

The Irish Catholic

GOODBYE CATHOLIC IRELAND

Roll up and put the boot in again, says David Quinn Page 9

LOVELY ROSE OF CLARE

Pilgrimage volunteer and hospital carer Page 25



DARING MISSION

Irishmen save lives in East African famine Pages 14 & 15



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Asylum deaths in care a 'living injustice' – priest

Govt doesn't know cause of death of asylum seekers in State care

EXCLUSIVE
Mags Gargan

The Government is unaware of the cause of death of more than one in three asylum seekers who die in State care, *The Irish Catholic* can reveal. The failure has been described as "despicable" by a leading campaigner for asylum seekers.

New statistics obtained by this newspaper under the Freedom of Information Act show that 44 asylum seekers died while residents of controversial State-run direct provision centres over a ten-year period.

Fr Paddy Byrne, a curate in Co. Laois who ministers to residents in direct provision told *The Irish Catholic* that "we have learned nothing from the secrets of the past."

"This is a living injustice, it is a rotten disease, that the vast majority remain silent about," he said.

However, the number of unexplained deaths may, in fact, be higher since accompanying documentation points out that where a cause of death is listed, this is only a suspected cause of death.

Of those for whom there is a suspected cause of death, two people are thought to have died as a result of suicide, one person as a result of a stabbing incident and another drowned in the last ten years.

In the case of a 16-year-old asylum seeker, the records record simply "sudden, died in school". There is no further explanation. Fr Byrne recalled how he presided at the recent

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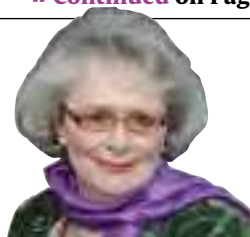
Thank you for the prayers

Lt Col. Mary Carroll and Sgt Major Fintan Lambe present Sr Colette of Galway's Poor Clare Sisters with a hand-carved crucifix from Bethlehem as an expression of thanks from the 54th Infantry Group UNDOF for the sisters' promise of prayers when they left last year for a peace-keeping mission in the Golan Heights.

MARY KENNY

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JOHN ALLEN

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Michael Kelly's Editor's Comment returns in the autumn

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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: Elaine McNamee, elaine@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874020

Magnificat: magnificat@irishcatholic.ie 01 6874024

Shop: shop@irishcatholic.ie

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Some of the 1,300 pilgrims from Kildare and Leighlin in Lourdes.

Record number of pilgrims share 'graceful time of healing' in Lourdes

Greg Daly

Bishop Denis Nulty has described the first ever diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes from Kildare and Leighlin as a "huge experience" after 1,300 people from every parish in the diocese visited the French Marian shrine.

Describing how he "enjoyed every bit" of the pilgrimage, Dr Nulty had nothing but praise for the "vast crowd" that had come on the pilgrimage in an attempt to unify the diocese in prayer.

"I proposed three years ago that it would help us as a dio-

cese, bringing all the parishes together," he told *The Irish Catholic*. "We do many things about structures and planning for the future," he explained, saying that the purpose of the pilgrimage was to focus the diocese on "the important thing about getting us all going the one direction in prayer".

The proposal met with a great reaction, he continued. "People really responded with great generosity to that invitation," he said, noting how every parish in the diocese was represented on the pilgrimage.

"Many parishes brought

their banners," he said, adding, "the pictures on our website tell the story very well - they are tremendous, showing the colour of the pilgrimage."

The success of the pilgrimage was recognised by the French authorities at the shrine, he said, with "huge compliments" being given on how well-run the pilgrimage was, singling out the contribution of young people from Newbridge and Portlaoise to the pilgrimage and noting the care given to about 80 pilgrims who needed special attention.

Describing the pilgrim-

age as "a graceful time of healing for all of us", he said the pilgrims will carry home "tremendous memories", highlighting especially what he described as "most moving encounters at the baths, at the stations, in the torchlight procession, Eucharistic adoration, and the Mass at the Grotto".

Although this was Kildare and Leighlin's first ever diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes, it won't be the last, he stressed. "We will be going every year, with alternate years being large diocesan pilgrimages, on the same dates in July," he said.

Asylum deaths in care a 'living injustice' - priest

» Continued from Page 1

funeral of an asylum seeker who had died in State care. "I can only call it a horror story of a young woman who was forgotten by this society, who never felt

hospitality and welcome".

Stephen Ng'ang'a, who advocates for the rights of asylum seekers, said the poor record keeping "goes to show how careless the State is in terms of dealing with refugees and asylum seekers and their human dignity - whether they died

of any cause - has been undermined.

"If they are treated as numbers or as non-entities or non-nationals or whatever stereotype associated with asylum seekers, I think it is despicable," he said.

See Page 13.

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Planning restrictions on the cards for former seminary bought by hotelier

Greg Daly

The new owners of a former seminary, sold earlier this year for over €16 million, are likely to face serious restrictions in developing the site, *The Irish Catholic* understands.

St Mary's Carmelite Seminary, off Donnybrook's Bloomfield Avenue, was placed on the open market last October, with joint agents GVA Donal Ó Buachalla and WK Nolan Property seeking offers of

more than €10 million for the 19th-Century property. The property is believed to have been sold to a leading hotelier for more than €6 million above the guide price.

However, efforts are afoot for Dublin City Council to have major parts of the site listed as protected structures of regional significance.

Labour Party Councillor Mary Freehill, who first put forward a motion to this effect in March told *The Irish*

Catholic that an examination of the site's significance is currently afoot, and that the council will consider how to act when it has received a report on the site.

Explaining that her proposal came from "a conservation point of view", she said she made the original proposal because "An Taisce were concerned and some locals were concerned". It is understood that locals previously assumed the structures

were already protected.

It is proposed that the original red-brick 1888 seminary building and the 1896 chapel, both of which are built in a Gothic Revival style, should be protected along with an adjoining section and boundary walls dating from about 1800.

Permission

"It is now a legal offense to alter the character of a protected structure without

planning permission," Aughey O'Flaherty Architects told *The Irish Catholic*, adding that while fixtures and features can also be protected, "the perception that little or nothing can be done to a protected structure is false".

Explaining that work sensitive to a structure's special interest can be done, the conservation architecture firm said this needs clearance in advance, with insensitive work or work detracting from

a structure's character typically not being given clearance.

Major work such as the conversion of a chapel into a ballroom would require consultation, the firm said, noting that "in such complex situations, a consultation with the planning authorities is advised, as this also implies a change of use for the structure in question".

Such changes are, however, "not unachievable", they said.

Bieber quits world tour to re-find his Christian faith

Pop superstar Justin Bieber has reportedly cut short his world tour in a bid to re-connect with the deep Christian faith of his childhood.

The Canadian singer unexpectedly cut short his 'Purpose' tour due to what his management said was "unforeseen circumstances". Media report that Bieber told friends he felt burnt out.

However, music industry insiders – quoting sources close to the 23-year-old say the real reason is that he wants to focus on his faith.

Mr Bieber has spoken passionately in the past about

being raised as a Christian. He has claimed that prayer is a very important part of his life and expressed his belief that forgiveness is one of the most important parts of the Christian message for him.

His career has not been without controversy and Bieber has been arrested on several occasions including on suspicion of vandalism and driving under the influence of alcohol.

He has provoked the ire of pro-choice campaigners by expressing his view that abortion is wrong.



JOE WALSH TOURS PILGRIMAGES 2017



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Fatima

NEWS
IN BRIEFTrócaire praises
parishioners
for weekend
support

Trócaire has thanked parishioners for their support of the national Church collection last weekend in aid of the crisis in East Africa. The Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference called for a collection to respond to the 25 million people who face food shortages and starvation in Somalia, South Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia. "Our health centres and feeding programmes are saving lives but we urgently need to scale-up our response. Last weekend's collection will enable us to reach even more people with life-saving aid," said Director of Trócaire, Eamonn Meehan.

"The support of the Catholic Church in Ireland will make a significant contribution to saving lives in east Africa over the coming weeks and months."

Preach to modern
world by example

Catholics cannot rely on culture to help evangelise in the modern world, and must witness to the Faith by example, Achonry's Bishop Brendan Kelly has said.

Dr Kelly was speaking at the ordination of Rev Declan Lohan at Church of the Immaculate Conception, Dranmore, Co Galway on Sunday, July 23.

A former barrister, Fr Lohan began his training in 2007 in France, returning to complete his studies at St Patrick's College, Maynooth. He gives much of the credit for his vocation to the example of many people he has encountered in his life including his family, his teachers, his neighbours and his friends.

Gardaí 'intimidate' pro-life
campaigners say volunteers

Chai Brady

A file is being prepared for the DPP after pro-life campaigners accused two gardaí of confiscating legal campaign posters at a demonstration in Kilkenny on Saturday.

It is alleged that 10 minutes after pro-life volunteers arrived and began campaigning, two gardaí approached the pro-life group Youth Defence, saying they had received numerous complaints about their signs depicting aborted fetuses.

The Department of Public Prosecutions has previously ruled that it is legal to show the images. Garda have made written apologies for taking similar actions to what was

described by campaigners in Kilkenny, in 1997 and 2010.

Rebecca Roughneen, a Project Co-Ordinator with Youth Defence, was at the scene. She was on the 10-day #SaveThe8th Roadshow since the beginning, but says she has not experienced similar treatment by the Garda anywhere else. Ms Roughneen says she felt "intimidated" by the gardaí.

Advice

After seeking legal advice, the group decided to uncover the images after the gardaí left, and say they returned 30 minutes later to seize the posters. A video posted on Facebook by Youth Defence shows two men taking the posters and

putting them into a car.

"We continued a street session until about 5pm without the information boards, we had other leaflets and posters and things like that. We had a fantastic response I have to say...we were really heartened," Ms Roughneen said.

Niamh Uí Bhrian, spokesperson for the Life Institute, said that the actions taken by gardaí have caused "concern" among pro-life campaigners, adding that if their decision to seize the posters was weighed against previous DPP decisions, they would have acted unlawfully.

She said: "I think people are anxious that the gardaí will come back and confirm this and return the boards.

Because if they don't I think people have serious concerns about what that means for free speech, and for the right to have a proper debate about this enormously important issue as we approach the referendum."

The Garda released a statement confirming a file is being prepared for the DPP and the matter is the subject to an ongoing investigation.

"In response to a number of complaints from members of the public materials being displayed by a group holding a roadshow on High Street Kilkenny on the 22/7/2017 were seized by Gardaí. No arrests were made and the event was not being policed at the time," it read.

New Papal
Nuncio due
next month

Staff reporter

The Pope's new representative to Ireland Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo is due to take up residence in the country next month.

The new Papal Nuncio is expected to be received at an informal ceremony at Dublin Airport on August 14 before proceeding to the Apostolic Nunciature of Dublin's Navan Road.

Dr Okolo (60) is a native of Nigeria and has most recently served the Holy See as Papal Nuncio to the Dominican Republic where he has served since 2013. He will replace Archbishop Charles Brown who took up his appointment as Papal Nuncio to Albania in May.

Arrival

Shortly after his arrival, Dr Okolo is expected to present his credentials to President Michael D. Higgins during a brief ceremony at Áras an Uachtaráin. It is customary for a new nuncio to maintain a discreet presence before the official State credentials ceremony. After this official engagement, there is expected to be a liturgical welcome in Dublin's pro-cathedral to ceremonially mark the beginning of his ministry as the Pope's representative to the local church.

A Church-State crisis was almost caused in 1949 when Church leaders here decided to hold the liturgical celebration of welcome for the Nuncio Archbishop Ettore Felici before credentials had been presented to President Sean T. O'Kelly.

Missionary nun
Bono's guest at
U2's gig

Bono made sure a missionary nun who inspired U2's 2004 song Crumbs from Your Table got tickets to attend their concert at Croke Park last Saturday.

Dublin-born Sr Anne Carr joined the Medical Missionaries of Mary in 1968, and has done extensive work in Africa.

She worked in a maternity unit and as a hospital chaplain in Malawi, which is where Bono first met her in 2002 - she took him on a tour of the hospital.

The song appears in U2's album How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb, and the CD was sent to her in Africa.

She was invited to several events by Bono which she was always too shy to go to, until she decided she would like to see them play live in Croke Park, which Bono happily accommodated.

Walking for peace



Walkers from Belfast, Derry and Dublin arrive at Knock Shrine for the annual Cursillo Peace Pilgrimage, which has taken place for over 30 years. This year 260 pilgrims walked to the shrine as a pilgrimage for 'Peace in Our Hearts, in our Homes and in Our Country and the World'. Photo: Sinéad Mallee

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Achonry diocesan
changes

Bishop Brendan Kelly has announced this year's diocesan changes for the Diocese of Achonry.

Archdeacon Patrick Kilcoyne, parish priest of Kiltimagh will be retiring, and will be succeeded at Kiltimagh by Carracastle's Fr Michael Quinn, PP Swinford curate Fr Gerard Davey will succeed Fr Quinn at Carracastle.

As Fr Thomas Mulligan, PP, Atymass, is also retiring, Kilkelly curate Fr John Maloney will become Administrator at Atymass.

The appointments will come into effect on the first weekend of September.

The parable of the Dublin trams

I'm very fond of my own little parable about the Dublin trams. It's highly symbolic about social change – and social renewal.

In 1949, the last of the Dublin trams were abolished, as all progressive-minded folk affirmed that “the future belongs to the motor car”. A few, lonely protesters tried to save the Dublin trams, but to no avail. They were written off as anachronisms.

Walk through the streets of Dublin today and what do you see? The Dublin tramway system being painstakingly reconstituted – at huge expense and enormous inconvenience.

So the trams weren't an “anachronism” after all! Trams are now considered a brilliantly efficient form of public transport.

Consequently, whenever someone condemns any process or practice as “an anachronism”, the tram association bell rings in my head.

Support

The Fine Gael TD Josepha Madigan has condemned Article 41.2.1 of the Constitution which refers to the woman in the home. (“...the State recognises that by her life within the home, the woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved.”) Ms Madigan hopes to have this “archaic” “anachronism” deleted by referendum. She is backed by Orla O'Connor of the National Women's Council and the UN Committee



Mary Kenny

on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. Tram bell again! The clause's phrasing is a little old-fashioned, but does it discriminate against women – or does it honour those women (and mothers) who freely choose to be home-makers?

“The home-maker has made a real contribution to social well-being”

And now comes another twist in the saga. Prof. Geoffrey Shannon, a leading lawyer, has said that removing this clause might very well disadvantage women in the case of marriage breakdown. Maintenance could be reduced without

this “anachronistic” 41.2.1. A dependent spouse “fares better in Ireland than in virtually any other jurisdiction in the world” – because of the state's recognition that the home-maker has made a real contribution to social well-being, and therefore deserves support and protection.

Josepha Madigan, Orla O'Connor and the panjandrums at the UN Committee may ponder on the possibility that in several decades time, they may be considered “archaic” and “anachronistic”, while the idea of extending fair support to homemakers is regarded as enlightened, decent and honourable.

Do contemplate the parable of the Dublin trams, sisters!

A time well captured

My summer reading includes Matt Cooper's entertaining and informative biography of Tony O'Reilly, *The Maximalist*, now in paperback. It is a picture of a time, and a place – Ireland from the 1940s to the 2000s – as well as of a man. O'Reilly taught Irish business people how to market a 'brand', which included a dynamic Irish identity.

The author gives full credit to the encouragement Tony received from his Jesuit teachers at Belvedere, although they knew, privately, that his parents were not then married, something usually stigmatised in the 1940s – and not just in Ireland.

Tony himself once said to me “my mother fluttered her eyelashes at the admissions interview; and, as well, I think the Jesuits saw a potential in me for future achievement.” Indeed.

Handshake is a touching gesture

I notice that in Dublin churches, the ‘handshake of peace’ is usually practiced at Sunday Mass. But outside of Dublin, it is – in my experience – less usual. When I was in Co. Kerry last month, there was no ‘handshake of peace’.

I surmise that this is the explanation: in most parts of Ireland, outside of the major cities, people in the community either know each other already, or have some familiarity with those they see regularly in the church. In these circumstances, they might feel a bit artificial about exchanging the handshake. They already share a sense of community with those in the pew – they don't need to emphasise it with a formal handshake.

But in Dublin, those attending Mass are more likely to be strangers to one another, and therefore the ‘handshake of peace’ seems like a kindly way of acknowledging a stranger, and extending a sense of

community. And in this season of visitors and tourists, it may also act as a céad míle fáilte to those from overseas.

There were a couple of Americans in the pew in front of me last Sunday and you could see that they really appreciated the gesture.

It would be nice to see it practiced everywhere, although I realise that it doesn't come naturally to everyone. My late husband thought it rather false – as if pretending to be chummy with all and sundry. I argued the case that it represented a fellowship of Christians, but he found it embarrassing.

But look, get over yourself, say I. Share the handshake of peace, which can also be a welcome to another soul in the parish. You never know what inner struggles the person next to you might be going through, and the fellowship of faith can be, literally, touching, in this exchange.

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Call for empty house tax to boost supply

Greg Daly

The Government should consider taxing the owners of needlessly empty houses in an attempt to increase housing supply in the capital, a leading homelessness campaigner has said.

Commenting on reports that hundreds of properties are lying vacant around the city, Mike Allen of Focus Ireland told *The Irish Catholic* that efforts should be made to establish why so many houses are empty.

"Getting a substantial part of Dublin's empty houses back into use should be a key part of our housing strategy," he said, continuing, "but to do it on the scale that's necessary the Government should introduce an empty-property tax with broad-based exemptions for reasons why people should be allowed to keep their property empty while paying a tax."

His comments followed a call from the Peter McVerry Trust for councils to use compulsory purchase orders to buy up to 500 proper-

ties currently empty around Dublin. It is understood that just 13 properties have been acquired by Dublin councils in this way so far this year.

While sympathetic to this proposal, given the scale of the capital's homelessness crisis, Mr Allen said CPOs can be a "heavy-handed approach".

Situations

"You do need to recognise that there are some situations where people keep places empty as a result of other Government policies, for example when an elderly person has gone into a nursing home and the house lies empty because of the way the Fair Deal scheme works," he said, adding that difficulties with wills can also lead to houses being empty for prolonged periods.

At the same time, he said, "there are cases where people have empty properties that are sitting there from year to year", and that while it is "bizarre" to think there are people with empty properties who are not getting any income from their use, this

seems to be a widespread reality.

