



The NET

Sharing fruits of faith in Derry Diocese

ISSUE 96. MAY 2024

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See inside...



40th celebration for St Oran's NS - Bunrana.



Celebrating 60 years of St Patrick's & St Brigid's College - Claudy.



Diamond and Golden milestones marked - Clonleigh, Lifford



"Queen of the Angels and Queen of the May." (see p20)

St Patrick's PS, Gortin, P7 pupils taking part in their school's May Procession to honour Our Lady.



Dominican Mission a time of reflection - Three Patrons, Derry.



St Columba's PS outstanding pastoral care award - Draperstown



St Eithne's PS Crowning of Our Lady - Holy Family, Ballymagroarty.



Volunteer Appreciation - Donagheady, Co Tyrone.

People in focus



Blessed Carlo Acutis.



Christina Carey, Greenlough.



Fr Pat O'Hagan, Bellaghy PP.



The late Sr Anna Doherty RSM, Derry.



Thomas Gallagher, Derry

Also featuring: Youth of Acutis launch in Derry; Claudy College new Wellbeing Hub officially opened; Home of the Mother Family Encounter weekend; Coleraine Parish Picnic; St Brigid's PS Mayogall moving presentation of Mary's Way of the Cross; Young Writers section; Children's Catechism Club; Malin Well Rosary walk; Barons Court fundraising walk for Newtownstewart parishes; Bellaghy & Newtownstewart sacramental joy; May processions & Parish Grotto Rosaries; Legion of Mary Rosary promotion; Large turnout for Dawn Walks; Irish section; Derry pilgrims at Knock Eucharistic pilgrimage; Cursillo renewal; Diocesan Priests' Conference; Vocations News; Features; Diary Dates, Quiz... and much more...

Contents

Disciple' means who is learning
- Reflection by Bishop Donalp2
Diocese of Derry Lough Derg Pilgrimage
by Tony Brennanp2

Newly founded Youth of Acutis welcome miracle
clearing path for Carlo's canonisationp3
Blessed Carlo's top tip for attaining holiness
- to want it will all your heart!p3

Celebrating 60 years of St Patrick's & St Brigid's Claudyp4-5

Claudy College new Wellbeing Hub a game changer
in mental health care for the youngp6

HM Regional Encounter in Donegal - a much-needed spiritual boost
by Sr Ruby SHMp7

Servant Sisters lead prayer and song
at Crossroads Crowning of Our Ladyp7
May crowning of Our Lady at St Eithne's PS, Derryp7
Home of the Mother 'All or Nothing' Youth Clubp7

St Oran's NS Buncrana celebrates 40th anniversaryp8-9

Sun shines on Coleraine Parish Picnicp9

Young Writers share their thoughts on...
*The transforming power of Pentecost
*The Chosen...the biblical drama that may change your life
*St Joseph of Cupertino and Exam Prayer
*Pope Francis telling young people to look outwards for real interaction
*Eucharistic Adoration
*Young people encouraged to "be diligent dreamers" by Pope Francis
*Hospitality in Christianity
*Surf Sand Son retreat connecting young people of faith
*The magnificence of God's Creationp10-12

St Columba's PS Draperstown wins award
for outstanding pastoral carep13
Mary's Way of the Cross with St Brigid's PS Mayogall
by Grainne O'Kanep13
Anam Og Summer Schemep13

Three Patrons parishioners encouraged to reflect,
restore and rebuild during Dominican-led Missionp14-15

Barons Court cross community walk
raises funds for two Newtownstewart parishesp15

"We are an Easter People and Alleluia is our song!"
by Fr Peter O'Kanep16
Bellaghy Confirmation children
encouraged to use Holy Spirit gifts wellp16
Bellaghy Holy Communion joyp16
Parish Eucharistic Adoration across Diocesep16

Irish section by Déaglán Ó Laithbheartaigh...
* Léigiún Mhuire - Arm Mhuire (The Legion of Mary - Mary's Army)
* Comhdháil mór i nDoire (A Great Conference in Derry)p17

Clonleigh Parish marks Diamond & Golden milestonesp18-19

Derry pilgrims amongst thousands at Knock
with Eucharistic Adoration Apostolate
by Roseann O'Donnellp20
Newtownstewart First Holy Communicants
Celebrate 'Second Holy Communion'p20
Gortin primary pupils in May Procession
to honour Our Ladyp20

