉ radio back in October 2006 were the well-known atheist Richard Dawkins and the journalist David Quinn.

Dawkins was there to discuss his book, *The God Delusion* (Black Swan, £9.99pb). Dawkins was invited to talk about his ideas, and David Quinn was there to listen and refute them. I found myself amazed at Quinn's cogent, rational arguments and his confident, truculent analysis of Richard's Dawkins' opinions.

He questioned Dawkins about the existence of matter and where it came from, and about freewill. He told Dawkins that if there's no God, then there's no freewill or objective morality.

Dawkins replied rather lamely: "Science is working on it." Quinn told him: "You must go outside matter to answer the question."

Sanctions

As I listened to David Quinn on the programme I was reminded of a line from the atheist, Nietzsche, who said: "Fools, as if morality can be preserved when the God who sanctions it is missing." Dostoyevsky's Ivan Karamazov exclaimed: "If God does not exist, then everything is permitted." That particular edition of the *Ryan Tubridy Show* made me realize just how bright and capable David Quinn is.

Over the past 25 years, Quinn has written articles for various newspapers on numerous topics and in this thought-provoking and fascinating book, *How We Killed God*, we are treated to a collection of many of those entertaining and stimulating pieces.

He is nothing if not an individualist who's not afraid to go against the

tide of secularism and groupthink that seems to prevail everywhere nowadays.

His approach is always calm and carefully thought out. There are so many different subjects dealt with in this collection and we will all have our particular favourites.

One of mine is an article he wrote in 2013 entitled 'If there is no God, no law-giver, then why should we be equal?' In discussing Martin Luther King, he writes: "Politics is full of human rights talk. However, this presupposes there is some kind of moral law, higher

than the civil law, which the civil law must conform to...Martin Luther King's 'dream' speech is rightly celebrated as a great civil rights speech. But it stems from a deep theological and philosophical vision, one that depends on believing in a creator God and in moral and natural law which he gave us and against which our laws must be judged."

“He is nothing if not an individualist who's not afraid to go against the tide of secularism and groupthink”

When pro-life members of Fine Gael were expelled from their party for opposing the Protection of Life During Pregnancy legislation, 2013, some people praised Enda Kenny for his

strong stand and insistence on party loyalty.

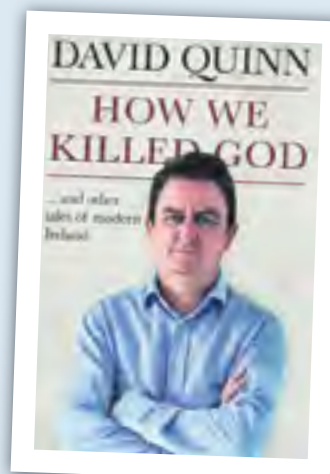
Davis Quinn says: "Again and again, I contrast in my mind the praise Enda Kenny received in many quarters for his ruthless treatment of his party colleagues who voted against the new abortion law, and the condemnation the Vatican has received for its much milder treatment of dissident priests such as Fr. Tony Flannery.

"...If it is okay for Fine Gael to take strong action to maintain discipline and the coherence of party policy, then why is it not okay for the Church to do so? Here is the explanation for the contradiction: those praising Kenny and attacking the Vatican simply want to have their way, by whatever means. They wanted abortion legislated for under the terms of the X case, and they want the Catholic Church to change its teaching in line with their wishes. Therefore,

they supported the disciplining of Lucinda Creighton, Terence Flanagan, Brian Walsh, Fidelma Healy Eames, Billy Timmins, Peter Matthews, and Paul Bradford and oppose the disciplining of Fr. Tony Flannery *et al.* So it's not the use of discipline per se that they oppose. They like it when it suits them. That is to say, they are entirely hypocritical about the matter. And they get away with it and probably can't even see the contradiction half the time."

Whether one agrees or disagrees with David Quinn's views it's not possible to ignore him. He is always highly articulate and extremely well informed and he never fails to engage our full attention, whether for or against him. In this book he covers a very great deal of ground indeed, to the rich benefit of his readers.

He dedicates his book to his good friend, Tom O'Gorman, who died such a tragic and violent death in 2014.