A "taxation measure with a reasonably broad get-out clause" could effectively encourage people to use

their empty properties or justify failures to do so, he said, criticising delays in the formulation of a Government strategy on vacant property.

Pointing out that one was promised last year, he said it is unlikely to be published before the end of the summer, and said it has been "incredibly delayed".



Capuchin students from New Zealand, Poland, Ukraine and Slovakia visiting the Irish Capuchin Province as part of a collaborative formation programme. From left: Bro. Peter, Bro. Jacek (Formator), Bro. Roman, Bro. Nick, Bro. Paul, Bro. Michael and Bro. Kieran Shorten (Ard Mhuire Capuchin Friary, Co Donegal)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Family focus on Reek Sunday

Archbishop Michael Neary will lead the annual pilgrimage at Croagh Patrick in Co Mayo this weekend, with a special focus on the family as preparations begin for the World Meeting of Families 2018 (WMOF2018).

WMOF2018 are inviting Reek Sunday pilgrims to pray for families and wear a special sticker as a symbol of bringing families with them in prayer as they make their ascent to the summit. The stickers will be distributed by WMOF2018 volunteers at St Patrick's statue at the start of the ascent to the sacred mountain.

Procedural challenge to prayer ban quashed

Questions have been raised over the legitimacy of the process which led to the prohibition of pre-meeting prayers in Galway City Council.

A "re-jigging of the agenda" in May allowed Mayor Pearse Flannery (FG) to take "advantage of the situation" and move the prayer removal amendment to the Standing Orders up the agenda, resulting in a vote with only 14 out of the 18 members present, according to Fianna Fáil Cllr. Peter Keane.

That vote was evenly split, with the mayor's casting vote pushing through the change.

Attempts to reverse this decision on procedural grounds have been voted down 15-3, however. "At the end of the day, democracy counts, and we lost," said Cllr. Keane.

Homily remembers three Donegal women killed in crash

Chai Brady

Thanks were given for the lives of three women who tragically lost their lives in a car crash in Co Louth at their funeral mass at the Church of Saint Joseph and Saint Conal in Donegal.

The three women were travelling home to Bruckless from Dublin Airport and were killed in a three-car collision on July 21, just after a holiday in Turkey.

Fr James Sweeney gave the homily, saying the community "commended the souls of Margaret McGonagle, her daughter Mairead Mundy

and friend Rachel Battles to the care and mercy of God".

He said the community has rallied together in support of all the families involved, and that the "sense of community spirit has brought the parish together helping to provide all the support and assistance we can humanly give".

The women were remembered as well-known members of the community.

Margaret McGonagle was involved in setting up the Donegal Rape Crisis Centre, and one of her clients thanked her for changing her "life completely".

"It's a pleasure to have met you and I have enjoyed every

second. You have inspired me so much and helped me to smile again," she said.

Her daughter, Mairead Mundy was remembered as a champion Irish dancer, who danced in both the Ulster and All-Ireland competitions.

A man and a six-year-old girl were seriously injured in the collision, and were taken to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda.

New books brings Lough Derg to life

Victoria Holthaus

Lough Derg is brought to life in *Peggy goes on Pilgrimage* and *Lough Derg's Colouring Book*, thanks to author and member of the pastoral team Mary McDaid.

"These two books have been in my head for nearly as long as I've been blessed to work each summer on Lough Derg and that's a long time now this being my 30th year; it's a ministry I've loved from day one and looking back, it was the characters and their personal witness to the pilgrimage that fostered my passion for this sacred place," she said.

Hoping the books will help to inspire young generations

to learn more about the Island and its tradition of pilgrimage, Mary said this is where the influence for a "child friendly illustrative styling" comes from thanks to illustrator Naomhe McNally.

"The story of *Peggy goes on Pilgrimage* will sow the seed of pilgrimage in the hearts of our young folk and bring the conversation of this Island more easily into the homes of Lough Derg pilgrim families," Mary added.

The books are available from the Lough Derg gift shop during the pilgrimage season May-October 2017 or can be purchased directly from Lough Derg by phone 071 9861518 or email info@lough-derg.org for further details.

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KNOCK National Novena

Theme: 'Living Life to the Full'

Monday, 14th
August to
Tuesday, 22nd
August

The National Novena to Our Lady of Knock offers nine days of reflection and prayer and a chance to reconnect with your faith in a sacred space.

The programme for this year includes a wonderful line-up of guest speakers and workshops to help enrich and enliven faith. The theme is 'Living Life to the Full' and as the title suggests, there will be a strong focus on appreciating the gift of life and finding beauty in the everyday.

Novena Speakers

The Novena will open on Monday, 14th August with **Dr Mary Healy**, international speaker on scripture and healing, followed by Redemptorists **Fr Seamus Enright, CSSR** and **Fr Michael Cusack, CSSR** on Tuesday, 15th.

Marty Morrissey will make his debut public appearance at Knock on Wednesday, 16th August when he will speak during the 3pm and 8.30pm ceremonies. Although best known for his career as a sports commentator and TV personality on RTÉ, Marty is also known for his great sense of humour and infectious upbeat personality. Sport will be the topic *du jour* as workshops will be delivered by **Fr Kevin O'Gorman**, author of 'Saving Sport: Sport, Society and Spirituality'.

There will be a local flavour on Thursday 17th with Knock native **Bernadette McNeive** and professional motivational speaker **Darren Cawley** who will both deliver moving accounts of their own personal stories of organ donation.

To mark 500 years of the Reformation, **Rt Revd Patrick Rooke** (Bishop of Tuam, Killala & Achonry Diocese- Church of Ireland) will be welcomed for the ceremonies on Friday 18th and joined by **Dr Salvador Ryan**, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at St Patrick's College, Maynooth who will conduct workshops on this day.

On Saturday 19th **Most Rev Philip Boyce, DD.**, retired Bishop of Raphoe will be welcomed to Knock for ceremonies and joined by writer and theologian **Fr Daniel O'Leary** to facilitate workshops.

Most Rev Kevin Doran, Bishop of Elphin will speak during the ceremonies on Sunday, 20th August and workshops will be facilitated by **Dr Aoife McGrath**, lecturer in Pastoral Theology and Parish Placement Coordinator at the Pontifical University, Maynooth.



World Meeting of Families

One of the highlights of the Novena will take place on Monday 21st August with the launch of the World Meeting of Families 2018 programme 'Amoris: Let's talk Family, Let's be Family!'. Families representing each diocese will travel to Knock for this special day.

A newly commissioned Icon of the Holy Family will be unveiled and anointed in the Basilica following which, the Icon will travel to each diocese around the country as part of the WMOF2018 celebrations.

Very Rev Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin will highlight family life with 'When Plates Fly! Pope Francis on the joys and challenges of family life' and workshops will be facilitated by Fr Timothy Bartlett on how to make technology more family friendly.

The Novena will come to a close on Tuesday, 22nd August with **Maria Steen**, spokesperson for the Iona Institute at the ceremonies and workshops with **Cora Sherlock**, Deputy Chairperson of the Pro Life Campaign.

Fr Richard Gibbons, PP, Rector of Knock Shrine is looking forward to hosting the annual Novena which continues to be the biggest event in the Shrine's annual calendar. **"The Novena is about embracing our spiritual**

elves and in today's world it is a valuable thing to take some time alone or with family and friends to experience the richness of our faith and to escape the material and fast-paced world."

Youth & Faith

Once again The HUB which is run by the Youth Ministry at Knock, will open their doors throughout the Novena. The HUB is a great place for children (five years and over) and young people and offers a wide variety of activities and workshops to help young people engage with their faith in a fun and safe environment.

Live Streaming

Knock Shrine are engaging more and more with pilgrims on social media and this year it is planned to have all of the ceremonies steamed live via the Knock Shrine Facebook and Twitter pages. The Masses will also be streamed as usual on the Knock Shrine website and YouTube channel.

Ceremonies will take place at 3pm and 8.30pm and workshops at 12 noon and 6pm daily. Find out more at www.knockshrine.ie or follow on Facebook and Twitter.

Witnesses' Walk

A special walk will take place to give recognition to all of the people who witnessed the Apparition at Knock on the 21st August, 1879. The walk will follow a short route

around the village and Shrine grounds, pausing at key points. It will begin at 7pm outside the Chapel of Reconciliation and end with a minute silence and prayers in the Apparition Chapel at 8pm prior to the Novena evening ceremony.



Revisiting the *Alma Mater*



The class of 1952.



The class of 1957.



The class of 1962.

Victoria Holthaus and Colm Fitzpatrick

Past attendees of All Hallows seminary in Dublin returned to their beloved campus to celebrate their jubilee anniversaries last week. For most it has been 25, 30, 40 and even 60 years since they have been ordained but attendees still felt quite at home, as they came together to celebrate through Mass, meals and the many stories about their fondest memories throughout the years.

"We were shown great kindness then and we see great kindness now," said Christy Sheridan, 1962-1965 All Hallows Association Kildare.

Founded in 1842 by Fr John Hand, All Hallows has a rich history in education and serving others. Priests from the college were sought after by dioceses throughout the world and at one point, more than half of all priests in Aus-

tralia were from All Hallows. "If you felt you had a vocation and wanted to be a secular priest, you went to All Hallows," said Fr Patrick Conlon, class of 1957.

Closed

While All Hallows is now closed, Dublin City University (DCU) has bought the campus to help preserve its buildings and create a contemporary learning environment for their students. However, former students will continue to travel from across the globe every year for Jubilee Day, to reminiscence with friends and colleagues, some of whom have not talked since their ordination day.

"The comradery of all of us going to different places with diverse backgrounds and homes but yet we're bringing that diversity out to the ministry and the world. That would be my most significant lesson from here," said Fr John Waldren, class of 1966.



The Friends of All Hallows (above) and class groups of jubilarians from All Hallows pictured with Bishop Kevin Boland who celebrated the jubilee Mass. Photos: Joe Gavin



Fr John Waldren, Class of 1966 from Portland, Oregon.

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The class of 1967.



The class of 1977.



L-R: Fr Brendan Deenihan, Class of 1963 from Portelizabeth, South Africa; Christy Sheridan, 1962 – 1965 AHA Kildare, from Newbridge, Co. Kildare; George Calley, Class of 1968 from Orange County, California.



L-R: Patrick Conlon, Class of 1957 from Plymouth and Rev. John Kileen, Class of 1957 from Corpus Christi, Texas. Photo: Victoria Holthaus



Roll up, roll up and put the boot into old, Catholic Ireland

Plans for pubs to open on Good Friday show politicians' desperation to flaunt 'progressive' credentials, writes **David Quinn**

Alcohol sales are restricted in Ireland in all sorts of ways. For example, an off-licence cannot sell alcohol before 10.30am from Monday to Saturday, or before 12.30pm on a Sunday, and never after 10pm. Pubs must close after a certain hour. 'Happy Hour' – selling alcohol at a reduced price during a certain time of day – is prohibited. Alcohol cannot be sold to anyone under 18.

There are two days in the year when pubs and restaurants cannot serve alcohol: Good Friday and Christmas Day. From next year on, that will be down to Christmas Day only, because the Government has backed a move to turn Good Friday into a normal drinking day. It backed a Private Members' Bill that passed all stages in the Seanad last week. It will now go to the Dáil and inevitably pass there as well.

The main sponsor of the bill, Senator Billy Lawless (a restaurateur by trade, incidentally), seemed very pleased with himself as his initiative was passed by the Seanad with the Government ensuring a minimum of debate. (This despite the fact that an opinion poll conducted by Amárach Research on behalf of The Iona Institute showed that the public are split 50/50 on the matter.)

Pluralist

Lawless hailed the passage of his bill as "another progressive step in Ireland's long journey towards separation between Church and State". He said it sends a message that "Ireland is a pluralist, globalist, forward-thinking country".

One of the Bill's co-sponsors, Gerard Craughwell, said the bill would not force people to take drink on a Good Friday "but merely leaves the option open".



He assured the public: "We are not trying to trample all over the religious beliefs of people in Ireland. The people who have religious beliefs will continue to observe them. The people who wish to have a drink will do so." (Newsflash; they could already drink at home.)

So, there it is: another victory for liberalism, for pluralism, for secularism, for globalism, for forward thinking, for individual freedom. A great day indeed. The Irish people can now go into pubs 364 days of the year, instead of a mere 363.

Let's call out what is really going on here: any Irish law that has a religious origin is being targeted as an unacceptable restriction on freedom, a violation of Church/State separation. But all kinds of other restrictions can be permitted, hence the list of restrictions on the sale of alcohol I listed at the top of the article.

“The Irish people can now go into pubs 364 days of the year, instead of a mere 363”

Why didn't Senators Lawless and Craughwell campaign for the lifting of most other restrictions on the sale of alcohol on the grounds that these restrictions, like the Good Friday rule, interfere with personal freedom?

It could equally be argued that off-licences should be allowed sell alcohol at any time of the day or night. If you don't want to buy alcohol at 3am then don't. But don't stop anyone else from doing so if that is what they want. Personal freedom is personal freedom.

So why didn't Senators Lawless, Craughwell *et al* campaign for this as well? They might argue that these restrictions are for health reasons. But isn't that the 'Nanny State' at work, and isn't the 'Nanny State' a sort of new version of the Church? (The Church would have argued that closing the pubs on Good Friday was for the good of our spiritual health.)

Conclusion

Again, it is very hard to avoid the conclusion that the Good Friday drinking laws were targeted because anything connected with the Church is the easiest of easy targets in Ireland presently. It also gives politicians an unrivalled opportunity to 'virtue-signal'. Boasting about 'pluralist', 'globalist' Ireland is the modern equivalent of boasting in days gone-by about 'Holy Catholic' Ireland. You can be sure of applause in fashionable quarters.

We saw the same kind of thing from Fine Gael TD Regina Doherty in an interview in the current edition of *Hot Press*. *Hot Press* loves to ask politicians cringe-inducing questions about their sex lives and it is also the done thing to ask them about religion. In both cases politicians are invited to show that they aren't the least hung up about either sex or religion and for the most part the politicians are eager to oblige ('Look how cool I am').

Regina Doherty did not disappoint. Admittedly she kept her dignity intact when asked about her sex life, but gave *Hot Press* almost all it could have hoped for when it asked her about religion.

She considers herself to be religious, but for her, religion is mainly a personal thing. Her relationship is with God, not with the

'Church'. (But the Church is the community of believers. Doesn't she believe religion has a communal aspect?)

Anyway, having confessed to being religious in her own personal way, she rushed to reassure her interviewer that there is a "bucket load of stuff that I don't believe that the Church will tell you – buckets

and buckets". (Is it the same with Fine Gael? She was the Fine Gael Chief Whip which is all about ensuring the members toe the party line. Irony, anyone?)

She wants the pro-life amendment to go (in the 2011 General Election she was all for that amendment). She wants the Angelus to be

banished from the airwaves. She thinks the church collection should "probably" be taxed, even though people contribute to it after having paid their taxes. (Should the Fine Gael collection be taxed as well?)

“There is a 'bucket load of stuff that I don't believe that the Church will tell you”

No doubt she's also fully in support of opening the pubs on Good Friday. This is how most of our politicians are these days. A previous generation was all about showing how Catholic they were.

Today they want to flaunt their 'progressive' credentials as happened in the Seanad last week and as happened in the pages of *Hot Press* in the case of Regina Doherty.

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- Sunday Times columnist, Brenda Power.

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It is through a priest's humanity come closer to the God who love

Because a priest stands in the middle of the relationship between God and his people, he becomes a channel of grace and love, writes **Fr Ciaran Dougherty OP**



At the beginning of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle said "all men desire to know." And he was right.

But he wasn't just talking about the acquisition of random knowledge, he had a very specific thing in mind. He wanted to know what was what.

This day after your ordination, it may seem that everything is done and dusted. Your formation is finished, your studies are finished, you have become what you have been waiting to become for so many years. All your questions may appear to have been answered.

But there is a question that might and perhaps must haunt you every day for the rest of your life; What have I become?

The simple answer is 'a priest', and everybody thinks that they know what a priest is. A priest is the one who baptises and says Mass and hears confessions and visits the sick and organises the bingo. But if we were to list all the different things a priest does still we would only be scratching the surface of what a priest is.

Higher things

For there really is no easy answer to that question, because to understand what a priest is would be to understand the height and the depth of the being of Jesus Christ himself. Because as you know, to understand a thing you have to know it in its fully developed state. But still we and you want to know in this as in everything else we have to start with the things we know best and move on from there to the higher things. We have to start by asking questions.

So, we take all these things a priest does: the things we can see and experience with

our senses, the words, the gestures, the anointings and so on and we ask the obvious question as to why he does them at all.

Just as people may wonder why you did what you did yesterday. And to understand this we must investigate two things: we must look at Christ and see why he did what he did, and then you must search your own mind to find out why you did what you did.

The Gospels tell us many things about Jesus. In various ways they tell us who he is and what he did and at the root of it all we find a simple statement of love "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

“Love is the reason that Jesus did what he did, why he lived and walked among his people, why he died on the Cross to save us...”

It was because of God's love for his own creation that he gave us his only son as Saviour. And we are all familiar with love, it is something we grew up with, something we first receive and in receiving learn how to give. And in those primary human relationships of love we see the image of God made flesh, made real and tangible and easily understood by human beings. And if we think for a second we realise that we learn to love because we learn that we are loved.

So, love is the reason that Jesus did what he did, why he lived and walked among his people, why he died on the Cross to save us, why he rose again to give us the hope of



eternal life. As I said, we all understand love, we know what it looks like and what it feels like, but as wonderful as the things that Jesus did for us are, they are only a

glimpse of the love that God has for us, because in this life and in these bodies we cannot hope to really understand the immensity of God's love for us.

Your life as a Dominican has been and will continue to be a preparation in prayer and study for the unfolding of your new reality, your priestly reality. In prayer and

study you will learn more of this love that God has for you and hopefully you will be filled with this love that it will strain the limits of your flesh, compelling you to preach the Gospel because you must get out what is within. It will become a source of woe to you if you do not preach the Gospel.

“What you have learned from God, great though it is, is but a taste of the fullness of the all the possibilities of divine love”

Because you will stand now in the middle of a relationship, the relationship between God and his people. You are a servant of Christ and his people, a channel of grace and love.

You are a channel for being,

that people es them



he communicated this love no matter how unable some were to receive or understand it. It is this love that he will teach you in prayer and which you must communicate to those you serve in your preaching.