Memories of Marian Devotion in May
by Dr Seán Beattiep21
Malin Well Rosary walk tradition continuesp21
Legion of Mary promoting Rosary in the homep21
Gortin primary pupils in May Procession
to honour Our Ladyp21
May Rosaries in honour of Our Lady...
* St Mary's, Dregish
* St Patrick's, Dungiven
* St Mary's, Limavady
* St Patrick's, Claudyp21
Men's First Saturday Rosaries
in Derry & Camdonaghp21

Walking Camino to raise vital funds for ALPS
- Greenlough parishioner, Christina Careyp22
Large turnout for Dawn Walksp22

Our focus needs to be on living out Christian faith
in every area of our lives...not just on Sundays
- Thomas Gallagherp23
Cursillo renewal weekend an encouraging time
of community reflection by Aoife O'Neillp23

Fruitful time for priests of Diocese
at conference reflecting on co-responsibility
by Fr Peter Maddenp24
Unexpected encounter highlight of 40th Ordination
group's visit to Romep24
Diocesan Vocations News
by Fr Pat O'Haganp24
Prayer for Priestsp24
Pope's Prayer Intentionp24

A tribute to Sr Anna Doherty
by Sr Margaret McConaloguep25
Donaghadee Parish and Aghabrack & District
Community Association celebrate volunteersp25

Mystery by Fr John McLaughlin SSCp26

Eternal Echoes: Timeless Truths for Today's Hearts
by Regina Deighan
- The Four Marks of the Church: A Series continuedp27
Catechism-YouCat June pilgrimage to Knock
St Eugene's Cathedral prayer schedule...Ordinary Timep27

Parish Post-itsp28-29

Diocesan Diaryp29
...other Diary Datesp29

Love is a decision
by Fr Johnny Doherty CSsRp30
Legion of Mary promoting Rosary in the home
Termonbacca News...
*Ladies' Bible Studyp30
*Carmelite Book Clubp30
Children's Catechism Club - C3
by Veronica Harleyp31
Quiz Time with Lawrencep31

Bishop Donal reflects on the Pope's May Prayer intention for the formation of religious and seminarians: "We pray that religious women and men, and seminarians, grow in their own vocations through their human, pastoral, spiritual and community formation, leading them to be credible witnesses to the Gospel."

'Disciple' means one who is learning



Bishop Donal

ONE of the important emphases in the recent church has been on 'adult faith formation'. Unless we are learning to be better disciples, and growing in our knowledge and love of Jesus, our faith is stagnating.

Even in the world of business, everyone is expected to be undergoing 'continuous professional development'. Otherwise business cannot respond to new challenges.

St Paul, as he travelled around the Jewish and Gentile world, wrote that he made himself all things to all people, so that by all possible means he might save

some (1 Cor 9:22). In a rapidly changing world, we need to be learning the skills of how to bring the Gospel to new circumstances.

Where does that fit in with us today?

The Summary Document from last October's Synod (A Synodal church in Mission) states that 'the Church is mission'. And in that church, there are both charismatic and hierarchical gifts. The latter gifts of the Spirit help people to provide formal and leadership services. The charismatic gifts are to be found in individuals as well as in movements of

lay people, and in those who consecrate their lives to Christ in convents and monasteries.

The prayer intention of Pope Francis is that religious women and men, as well as those preparing for priestly ordination, will be formed to grow as lifelong disciples of Jesus. And they do so, not merely to satisfy their own personal spiritual journey. They are disciples so that they can be salt to the earth and light to the world, credible witnesses to the Gospel in changing times.

Aspects of Formation

Pope Francis also underlines how disciples have to grow in all aspects of who they are. St Thomas Aquinas wrote that "grace builds on nature". Jesus calls us to follow in the real circumstances of our lives. That means that human formation is at the heart of who we are as Christ's followers. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Grace is at work in all of who we are.

Then Pope Francis talks about pastoral formation. We are all called to be concerned about the physical well-being and the eternal salvation of others. Religious sisters and brothers, as well as priests, have to take seriously that they are being set aside for ministry to others.

Our vocations are all in the

service of mission and never merely private. We are called in the church for the mission of the church. That means learning new pastoral skills and utilising new means of communication

And there is a need for spiritual formation. Pope John Paul II wrote in 2001 that all our structures have to be schools of prayer (Novo Millennio Ineunte, 32-34 NMI). He added that "training holiness calls for a Christian life distinguished above all in the art of prayer" (NMI 32.)

Any vocation from God is not to do a job in the church but to be a Spirit-filled disciple. That requires spiritual formation, learning from our great spiritual traditions.

And Pope Francis underlines that community living is part of the message of the Gospel. We belong to one another. We are all living cells in the Body of Christ, St Paul said. The Second Vatican Council had written about the Church being a sign or sacrament of intimate union with God and of the unity of the human race (Cf Lumen Gentium 1).