And finally . . .

Accepting the Mystery: Scriptural Reflections for Advent and Christmas
by Walter Kasper
(The Paulist Press, \$16.95)

● These thoughts on the central mystery of Christianity, the incarnation of Christ, by the distinguished and thoughtful German Cardinal who has long been an influential figure in promoting Christian unity, may seem to be a book for only a part of the year. But this little book will be found to have truths for every week of the year, for every day is a sort of advent.

In his foreword Cardinal Kaspar says about the theme of these pages: "Against all wishes or temptations to restrict the horizon of human existence to what is feasible, manageable, consumable, the Christian celebration of Christmas gives language to the message of faith: 'Human Being, acknowledge the mystery that you are.'"

The second one sounds the most traditional, except that instead of the boiled bacon it should have the rashers from the first one.

However, as the editor says, there are hundreds of recipes for Coddle, but surely the real one should include milk and not stock, and it should be cooked over the lowest of heat for a morning, to eat at the traditional "dinnertime".

A most enjoyable book, promising lots of delicious food, all in an excellent cause.

by Neven Maguire
(Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services, Harold's Cross, €15.00)

This beautifully produced book contains over 70 recipes from patients and friends of the Harold's Cross Hospice.

Attached to many of them are little glimpses of the person connected with them which give the text a very special feel, especially at this time of the year. There is nothing ultra-foodie here, this is all good life-sustaining stuff. Who could resist a cook book with two recipes for Dublin Coddle?

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

MAP TRAVEL

Reformation Tour

"In the footsteps of Martin Luther"

Under the leadership of Dr. Kieran O'Mahony, OSA

Thursday 10 – Tuesday 15 May 2018

Wittenberg, Erfurt, Eisennach, Eisleben & Berlin

€845.00 per person

Detailed itinerary on

www.maptravel.ie or call (01) 8783111

Bonded and licensed as a Travel Agent TA 0474

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



Classified ads

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.

CATHOLIC CONNECTIONS

SINGLE MALE in early 70's in Louth, would like to meet lady 60+ for friendship. My hobbies are country life travel. Please send replies to Box No. 5045.

IN MEMORIUM

THE 14th ANNIVERSARY of the death of an unborn baby (at the behest of the (former) Midland Health Board) occurs on 16 December 2017.

THANKSGIVING

ST EXPEDITE, Thank you for answering my prayer for the best possible outcome in finding employment.

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 post to

Little Flower Penny Dinners, 11 Meath St, D8

Phone 01 4536621 or 01 4546795

e-mail: srbridg@littleflower.ie



Reg. Charity
No. 6179

Please make a little room in your will for people who are homeless

Contact our Fundraising Department in strictest confidence

Tel. 01 8815 900

Email: info@focusireland.ie

www.focusireland.ie

FOCUS Ireland

NOTICE THIS? GET YOUR MESSAGE OUT TO 90,000 READERS!

The Irish Catholic

PETER SHOES O'DWYER



19 Main Street Cashel Co. Tipperary

HEALTH FOR YOUR FEET

Ireland's largest selection of medical and diabetic footwear

These European stylish and comfort footwear brands are specially designed to cater for people with diabetes, arthritis, bunions, hammer toes, corns, swollen feet, hallux valgus, wearing bandages and other foot conditions.

We cater for ex-small and ex-large sizes for both ladies and men.

Ring Peter on 062-64364 or 086-0559756 for after hour's appointments.

Leave a Legacy of Hope

When you are making your will, please remember the vulnerable families you can save from homelessness. Contact Cora at Threshold in strictest confidence.

Threshold
Solving housing problems, preventing homelessness

Call: 01 635 3607

Email: Cora@threshold.ie

Visit: www.threshold.ie



THE PERFECT GIFT FOR YOUR LOVED ONE

To Love and to be Loved
by Desmond O'Donnell

RRP: €15.00



"A work of rare brilliance..."
- Archbishop Richard Clarke

"This wonderful encouraging and wise book rests on a very wide understanding and scholarship. I felt I gained so much insight into my own life in reading it."

- Mary Kenny, playwright, author and journalist.