You have been given your place in the world amongst all the signs and wonders that direct the human heart to its maker. The Lord may call you his friend, but you must call yourself servant in front of His people.

“What you are you understand a little, what you are to become you understand not at all...”

So, never rest and say there is nothing more the Lord or his people can teach me. Always be on the lookout for what more you can be taught and what more you can learn so that you can serve Him and his people better.

They will show you their need for God in all the ways that human beings need God and God will respond to them through you.

You now participate in God's work of satisfying the needs of his people and if they see God in you they will come closer to him, sometimes a little, sometimes a lot, but even coming a little closer is something to rejoice about/over. So what is a priest? What are you?

You are a servant, a friend, a brother, a father, one who offers sacrifice and praise on behalf of the people and for the people and as you work and pray for the salvation of others, others will in their own way work and pray for your salvation.

What you are you understand a little, what you are to become you understand not at all, but God who has begun this work in you will bring it to its completion and when he does you will fully understand what you are in the light of God's full revelation of Himself to you.

❶ *Fr Ciaran Dougherty OP is a Dominican friar. This is the text of the homily he preached at the recent first Mass of thanksgiving of Fr Philip Mulryne OP.*

a way for Christ to be in the world, but not the only way, and not the most important.

But you must humbly acknowledge that you are more than just the man in the middle. God has called you to serve him and his people will need you to serve them. So all your natural human characteristics take on a supernatural character as it is through your humanity, as it was through the Lord's humanity that people will come closer to the God who loves them.

What you have learned from God, great though it is, is but a taste of the fullness of the all the possibilities of divine love. You have learned that love is kind, that love is merciful, that love does not delight in wrong doing but delights in the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things,

Christ knew the fullness of the love that brought him into the world and through everything which he did and said



Niamh Uí Bhriain

By any standards, Karen Gaffney is an extraordinary person. A long-distance swimmer who relay swam the English Channel, she is an impressive and witty public speaker whose TED talk on inclusion for people with disabilities has captured global attention.

She is also the first living person with Down Syndrome to receive an honorary doctorate, and is admired, not only for her personal achievements, but for her challenge to a culture where babies with Down Syndrome are increasingly aborted before birth.

The Irish media, it seems, isn't ready for that challenge. During her recent visit, we experienced a blanket refusal by the mainstream media to give Karen a platform. She seemed to be viewed as a woman with a dangerous idea, a woman who needed to be censored, because she is not afraid to speak out about the reality of what abortion has meant for her community.

"Imagine that here we are reversing the damage caused by institutions, removing barriers to education, making inroads into a full and inclusive life for people like me, and still we have those who say we shouldn't even be born at all," she previously told an audience at a TED Talk in Portland.

"I believe that Down Syndrome is a life worth saying 'yes' to. It is a life worth saving. Every life has value, every life matters, regardless of how many chromosomes you have," she says.

We hear a lot about how much the media is anxious to support strong, intelligent women, and ensure inclusion for people with disabilities, but none of that seems to matter when a strong, intelligent, articulate woman with a disability is saying that every person has a right to life.

Karen Gaffney represents a community which has been devastated by abortion. In Britain, 90% of babies with Down Syndrome are aborted before birth. In Iceland,

Why the media ignored the inspiring, amazing Karen Gaffney



Karen Gaffney.

not one baby with Down Syndrome has been born in the past five years. Yet the Irish media didn't want you to hear what a person with Down Syndrome had to say on the issue.

When Karen spoke to TDs in Dáil Éireann, they were hugely impressed by her inspiring passion for life and her work to make a better world for people with disabilities.

The media never showed up to the press event that followed. RTÉ said that was because it was 'just an anti-abortion event'. My guess is that there's actually a very particular reason why they didn't want her message to be heard.

“There has been a dramatic fall in support for abortion on grounds of disability”

According to recent opinion polls, there has been a dramatic fall in support for abortion on grounds of disability, a welcome shift from a shocking 61% support in a January 2016 Red C/ Newstalk poll to just 36% in a June Ipsos/MRBI poll for *The Irish Times*. This shift caused *The Irish Times* to fret that the issue had seen a "hardening of opposition", a curious observation when surely what the polls are showing is a softening of hearts, motivated by compassion and common decency. Has this dramatic fall made our lamentably

biased media reluctant to give a voice to people like Karen Gaffney? It would appear so.

Proud

On July 1, Karen addressed the Save the 8th Rally for Life, a gathering which brought up to 80,000 people to celebrate life and demand a better answer than abortion for mothers and babies.

"I am very proud to be here today to stand up for life, for all life, for the life of the unborn child even if that child will be born with Down Syndrome", she began to rapturous applause.

"I am from the US", she continued, "and in my country, and in many countries all around the world, babies who may have Down Syndrome are being

wiped out, even before they take their first breath. But not here. Not today. Not in your country. Not in Ireland!"

Karen Gaffney's rally speech is set to go viral on social media, and will resonate with ordinary people of goodwill who realise that all of us deserve a chance at life, and that love doesn't count chromosomes.

But the Irish media needs to take a long, hard look at itself and at its willingness to discriminate against this inspiring, compassionate, articulate woman simply because she believes that Down Syndrome is a life worth saying 'yes' to.

❶ *Niamh Uí Bhriain is a spokeswoman for the Life Institute. www.thelifeinstitute.net*

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Mass being celebrated in Maynooth College Chapel on Saturday. Photo: John McElroy



Charles Kelly, Marta Gamiz (Spain) and Jose Barcerisa (Spain).



Joe McDonnell, Frank Hearn and Gerard T. Ryan.



Cardinal Seán Brady with Christopher Nolan, Bart McGettrick and Michael Byrne.



Dr Mary Holohan and Maureen Jones.



Patrick Durcan, Peter Durnin and Brendan O'Reilly.



The procession leaving the chapel at the end of Mass.



Colette McGrady, Marion O'Byrne and Marie Kenna.



The procession leaving the chapel at the end of Mass.



Jim Dorgan, Francey Murray, John Bosco O'Hagan and Jack Fadden.



Cardinal Seán Brady with Eleanor Hurl and Veronica Holohan, the two new Dames of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.



Aine Fitzgerald O'Reilly, Damian Walls, Mairead Walls and Thomas Kilduff.

Two new members were admitted as Dames of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in Maynooth at the weekend. During a Mass presided over by Cardinal Seán Brady in the College Chapel, Veronica Holohan and Eleanor Hurl were invested as dames. With its roots in ancient times, members the Equestrian Order of

the Holy Sepulchre work to support Christian communities in the Holy Land. The organisation supports many charitable and outreach programmes aimed at ensuring that Christians can have a viable future in the land of Christ's birth and earthly ministry. Other members of the Irish

lieutenancy of the order who received promotions at the weekend were Fr Derek Darby who was promoted to the rank of Knight Commander, Anthony Bailey who was promoted to the rank of Knight Grand Cross and Dr Donal Lydon who received the Gold Palm of Jerusalem.



Mags Gargan

The Government does not know the cause of death of a third of the asylum seekers who have died in State care in the last 10 years. While two people are recorded as dying as a result of suicide and one resident was stabbed to death, the “suspected cause of death” of over one third of the people who have died while resident in the direct provision accommodation system is unknown.

In response to a Freedom of Information request from *The Irish Catholic*, the Department of Justice released figures which show that 44 people have died in the direct provision system between 2007 and 2017, including three stillborn babies and one “neonatal death”.

In 15 of the cases the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) record the suspected cause of death as “unknown” or simply “died”. Among those listed as unknown was a 41-year-old man who was “found in room by roommate” in 2008, a 53-year-old man who was “found dead in his bed at 9am” by his roommate in 2012, a 35-year-old man “found unconscious in room and died in hospital” in 2014 and another man in 2015 “found unconscious in room and died in hospital”.

Residents

Fr Paddy Byrne, a curate in Portlaoise parish who ministers to the residents of the Montague Hotel, told *The Irish Catholic* he recently presided at a funeral of a person living in direct provision. “I can only call it a horror story of a young woman who was forgotten by this society, who never felt hospitality or welcome, who was imprisoned because of her identity and died ‘unknown,’” he said.

The real extent of Government ignorance in this respect may be rather higher; while the Department of Justice admits to having no information on why over a third of those in direct provision died, the official ‘cause of death’ in other cases is in reality a ‘suspected cause of death’, based on “information known (or believed to be known)” by the management of direct provision centres.

In a statement the department said that in some cases the RIA will have general knowledge of the suspected cause of death – either as a result of specified medical needs of a resident or if



Lissywollen direct provision centre for asylum seekers in Athlone, Co. Westmeath.

Cause of one in three deaths in direct provision system is unknown



Residents protesting against the direct provision system.

information is provided by a centre manager – but it does not “seek information on protection applicants outside its remit”.

It said that neither the HSE nor a coroner “have ever raised an issue relating to the accommodation in which a deceased person lived prior to their death”. If this were to happen it said, the RIA “would respond accordingly”.

Leonie Kerins, Director of Doras Luimní – an NGO supporting migrants’ rights – said it “doesn’t surprise me that the RIA say their responsibilities are limited, and not anything beyond food and accommodation”. “That’s how they see their role, bricks and mortar and the particular needs of asylum seekers are not taken into consideration in terms of separation from family, post-traumatic stress and survival of torture,” she said.

“It just goes to show how careless the State is in terms of dealing with refugee issues”

“Direct provision is detrimental to the residents’ wellbeing psychologically and it has a long-term impact beyond direct provision. I would be interested to track

those who have died soon after leaving direct provision as well.”

Eugene Quinn, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS Ireland) National Director, said understanding the cause of death of people who are in the care of the State is “important”. “As RIA have no responsibilities in relation to the retention of information or recording a cause of death, it is necessary that there is a whole system approach to dealing with deaths of direct provision residents. This would ensure deaths are handled sensitively and culturally appropriately and that any learnings for the system are taken on board,” he said.

Stephen Ng’ang’a, Coordinator of the Core Group of Asylum Seekers, said he was surprised that RIA “don’t keep a record of these things and it just goes to show how careless the State is in terms of dealing with refugee and asylum seeker issues, and their human dignity – whether they died of any cause – has been undermined. That is my worry – if they are treated as numbers or as non-entities or non-nationals or whatever stereotype associated with asylum seekers, I think it is despicable,” he said.

“It has been said that in the future this kind of thing will come to light and it’s going to be a huge issue. I don’t

think an apology is going to fix all the issues that were not addressed by the current regime.”

Direct provision was introduced by the Government in 2000 as a means of meeting the basic needs of food and shelter for asylum seekers while their claims for refugee status are being processed. Initially viewed as a short-term arrangement, for about six months, it covers full board accommodation and personal allowances of €19.10 per adult and €15.60 per child per week. The centres, which include former hostels, hotels and a mobile home park, are run by private contractors who receive about €50 million in State funding annually.

“This is a living injustice, it is a rotten disease, that the vast majority remain silent about,” Fr Byrne said. “We speak about new government, change and new beginning, and yet we have learned nothing from the secrets of the past.

Populist media have rightly exposed the horrors of mother and baby homes without much filtering, but the reality that is happening in direct provision is that people who are raw and vulnerable are coming to this country and being imprisoned for up to 10 and 12 years.

“There is no appetite among the Government to

deal with this and I call upon the Justice Minister to at least bring credibility to Irish society in relation to how we treat asylum seekers by ending direct provision or closing where they are being held up,” he said.

A Government working group chaired by retired High Court Judge Bryan McMahon and drawing from a range of interests in the international protection area, including JRS Ireland and the Core Group of Asylum Seekers, made 173 recommendations in 2015 to overhaul the direct provision system.

The three key priorities in the report requiring immediate action were: Those living in direct provision for five years or more should be granted protection status or leave to remain; the weekly direct provision allowance should be increased to €38.74

for adults and €29.80 for children; communal catering should be introduced to direct provision centres.

A number of positive steps have been taken, for example the weekly allowance for children was increased from €9.60 in 2016 and direct provision centres were brought within the remit of the Ombudsman for Children Office earlier this year, giving them an independent institution to pursue complaints in relation to their conditions.

Following the McMahon Report the Government committed to introducing communal or self-catering facilities in family centres and a model has been delivered for the largest family centre in Mosney and other variations are being rolled out in Monaghan, Athlone, Kinsale Road and Clonakilty.

“At the end June it was reported that there are more than 4,500 open cases”

The Government introduced a new International Protection Procedure at the start of 2017, which aims to streamline the asylum process and produce more speedy decisions. However, at the end June it was reported that at the present time there are more than 4,500 open cases.

New applicants for protection (unless they fall within a prioritised category) are currently estimated to have to wait 18 months for an interview.

The Direct Provision population, having fallen in 2016 with the resolution of five year plus cases, is now trending upwards with RIA reporting occupancy at 92% of contracted capacity last month, compared to 78% occupancy in August 2016.

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Irish missionaries lead against starvation in

Irish missionaries and Irish charity Trócaire continue the fight against the injustice of poverty and starvation in Africa, writes **Chai Brady**



Irish missionaries are renowned and respected across Africa, but not many have lived the eclectic life of one man in particular.

This Limerick native taught at Catholic schools, worked as an ambulance driver and in hospital administration, survived malaria, and now serves as the Chancellor of a diocese the same size as the island of Ireland.

Tony Woods (73), a lay missionary, has been working in education and health in Africa for half a century, and is currently the chancellor of the Lodwar diocese in Turkana, northern Kenya.

He faces a monumental and harrowing challenge: to prevent men, women and children in Turkana from dying of starvation.

The failure of subsequent rainy seasons for the last two years has caused the worst drought the region has experienced in generations. Not only has it affected Kenya, but the whole of East Africa, with 25 million people facing starvation - which leads to a drawn-out, agonising death.

“Our medical service has expanded and goes into the places that most others don’t want to go”

The Turkana people are mainly nomadic pastoralists who travel with their livestock in search of water and pasture. Their way of life is no longer possible as there is nothing to sustain their animals. Without their cattle, camels or goats they have no livelihoods, and no way of providing for themselves - let alone a family.

With no other option they are forced to move to hellish slums, and battle to stay alive with rampant disease and frequent violent crime in places like Kibera (the largest slum in Africa and third largest in the world) in Kenya’s capital of Nairobi. HIV is more than twice as common in Kibera than anywhere else in the country.

There are currently 60,000 children in northern Kenya at risk of starving if they don’t receive immediate support, 17,000 of

these children are already severely malnourished. The Lodwar Diocese and Trócaire are doing all they can with the resources they currently have. It is not enough.

Tony told *The Irish Catholic* about his personal hardships over the years, and how the diocese work with Trócaire to deliver life-saving aid. The developmental work done to establish sustainable communities has helped greatly, but a volatile political landscape has left the diocese in a precarious situation.

Political issues

Tony first arrived in Africa in 1964 with the Mill Hill Fathers, who convinced him to go to Cameroon to teach English after he completed his studies in UCD. Over 50 years later he hasn’t stopped working to help people in the country.

Currently the Diocese of Lodwar operates 60% of the preventative and curative health services for Turkana, and provide a large amount of education and water utilities.

“Our medical service has expanded and goes into the places that most others don’t want to go, and that is what we’re really going to be doing from now on,” said Tony.

With the support of Trócaire they operate outreach programmes that deliver life-saving medical supplies to people that are unable to reach it. They travel to communities who are not provided for by local authorities up to 45km away.

“People working for us know when they’re coming, you have to go to a place that’s not so accessible. Same way with water... the diocese has been providing the water sources: most of them,” Tony said.

St Mary’s clinic in Kalokol is located on the west side of Lake Turkana, the dispensary operates an outreach programme. The clinic currently provides supplementary feeding for children between six months and five years old with the help of Trócaire, which is supposed to be an addition to what families can provide at home - which is generally a maize-based porridge eaten once a day.



However, even accessing maize has become an issue as a moth called the fall armyworm has been destroying crops on a massive scale, making it difficult and more expensive to get the staple food. It is resistant to most pesticides.

St Mary’s clinic currently has 1,500 children on its programme,

but had to turn 1,200 eligible babies and children away due to lack of resources, which is a common story across the majority of clinics in Turkana.

Lack of resources can only be helped through donations, which have been sparse as the world’s attention is focused on Brexit

and US president Donald Trump according to Trócaire.

This comes as the Turkana County Department of Health found that in Turkana South alone 12% of children under five are severely malnourished, which is even worse than areas in Somalia which are on the brink of full-scale famine.

“The only thing now is to contribute, to contribute basically to Trócaire”

It is critical to combat malnutrition at that age as quickly as possible, as it can irreversibly stunt growth and mental development.

“The only thing now is to contribute, to contribute basically to Trócaire,” Tony said, “because Trócaire is a conduit to which we access funds and they account for it to Ireland.”

Although the government of Kenya has been responding to the



Tony Woods, Chancellor of the Lodwar Diocese in Turkana, poses on his roof-bed. The Irish lay missionary has been preventing the starvation and suffering of Turkana people.

the fight Kenya



Two Turkana women carry water from a shallow well on a dry river bed in Kalokol.



These habitations are usually used by nomads and are prone to fire.

crisis, they are overwhelmed by the sheer scale of the situation, and have appealed for international support.

After a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was agreed Turkana's local government is now supporting the Diocese of Lodwar by paying staff in health centres such as Kakuma hospital – which are extremely expensive for the diocese to run.

But as the crisis worsens even these supports are not enough, and with elections in Kenya next month there are worries that the MOU may be made void.

Mr Woods said: "The salaries have helped enormously. We have got our salaries for Kakuma Hospital, not all of them but certain cadres in the medical field. Our MOU is supposed to go until February 2018, but we have a very dodgy little thing happening here, on August 8 we have an election, if there is a change of Governor we might be finished today...but anyhow we'll wait and see.

"We're looking also at even if there was no county government

helping us we must now look to how we would survive, would we close some, would we change some for a different use."

Historically elections in Kenya have been punctuated with acts of extreme violence, mainly after the ballots are counted and the successful candidates announced. After accusations of corruption and riots in 2007 at least 1,200 people were killed and tens-of-thousands displaced.

Terrorism

The Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops has recently warned that attacks on certain villages across Kenya, that are masquerading as terrorism or robbery, are politically sponsored to move people out of electoral areas.

Similar to the process of gerrymandering, which aims to change electoral boundaries to the advantage of certain political groups – observed both north and south of the island of Ireland – this barbaric method of displacing innocent people is causing further anger and suffering.