One modern author wrote that we can become "an antidote to an age of decomposing bonds and identity fundamentalism." Community in Christ flies in the face of rampant individualism. Renewal has always come from communities holding together at the centre, so as to support one another in going out to the margins.

Summary

The Synod document underlines how we are in a change of times. Formation for seminarians and religious men and women has to be for mission in the 21st century, not in order to reconstruct an earlier age. Pope Francis wants us to face the future, not with fear, but with trust in the Holy Spirit.

As one of the Psalms say, "Oh that today you would listen to God's voice, harden not our hearts." (Ps 94)

Can we pray with Pope Francis that we will let the Spirit take away any hearts of stone and make us disciples with hearts of flesh? We need that ongoing formation so as to be, and become, credible witnesses of the Gospel.

Diocese of Derry Three-Day Pilgrimage to Lough Derg by Tony Brennan

LOUGH Derg is a sacred place apart to bring burdens and leave them behind, to seek healing for wounds and to ask for them to be healed.

The pilgrimage is all about letting go, a time to see ones daily life as it truly is. The Lough Derg Three-Day Pilgrimage provides a kind of breathing space, in which people can calmly explore and reflect on where they find themselves in their lives at that moment in time.

Will you join the Diocese of Derry pilgrimage to this Holy

place? This is an opportunity to give thanks to God for having the health, the time, and the freedom to do the pilgrimage. It's a moment to remember one's loved ones at home and anyone who particularly asked for prayers, and also to say a prayer for fellow pilgrims.

The Diocese of Derry Three-Day Pilgrimage is led by Bishop McKeown and starts on Friday, July 26, concluding on Sunday, July 28.

The Bus will depart after

10 am Mass in St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry, on Friday, July 26, and will travel via Lifford and Ballybofey.

The cost is £80, including transport. Cost without transport is £70.

Prebooking is required. Please contact Tony Brennan on tony.brennan@derrydiocese.org or phone the Diocese Office on 0044 28 7126 2302 for booking form.

We look forward to welcoming you!

LOUGH DERG
SANCTUARY OF SAINT PATRICK

DIOCESE OF DERRY

Three Day Pilgrimage to Lough Derg
Led by Bishop McKeown
Friday, 26th July - Sunday, 28th July 2024

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The NET
Sharing the fruits of the faith in the Derry Diocese

Supporting us:

The mission of 'The NET' is to share the fruits of the faith in homes, parishes and schools across the Diocese of Derry, and be a source of hope and encouragement in living our Catholic faith each day.

'The NET' is a Lay Apostolate that has the blessing of our Bishop, Most Rev Donal McKeown.

With no fixed charge to read this publication, donations would be most welcome to help cover costs. Annual accounts will be available to view on request.

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The ministry of
The NET
was dedicated to Our Lady, through the intercession of St Maximilian Kolbe, in a ceremony celebrated by Bishop Donal McKeown on August 14, 2019.

The NET
Sharing the fruits of the faith in the Derry Diocese

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Newly founded Youth of Acutis welcome miracle clearing path for Carlo's canonisation



THE news of a second miracle attributed to the intercession of Blessed Carlo Acutis being recognised by Pope Francis, along with the announcement that the Holy Father will convene a Consistory of Cardinals to deliberate the millennial's canonisation, has been greeted with much excitement by many, including the members of the newly founded Youth of Acutis in Derry.

Reacting to the announcement, 18-year-old James Tourish, Youth of Acutis founder, remarked that they looked forward to hearing more about the process of Blessed Carlo's path to sainthood, and that they would continue to take inspiration from his life and attempt to follow his footsteps as a young person in an uncertain world.

"We joyously welcome the news of Pope Francis recognising a miracle attributed to Blessed Carlo Acutis, clearing the way for Carlo's canonisation," said James, adding: "We hope that as the first millennial

Saint, he can inspire the youth of the Diocese of Derry, as well as young people around the world to attempt to live saintly lives, putting Christ at the centre of our hearts and seeking to put the needs of others before our own."

The new group for youth exploring their faith was launched earlier this month on May 3, Blessed Carlo's birthday, during a Founding Mass celebrated by Bishop Donal in St Eugene's Cathedral.

Commending the group's main goal as being 'to bring young people to Christ', the Bishop encouraged prayer "for a new generation of generous young hearts who believe that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and who want to let others see Jesus."

James and some other founding members of Youth of Acutis read the Prayer of the Faithful and took up the Offertory gifts during the Mass, which concluded with Bishop Donal saying a prayer of dedication for the new youth faith group.