Modern Life, especially in the western world, makes questions about love intensely urgent. As personal mobility increases, as connections between people become more fragile, and as the question of personal identity is now a really challenging one, the meaning of love has become a central issue for reflective individuals and groups.

Available from Dominican Publications, Veritas and other bookshops.

More information contact:
Dominican Publications

www.dominicanpublications.com or call +353 (0)1 872 1611

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

LEGACY

Help evangelize Ireland by remembering The Irish Catholic in your will.

Since 1888 we have been Ireland's leading Catholic weekly. Your help will grow subscriptions to schools and poor parishes.

For more information contact us on 01-687-4020

Follow the Irish Catholic on Facebook

The-Irish-Catholic-Newspaper

Leisure time



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 January 11th 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.

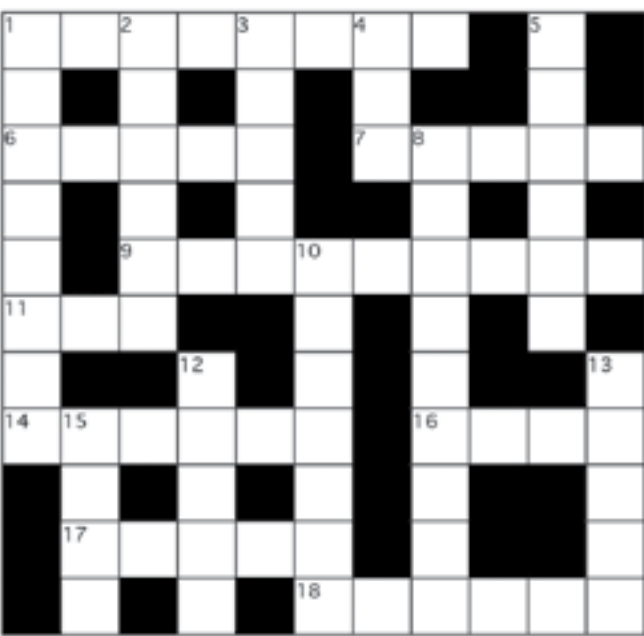
Please remember this work when making your will

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

Crossword Junior Gordius 212



- ACROSS**
- 1 Everest is the world's highest one (8)
 - 6 Popular flowers with thorny stems (5)
 - 7 The language of ancient Rome (5)
 - 9 If you don't grill your sausages, you might cook them in this (6-3)
 - 11 You might go skating on it (3)
 - 14 It was written by Matthew, Mark, Luke or John (6)
 - 16 A hammer, saw or spanner, maybe (4)
 - 17 In the circus, this person makes people laugh (5)
 - 18 This creature was supposed to breathe fire (6)
- DOWN**
- 1 Walking together the way soldiers do (8)
 - 2 Risky or dangerous (6)
 - 3 Full of flavour (5)
 - 4 Sick (3)
 - 5 The last schoolday of the week (6)
 - 8 Lionel Messi plays soccer for this South American country (9)
 - 10 The Emerald Isle (7)
 - 12 Wear it in the kitchen to protect your clothes (5)
 - 13 Creature from another planet (5)
 - 15 Just a single time (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS
GORDIUS No.328

Across - 1 Lit 3 Celebration 8 Archer 9 Impudent 10 Oxter 11 Tells 13 Papal nuncio 15 Annoyed 16 Monocle 20 Showy 21 Hurly-burly 24 Floodlit 26 Battlements 27 Ted