The weather in Turkana regularly reaches 40°C, and the temperature has risen on average by 3°C since the 1960s according to the local weather station – compared to the global increase of 0.7°C. The increase in temperature has been directly linked to climate change, which is mainly being caused by China, the US, and the EU who are the largest contributors to the Earth's carbon emissions.

The water table has continued to drop due to the drought, making it more difficult for people to dig shallow wells that are deep enough. The diocese continue to fight to make clean water available for people, even in the most remote parts of the county.

It is not just Ireland and Trócaire that help the Irish-missionary founded diocese, but Catholic communities around the world.

A group called eRko collects large amounts of money from Christmas to Epiphany every year in Slovakia, Austria and Germany.

Tony said: "They have given us a most wonderful thing called a pump maintenance unit, it is absolutely essential because various people will drill boreholes, will do the rock dams, will do other type of things and then go, but there's no maintenance..."

“We have to come up with solutions that will work in the context of climate change”

"In a drought situation, it is even more necessary because the water table goes down and there's extra pressure on pumps: people break it. All you've got to do is you call up...and if it is an institution like a school or a hospital they will go there first because there are big congregations of people."

Almost immediately after arriving in Africa Tony had to face one of the most difficult challenges of his life. Before leaving Ireland, he went searching for Paludrine – medicine previously used to prevent malaria – in Doon, Co. Limerick.

Naturally, the small rural chemist didn't have medication for tropical diseases at the time, and the 21-year-old went to Africa with no protection against the deadly sickness.

"About 10 days after I arrived there was an agricultural show in Bamenda, and that was very near the school (Our Lady of Lourdes College, Mankon). We went down with the girls. Anyhow after a while all I wanted to do was lie down," he said.

Tony remembers the students running to get one of the sisters who immediately knew what was wrong. A week later he was struggling with malaria, and was in a nightmarish condition. He considered giving up and going home. He was given £100 for emergencies, but at the time he said he couldn't even think of that.

"I thought I was dying, I was sure," he said, "The malaria itself: you freeze, you roast, all these things; horrible. And then the depression, the only time I've ever



Paul Healy, the Country Director for Trócaire in Kenya and Somalia, stands at a dry river bed in Kalokol, where people have been digging shallow wells.

felt depressed was after that."

However nowadays the hardy Irish-man sleeps on a bed on his roof: "I think I'm kind of immune to malaria, I have not had malaria for about 30 years now, I never use nets and they (mosquitos) never come to me," he said. (Malaria is one of the top 10 sicknesses that doctors see in Turkana.)

In 1968 he arrived in eastern Kenya for the first time, and taught in Kitui for what he thought would be two years, which extended to 32. He became involved in administering the Catholic Church-run Kakuma hospital in Turkana in 2001 which included doing weekend runs in an ambulance.

"It was very different from school. That was 17 years ago and I was a lot stronger. At the weekend, I would drive the ambulance. It was easier to have the drivers off on the weekend...it was no bother. The ambulance was just an ordinary pick-up really, just a glorified name."

After two years in the hospital the former Bishop of the Lodwar diocese, Bishop Patrick Harrington, asked him to become the chancellor.

Trócaire

Trócaire have been involved with the diocese since 1994, and focused on essential work relating to human rights issues during the 1990s. They have been focusing on sustainable development projects by improving agricultural production systems, but the humanitarian crisis has caused them to begin an emergency response in order to keep people alive.

Paul Healy the Country Director of Trócaire in Kenya and Somalia, originally from Dublin, has called for a "response of faith", as they are running out of funds.

"The Turkana people are suffering tremendously and Trócaire has to be there with them, so what we are appealing for, to the Church community in Ireland, is for a response of faith. As our brothers and sisters in Turkana (suffer) it is a demand of our faith to respond, and to give what we have to support people who are starving," he said.

"If you go back 40, 50, 60 or even 500 years, you'll see that the Irish Church never contained within itself, it always went out with its

message of justice and peace and inclusivity.

"Trócaire is an extension of that, so the work that we do is based on Catholic social teaching, and we built here in Turkana on the missionary footprint, but the needs here are greater than ever because of climate change, the current drought and the marginalisation of these people."

With the support of Irish Aid over the coming three to four years they will have developed a programme with communities to regenerate rangelands and produce fodder for people to sell or be placed along migratory routes so that livestock survive.

Paul said: "It has been extremely successful where communities that may have been in conflict before over that simple resource – which is grassland for animals – no longer have that because we've been able to produce fodder with the community."

He described livestock as their "lifeline" saying, "you see the Turkana people, they're tall and graceful people, they have a high protein diet because they've survived on milk and blood and meat, and that has been for generations, but that all is now exposed to great jeopardy...we have to come up with solutions that will work in the context of climate change and that's going to be an enormous challenge for the future".

"It is unacceptable in this day and age, it's unacceptable to any Christian community who has any sense of justice, it's a simple thing, 80% of these people are in serious dire straits (earning less than 0.90c a day) and we need to respond to it appropriately as a Catholic Church in Ireland."

The President of Ireland and the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference last week called on the people of Ireland to respond to the crisis, with national collections for Trócaire taking place on July 21 and 22. Without the donations already received, many children and parents would have already perished.

At this point each donation means more children are admitted to supplementary food programmes, and more families are prevented from moving away from everyone and everything they know, to live harsh existences in slums.

Out&About

Young Killaloe pilgrims in Taizé



FRANCE: Participants on the Killaloe Diocesan Pilgrimage to Taizé with Fr Jerry Carey.



WESTMEATH: At the Mullingar Deanery Annual Pioneer Mass held in the Cathedral Of Christ the King, Mullingar are: Danny Dunne (Silver Medal), Kathleen Mimmagh, Betty Mimmagh-Dunne (Gold Medal), Kathleen Ward (Gold Medal), Bridie Hannigan (Gold Medal), Fr Padraic McMahon Adm. and Joe Monaghan, Chairman Mullingar Deanery Pioneers.



DUBLIN: Sr Maria Kenny with Bishop Raymond Field celebrating 50 years as a Sister of Charity in St Patrick's, Ringsend with her colleagues and Fr Ivan Tonge, Parish Priest.



WESTMEATH: The Camillian religious community celebrated the feast of St Camillus with a novena in Killucan last week during which Bro. Augustine celebrated his 92th birthday: from left, Fr Frank Monks, Bro. Augustine McCormack, Bro. John O'Brien and Fr William Coleman.



LIMERICK: Sr Stan receiving the 2017 Fitzgerald Bible Bruff Award at the Thomas Fitzgerald Centre in Bruff for her lifelong work for the "poor, the homeless and the excluded". From left: Paul Dennehy, Chairman; Anthony Gubbins; Cllr Stephen Keary, Mayor of Limerick City & County; Michael Cronin; Sr Stan; Canon James Costello and Jim Cottam.

Edited by Mags Gargan
mags@irishcatholic.ie



Events deadline is a week in advance of publication



KERRY: The priests who celebrated the annual Mass for the Holy Souls at Rath cemetery, Tralee – attended by more than 2,000 people – pictured with the committee. From left, sitting: Canon Seamus Linnane, Fr Tadhg Fitzgerald PP, Fr Dan O’Riordan PP, VF, Fr Pat Crean-Lynch PP, Archbishop Tom Crean PP, Msgr Sean Hanafan VG and Fr Neill Howard CC; back, Joe Moynihan, Olga Tarantsoba, Fr John Buckley, Fr Bernard Healy CC, Fr Tomás O’Keeffe, Billy Locke, chairman Rath Committee, Danny and Kathleen Lawlor, Treasurer, Fr Kieran O’Brien Adm St. Mary’s Cathedral Killarney, Sonny and Elsie Healy, Noreen Hanafin, Denis O’Shea and Frances Quirke. Photo: John Cleary



◀ **GALWAY:** Participants who attended the seven-week ChristLife Faith Formation Course called ‘Discovering Christ’ in Mountbellew (Archdiocese of Tuam) in May-June together with the Parish Priest Fr Karl Burns.

▶ **CAVAN:** The Bishop of Kilmore, Dr Leo O’Reilly recently presented certificates to 42 people who undertook a three-year study of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.



IN SHORT

Fatima centenary conference

A conference to make the jubilee centenary of Our Lady of Fatima will be held from September 8-9 in the Drummond Hotel, Ballykelly, Co. Derry.

Speakers include Fr John Walsh OP, Black Abbey; Prof. Fr Ailbe O’Reilly ORC, Prof. of Theology in Newman College; Prof. William A. Thomas of the Pontifical Marian Academy and Fr John Harris OP, Newbridge. The pilgrim statue of Our Lady from Fatima and a first class relic of St Pope John Paul II will be at the conference. There will also be Confession, Benediction, Mass and the Rosary.

Entrance fee £30. For conference bookings call Joan on +353 87 914 1588.

Novena to St John Vianney in Dublin

A novena to St John Vianney (Cure of Ars) will be held at St John Vianney Church, Ardlea Road, Artane, Dublin from August 4-12.

Novena Mass each day at 10am and 7.30pm on Friday, August 4 and 11. Also Saturday 6pm, Sunday 9.30 and 11.30 am. Special celebrants and preachers each day including Fr Paddy Boyle, Fr Paschal Scallon CM, Fr Bryan Shortall OFM Cap.

Mass with Anointing of the Sick at 3pm on Wednesday, August 9. Holy Hour on Thursday, August 10 at 7.30pm. Adoration on Monday, August 7 after 10am Mass until 8pm (and every

Monday of the year).

Confessions and veneration of the relics after each Mass and Holy Hour.

Celebrating Jesuit Week at Knock Shrine

A ‘Jesuit week’ is underway in Knock Shrine until July 31 exploring Ignatian spirituality.

Facilitated by Fr Terry Howard SJ and Fr Edmund Grace SJ, there are daily preached retreats in the Prayer Guidance Centre at 10.30am and talks on prayer at 11.05am and 7.05pm. Mass is also being celebrated daily in the Basilica at 3pm.

For more information, contact the Prayer Guidance Centre: (094) 93 88100 or prayerguidance@knockshrine.ie

ANTRIM

The First Saturday Devotions will take place each month in St Matthias Church, Glen Road, Belfast. Adoration/Confessions and Consecration to Our Lady at 3pm, Mass at 4pm. All welcome.

ARMAGH

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

Mass and delivery of first class relic of St Faustina and visitation of the St Michael the Archangel statue at St Patrick Chapel, Cullyhanna on July 28 and 29 at 8pm.

Mass and visitation of the St Michael the Archangel pilgrim statue on July 30 at 10am in the Church of St Michael, Newtownhamilton.

CAVAN

The relic of St Teresa of Calcutta will be at Cavan Cathedral from August 2-4.

CORK

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

DONEGAL

John Pridmore, international speaker and author of *From Gangland to Promised Land* will be leading a Healing Retreat in Ards Friary, Creeslough from Friday, August 25 to Sunday, August 27.

Mass and visitation of the St Michael the Archangel pilgrim statue on July 31 at 7pm in St Mary’s Church, Creggan.

DUBLIN

Church of Three Patrons, Rathgar, Divine Mercy Devotions, First Friday, August 4 at 7pm. Mass, Benediction, Chaplet & Blessing with Relic of St Faustina. Confessions available.

One Heart Adoration Vigil in Church of Three Patrons, Rathgar from 8.15pm, Friday, August 4 – 10am Mass Saturday, August 5. (Vigils every First Fri / First Sat for Life and Family).

Novena to St John Vianney (Cure of Ars) August 4-12 at St John Vianney Church, Ardlea Road, Artane. Mass each day at 10am and 7.30pm on Friday August 4 and 11. Also Saturday 6pm, Sunday 9.30 and 11.30am. Special celebrants and preachers each day.

Divine Mercy Mass 7.30pm every Tuesday night in St Saviour’s Church, Dominick Street followed by holy hour. Also prayers of Divine Mercy every day at 2.30pm at the shrine with the relic of St Faustina.

Life to the Full Book Club for young adults (20’s & 30’s) each week to reflect and discuss a chosen spiritual book over a few weeks. Every Thursday from 7-8.30pm in St Paul’s Church Arran Quay (Smithfield). Email: michelle.manley@dublindiocese

Mass in honour of God our Father in Divine Masters, Stillorgan on Sunday, August 6 at 2.30pm.

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

KILDARE

Carbury Parish - Adoration in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Derrinturn takes place each Monday from 10.30am until 12 midnight. Adoration for priestly vocations takes place every Thursday, 8.45pm.

KILKENNY

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

LIMERICK

Mass for healing of families in the Church of the Assumption, Ballylanders on Tuesday, August 8 at 8pm with Fr Brendan Walsh, SAC. Enquiries: Anna 087-7873743.

LONGFORD

The relic of St Teresa of Calcutta will be at St Mel’s Cathedral in Longford on July 31.

MAYO

Holy Souls Society of Ireland annual pilgrimage to Knock Shrine – August 21 for a 3pm Novena Mass.

The 12th annual Charismatic Weekend Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine, hosted by the Monaghan Charismatic Prayer Group, on August 25 at 6pm, August 26 at 9am and August 27 at 8.30am. Speakers: Fr Peter Casey, Sr Anne Maria O’Shaughnessy and Philip McArdle.

MEATH

Clonmacnois Prayer Vigil in Cluain Chiarain Prayer Centre every third Friday. Mass at 9pm. Adoration and Prayers follow until 2.10am. Enquiries: Dave 085-7746763.

MONAGHAN

The relic of St Teresa of Calcutta will be at St Macartan’s Cathedral in Monaghan from August 4-6.

SLIGO

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

WATERFORD

Fr Colm O’Brien Memorial Cycle in aid of Laura Lynn on Saturday, August 12. Route 1 at 11am from Ss Peter & Pauls Clonmel to Tramore (60km). Route 2 at 13.30pm from The Kingfisher, Tramore Rd, Waterford to Tramore (10km). www.frcolmobrien-memorialcycle.com

WESTMEATH

The relic of St Teresa of Calcutta will be at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Mullingar from July 26-28.

WICKLOW

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

Holy Hour of Adoration, Prayer and Music continues every Wednesday, 8pm-9pm, in St Patrick’s Church, Wicklow Town. All welcome. You can also join us on the live stream: <http://www.churchservices.tv/spatrick-schurchwicklow>. Open air Mass, 11.30am on Sunday, July 30, in the Abbey Grounds in Wicklow town, followed by refreshments and music. Feel free to bring along a picnic.

World Report

IN BRIEF

Kenans take refuge in churches after terror attacks

Increased terror attacks have forced 2,000 Kenans from their homes close to the border of Somalia, with many civilians taking refuge in churches. Al-Shabab, an Islamist militant group, are suspected for the violence that has led to people taking refuge in two churches and a school.

Fr Peter Kariuki, a priest at the Catholic parish in Hind, Lamu County, said many of those seeking shelter are Christians. "The militants have been asking the people to say their faith. Those found to be Christians are being killed," Father Kariuki said.

Church sources said the villagers are camped at the Catholic Church in Witu, an evangelical African Inland Church and a local school compound. The moving populations were living near the dense Boni Forest, which the militants have allegedly been using as a cover to terrorise villages.

China to retain power over Church

The Chinese Communist Party's top leader in charge of religion has made it clear that Beijing intends to retain influence over the Catholic Church. Yu Zhengsheng, a member of the elite seven-man Politburo Standing Committee, told members of the open church community "to ensure that the leadership of the Chinese Catholic Church is held firmly in the hands of those who love the nation and the religion".

He made his comments amid continuing talks between Beijing and the Vatican about the normalisation of the appointment of bishops.

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Italy's drought forces Vatican to turn off 100 fountains

Prolonged drought in the city of Rome has caused Vatican officials to begin turning off 100 fountains as a heatwave hits Italy - this includes two baroque fountains in St Peter's Square.

Vatican spokesperson Greg Burke said that turning off the fountains was, "the Vatican's way of living in solidarity with Rome, trying to help Rome get through this crisis".

The Vatican's fountains are gradually being turned off, with the measure initiated on Monday.

The amount of fountains ultimately being turned off will be decided by the severity of the drought over the coming months.

Mr Burke said it was the first time Vatican authorities could remember having to turn off the fountains.

"The drought that is affecting the city of Rome and the surrounding areas of the capital has led the Holy See to take measures to save water," the Vatican said on its website.

"The Governorate of Vati-



People drink water from a fountain in Rome, but a drought means that 100 fountains are to be turned off. Photo: CNS

can City State has decided to turn off all the fountains, both the external ones located in St Peter's Square, and the interior fountains including those in the Vatican Gardens."

This comes as two-thirds of Italy's farmland is suffering from drought, with the cost to farmers being estimated at €2bn according to Italian farmers.

Farmers association Col-diretti said that dairy farmers, and those growing tomatoes, wine grapes, and olives are among those that are most affected according to the BBC. They say that 60% of farmland is threatened by the drought.

Rome's utility company Acea are warning that there will be water rationing as

authorities in the Lazio region ordered the pumping of water from Lake Bracciano to stop (8% of Rome's water comes from the lake), with the governor saying the water level had fallen too much and they risk an environmental disaster.

Already some of Rome's water fountains have been turned off.

The parents of critically-ill Charlie Gard drop case

Following the decision of Charlie Gard's parents to end the legal battle for their critically-ill child to be flown to the US, Catholic Bishops in the UK expressed their sympathy.

For almost half a year the baby's parents fought to have him transferred to the US to undergo specialist treatment. They decided not to continue, saying at a hearing this week that it was too late.

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales released a statement saying they expressed the "deepest sympathy and compassion" for the parents and their son.

"Indeed it is for Charlie [pictured], his parents and family that we all pray,

hoping that they are able, as a family, to be given the support and the space to find peace in the days ahead," it read.

"Their farewell to their tiny and precious baby touches the hearts of all who, like Pope Francis, have followed this sad and complex story. Charlie's life will be lovingly cherished until its natural end."

Charlie Gard was diagnosed with a hereditary genetic disorder, and his parents were told by a US neurologist - Michio Hirano - that nucleoside bypass therapy could save him. However staff at Great Ormond Street Hospital denied that Charlie had any chance of survival, saying he no longer had any hope of a meaningful life.

The court heard that the latest EEG and MRI scans showed there had been significant muscular deterioration caused by extensive muscle atrophy. The parents read statements after the hearing saying they believed wasted time affected their son's chances of survival. Shortly he will be removed from life support.



US bishops call for protections for young migrants

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops urged the Trump administration to "ensure permanent protection" for young people brought to the US as minors without legal documentation.