Afterwards, the Youth of Acutis founding members and other young people who had attended the launch Mass gathered in the Cathedral Hall for conversation and refreshments. They were joined by Bishop Donal and Fr Sean O'Donnell, the group's spiritual director.

Encouraging the young people as they begin their journey together, Bishop Donal said: "It is great to see so many of you here for the start of this journey. Perhaps you could read up about Carlo Acutis and see what strikes you, and discern what it is that Carlo would like this group to be and do."

Fr Sean told them: "I am happy to guide you and encourage that love of Jesus."

Speaking to the group, James explained the background to it and his hopes: "The idea for a group of young people meeting up regularly came to me through meetings between The Net Young Writers and Bishop Donal at the Iosas Centre. I thought why not meet

more often as young people to talk. "When I think of faith, I think of my granny or older people. I think it would be good for us to meet as young people and talk about our faith. The statue of Carlo in the Cathedral has made a lot of people think about their faith more, because of the way Carlo lived his life.

"Carlo is someone who lived 20 years ago. It is not that he was a young person in the 1900s. He lived in our age and understood what we, as young people, are going through in this day and age. I think we can relate to him in that special way."

"I don't know where this group is going, but I hope that it can go very far," he remarked, adding: "There needs to be a change of young people's views of our Church. I think some people view the church as some far away community. We have the responsibility to help each other to love and help each other.

"My faith journey has been difficult at times but I felt that reading the Bible and what Jesus wants for us, just makes sense. I think that is why I stuck with it."

Sharing his hope that the Youth of Acutis group will have a community focus, James said: "The Church has its problems, but that came from the faith not being lived right. I think our role is to show that the Church is a place helping people. I would love for this group to be involved in charity work and acts that show people that we are

ready to do what we have to do.

"Hopefully, we can inspire other young people as to what our faith is about. It is founded on love and forgiveness."

Quoting Carlo saying: "To be always close to Jesus, that is my life plan", James added: "That is really what I hope this group can strive to be too."

Planning to meet again towards the end of June, after the exam season, the young people took bundles of Carlo Acutis prayer cards with them to share with others.

Youth of Acutis is aimed at those aged 16-21 years old, but anyone older or younger than this who is interested in being involved is encouraged to contact James.

For expressions of interest or



further information, James can be contacted by emailing him at Jamestourish@outlook.com. Youth of Acutis also have Facebook and Instagram accounts.



On his way to being declared a saint... Blessed Carlo's top tip for attaining holiness...to want it with all your heart!



KNOWN as 'God's Influencer' for his use of the internet to highlight Eucharistic miracles, Blessed Carlo Acutis continues to influence lives almost 18 years after his teenage death from leukaemia in Italy, with the inspiring story of his faith-filled short life reaching more and more people following a miracle that led to his beatification in 2020, and now a second miracle which has cleared the way for his canonization.

The striking sight of the mortal remains of Blessed Carlo on view in the Sanctuary of the Renunciation in Assisi, displayed in jeans, a sweater and a pair of Nikes, has been venerated by thousands, and tours of his relics to various parts of the world, including Derry and other Irish Dioceses, are drawing large numbers for a blessing.

Commenting on the latest news

regarding Blessed Carlo's cause for sainthood, Bishop Donal told 'The Net': "It is a real blessing for us all that Pope Francis has set Blessed Carlo Acutis on the road to sainthood. The young saint-to-be has inspired many young people to seek holiness in the world of on-line media. His emphasis on Jesus in the Eucharist chimes with a renewed emphasis on Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament."

He added: "2025 is a Holy Year for the entire church with the theme of 'Pilgrims of Hope'. In a world of much negativity, fear and gloom, the forthcoming canonisation of Saint Carlo - with the participation of his parents and family - can be a sign of hope that God's abundant grace is at work in our time and place.

"I hope that the statue and relic in St Eugene's Cathedral can be the focal point for a renewal of our mission to bring Christ to young people and young people to Christ."

Born on May 3, 1991, in London, to Antonia Salzano, an Italian, and Andrea Acutis, of English-Italian blood, Blessed Carlo is set to become the Catholic Church's first millennial saint (a person born in the early 1980s to late 1990s). He was brought up in Milan from the age of four months, and from a young age was drawn to wanting

to visit churches to "say hello to Jesus", and expressed concern for poor people he saw begging in the town of Milan, wanting to buy them sleeping bags and blankets. At school, he stood up for those being bullied and befriended those who were shy or had difficulty interacting with others.