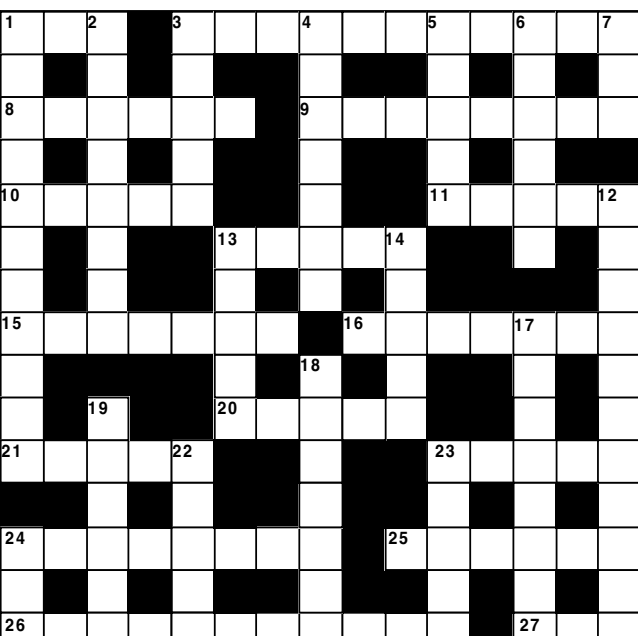
Down - 1 Leap of faith 2 Taciturn 3 Clear 4 Epitaph 5 Adult 6 Ideals 7 Nit 12 Sweeney Todd 13 Poets 14 Loony 17 Carrycot 18 Mountie 19 Try out 22 Yodel 23 Blues 24 Fob

CHILDREN'S No.211

Across - 1 Leonardo 6 Bit 7 Nod 8 Title 9 Racehorse 12 God 14 Scatter 17 Decide 18 Pail 19 Insect 20 Soft

Down - 1 Landing 2 Ordered 3 Attacks 4 Dutch 5 Stole 6 Bear 10 Octopus 11 Sheriff 13 Ocean 15 Cheat 16 Fire

Crossword Gordius 329



- ACROSS**
- 1 Actress Ms Ryan is grand, for example! (3)
 - 3 Disturb pelicans out here? That's just pure guesswork (11)
 - 8 Young cat (6)
 - 9 Is it shot at from some ant-heaps? (8)
 - 10 Completely defeated - when none are asleep? (3,2)
 - 11 Harry Potter's rival Malfoy undoes a cord (5)
 - 13 Take hold of (5)
 - 15 & 27a The entitlement of a person to walk a certain path (5,2,3)
 - 16 Anticipate expressing a golf warning to the diocese (7)
 - 20 & 24d Fair stall featuring a fortunate pickpocket (5,3)
 - 21 Improve, make corrections (5)
 - 23 False name (5)
 - 24 Imagines what one may have while sleeping during a flight? (6,2)
 - 25 Spicy ingredient (6)
 - 26 Member of the flock (11)
 - 27 See 15 across
- DOWN**
- 1 & 12d Create hope from constraint, perhaps, when you have a positive attitude to what you are forced to do (4,1,6,2,9)
 - 2 Coexist in friendly manner (3,5)
 - 3 Member of the flock (5)
 - 4 An unoriginal type can make an ape feline (7)
 - 5 Honourable prize (5)
 - 6 Old Testament prophet whose book precedes Jeremiah in the Bible (6)
 - 7 Ton up? Negative (3)
 - 12 See 1 down
 - 13 Snarl, "Get bigger, novice" (5)
 - 14 Type of flower (5)
 - 17 The cardinal gets on in legal practice when he's married to your child (3-2-3)
 - 18 Star sign during which winter begins (7)
 - 19 Rock travelling through space (6)
 - 22 Landfill sites (5)
 - 23 Detest (5)
 - 24 See 20 across

Sudoku Corner 212

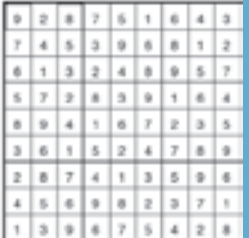
Easy

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

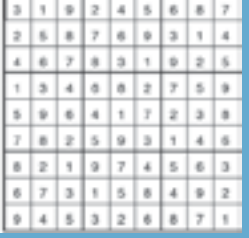
Hard

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

Last week's Easy 211



Last week's Hard 211





Fr Vincent Sherlock

Notebook

You could not have come at a better time

JACK WAS a decent man! The sort you'd enjoy visiting. He lived alone – well not totally for he had an amazing connection with horses. A man once told me that he could leave the wildest of horses in the field beside Jack's house and within days, the animal would be tamed beyond belief. Gentleness and patience were the only tools Jack used. He was a decent man.

I began to visit him on my First Friday call. The priest that was in the parish before me used to spread his calls over two days, Thursday and Friday, but I discovered I could do them all on the Friday. Maybe I didn't give it as much time as the other man, I'm not sure.