Chair of the Migration Committee, Bishop Joe Vasquez of Texas, reiterated the bishops' support for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), a 2012 policy which gives recipients a temporary reprieve from deportation and employment authorisation in the US as long as they meet certain

criteria.

During his campaign for president, Donald Trump said he would get rid of the programme but later backtracked. It's unclear what will happen to the estimated 750,000 youth who signed up for the program.

"DACA youth are contributors to our economy, veterans of our military, academic standouts in our universities, and leaders in our parishes," said Bishop Vasquez.

"These young people entered the

US as children and know America as their only home. The dignity of every human being, particularly that of our children and youth, must be protected."

He urged the administration "to continue administering the DACA program and to publicly ensure that DACA youth are not priorities for deportation."

The bishops join other Catholic institutions who are worried about the group and urging protection.



Edited by Chai Brady
chai@irishcatholic.ie

1,700 young people celebrate their Faith



A girl receives Communion during Mass at the Steubenville NYC youth conference at St John's University in Jamaica, New York. More than 1,700 teenagers and youth ministers from 11 states and Canada participated in the event. Photo: CNS

Pro-life groups fight Hawaii law compelling abortion advertising

US pro-life organisations have filed a federal lawsuit to halt the enforcement of a new law in Hawaii that requires pregnancy centres to "advertise" contraception and abortion services.

Attorneys for Alliance Defending Freedom, a non-profit and pro-life legal group that supports religious freedom filed the suit.

They acted on behalf of a centre called A Place for Women, and the National Institute of Family and Life Advocates, which represents most of Hawaii's five other pregnancy counselling centres.

The legislation was passed in May, and Gov David Ige signed it into law this month. It compels Hawaii's six pregnancy care centres to post or distribute information referring clients to state-provided prenatal services

that would include contraception and abortion. Failure to provide this information would incur a fine of \$500 (€430) for a first offense and \$1,000 (€860) for each subsequent offense.

The lawsuit asks the US District Court for the District of Hawaii to declare the law, S.B. 501, unconstitutional.

It lists Hawaii Attorney General Douglas Chin and Gov Ige as defendants.

Alliance Defending Freedom also filed a motion for a preliminary injunction against enforcement of the law, while the case is being considered.

"This is a government-compelled speech issue," said Hawaii Catholic Conference communications director Eva Andrade. "You cannot force someone to post something against

their beliefs."

The law requires "limited service pregnancy centres" to display "in a clear and conspicuous place" a message on letter-size paper in no less than 22-point-size type.

It would read that Hawaii's public programmes provide low-cost access to family planning services, including all FDA-approved methods of contraception and pregnancy related services.

"Freedom of speech also means the freedom to not express views that would violate one's conscience," said Alliance Defending Freedom attorney Elissa Graves in a news release. "Yet, under this law, Hawaii is forcing pro-life centres and physicians to provide free advertising for the abortion industry against their conscience."

African archbishops praises Zambian women

Catholic women in Zambia have been described as the "heartbeat" of parishes by the President of the Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Archbishop Mpundu thanked women for their active role in the Church, saying: "Women are the heartbeat of our parishes and the church in general, without them, the Church would be dead."

He spoke at the 125th anniversary of the arrival of Catholic Christianity in Zambia last week, and encouraged: "The vibrant, mature and dynamic Church to soldier on in her faith, especially by sharing it with others.

"Share your faith with other people, members of your extended families, and with other Zambians. Faith that is not shared remains

small and is infantile. Faith shared is multiplied," said the Archbishop.

Archbishop Julio Murat, the Apostolic Nuncio to Zambia urged the Zambian Church to send missionaries to the Western world.

"During the Jubilee year, we have to thank God, ask him for forgiveness and pledge to do better with God. Since the Church in Zambia has grown, it is now time

to send missionaries to the world," Archbishop Murat said.

The Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) came to Zambia in 1894 and successfully established a mission in the northern part of the country.

The event was attended by the vice president and several members of government.

Vatican roundup

Pope Francis responds to nine-year-old's pilgrimage invitation

An Italian boy called Andrea invited the Pope to join him and other children on a "Pilgrimage of Joy" to the Marian Shrine of Loreto Italy.

The nine-year-old was so moved by his experience that he asked the Pontiff to join him next year.

Pope Francis replied: "Thanks for the invitation you have made me, to go on a pilgrimage with you, being with children is for me the greatest joy. A proverb says: 'Never say never.' Therefore let us entrust this dream into the hands of providence".

Andrea and 130 sick and disabled children were accompanied by nuns on the pilgrimage last month and asked for the Pope's blessing.

Pope Francis also said: "It was so nice to receive your letter and to hear about the enriching adventure you experienced with UNITALSI during the Pilgrimage of Joy to Loreto for children."

He added that "I was praying to Our Lady of Loreto for you, and blessed you straight from the heart along with your parents, volunteers, priests and UNITALSI leaders".

People should be central to UN sustainability goals

Sustainability goals should bring about the "true good" of people around the world and encourage care for "our common home".

The UN sustainable development goals were agreed upon in 2015, and should not be seen as "ends in themselves", said the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations. Archbishop Bernardito Auza said that religious leaders must partner with one another, as well as the international community, to make sure the good of humanity is integral to these goals.

He noted the "enormous work" the world's religions carry out, from alleviating poverty and feeding the hungry to providing health care and promoting the

dignity of women.

The archbishop said each religions' greatest long-term contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity being realised, will be to keep the UN focused on the human person.

"Within the specific context of the sustainable development agenda, if we lose sight of these fundamental human coordinates, there's the serious risk that the SDGs may be understood in only partial ways, through excessively economic, environmental, or sociological lenses, while missing their deeper ethical and anthropological context and purposes," Archbishop Auza said.

Pope calls bin-man who recovers from leg amputations

A garbage man who lost his legs in a freak accident received a surprise call last week from Pope Francis.

An Argentinian father of five, Maximiliano Acuña (33), was collecting rubbish in Buenos Aires when he was hit by a car travelling at about 130kmh.

Both his legs were amputated as a result.

A Buenos Aires legislator, Gustavo Vera, emailed the Pope explaining that Mr Acuña's prognosis was for the worst.

He told Pope Francis: "In the best case scenario, he was expected to be in a vegetative state or to have serious neuronal damage, and in the worst case it was going to be the end for him."

After that he made a speedy recovery to the surprise of his doctors, and last week, just before being honoured at a special ceremony, he received a call from the Pontiff.

Mr Acuña emotionally recounted him saying: "I'm Pope Francis. A friend sent me a letter, and I was moved and struck by how much strength you have. Always go forward, because you're an example."

Letter from Rome



John L. Allen Jr

Support for Pope Francis seems indestructible and Catholics should use it, writes **John Allen Jr.**

Right now, as Inés San Martín reports in this week's International Analysis (facing) there's a fascinating drama unfolding in the Diocese of Ahiara in Nigeria, where Pope Francis has thrown down one of the most authoritarian gauntlets we've seen any Pope fling in a long time. He's threatened every priest of the diocese, no matter where they are in the world, with suspension unless they write to apologise for spurning a bishop appointed five years ago because he doesn't come from the dominant ethnic and linguistic group.

What all this got me thinking about is the following: Had any other recent Pope done such a thing, howls about abuse of power and over-centralization probably would have been deafening, especially from the



Pope Francis greets the crowd as he leaves his general audience in St Peter's Square at the Vatican. Photo: CNS

press, where the rebel priests likely would have become folk heroes. Francis, however, gets more or less a free pass.

Yes, some coverage has been more critical of late, especially Francis's handling of the sexual abuse scandals in the wake of the criminal indictment of one of his top aides, Cardinal George Pell, in Australia. Even then, however, the tone tends to be, "Francis is such a great guy, so why is this area lagging behind?"

Naturally, I'm referring here to the mainstream secular media.

Intramural Catholic discussion is a different animal.

From the beginning, we've been waiting for that honeymoon to end, since that's the usual pattern. However, there are always a handful of exceptions, personalities whose images as either heroes or villains become so set in stone they're impervious to reconsideration.

Premature deaths

In our time, Nelson Mandela was one such figure. Even five mixed years as President of South Africa, and the dubious successor he left behind in Thabo Mbeki (who doubts the link between HIV and AIDS and banned retrovirals in public hospitals, arguably making him responsible for the premature deaths of nearly 400,000 people), didn't put a dent in Mandela's secular halo.

Today, Donald Trump illustrates the same principle in reverse. As a thought experiment, ask yourself this: what would it take for the mainstream American media to suddenly embrace Trump as a good guy? A zombie apocalypse? A covert CIA brainwashing operation? You get the idea.

Pope Francis seems surrounded by the same sort of essentially irreversible narrative.

Just for the sake of it, however, can we envision anything that might change the equation? Sure, I can tick off at least three such possibilities, but none seems even remotely likely.

If Pope Francis were to be caught up in some sort of personal scandal that appears to stick – if he were personally caught with his hand in the Vatican's financial cookie jar, for instance, or if there were some sensational allegation of abuse in his past that surfaced – that might do it, under the law of "equal and opposite reaction".

He's got such a reputation as a reformer, as the antidote to the bad old days of clerical privilege, that if a truly credible report of corruption

were to come to light, the disillusionment might set a new land speed record for upending his narrative.

The odds of that, however, seem awfully long – first, because whatever else one may think of Francis, he genuinely seems a man of integrity, and second, because if there were such a bombshell out there, it probably would have gone off by now anyway.

The popular narrative about Francis opens doors

There certainly have been personnel controversies and allegations of heavy-handedness by Pope Francis, most recently his decision to move German Cardinal Gerhard Müller out of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith shortly after dismissing three priests who worked in Müller's office.

To the general public, however, such developments come off as routine bureaucratic shuffling, and besides which, the people involved are either anonymous or perceived critics of Francis, which means the narrative tells us they had it coming.

So, who would he have to target to revise such impressions?

Well, maybe if he announced a massive new investigation of American nuns to finish the work left undone last time, that might move the needle. Or, if he were to stroll into St Peter's Square and announce that any theologian unwilling to sign a personal loyalty oath to uphold Church teaching on X will henceforth be excommunicated, that might do it too. The problem is that any such scenario one could conjure up is so improbable as to be basically a non-starter.

Pope Francis gets credit for a string of perceived diplomatic and political breakthroughs, including helping to avert a Western anti-Assad war in Syria in late 2013, pav-

ing the way for ending Cold War tensions between the US and Cuba, making a peaceful transfer of power possible in the Central African Republic, and pushing a peace deal in Colombia across the finish line.

Suppose, however, that when he goes to Colombia in September to take a victory lap, something he says or does, obviously unintentionally, sparks a new round of violence, and the deal unravels? If the bloody conflict comes roaring back, the narrative could shift from "moral hero works his magic" to "reckless meddler makes things worse".

Again, however, that seems improbable – not so much that violence could return, because it's hardly as if all the wounds from the world's longest-running civil war have healed – but that it would be seen as Pope Francis's fault, when so much of his energy has been invested in promoting peace.

The narrative doesn't reverse centuries-long secular trends

Bottom line, arguably the single greatest asset Francis enjoys as pope is his narrative.

Catholic bishops in every corner of the world today, no matter their personal opinions on the papacy, will tell you they enjoy strolling through airports because so many random people will come up to them, often non-Catholics and even unchurched, to say how much they love this Pope. The popular narrative about Francis – humility, simplicity, understanding, mercifulness – opens doors. It changes moods as well as conversations, making people inclined to at least listen to what the Pope and the Church have to say.

The narrative is not a magic wand, of course. It doesn't automatically fill up churches or generate vocations, it doesn't reverse centuries-long secular trends, it doesn't guarantee victory in every cultural battle, it doesn't necessarily keep persecuted Christians safe, and it certainly doesn't mean that every choice Francis makes as a governor, a teacher and even a pastor is beyond reproach.

However, the narrative is nevertheless a powerful missionary calling card. Catholics may be used to it by now, even rolling our eyes sometimes at the occasional superficiality of it, but it's a resource the institutional Church hasn't had at its disposal for an awfully long time, and may not see again soon after Francis is gone.

For once, in other words, the all-important "narrative" – that largely unconscious set of assumptions, which forms the bedrock of the media's mostly unstated faith – is Catholicism's friend. Perhaps rather than endlessly debating whether Francis deserves it, the real question ought to be, what kind of job is the rest of the Church doing at taking advantage of it?

John Allen Jr is editor of Cruxnow.com

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Answers from a troubled diocese

African priests threatened with excommunication have begun responding to the Pope, writes **Inés San Martín**

Days after time ran out for the priests of an entire Nigerian diocese to write and apologise for having refused to accept their bishop for the past five years, Pope Francis, through some of his closest advisers, has begun to respond to each of them.

"The Pope promised he would write back, and he's doing so," said Cardinal John Onaiyekan of Abuja, Nigeria.

The prelate, who's been the apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Ahiara, also said that the letters "are not passing through me", so he doesn't know their content, and added that he probably won't until the process of delivering the letters is over.

Speaking to *Crux* over the phone on Friday, Onaiyekan also said that he hopes Bishop Peter Eber Okpaleke, who was appointed to the southern Nigerian diocese of Ahiara by Benedict XVI in 2012, is accepted by the time the process is over.

"I hope that my brothers will recognise him," he said. "I'm waiting and praying, hoping that this long crisis will come to an end."

Letters

The letters from the Vatican, which address each priest by name, are slowly beginning to arrive, through the Vatican nunciature in Nigeria. The new papal representative, Italian Archbishop Antonio Guido Filipazzi, arrived in Nigeria a few days ago.

Several attempts to reach the nunciature to confirm if the letters that have already been delivered had been brought into the country by Filipazzi went unanswered.

The situation in Ahiara is a complex one, with some members of both the priesthood and the laity refusing to accept Okpaleke, and many others supporting him. The diocese has produced many vocations to the priesthood, and locals argue that it's time one of them is appointed as bishop.

When appointing the current bishop, who hasn't been allowed in Ahiara for the past five years, the Vatican followed a long-standing tradition of choosing people from another city to lead any given diocese, particularly



Left, Cardinal John Onaiyekan of Abuja, Nigeria and, above, Bishop Peter Eber Okpaleke. Main photo:CNS

in Africa. Historically, this is done in an attempt to show that the universality of the Church overcomes tribal and ethnic differences.

“Whoever was opposed to Bishop Okpaleke taking possession of the Diocese wants to destroy the Church”

On June 8, Pope Francis issued a seemingly unprecedented threat, giving the priests of the diocese a 30-day deadline: either write to him promising “total obedience”, or face suspension. The request had already been made by Cardinal Fernando Filoni, of the Vatican's Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, which oversees missionary territories. His request was sent in a letter dated June 24, 2014.

However, the two requests garnered different responses,

fuelled perhaps by the threat of suspension hanging over the priests who refused to comply.

When Francis announced that he expected them to write a letter apologising for their behaviour and promising loyalty to the pontiff, including in the matter of episcopal appointments, the priests who were rebelling originally responded saying that the request was false.

The papal text in English was originally posted June 9 on the blog of Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama of Jos, president of the Nigerian bishops' conference. Soon after, the Vatican released the text too, crushing any doubts over its authenticity.

In his strong message, Francis minced no words: “Whoever was opposed to Bishop Okpaleke taking possession of the Diocese wants to destroy the Church. This is forbidden”.

From that day on, most of the priests in the diocese complied with the Pope's request: They sent a letter to the Vatican, addressed to Francis, apologising. However, based on conversations in recent

days with some of the priests, not all of the apologies were honest, as they carried a threat.

“On the directive of the Pope that we should write him individually and personally to express our obedience and loyalty to him and ask for forgiveness for the contribution in the sorrows he has suffered because of the crisis in Ahiara Diocese, all the priests in the diocese have complied,” one of the men put it, on the condition of remaining anonymous. “He is our father, our loyalty to him cannot be compromised in any way.”

Yet, not long after, he added: “But we hope he reviews his position, and appoints a different bishop.”

Though a majority of the people in Ahiara want to see the crisis resolved peacefully, and are praying for each other in this troubled time and have accepted that it's in their best interest to embrace what Francis asks of them, both sides – those who support Okpaleke and those who want another bishop – don't hesitate in making *ad hominem* attacks.

Most of it cannot be re-printed, but one person claimed that the priests who reject the prelate have “inhaled the smoke of Satan”. On the other side, most accuse the bishop and those who support him – from Francis to the laity – of wrong doing and criminal activity.

“The content of each of the letters expected might vary, depending on what each priest wrote in their apology letter”

The priests who, to this point, have received the letters from the Vatican, have refused to share their content, arguing that they are private. However, *Crux* has received confirmation from Nigeria that the letters address the priests by name, and at least one of them is “quite personal” and was signed mid-July.

Signed by both the Vatican's Secretary of State Italian Cardinal Pietro Parolin and Filoni, an “apostolic blessing” is extended on behalf of Pope Francis.

The Mbaise Catholic Forum speculates that the content of each of the letters expected might vary, depending on what each priest wrote in their apology letter. Some, they write, could “receive letters suspending their priestly faculties.”

The pro-Okpaleke website, created by people based in Ahiara, has a list of 201 priests incardinated in the diocese, of whom 157 have allegedly written to Francis. The first number, however, differs from the one given in the 2017 edition of the *Annuario Pontificio*, the Vatican book of statistics, that says there are 114 secular priests in the diocese, and 14 belonging to religious orders.

i Inés San Martín is Vatican correspondent for *Cruxnow.com*

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

We need to go back to our Christian roots

Dear Editor, I read with interest the account of Archbishop Diarmuid Martin's analysis of the state of the Catholic Church in modern Ireland and his many solutions that would improve the situation (IC 13/07/2017).

While many of them have been put forward in the past 40-50 years, very few of them yielded the much longed for results. Unfortunately, our churches continue to empty and religious belief and practise, especially for under 50-year-olds, has declined dramatically.

Yet the Good God has given us some basic solutions, that if put into practise would yield a 'hundred fold'. The Church should return to

the Judaeo-Christian ethos that governed Church and State law for centuries. These laws were based on the Ten Commandments, natural law and common sense. The Ten Commandments in their fullest form, should once again be preached from the pulpits. They gave a clear guidance on what is right and wrong, a guidance that is sadly lacking in the world today.