After receiving his First Holy Communion aged seven, Carlo sought to attend Mass daily whenever he could, and always made an effort to spend time, before or after Mass, in prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. So central was the Eucharist in his life that he called it his "highway to Heaven". Carlo also had great devotion to Our Lady and prayed the Rosary every day.

Devout in his faith, Carlo's influence drew his parents back to practising their Catholic faith, and led to the conversion and baptism of his Hindu au pair. His love for computers, and creating websites and programmes, led to him developing a website documenting miracles from around the world. This website has now been translated into several different languages, and used as the basis for an exhibition which has travelled around the world. He was convinced that evidence of Eucharistic miracles would help

people believe that Jesus is present at every Mass.

One of his many messages on his website is "the more often we receive the Eucharist, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of Heaven." He also listed instructions for becoming holy, with the first one being: "You must want it with all your heart".

Sufferings

Aged 15, Carlo became ill with what was initially thought to be the flu, on October 2, 2006, but he deteriorated within days and was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukaemia. When asked by doctors if he was suffering, Carlo would reply that there were people suffering much more than him. Despite being in great pain, he never complained, but offered his sufferings "for the Lord, for the Pope and the Church in order not to go to purgatory but to go straight to Heaven."

After suffering a brain haemorrhage on October 11, he went into a coma and died the following day. His large funeral was attended by many of the migrants that Carlo had befriended. He was buried in Assisi at his request, because of his love for St Francis.

The first miracle that led to Carlo's beatification in Assisi was that of a Brazilian boy, called Mattheus, in 2013. He had 'annular pancreas' and had been unable to eat without vomiting. Mattheus was four years old and, weighing 9kg, not expected to live long.

His mother, Luciana Vianna, had spent years praying for his healing. Fr Marcelo Tenorio, a family friend, was praying for the beatification of Carlo, having read online about his life. When he obtained a relic from Carlo's mother in 2013, he celebrated a Mass and prayer service in his parish, encouraging people to ask for Carlo's intercession for whatever healing needed.

In the lead-up to the prayer service, Luciana prayed a novena for his intercession for her son, and explained to Mattheus that they could ask Carlo to pray that he be healed. On the day of the prayer service, Mattheus touched Carlo's picture, saying: "I wish I could stop vomiting so much."

Telling his mother on the way home that he was healed, Mattheus went on to eat the French fries, rice, beans and steak he asked for on arriving home, and didn't vomit. He then ate normally the next day and the day after, leaving his doctors baffled at his healing when scans showed that his condition had vanished.

The second miracle attributed to Blessed Carlo relates to a 21-year-old woman from Costa Rica, Valeria Valverde, who had fallen from her

bicycle on July 2, 2022, in Florence, where she was a university student. Suffering a severe head injury that required emergency surgery to alleviate pressure on her brain, her doctors had warned of a very low chance of survival.

Hearing the news, the secretary of Valeria's mother, Liliana, started praying to Blessed Carlo, and six days later, on July 8, Liliana went to pray at his tomb in Assisi for her daughter's healing, leaving a written note. That very day, Valeria began to breathe spontaneously, and the next day she began moving and partially got her speech back.

On July 18, a CAT scan showed that the haemorrhage had disappeared, and on August 11, she began rehabilitation therapy, making quick progress. In thanksgiving for his intercession, the mother and daughter went on pilgrimage to Blessed Carlo's tomb on September 2.

Releasing a decree on Thursday, May 23, after accepting this second miracle, Pope Francis announced that he will convene a Consistory of Cardinals to deliberate the canonization of Blessed Carlo Acutis, and several other men and women.



Celebrating 60 years of St Patrick's & St Brigid's College Claudy

Where parish, church and faith continue to be central to school ethos

FOUNDED in 1963, St Patrick's & St Brigid's College in the village of Claudy is in celebratory mode marking its 60th anniversary. With the College crest bearing the words 'Laudate Dominum' ('O praise the Lord' Ps117), the main celebration was that of a special Mass in the nearby St Patrick's Church.

Welcoming Bishop Donal to celebrate the Mass, as he did for the College's 50th anniversary on his first official visit to the Cumber Upper & Learmount Parish, the chairperson of the Board of Governors, Helen Crossan remarked that it was fitting the anniversary celebrations commenced in the Parish Church as "the parish, the church and our faith have always been central to the ethos of our school, and will continue to be so as our young people strive to deal with the ever increasing challenges that life places before them."

She went on to point out: "At St Patrick's & St Brigid's College, we prepare pupils for life and work in the 21st century by enabling them to strive for the highest possible levels of Christian and human

achievement."