In any case, I asked Jack one day if he called in to visit any of his neighbours and he told me that he didn't. I then asked if any of them called in to visit him and again he said "no". He seemed quite all right with this and I asked him if he went anywhere – "No," he replied, "I don't bother."

"You must enjoy your own company," I said.

"I do for sure," he replied, and I said: "Jack, you're a lucky man." He nodded in agreement.

"Is there anything I can do



for you?" I asked. It's as if he'd been waiting all his life for this question. "Could you call on a Thursday?" he said! I smiled, the man who didn't go anywhere found Friday to be a less than ideal

day for my visitation. I think we both saw the humorous side of this. We both laughed. I've never forgotten the moment. He was a decent man. I kept going on Fridays and we didn't have that

RONAN REMEMBERED: The last time I spoke with Fr Ronan Drury [pictured] was on a Monday about four months ago. I recognised his voice immediately and prepared myself for work! "I'm not the editor," he used to say, "I'm the predator!" He asked for nothing. He called because he had read a piece I had in *The Irish Catholic* that weekend. "It was so good," he said, "just wonderful, and I wanted to say that." Thirty and more years ago, he shaped my voice and words. His call humbled me. I can only hope he knew that. May he rest in peace.



conversation again.

The last time I saw him was in hospital. I just called in to see how he was doing and found him nearing the end. We said a few prayers and said goodbye. When I got to my car, I thought that I really should have anointed him, so I returned to his room, said the prayers and celebrated with him the Sacrament of the Sick.

The right place

A few hours later, his nephew called. "Jack's gone," he said.

"May he rest in peace," I replied.

I realised it was before midnight and, more importantly, that it was Thursday. "It took me a while Jack," I said to him in prayer, "but I did manage to get to visit you on a Thursday."

Luke's Gospel passage (1:39-45) finds Mary on Elizabeth's doorstep. Irrespective of the day, she's in the right place.

Maybe there's someone that might benefit from a visit from you this Advent day?

(From a short booklet of Advent Reflections I've written called *Let Advent be Advent*, published by Messenger Publications and available through www.messenger.ie and bookshops.)

A prayer for Advent

Lord, As we think of Mary's visit to her cousin Elizabeth, remind me of the importance of visitation and keeping in touch with people.

Allow me that freedom of time that ensures I can visit people especially when they might most need it.

May my own comforts, tiredness or laziness never stand in the way of doing the right thing by others.

May I show graciousness too in welcoming those who come to visit me and assure them of a welcome that is sincere and appreciative of the time they've given, and the effort made. Amen.



Please help needy children this Christmas

This 10-year-old girl took charge of her one-day-old niece after Ramona, the baby's mother, died in childbirth aged just 17. Now, both children must rely on others for all that they need. The Little Way Association constantly receives requests for help from priests and religious working with needy children. Your donations can be sent to those Church workers without deduction of any kind.

As we prepare to welcome the Christ child at Christmas, please consider making a gift to The Little Way Association's fund for children. You can use the coupon below or give online at tinyurl.com/lwadonations quoting "children" in the message field. Thank you, and may God reward your generosity.



"Jesus wills that we give alms to Him as to one poor and needy. He puts Himself as it were at our mercy; He will take nothing but what we give Him from our heart, and the very least trifle is precious in His sight."

- St Therese

You can help repair a mission chapel

The Little Way Association has a long history of providing humble places of worship for far-flung parishes in mission countries. Nature can take its toll on these simple buildings, and we receive requests from priests for help with repairs.

We humbly ask that you allocate some of your Christmas giving to our chapels fund. By ensuring that these small but dignified churches are in good repair, you help to make possible the offering of Holy Mass in needy Catholic communities.

The clergy and people overseas who benefit from your generosity invariably promise to pray for their benefactors' intentions.

Poverty is still a plague on our world. Please support The Little Way Association in enabling missionaries to reduce poverty, and to spread the Gospel in the spirit of St Thérèse.

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

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:

- €..... **NEEDY CHILDREN**
- €..... **REPAIRING MISSION CHAPELS**
- €..... **MASS OFFERINGS**
(Please state no. of Masses _____)
- €..... **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.