Our love of God and his love and care for us should be emphasised, if we really loved God we would have no problem putting aside one hour in the week to worship him through the Holy Mass. Respect and reverence for the real present in the Holy Eucharist

should be encouraged, with the faithful being constantly reminded to receive Holy Communion always in the state of grace. Each parish should be encouraged to set aside even one hour a week or perhaps a month for Eucharistic Adoration. The Rosary should be recited before or after Mass at the weekends.

The argument against preaching to the converted, or to an aged faithful, should be discounted. Christ certainly didn't need a crowd, nor did he put an age limit on them.

*Yours etc.,
Eilis McNamara,
Glin,
Co. Limerick.*

Charlie Gard's parents should have final decision

Dear Editor, Austen Ivereigh in his thoughtful piece about the Charlie Gard case (IC 13/07/2017) fails to recognise that Charlie's parents have clearly stated that given just three months of the proposed alternative treatment for their son in the US, they would know for sure if there was to be any improvement or not in the quality of his life.

They could then accept if necessary the ending of

life support mechanisms knowing at least that every last option had been tried.

This plus the fact that such treatment would come at no cost to UK taxpayers seems to render the decision of a High Court judge rather than the parents, as to whether or not Charlie Gard should be given that chance, the height of arrogance.

When we are glad to see the state step in to "impose

limits in the interests of the baby", i.e. terminate its existence - we have to be aware that such authority can also be applied to all sorts of congenital illnesses, which the state may decide must not be 'imposed' on a helpless patient, born or unborn.

There is indeed a fine line beyond which it is likely more humane to accept natural death, but if there

is even the slightest chance of a life being improved and saved at reasonable cost, it must be the parents who have the last word, not the state. The Vatican medical services rightly also offered this baby and parents that basic parental dignity. I sincerely hope that the UK High Court will see sense.

*Yours etc.,
BJ Turbett,
Strabane, Co. Tyrone.*

Two wrongs don't make a right

Dear Editor, J. Anthony Gaughan's otherwise excellent and informative review of *The Irish Revolution, 1912-23: Monaghan* is marred by his suggestion that burning down "big houses" was "poetic justice" in view of some of their owners' earlier support for armed resistance to Home Rule. This tribal sentiment is unworthy of him: both sides deserve condemnation for the way politics descended into violence in those years. Two wrongs, etc.

*Yours etc.,
Ian d'Alton,
Naas,
Co. Kildare.*

Dublin diocese doesn't need a diplomat but a prophet

Dear Editor, "I am not sure that what Dublin needs now is a diplomat, what Dublin needs now is a prophet." This is what a retired Kerry parish priest sagaciously remarked when Archbishop Diarmuid Martin was appointed to the archdiocese.

The Jesus of the ecclesiastical diplomat tends to be, on occasion, not always quite the Lord Jesus of the Gospels.

*Yours etc.,
Joseph Nolan (Revd), Co. Kerry.*

Ban on women priests is the real insult

Dear Editor, I disagree with Bishop Michael Smith that the issue of female priests is an "insult to women" (IC 20/07/2017). I believe that banning women from being ordained priests is insulting. I have yet to hear a better argument than the fact that the 12 apostles were all men. So what? Unless Jesus actually said women can't be ordained I don't see why we can't get past this.

*Yours etc.,
Mary Finegan,
Ennis,
Co. Clare.*

Bring back our treats!

Dear Editor, Does *The Irish Catholic* assume that we stop baking during summer? If not, why is it that Erin Fox's excellent if irregular column 'Sweet Treats' should disappear from the newspaper's (otherwise excellent) content? Please, re-instate our treats!

*Yours etc.,
Sarah O'Leary,
Dun Laoghaire,
Co. Dublin.*



All treatments were originally experimental

Dear Editor, Before considering any sides of a debate, it is surely necessary to research the timeline of events.

Charlie Gard was born in August 2016 and appeared to be a normal healthy baby. Over the next few weeks he gradually deteriorated, becoming listless and lethargic and in September was brought to Great Ormond Street Hospital for treatment. He was diagnosed with a progressive form of Mitochondrial DNA depletion and in December 2016 the hospital sought permission from his parents to remove his life support.

By then, his parents had discovered experimental treatment available in America which is currently being used on 18 patients with various forms of Mitochondrial disease (none exactly the same as Charlie Gard). All have shown some improvement but no-one is sure of the eventual outcome. The treatment is non-invasive and consists of administering small amounts of liquid over a long period, the only known side effect is diarrhoea.

The parents befriended a publicist who helped establish a GoFundMe account and raise the necessary money. Initially the hospital supported the parents, but later decided a full recovery would be impossible and in February the hospital appointed a guardian for Charlie and began legal action against his parents to end his treatment.

Since then, the case has been taken to the High Court, Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court, the European Court of Human Rights, and now with global publicity following the intervention of Pope Francis and President Donald Trump, another court sitting. The legal costs for the hospital must be enormous and every month's delay in commencing treatment is diminishing the chances of success.

All our present day treatments and vaccines were originally experimental, initially tried out on patients who were going to die and had nothing to lose.

Where small children are concerned, some parents prefer not to prolong the agony and accept death while others prefer to cling to hope. Not only can they assure themselves that they tried their best but they are consoled by knowing their child's death was not in vain and the knowledge gained in his treatment will one day save another child's life.

*Yours etc.,
Maureen Sherlock,
Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny.*

Inspired by Shannon Angel Sisters

Dear Editor, Your feature on the ladies in Shannon who make angel gowns for premature babies really struck a chord with me (IC 20/07/2017). What a brilliant idea!

My wedding dress has been hanging in my wardrobe since the big day, simply because I could not decide what to do with it. I love the idea of putting it to good use to help those little babies who have had to fight for their lives, whether that fight has been lost or won.

*Yours etc.,
Rose Walsh,
Templeogue, Dublin 6W.*

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



ITALY: Rome's Bambino Gesù hospital, where two former top Vatican officials appeared before a Vatican court for a pretrial hearing on allegations of embezzlement.



SYRIA: A girl walks past the rubble of war in Damascus.



USA: People illustrate the importance of affordable health care in New York City. Venice, Florida's Bishop Frank Dewane, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, has called on the Senate to fix problems with the Affordable Care Act in a more narrow way, rather than repeal it without an adequate replacement.



WEST BANK: Franciscan Father Mario Hadchity sits with Sara Wajne in the computer lab at a new youth center in Jericho, West Bank. Photos: CNS



◀ **USA:** Worshippers pray during a street Mass in the Little Village neighborhood of Chicago. St. Agnes of Bohemia Parish holds the Mass every summer to "bring peace and the joy of the Gospel" to the neighbourhood.

▶ **BULGARIA:** Paratroopers of NATO armies take part in an exercise in Bezmer with the aim of "supporting security and stability" in the region. A new UN plan of action says religious leaders have a role alongside governments in preventing incitement that leads to atrocities.



Family & Lifestyle



As it celebrates 50 years, **Colm Fitzpatrick** looks at the work of the Community Games

A cohort of keen and competitive children across Ireland will be challenging one another in their respective skills this summer, ranging from swim strokes to paint strokes to tennis strokes.

Initially founded in 1967 to provide young people with lively and productive opportunities, the Community Games, now called the Aldi Community Games following a three-year sponsorship deal, attracts over 160,000 children aged 6-16 every year and around 20,000 volunteers in about 575 areas throughout 28 counties.

Individual participants must first compete at an area, then at county and sometimes at provincial level, in order to qualify for the National Festival which will see around 7,000 children contesting this year.

Discussing the friendly rivalry, Community Games President Gerry Davenport says, "the competition element is always there" but "you don't have to be brilliant".

"Sometimes the happier children are the ones knocked out in the first round," he says, adding that the games are really about encouraging people to participate, to join local clubs and above all giving children an opportunity and so "a chance from the start".

Although not everyone can be a winner, the Community Games, Gerry stresses, is more focused on promoting "comradery among children" and gaining friendships.

Developments

Speaking about the ongoing developments of the Games, Gerry says, "we also have handwriting, debating and quizzes", continuing, "you don't have to be a talented sportsperson - there's something for everyone". No matter what activity or sport you do with the Aldi Community Games, being healthy and active is the ultimate end goal because no gold medal can compare with creating lifelong healthy habits.

The games, which have been integral to both Irish athletic and civic life for 50 years, were founded by Dubliner Joe Connolly (1922-2008) as a response to the lacunae of sporting and leisure activities for young people in 1960s Dublin. Being a young parent in his adopted home of Walkinstown, his concern for the few recreational facilities in the estate inspired him to form a committee of

like-minded people dedicated to expressing communal interests as well as alerting the Government to the need to rectify athletic amenities of which many young children had been deprived.

2017 is a milestone for Community Games, marking 50 years of sport, culture, fun and friendly rivalry

The first Dublin finals took place in the John F. Kennedy Stadium, now the National Athletics Stadium in Santry in 1967, and 50 years on the Community Games is celebrating its special Jubilee Year back in Dublin where it all first began, less than 15 kilometres away in the Sport Ireland National Sports Campus in Abbotstown.

"It's an exciting time, I think we're going the right way. Aldi has seen some good in us - the three-year sponsorship is a great deal to bring the Games forward," Gerry says. "I'm proud. Joe (the founder) wouldn't

have thought how well it would have grown."

At the first part of Games 2017 National Festival in May, over 2,800 participants competed for titles across a wide range of sporting and cultural activities, including unorthodox events like Spike Ball as well as chess and debating.

Speaking at the launch John Byrne, Community Games CEO, said: "2017 is a milestone for Community Games, marking 50 years of sport, culture, fun and friendly rivalry for those that have participated.

"The focus of Community Games has always been geared to providing our young people a pathway to a healthy and active lifestyle promoted by a cohort of hardworking and dedicated volunteers."

Finbar McCarthy, Group Buying Director of Aldi Ireland added: "There has been a strong tradition of young people across towns and villages taking part in Community Games, and this year is particularly special."

Further competitions for the National Festival will be taking place

from August 18-20.

Over its five decades more than five million people have taken part in the Community Games, some of whom have become Ireland's top athletes and icons, such as 1984 Olympic silver medallist John Treacy or former Ireland international soccer star Niall Quinn.

These national heroes began their career through the Games and so are inspirational figures in the eyes of these aspiring children.

"They're for people to look up to," Gerry says, "to look at what they've achieved." The heroes are not celebrities with a passive interest in the games, rather at "every opportunity they get, they do promote it", he adds. The eclectic mix of heroes including Saoirse Ronan, Joanna Cooper and Darren Fehill among others, is a testimony to the steadfast influence of the Community Games in Irish culture.

Platform

Although these heroes are able to enhance the platform for children to engage in activities, the actual success of the Community Games

rests upon its 20,000 annual volunteers.

"The role of the volunteer is paramount to the success of the organisation", Gerry says.

"We are deeply indebted to those people who have kept the Community Games alive by giving their time generously."

The actual success of the Community Games rests upon its 20,000 annual volunteers

Lisa Marie McCooley, a primary school teacher from Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan has been a longstanding volunteer, after having competed in the games as a child. Praising her experience of it, she said that she has made many "bonds" and gained confidence in engaging with the youth.

The children, too, she adds, also make life-long friends, and learn about the importance of taking part. "It's not always about winning," Lisa says, "it's also about having fun."

Mick England from Co. Tipperary,



Let the games



A rambling rose



begin!



who volunteered as a finish judge and is now co-ordinating javelin and ball throw, adds that the Community Games is a family event, which his children have all be involved in, with many of them even competing at national finals. Two positive aspects of the games stand out for him, namely the “immense” friendships that can be made, and also the fruitful productivity and opportunities children gain from playing sports.

Motivation

Not only can competitors draw motivation from these volunteers, but this year the Community Games is encouraging parents to support their child's participation in their chosen activity.

The campaign entitled 'It's our game not yours', which was launched by the Child Protection in Sport Unit in Britain, ensures that young people can be fully involved in sport without enduring the negative behaviour of some parents in junior sport.

Alongside this campaign, the Community Games is also

supporting the No Hate Speech Movement, a Europe-wide initiative which Ireland joined last year. The movement addresses online hate speech which has become a major form of human rights abuse, with serious consequences for people both online and offline. Young people are especially prone to this problem, at times becoming victims or targets, as well as active and passive agents.

For Gerry Davenport these types of initiatives, combined with the ubiquity of cross-county participation, means that the Community Games is succeeding in its goal of being an “inclusive organisation”, resulting in an increasing number of people participating in the last few years, following a slump in attendees.

“It's a harder fight to keep the children attracted,” Gerry says, adding that in order to continually reinvigorate the Community Games across Ireland, innovation and renewal is vital.

“You can't stand still,” he says, “you can't get left behind – keep moving forward.”

Victoria Holthaus speaks to the Clare Rose in advance of the August festival



Personal PROFILE



Aoife Murray with Bishop Fintan Monahan.

Last month 400 pilgrims set out from the Diocese of Killaloe on the summer pilgrimage to Lourdes. The group included Bishop Fintan Monahan, eight priests, 52 assisted pilgrims, nursing and hospitality staff, 48 youth helpers, 10 youth leaders, the choir from the parish of Ogonnelloe and one Rose.

The Clare Rose of Tralee contestant, Aoife Murray volunteered on the pilgrimage as part of the caring staff in the hospital.

“I was there in 2009 as a youth volunteer and I have always wanted to go back,” she says. “I guess it is five intense days and when you come back you are very tired, but I made great friends and met some really amazing people.”

Aoife actually decided to volunteer for the pilgrimage before she became a rose. The 24-year-old moved to Dublin for her job a year and a half ago and this was the first time since 2009 that she could take the time off to travel. Along with her duties on the caring staff, Aoife was given the honour of lighting the Pilgrimage Candle for the diocese during the closing ceremony.

“Aoife says faith has always been a part of her life growing up as she would attend Mass and continues to do so”

Her day-to-day work during the pilgrimage involved helping in setting up for lunch and dinner, which allowed for her to chat with those pilgrims who came in.

“A few people had recognised me. One of the nurses was like ‘oh we have a Rose of Tralee working with us’ which was quite fun. All of the pilgrims were very supportive and one of them even said I may be the most prayed for Rose. When we had a dance, I put on the sash for it and we had a good craic,” she says.

Aoife has been dreaming of wearing that sash ever since she was a child, and says she watched the Rose of Tralee every year with her sisters. Aoife is the youngest of her sisters, Charlotte, Ann Marie and Grace. Her parents Christy and Ann, have been “very supportive” of this dream and plan on attending the festival along with their Rose this coming August.

Aoife decided to go for the position and apply for the competition after she was approached by numerous people believing she would be a great Rose. She describes herself as a homebird and although she lives in Dublin, being the Clare Rose of Tralee gives her plenty of opportunities to return home to Sixmilebridge in Co. Clare.

“It's nice to go back home and attend charities and events that I otherwise might not have had the chance to,” she says. As the Clare Rose of Tralee, she has represented her title at numerous events like the Shannon Airport Runway Night Run to barbeque and bake sales for a church.

The Rose of Tralee International Festival is one of Ireland's largest and longest running festivals, including entertainment, markets, fireworks, parades, and the selection of the Rose of Tralee. The event brings young women from all over the world who are of Irish decent to County Kerry for a celebration of Irish culture.

Duties

When she isn't attending to her duties as the Clare Rose of Tralee, she can be found in the credit and debit card section at the Bank of Ireland. She loves travelling, fitness, Ed Sheeran and baking. “I love to bake for any occasion, especially if there are any birthdays in work,” she says.

She also volunteers at the Alzheimer's Café in Dublin once a month saying “I love to help out there as you get to meet new people and you also get to learn about the effects of Alzheimer's and Dementia”. Aoife's manager has even given her the nickname of ‘Chief Do-gooder’.

Aoife graduated from the University of Limerick in 2015 after studying Economics and Sociology.

She says faith has always been a part of her life growing up as she would attend Mass and continues to do so now. She also hopes to volunteer on the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes again next year.

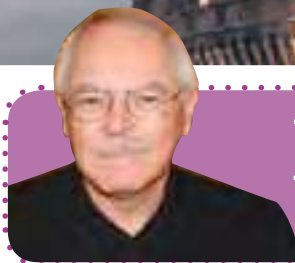
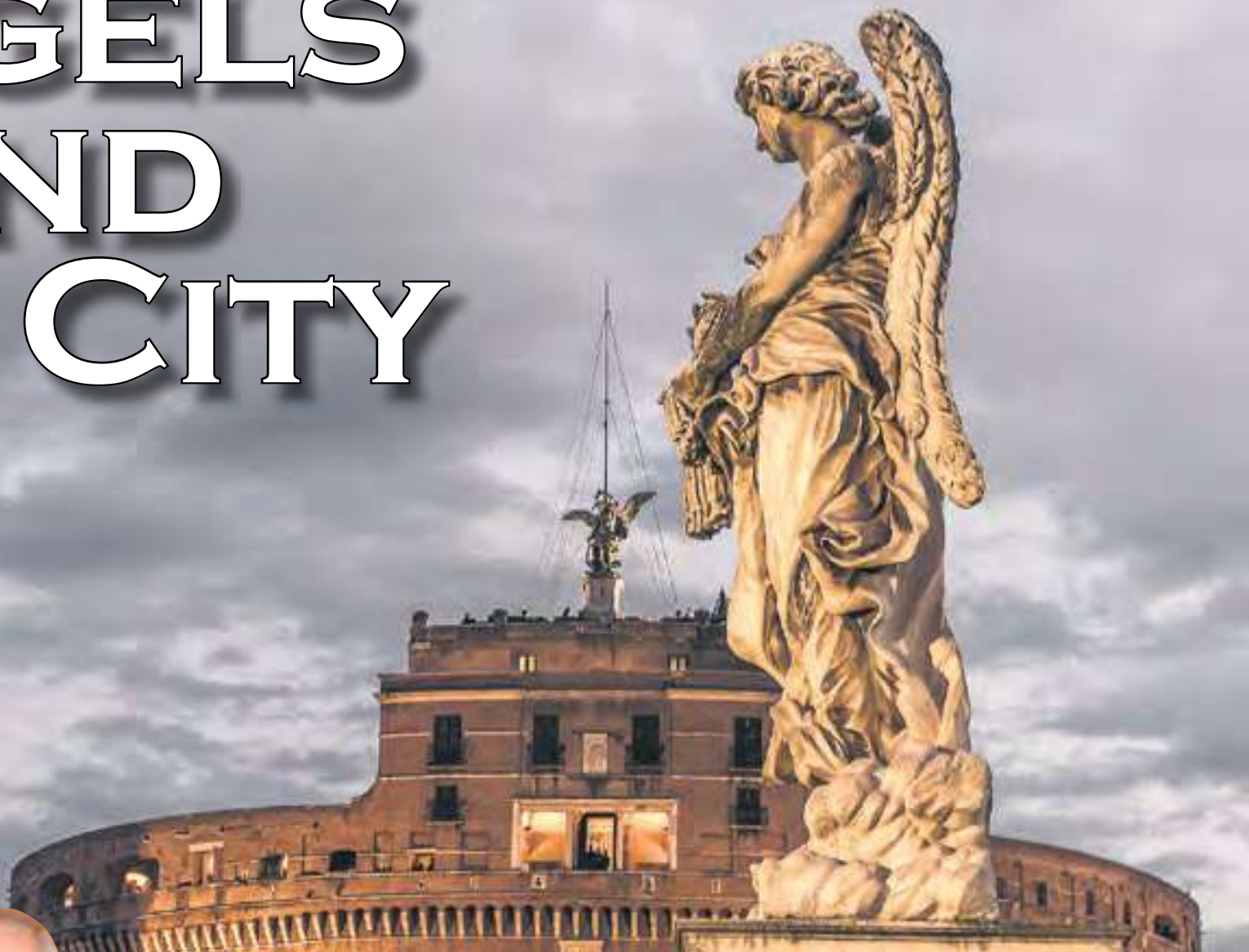
“It's one of the best things you can do. It's fantastic and it isn't all just about the praying. There are so many people to meet and hear their stories,” she says.