With a current enrolment of 534 pupils, aged 12-16 years old, Helen noted that the College location at the Gateway to the Sperrin Mountains, "enables it to serve well the needs of not only the local Parish of Cumber Upper & Learmount, but also the parishes of Banagher, Ardmore, Glendermott, Donaghadey, Culmore, Leckpatrick, Steelstown and Strathfoyle."

Highlighting Bishop Donal's "long and distinguished career in education", she remarked: "You are a vastly experienced Catholic educator. We have always valued your counsel and leadership throughout the last 10 years as we try and come to terms with, and deal with, the ever changing face of education both in our own Diocese and also across the North of Ireland."

The ceremony continued with the College's newly appointed principal, Mr Philip McCullagh introducing various symbols brought forward to the altar. A candle, carried by former pupil and current Head of Religious

Education, Laura Sweeney, symbolised the presence of Jesus with its light. A College jersey was brought forward by Conall White, former pupil and current Head of Year 10, as a reminder of having learned to play together as a team. Pupil, Ella Quinn, winner of the Year 8 Poetry competition, brought forward a poem in thanksgiving for the talents and gifts of all.

Head Boy, Rory Madden then read a Prayer to St Patrick, followed by a Prayer to St Brigid read by Head Girl, Cait McCloskey.

In his homily, Bishop Donal, who was joined on the altar by Fr David O'Kane PP and Fr Michael Canny VG, PP Waterside, commented on the "enormous challenges" staff face in all schools "because the young people face enormous challenges".

He stated: "Schools face funding issues. You have to deal with many people whose lives and relationships are on the edge of fragmentation. Many young people have so various special needs and claims on your time. You are expected to solve so many of the problems that society causes or fails to grapple with - and then you get blamed for not doing everything."

"And an often-intolerant state demands that you become a mouthpiece for its ideology. And in that context, you hear Jesus still say, 'Go make disciples of all nations.'"

Stand for something

Addressing how staff might deal with this, Bishop Donal highlighted the importance of standing for something, saying: "The Anglo-Saxon curriculum emphasis is increasingly limited to curricular content and teachers can be frightened into saying, 'I just teach my subject'. Some other countries

still emphasise thinking skills and insist on a role for philosophy and ethics. That leaves us in the current situation where, in the whole fraught area of human relationships all we should be allowed to do is give 'comprehensive and scientifically accurate education.'"

"If we want to be a decent formation community as well as a Catholic school that offers a life-giving way of looking at life, then we need to be aware of what it is we stand for. Education limited to curricular content with no sense of right and wrong does no favours to our young people who seek guidance. Information without any sense of inspiration crushes young people who want to dream. It is no wonder that so many people are crushed by the pain of being human and the absence of any worldview that helps them to cope. In a very mixed-up world, it is important that there is room for the school to discuss what vision you stand for."

Noting that the school's website is "clear about your identity and values", the Bishop remarked: "You know that your identity is a strength and not a hindrance to success on all levels. You have stated that you are committed, not just to handing on the content of faith but to developing values."

"You name them as: Belief - We identify our talents... We do our best; Achievement - We prepare correctly... We flourish together; Leadership - We take responsibility... We put others first; Courage - We take action... We never give up; Service - We serve each other... We serve our community; Thankfulness - We are thankful... We give praise."

Bishop Donal went on to point out how "the narrow emphasis



Continued from p4

on curricular content forgets that education is what remains after you have forgotten all you were ever taught.”

“The Catholic school,” he added, “has to be active in building communities of formation where good human relationships are promoted and cherished. Life is full of problems. But pupils learn more from how they are treated than from what they hear in nice words. Reconciliation is not merely a political issue. It has to do with day-to-day issues – and it is taught and caught without being part of the formal curriculum. Schools who are experts on in-house reconciliation will continue to be a blessing on the whole of society.”

In a message to current pupils of St Patrick’s & St Brigid’s, Bishop Donal echoed the words of St Paul in the second reading: “Let no one disregard you because you are young but be an example to all the believers in the way you speak and behave.”

He added: “I hope and pray that your school community will be helped to keep up the great work of offering a rounded wholesome education, nourishing dreams and resisting negativity. Thank you for all that you do. Never be ashamed

of who you are, even when many of our politicians would want us to go away. Work on the assumption that, if the powerful in our society are so opposed to what we do, we must be doing something uncomfortably right! That is what Jesus did – and what Saints Patrick and Brigid did in his name.”

The Mass came to a close with the beautiful singing of ‘Our Lady of Knock’ by the combined staff and students’ choir.