In the meantime Aoife is looking forward to the Rose of Tralee competition in August and meeting all the other Roses, escorts and volunteers, and she is honoured and “delighted” to be representing her county.

Aoife Murray amongst some Killaloe youth volunteers at Lourdes with Bishop Fintan Monahan.



ANGELS AND THE CITY



Fr Rolheiser

www.ronrolheiser.com



Nicholas Cage and Meg Ryan in *City Of Angels*.

Several years ago Hollywood made a movie, *City of Angels*, about an angel named Seth whose job it was to accompany the spirits of the recently deceased to the afterlife. On one such mission, waiting in a hospital, he fell in love with a brilliant young woman surgeon.

As an angel, Seth has never experienced touch or taste and now, deeply in love, he longs to physically touch and make love to his beloved. But this is his dilemma: as an angel with free will he has the option to let go of his angelic status and become a human person, but only at the cost of renouncing his present immortality as an angel.

It's a tough choice: immortality, but no sensual experience, or, sensual experience, but with all the contingencies that earthly morality brings – diminishment, aging, sickness, eventual death? He chooses the latter, renouncing his status as an immortal angel for the pleasure that earthly senses can bring.

“Spirit has classically been affirmed as above the senses”

The vast majority of people watching this movie, I suspect, will laud his choice. Almost everything in our hearts moves us to believe that it's cold and

inhuman not to make this choice.

The overpowering reality of the senses, especially when in love, can make everything else seem unreal, ethereal and second-best. What we experience through our senses, what we see, hear, taste, touch and smell is what's real for us. We have our own version of Descartes. For us, the indubitable is: I feel, therefore, I am!

Spirituality, in virtually every major religious tradition, at least in its popular conception, has seemingly said the opposite. Spirit has classically (and sometimes almost dogmatically) been affirmed as above the senses, as higher, superior, a needed guard against the

senses.

Sensual pleasure, except for how it was occasionally honoured in the realm of aesthetics, was perennially denigrated as furtive, superficial, and a hindrance to the spiritual life. We took St Paul's admonition that the “flesh lusts against the spirit” in the Greek, dualistic sense where body is bad and spirit is good.

Today, in the secularised world, the opposite seems true. The senses resoundingly trump the spirit. Secularised angels, unlike the religious angels of old, make the same option as Seth.

The seeming vagueness of the spirit is no match for the reality of the senses.

So which is more real?

At the end of the day, it's a false dichotomy. Our senses and our spirit both offer life, both are very important, and neither operates without the other.

As Christians, we believe that we're both body and soul, flesh and spirit, and that neither can be separated from the other. We're both mammal and angel, and in our search for life, meaning, happiness, and God, we should not forget that we are both.

Our spirit is open to life only through our senses, and our senses provide depth and meaning only because they are animated by spirit.

“We're not just mammal – we're equally part angel”

We all know the few things that man, as mammal, can do, William Auden once wrote. He's right, but we're not just mammal – we're equally part angel and once we add that to the equation then the very limited joys that mammals can enjoy (animal pleasure) can become unlimited joys for us as human in what we can experience in love, friendship, altruism, aesthetics, sexuality, mysticism, food, drink, humour.

Our senses make these real, even as our spirit gives them meaning.

And so a healthy spirituality needs to honour both the senses and the spirit. The ordinary pleasures of life can be deep or shallow, more mystical or more

mammal, depending upon how much we honour what's spirit and what's angel within us. Conversely, our spirituality and our prayer lives can be real or more of a fantasy, depending upon how much we incarnate them in what's sensual and what's mammal within us.

This holds true in every realm of our lives. For example, sexuality can be deep or shallow, more mystical or more mammal, contingent upon how much of it is soul and how much of it is merely sensual; just as it can be disembodied, sterile, and merely fantasy, contingent upon it also being body and not just soul.

The same is true of our experience of beauty, be that in our seeing, hearing, touching, tasting or smelling.

Any sensual experience can be deep or shallow; depending upon how much soul is in it, just as any experience of beauty can seem unreal and imaginary if it is too divorced from the senses.

Lecturer

Some years ago, I was attending a seminar in anthropology. At one point, the lecturer said this: “What psychology and spirituality keep forgetting is that we are mammals.” As a theologian and spiritual writer (and celibate) the truth of his words hit me hard. He's right! How easily do we forget this in religious circles. But religious circles are right too in consistently reminding us that we are also an angel.

Poor Seth, the tormented angel of *City of Angels*, he shouldn't have had to make that choice.

TVRadio

Brendan O'Regan



Religious illiteracy reigns on mainstream TV

One of the (many!) things that irritates me about mainstream media is the level of religious illiteracy among commentators.

A glaring example turned up in last Saturday's **Countrywide** (RTÉ Radio 1), when Damien O'Reilly interviewed Evelyn Cusack of Met Éireann. Weather superstitions and the alleged influence of saints were discussed but then O'Reilly dropped this clanger: "I'd say there isn't a scientist that's a believer, you can't be both", and then "if you're a scientist it's very hard to be going to Mass on Sunday"! Later he upgraded the scientist believers to "very few". Where would you even begin to dispel the ignorance? Maybe a long list of believer scientists, perhaps starting with William Reville, columnist in this paper and *The Irish Times*.

One of the many believer scientists turned up in the sad and disturbing radio documentary **Polar Opposites**, on RTÉ Radio 1 last Saturday. Mike Frigge is a scientist who is also a Catholic, and he is involved in the anti-abortion movement in Iceland.

Along with his wife April, Fr Denis O'Leary (from Cork and parish priest in Reykjavik) and others campaign on the issue with the group 'Defence of Life' which among other things holds prayer vigils outside a hospital where



Evelyn Cusack featured on RTÉ Radio 1.

abortions are performed. April Frigge had once been offered pre-natal screening but refused as she wasn't going to have an abortion no matter what the result.

Defence

Fr O'Leary was moderate and soft spoken in his defence of unborn children and obviously saw prayer as one way to pursue the goal of ridding Iceland of abortion. These pro-life people were given plenty of time to speak and weren't challenged and interrupted in every sentence.

The 'polar opposites'

included a young girl Dagbjört who had two abortions in her teens and early 20's. Though she wasn't admitting to regret for these she was obviously upset by all that had happened. She had little support, her mother just dropped her off at the hospital for the first abortion and left for work. The boyfriend was away working and afterwards going out with friends.

She found the nurses to be judgemental, though this was more about being critical of her carelessness in getting pregnant.

She was upset also when

the medical professional doing her pre-abortion scan was pointing out various body parts of the still living baby to a medical student. There was blood.

I've often been critical of the media in Ireland for continuing to discuss abortion without ever showing what it actually is. We got some insight in the documentary – a doctor described a procedure that "kills the foetus", described how "we suck it out", and told of how most of the bodies are burnt. Tellingly she said they generally don't show pre-abortion ultrasound images to women but reckoned if they did it might change minds.

Kudos to producers Nicoline Greer and Liam O'Brien for a show that was low key, with both sides getting a good airing. I'd have some reservations though – we didn't get to hear from any woman who regretted her abortion, or from one who was going to have one and changed her mind. The only opposition

we heard about was from a Catholic perspective, which fed into stereotyping of the pro-life position.

It's well worth listening back to on the RTE Radio Player or the *Documentary on One App*.

You'd certainly want the public broadcaster to be impartial, but obviously, on EWTN, the US Catholic station, you know what the ethos is going to be, and that's generally why you'd watch it.

Last Friday, on their show **Pro-Life Weekly** much of the emphasis was on the Charlie Gard case, which presenter Catherine Szeltner described as a 'confusing medical situation'. She spoke to lawyer Catherine Glen Foster, President of Americans for Life, who had been over in London helping the baby's parents. She was bothered that the situation featured doctors fighting with parents. In the end, she said, it's all about family.

In a related item they spoke to Bobby Schindler, brother of Terri Shiavo, the



Catherine Glen Foster appeared on EWTN.

PICK OF THE WEEK

THE BEST OF VINCENT BROWNE

TV3 Monday, 11pm

A look back at the highlights and controversial moments of 10 years of *Tonight with Vincent Browne*.

A WORLD WITHOUT DOWN'S SYNDROME?

RTÉ 1 Tuesday, 10.35 pm

Documentary about Down's syndrome and the ethics of pregnancy screening, fronted by Sally Phillips.

FÍORSCEÁL

TG 4 Thursday, 10.30 pm

With nine children shot and killed every day in the USA some campaigners are demanding stricter controls on gun purchase.

subject of a high profile end-of-life controversy in the US over ten years ago. Schindler now works in support of the medically vulnerable and his sister's case along with this activism has brought him back to the Catholic Church.

As he tried (in vain) to save her, he reckons she was also working to save him.

boregan@hotmail.com

Film

Aubrey Malone



'Homeric' odyssey through space for twin capsules

The Farthest (G)

Science fiction has become science fact. In the clock of history, man has gone from relative ignorance of the movements of the planets (viz. Ptolemy) to Galilean/Einsteinian enlightenment.

Many people think the acme of this psychic evolution occurred in July 1969 when Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon but a more fascinating – if less overtly dramatic – phenomenon took place eight years later when two capsules were sent into outer space to navigate the planets Jupiter, Uranus, Saturn and Neptune.

They were launched from NASA as 'slingshots' to the aforementioned planets in a



Very good
★★★★

'fly-by' mission that enabled them to send images back to Earth – and they're doing so to this day. In fact Voyagers 1 and 2 will still be zooming around the stratosphere four

billion years from now, long after the sun has burned up.

This is a brilliant documentary. It contains lots of interviews with the brains behind the various opera-

tions, so many benign and obsessed souls who radiate a childlike sense of wonder in a series of 'then and now' encounters from the 70s to the present. These people are pioneers just as much as Mr Armstrong was – or Christopher Columbus.

Presidency

A lot of the lingo flew above my head. Being the dunderhead I am in matters like this I found myself thinking things like: where does the Voyager get the fuel for four billion years of travel? Are there Texaco stations on Jupiter?

'The Farthest' brings us from the presidency of Richard Nixon – who was in power when it was initiated – to that

of Barack Obama at the other end. For those of us who are enthralled with the subject it bears all the hallmarks of a thriller. We go from the highs ("Hey – there's volcanic activity out there!") to the lows, as when the space shuttle Challenger explodes, killing all on board. Or when – less tragically – the scan platform for the images malfunctions and has to be adjusted.

For a lot of the time the two Voyagers were 'flying blind'. They didn't know what they were going to find. Strange stars? Populated planets? Or just somewhere, as one speaker puts it, "as dull as the Moon"? (I never found the Moon dull but these people are operating on such a mas-

sive scale that our beloved Moon is just a piece of rock 'down the road'.)

The excursions also had a cultural element. Voyager 1 was fitted with a soundtrack which 'advertised' the earth's music to any aliens who might want to groove to the delights of everyone from Beethoven to Chuck Berry.

Berry's song 'Johnny B. Goode' features on it. I don't know what an extra-terrestrial would make of his unique brand of rock but it certainly moved me when it came out. I hope it will have the same effect on any green-faced Neptunian with large antennae who happens to hear it.

Go, Johnny, go, go, go.

BookReviews

Peter Costello



Recent books in brief

Rebuilding Confirmation

by Christopher Wesley
(Maria Press, \$US 10.95PRP)

This important little book is subtitled: 'Because we need more than another graduation'. This will arouse echoes in the mind of pastors and parents, for there is certainly a great confusion it seems among Catholics about what Confirmation is.

Rites of passage are very important, and Irish society tends to make them less religious and more a party event. Young people seem to see Confirmation as an end to an engagement with religion rather than a beginning. A ceremony which should be seen as the commencement of life as a full Christian is now a cul-de-sac.

Religion, too, is a matter of life-long learning, a constant encounter with the new. Christopher Wesley is well aware of this, and here he shares his long experiences of small parish mentors and faith promotion groups. He wants to see Confirmation, not as an end point, but as the beginning of a full mature Christian life. That is not an easy task, but many involved with students in Ireland will find his American observations of great value in their own work.

Morning Homilies IV

by Pope Francis
(Orbis Books, \$US 18.00)

This is the latest in the series of little books that make available the morning thoughts of the Pope which he shares with the little community at St Martha's Guesthouse where he lives in the Vatican.

The earlier books have proved very popular, and they certainly provide vivid insights to the Pope's outlook and his cast of mind. Addressed to his own small cohort they have an air of family talk about them and will delight many of those who, in their own busy daily lives, think they would like to have a few moments of guided and insightful reflection to start their day.

Gospel Conversations

by Desmond O'Donnell OMI
(Dominican Publications, €9.99pb)

In his new book Desmond O'Donnell has adopted a technique as old as literature, the idea of the dialogue (which was so much used by Plato, Landor, and many others).

It has always provided a natural unthreatening way of exploring a topic or theme. Here are some 20 dialogues between characters, actual and imagined, in the New Testament experience.

They range from John the Baptist to Mary the Mother of Jesus and Mary Magdalen. But there are also striking conversations involving Zacchaeus discussing his new way of life, Johanna, Susanna and Magdalen talking about the Resurrection, and towards the end, Judas and Barabbas reflecting on their failures – though paradoxically without those failures the drama of salvation could not have been played out. I was reminded (perhaps irrelevantly) of that essay by Borges where he discuss that moment in Greek drama when Aeschylus "brought in a second actor".

The single hypocrite was no longer alone; dialogue, and so drama, became the future, revealing new horizons of insight. In a small way Fr O'Donnell's dialogues achieve in their own way some of this impact of the new.



The ins and outs of the very varied Reformation

A Nearly Infallible History of the Reformation

by Nick Page
(Hodder & Stoughton, £18.99pb RRP)

Peter Costello

Nick Page is the author of some 70 popular books in the area of religion, written from a quirky Protestant point of view. This is suggested by his subtitle: "Commemorating 500 years of Popes, Protestants, reformers, radicals and other assorted irritants".

He begins by pointing out that the first historian of the Reformation, a servant of the Protestant Prince Phillip of Hesse, wrote a book that attempted to be fair to all sides, and "so naturally, everybody hated it".

There can, in fact, be no more contentious subject than the Reformation, tangled as it is in the histories and politics of various countries, with mutually exclusive ambitions. Here in Ireland we are apt to see the matter through our own history and that of England and Scotland. But this book attempts something wider.

Divisive

He aims to put aside the myths – such as Luther nailing up his theses on the door of Wittenberg church, which never happened. But what happened was, goodness knows, divisive enough. He uses as an epigraph a comment from G.K. Chesterton: "The Reformer is always right



Cardinal Contarini.

about what's wrong. However, he's often wrong about what was right."

As is so often the case a Chestertonian paradox neatly summarises the matter.

Page's sparkly narrative, which is always amusing to read, but also well informed, covers the ground nation by nation, reformer by reformer.

There is also, as there has to be, a set of chapters devoted to the counter reformation, perhaps better called the Catholic Reformation.



But he also reminds us that the Church was too well aware of things that were wrong. Many were pointed out by Cardinal Contarini

in 1511. The point is, as he underlines, that Christianity has always been "a religion of renewal and reformation. Reformation – which comes from the Latin *reformatio* – is the life blood of the Church".

A clearer understanding of Church history, such as is now available to all, shows this to be true. Like some great tree the Church grows and changes, yet stays the same.

For Page this is illustrated by arguments over when the Reformation ended. He chooses a very British date, 1649, which has echoes in our own history. But in a sense the Reformation, through its continuing influence on all the Churches, still continues.

There remains "still a broad lump that is known as Catholicism", but on the other side "there are a host of Protestant Churches, there is no one Protestant faith" – an astonishing 33,000 denominations, many of them personal ministries in Africa.

The certainties that seemed so vivid to Luther,

Calvin, Zwingli and Knox are less certain now.

Today, many of the certainties of the Reformation seem a lot less certain. Catholics and Protestants are often to be found on the same side of the barricades, arm-in-arm against secularism, relativism, atheism, Islam, globalisation, and many other threats.

Approach

Increasingly, Catholics are adopting Protestant approaches to worship and their study of the Bible, while many Protestants are discovering the riches of Catholic spirituality and embracing the mysteries of ritual and liturgy.

They go on retreats, and embrace disciplines like fasting and Confession. And Christians on both sides of the fence obey their leaders if and when they want to.

These people are like Luther making their own stand on the basis of their own conscience and their own reading of the Bible. This is very 'reformation'. But surely it will only work if they trouble themselves to actually read the Bible, to inform their personal conscience, and merely accept the latest evangelically influenced opinions from America.

Nick Page is to be recommended to those who find academic history daunting. It is an enjoyable book, and it will not lead them too far astray from the approximate truth about what happened in the Reformation.

A new vision of the Via Dolorosa

DART Stáisiúin: Turas Traenach na Beatha / DART Stations: The Train Trek of Life

by Dr Tadhg Ó Dúshláine
(Foilseacháin Abhair Spioradálta, €7.00; contact: antiuire@gmail.com.)