Afterwards, all were invited to come along to the College to enjoy some refreshments and view photographic displays. Presentations were made to well-known Dungiven photographer, Danny O’Kane for providing many of the photographs for the display, and to Year 8 pupil, Ella Quinn for her prize winning poem written to mark the 60th anniversary.

Also on display was a beautiful Celtic Cross, which had been blessed by Bishop Donal, and will be presented annually to the Year 12 student who has made the most contribution to the faith life of the school.

The RE Department’s contribution to the celebrations took the form of two new banners honouring the College’s Patrons, St Patrick and St Brigid.



Cutting the anniversary cake are Pat and Phil O'Donnell, members of the original teaching staff when the school first opened.



Claudy College new Wellbeing Hub a game changer in mental health care for young

IN the midst of celebrating six decades of education provision during the 2023-24 academic year, St Patrick's & St Brigid's College, in the Co Derry village of Claudy, also celebrated the official opening of its new dedicated Wellbeing Hub.

A collaborative initiative between the College and mdeducational foundation, a charity dedicated to improving the wellbeing of young people, the principal, Mr Philip McCullagh remarked at the official opening of the Hub that it was "an important milestone" in the College's commitment to "fostering the well-being of senior students".

"With the foundation's generous support," he said, "we have been able to appoint a dedicated Wellbeing Lead, who serves as a vital resource in promoting and maintaining the health and wellbeing of our most senior pupils.

"Pastoral care is at the heart of St Patrick's & St Brigid's College, and the opening of this wellbeing hub conveys the seriousness of the approach taken by Governors and leaders on the importance of caring for the mental health of our young people.

"We are renowned for our 'family' atmosphere that we nurture between our staff and pupils, and having a full-time wellbeing practitioner demonstrates progression at the College and significant intent by the school's leadership.

"The opening of this hub shows how meeting the needs of pupils, both collectively and individually, is always at the forefront of our thinking."

Head Girl, Cait McCloskey spoke on behalf of the students to say "how thrilled" they were to have their own Wellbeing provision at the College, as well as having Blinne Hogan available full-time to support their mental health and

wellbeing.

"Many pupils need this support at different times and it has been very helpful to have Blinne in the run up to examinations," said Cait, adding: "She makes herself available, shows care and compassion and is someone who the senior pupils know they can turn to in times of need."

Via a video message, past pupil, Aaron Gordon expressed his delight that pupils at his former school will benefit from the Wellbeing Hub, envisaging that it will be a "well used" facility.

"I am living proof that early intervention and support can go a long way," said Aaron, recalling: "I wasn't a good student for a few years. A lot of teachers asked me if everything was alright and tried to look out for me, but they didn't have the time to dedicate to this, so it is great to have this wellbeing support lead. I know that it would have helped me a lot."

The guest speaker for the opening, which was attended by a number of special guests, was Prof Siobhan O'Neill, Ulster University/Mental Health Champion NI. As Mental Health Champion, Siobhan's role is to advise government about policy issues affecting mental health and wellbeing, and help design specific policies relating to mental health.

Commenting on the rise in mental health problems across society, particularly in children and young people, she pointed out that while one-in-five people will have a mental health problem at any given time, around half of all mental disorders develop before the age of 14, and three-quarters develop by the age of 25 years.

She added: "Research conducted through my office in 2023 found that 45 per cent of 16-year-olds in NI have poor mental ill-health – over half of girls and a third of

boys...There are many reasons for poor mental health in young people, however, the structure of the education system, the relentless emphasis on a narrow range of qualifications, and the stress that this creates for young people, is undoubtedly a huge factor.

"It's definitely not the fault of individual schools. It is a systemic problem that relates to social inequalities, poverty and deprivation. It's not the same in other countries and it is the job of people like me to call it out and campaign to create a more equal society for everyone."

Effective

Explaining that mental health is comprised of patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviours, Siobhan remarked: "We do have a surprising amount of control over this, but we need the right education and support to unlock that control. The right education and support empower us to develop effective ways to manage our body's response to stress and pressure.

"If we equip young people with those skills, in the educational setting, they can get the most out of their education and really truly thrive. The data tells us that mental illness is preventable if we can identify maladaptive patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviours early, and it is manageable and treatable, often really quickly, if we can spot the signs and intervene."

Commending the Wellbeing Hub initiative, Siobhan pointed out that it came at a time of increased demand for mental health services, and "the need for people to be able to identify and talk about their feelings, in safe settings, so that they can problem solve at an earlier stage to prevent the escalation of poor mental health."