Máire Ní Aogáin

According to a saying attributed to Jim Larkin, "Christ is crucified every day on the streets of Dublin". This little book transfers this metaphor to the DART stations, linking these to the Stations of the Cross.

The bilingual text draws on literature from each language to provide contemporary context for the Stations in a manner which should appeal to all age-groups.

It had its origins in a special one-off radio programme for Good Friday.



The programme invited listeners to undertake a spiritual journey with actors Bríd Ní Neachtain and Diarmuid de Faoite as they reflect on the meaning of each of the Stations of the Cross on a journey on the DART in Dublin, and their relevance to contemporary life.

The programme, produced by Mairéad Ní Dhomhnaill, was broadcast on Raidió na Gaeltachta. It has now been given book form. The creator,

Tadhg Ó Dúshláine, is an award winning poet and folklorist who lectures at NUI Maynooth.

Illustrations

The excellent illustrations are presented in the form of a billboard depicting 'Everyman' as contemporary Christ suffering on this 'Via Dolorosa'.

Cé gur féidir an leabhar a leanúint i gceachtar den dá theanga, is fearr a thaitneoidh sé le duine dátheangach. For example Station IV, 'Jesus meets his mother', quotes Pearse's poem 'The Mother' in the English text, but Ó Cadhain in the Irish – 'Sí cinniúint an mháthair bheith in ainriocht i gcónaí riamh'.

This is a very impressive booklet, deceptively simple in concept, but clever in execution.

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.

Ireland's role in keeping the world at peace



President Higgins meeting members of Ireland's UN peacekeepers.

Into Action: Irish peacekeepers under fire 1960-2014
by Dan Harvey
(Merrion Press, €18.99 pb)

Joe Carroll

Irish troops have been involved in United Nations peacekeeping missions for 60 years at a cost of 86 lives. It is an honourable record and the author, a former Lieutenant Colonel in the Defence Forces, has played his part.

In his new book he writes about the Irish role in these missions and concentrates on seven episodes where Irish troops had to resort to armed action as part of their mission. These include in the Congo, Lebanon, Kosovo, Chad and Syria.

The most tragic episode was at Niamba in the Congo in November 1960 where nine Irish soldiers died when ambushed by Baluba tribesmen. It was a rough wake-up call for the Irish peacekeepers caught in a chaotic situation in the breakaway province of Katanga. It was also a shock for the public at home which a few months earlier had seen the photographs of smiling soldiers boarding the US transport planes ferrying them to the Congo.

Action

Further action followed at Jadotville and the 'tunnel' in Elizabethville, but the Irish learned fast and won a high reputation for diplomatic as well as military skills by the time the Congo operation ended several years later.

Their future missions were complicated by

the UN mandates they operated under in which their entitlement to use force was never clearly spelled out. The distinction between 'peace enforcement' and 'peacekeeping' remains a subtle one, perhaps too subtle.



As peace enforcers, UN troops can engage opposing forces to win military objectives as happened at Elizabethville but after the Congo, UN mandates usually restricted the use of military force to self-defence situations.

This was a tricky one for the Irish troops patrolling the infamous 'enclave' on the border between Lebanon and Israel as part of UNIFIL from 1978.

Here the Irish and other peacekeepers were squeezed between the exiled Palestine Liberation Organisation, the Christian militia under the renegade Major Haddad and the trigger-happy Israeli forces. These were ready to make forays into the enclave when under rocket fire from the PLO. Between 1978 and 2000 some 46 Irish peacekeepers died on duty in the Lebanon.

An interesting variation on the classic UN mandate mission was the Irish contribution in Chad in 2008 as part of EUFOR set up by the EU under the European Security and Defence Policy.

“The most tragic episode was at Niamba in the Congo in November 1960”

The civil war in Chad was threatening to lead to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of refugees in isolated desert camps run by NGOs (non-governmental organisations). EUFOR, commanded from its headquarters in Paris by the Irish officer, Lt-General Pat Nash, was tasked to protect the camps until a UN police force would arrive.

The author describes how the Irish Rangers contingent had to operate in desert conditions, thousands of kilometres from reinforcements of equipment.

In a contribution to this book, General Nash concedes that in certain situations, EUFOR “was morally bound to intervene and did even though it was neither mandated nor structured to do so.”

This is a blunt comment on the ambiguity of some UN Security Council mandates and the problems it can pose for both the troops on the ground and their governments.

Web Watch

Silly season on the Catholic internet turns up on time

It's been a strange month for online Catholic news. July 1 saw Pope Francis informing Cardinal Gerhard Müller that he would not be renewing his tenure as head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Church's doctrinal watchdog. Readers may recall his public disagreement with Irish child protection advocate Marie Collins in March when he challenged her criticisms of the CDF, only to have Mrs Collins demonstrate to *The Irish Catholic* that his claim that a member of the CDF was on the Pope's child protection commission was simply untrue, as it hadn't been the case in two years.

One would think this would cause people to wonder whether the Pontiff's decision may have been motivated less by disapproval of the cardinal's doctrinal views than by how the CDF has looked dysfunctional of late.

Unfortunately, certain self-professed Catholics seem keen to lap up and spread about any old nonsense where stories smearing the reputation of the Holy Father are concerned, a prize example being a post on the strange website onepeterfive.com, derived from somebody who spoke to somebody who recently had lunch beside Cardinal Müller.

The story, almost as absurd as a recent unsubstantiated allegation by Marco Tosatti in firstthings.com that the Pope once deliberately had a Mass the cardinal was saying interrupted, claimed the Pontiff challenged Cardinal Müller with a five-question interrogation on a range of subjects, and was swiftly rejected by Vatican spokesman Greg Burke, the cardinal's secretary, and even eventually the cardinal himself.



Cardinal Gerhard Müller.

The latter denial has gone unmentioned on onepeterfive.com, while the other denials were acknowledged but brushed aside with spurious claims that the story was substantively true and showed the cardinal in a good light.

One might have thought this would be enough to keep the Catholic internet's more febrile fringes busy, but Cardinal Joachim Meisner's funeral created a far bigger uproar, with it swiftly being claimed that Pope Emeritus Benedict's funeral message for Cologne's former archbishop said: “The Lord does not abandon his Church even when the boat has taken on so much water as to be on the verge of sinking”.

Message

Some supposed the Pope Emeritus believes this is happening now, and that the message was intended as criticism of Pope Francis; the supposedly traditionalist website rorate-caeli.blogspot.com published a translation of the full message under the headline ‘Benedict XVI: “Francis = Capsizing Boat”’, while lifesitenews.com went with the headline ‘Breaking: Pope Benedict XVI says Church is “on the verge of capsizing”’.

Such stories weren't even close to true, ignoring

how the Pope Emeritus' original message had included both significant context and the all-important word *manchmal* or ‘sometimes’ – he wasn't saying the Church is especially taking on water now, but that while it often does so, it is guaranteed ultimate safety.

Describing those who had misrepresented Benedict as “stupid people”, the Pope Emeritus's private secretary Archbishop Georg Gänschwein said: “The emeritus pope was deliberately exploited. He wasn't alluding to anything specific with that phrase, but talking about the situation of the Church of today and that of the past as a boat that doesn't sail in calm waters. Francis also says this.”

Complicating things further, www.laciviltacattolica.it kicked up a proverbial and predictable hornets' nest through the clunkily-titled ‘Evangelical Fundamentalism and Catholic Integralism in the USA: A Surprising Ecumenism’.

The essay, by Pope Francis' friends Fr Antonio Spadaro and Marcelo Figueroa, argues there's something wrong in American Christianity where some Catholics have forged an “ecumenism of hate” where ideology matters more than a commitment to the fullness of Church teaching.

It's a flawed piece, but this is hardly an excuse for dismissing its thesis that there is a tendency in American Catholicism that too easily believes, as CruxNow.com contributor Austen Ivereigh says, “that you can conquer the public square by trading in some parts of the Gospel and neglecting others, that you can do deals with power-brokers to ‘Christianise’ from above”.

It's a serious point, and one we should all keep in mind.

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Dear Heart of Jesus,
In the past I have asked for many favours.

This time I ask for a special one. (mention here)

Take it, dear Heart of Jesus, and place it within your own broken Heart where your Father sees it.

Then, in his merciful eyes, it will become your favour, not mine. Amen.

Say this prayer for three days.

R.O'B.

The Miracle Prayer

Dear Heart of Jesus,
In the past I have asked for many favours.

This time I ask for a special one. (mention here)

Take it, dear Heart of Jesus, and place it within your own broken Heart where your Father sees it.

Then, in his merciful eyes, it will become your favour, not mine. Amen.

Say this prayer for three days.

N.H.

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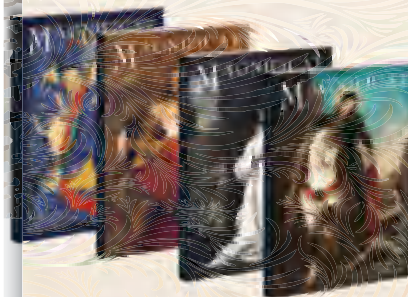
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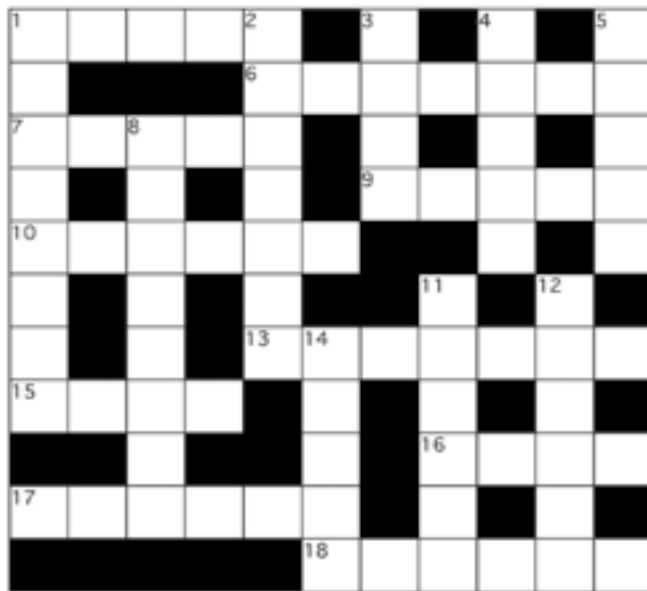
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Leisure time

Crossword Junior

Gordius 192



ACROSS

- 1 This fish hunts in the sea (5)
- 6 Against the law (7)
- 7 The time of darkness (5)
- 9 Leaving, moving away (5)
- 10 How heavy you are (6)
- 13 Spotted, saw (7)
- 15 A barber cuts it (4)
- 16 You might toss this piece of money (4)
- 17 What you get when you add forty and forty (6)
- 18 She has the same parents as you (6)

- 2 Room where meals are prepared (7)

- 3 The Irish one has the colours green, white and orange (4)
- 4 Once more (5)
- 5 You put them into sockets to make electric items work (6)
- 8 Smiling in a slightly cheeky way (8)

DOWN

- 1 To make it, you put filling between two slices of bread (8)

- 11 Show you see in a Big Top (6)
- 12 Make your mind up (6)
- 14 Does as one is told (5)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

GORDIUS No.308

Across – 1 Cur 3 Philipians 8 Nephew 9 Chain-saw
 10 Unite 11 Eying 13 Coach 15 The Last Supper
 16 Skimped 20 Spied 21 Nobel Prize 23 Cream
 24 Moistens 26 Cheshire Cat 27 Nee

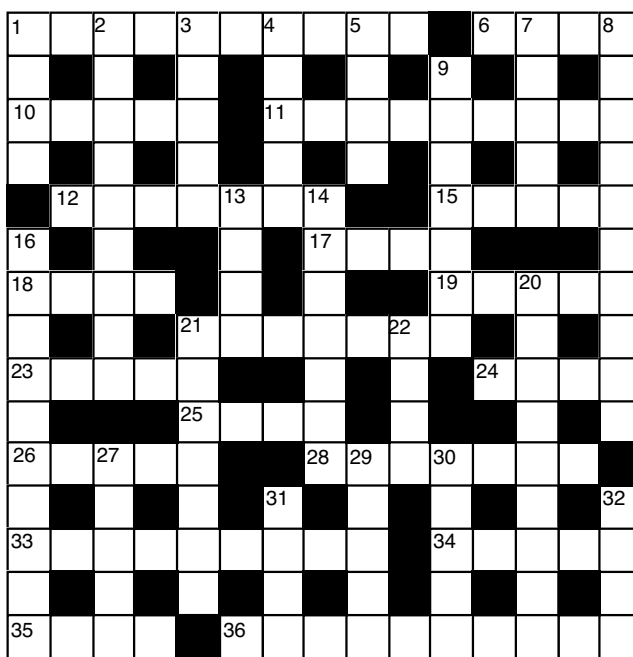
Down – 1 Conjunction 2 Reprieve 3 Piece 4 Lockjaw
 6 Assail 7 Sew 12 Gendarmerie 13 Casks 14 Hiked 17 Peter
 Pan 18 Finesse 19 Oblige 22 Latch 23 Count 24 Mac

CHILDREN'S No.191

Across – 1 Laugh 4 Light 7 Disappear 9 Bat 10 Easiest
 12 Bed 14 Derry 17 Dealer 18 First 19 Agrees
 Down – 1 Ladybird 2 Upset 3 Happen 5 Garden 6 Toast
 8 Easter egg 11 Brush 13 Birds 15 Exit 16 Blue

Crossword

Gordius 309



ACROSS

- 1 Two dairy products? No, just one (10)
- 6 See 27 down
- 10 & 30d Marine sports enthusiast who may have an absurd vice? (5,5)
- 11 Political address witnessed following anaesthetists one to nine? (6,3)
- 12 English cheese (7)
- 15 Thick, impenetrable (5)
- 17 Goes out like the tide (4)
- 18 American lake - part of a series (4)
- 19 These jugs sound like they're not mine! (5)
- 21 See 7 down
- 23 Large sea area (5)
- 24 Is this issued to scatter boas? (1.1.1.1.)
- 25 Mimics primates (4)
- 26 Tricky problem (5)
- 28 Dusk (7)
- 33 The gaps it displaces, this pasta (9)
- 34 Swerves (5)
- 35 Short morse code symbols (4)
- 36 Sanctified commands are the making of a priest (4,6)

DOWN

- 1 Piece of sculpture (4)
- 2 & 8d Contact what's

- mathematically straight, with a change of religion? That's some feat during a rugby match! (9,10)
- 3 This brings style to many an antelope (5)
- 4 Food for the Israelites? It's in the German nature to provide this (5)
- 5 Hobbling (4)
- 7 & 21a Part of the New World where they speak the language of Ancient Rome? (5,7)
- 8 See 2 down
- 9 This body of water is the lowest place on Earth (4,3)
- 13 Percussion instrument (4)
- 14 Compensation for getting many to leave a scarlet frock (7)
- 16 Rotted (10)
- 20 Lee, sew her up, but not here. (9)
- 21 State of lawlessness (7)
- 22 Facial feature that is an inch out of place (4)
- 27 How chic Mr Baldwin is! Clever and conceited too (5-4)
- 29 Make into one (5)
- 30 See 10 across
- 31 He's probably German, whichever way you view him (4)
- 32 Avails of (4)



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Sudoku Corner

192

Easy

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

Hard

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

Last week's Easy 191

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

Last week's Hard 191

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



Fr Vincent Sherlock

Notebook

Having Faith is all about being part of the team

THE REDEMPTORIST Fr Peter Burns directed our priests' diocesan retreat this year.

In some of his talks he spoke to us of Faith and the absolute need for it to be personal. He drew the vital distinction that though it need be 'personal', if truly lived it can never be private. By its nature Faith draws us into community, relationship and a shared journey. He spoke of the reality and risk of 'assuming' we have faith. A challenging thought for sure! There is an ongoing need to work at Faith, spend meaningful time in prayer, to enter into a deep and personal relationship with Christ.



hands, is quite likely too much for us. If we are to bring people into a relationship with Jesus, we must know this relationship ourselves.

LEONARD COHEN'S DIAMOND(S) ON THE SOUL

Neil Diamond's Leave a little room for God is worth a listen. He says it well, I think...

Leave a little room for God
As you're goin' through the day
Leave a little room for God
You know he won't get in your way

Save a little place inside
Somewhere you can call your own
Then leave a little room for God
And you won't ever be alone
What in the name of God brings you here?

What of those who have 'lost their Faith' and who might speak of wanting to reconnect with Christ? This is where personal Faith, parish, community and shared vision come into play. This is where we, as 'Church', have a mission and a calling to mentor or allow ourselves be mentored that Christ's word might be heard a-fresh.

There was talk about the need to become 'fascinated' by Christ and to enter something by way of 'apprenticeship' where people are willing to uncover what faith means by learning – truly learning – who Christ really is. Sharing the road with like-minded others in 'community', parish and the Church is crucial.

This leads to a growing in love

of Christ, having come to know him through careful reading of the Gospel which is the starting point, the meeting place, where Christ is encountered.

If we are truly friends with another there can be little room for counting costs or keeping a balance sheet. It is ultimately about commitment to another and willingness to be there for another in and out of season.

Training

My mind wandered to the Astro pitch beside the parish church and to a group of committed players immersed in a training session as I walked back from Mass.

I thought how vital it was that they train together, be together irrespective of how much personal time they might have given during the week.

The place on the team is only guaranteed through training as a team. The team training was, of course, equally strengthened by the work done alone.

Faith, friendship with Christ, is something like that too. Personal, not private and alone but with the eyes fixed on being part of the team.

Faith at its purest

It was my second and final 'three day' pilgrimage to Lough Derg and I met two men from Co. Cavan as we shared a cup of 'Lough Derg soup' (no seasoning required!) Feeling sorry for myself, I shared how difficult I was finding the experience. They were having none of it. "It's a powerful place", said one, "this is my third time doing it this year", the other added.

"What in the name of God brings you here three times?" I asked. The reply was as sincere as it was swift: "pure faith". I wonder is it time to give it another go, and I wonder has the soup improved?

Image

Fr Burns used a powerful image about hands of faith stretching back to the hands of Christ. It is then – quite literally – the handing on of faith. We do well to recall the hands of our parents, and their parents before them, all the way back to the 'hands of Christ'.

He's clear that, if as God's people, we have not had something approaching that personal encounter, if we are not 'in Faith', the task in hand, the task depending on that chain of



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