"The creation of safe settings for

those conversations in schools is a game changer," she said, adding: "Adolescence is an important period of development. It is a few years where young people are setting their goals and learning how to live, take measured risks and test the water. It is very difficult to reclaim that time later, so we need to make the most of that opportunity to set foundations for the future."

Siobhan continued: "It is for these reasons that this initiative by md educational foundation is important...It is in this age group that we can identify very clearly which young people are really struggling and would benefit most from clinical interventions. However, in most cases it is about early interventions, more 'light touch' approaches to support young people to manage their wellbeing and make the small changes that will have a big impact on their thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

"By providing dedicated wellbeing professionals in schools, the foundation is supporting a 'whole school' approach to wellbeing. This means that more young people can feel secure at school, and know that they are valued and cared for. Through the wellbeing curriculum, young people will be taught self-awareness and how to manage their wellbeing. This will create a culture of psychological fitness and resilience.

"This aligns really well with work in the Department of Education's framework for emotional wellbeing in education. This framework also provides early intervention and targeted interventions, but, unfortunately, it is not available in many of our schools due to funding shortages."

Siobhan went on to note that the schools participating in the mdeducational foundation



programme had been chosen "for their commitment to wellbeing", adding that the wellbeing hub, "the safe space to explore feelings and engage in activities to support emotional regulation, is another solid, visible signal of the importance they place on looking after the whole child."

"St Patrick's and St Brigid's," she said, "are very lucky to have this support from the Foundation, who have made a three-year salary-funded commitment to the College. I'm proud that this school in my local community has been

chosen because of their dedication to looking after their pupils, and I know that this will kick-start longer term wellbeing strategies and growth.

"The legacy that this initiative will produce is immeasurable. This will, in fact, change the trajectory for many, and that will ripple across communities and change the lives of future generations too."

Bringing the ceremony to a close, Siobhan was invited to cut the ribbon to declare the Wellbeing Hub officially open.

St Patrick's & St Brigid's 60th anniversary continued



HM Regional Encounter in Donegal...a much-needed spiritual boost *by Sr Ruby SHM*

Photographs by Roisin O'Callaghan

ON Saturday, May 18, the Home of the Mother hosted a regional encounter for all ages in Donegal. It was a small encounter of about 100 participants, where everyone was able to get to know one another.

The day started off on a high note with Mass celebrated by Fr Luke DeMasi, SHM, and Fr Rene Zambrana, SHM. During his homily, Fr Luke talked about what really fills us. We can have idols and spend our lives chasing them but inevitably we always find ourselves empty and unsatisfied...only the Lord can satisfy the deep longing of our hearts.

After Mass, we walked over to the old Parish Hall to have lunch. Each family brought a packed lunch

and generously brought more to share. Over a cup of tea and lunch, we were able to catch up with old friends and get to know the several new families that heard of the encounter through the different parish bulletins and social media.

Then we proceeded to the small group activities, while the parents had an opportunity for a Holy Hour just for themselves and the children had their own activities. The boys made use of the local pitch, where they were able to play sports to their heart's content, have time to learn more about their faith, and have some time for prayer. The teenage girls played lots of games, including basketball and a series of challenges to be inducted into Our

Lady's Army. They also were able to avail of adoration and had a deep meaningful conversation about the passions and how to direct them.

The younger girls were lucky enough to do some baking, play games, and delve deeper into their faith with the use of videos and a chat. The toddlers weren't left out; they too had many things planned for them, including finding the 12 hidden flowers to give to Our Blessed Mother, story time, videos, drawing, and lots of games.

Later on, we all met back at the hall to pray the Rosary as a family and sing songs to Our Lady. Confessions were available all day, and during the entire Rosary there was a constant flow in the

confession line, including some that hadn't confessed in a long time.

No day is complete without a good cup of tea and some goodies. Everyone brought a little (or a lot) to share and there was more time to chat and meet new people.

As it was the eve of Pentecost, we ended with the Home of the Mother Pentecost Vigil at the Parish with points of meditation, the Pentecost ritual, times of silence, songs, and confession was available.

It was a well-spent day that filled the hearts of many and helped the families to be renewed spiritually. Many said they had such a wonderful time and that it was a much-needed spiritual break and boost!



Parishioners brought lovely bouquets of flowers for Our Lady's altar in St Patrick's Church, Crossroads, Co Donegal

Servant Sisters lead prayer and song at Crossroads Crowning of Our Lady

THE Home of the Mother Servant Sisters led Killygordon parishioners in a time of prayer and hymn-singing to celebrate their floral crowning of Our Lady on the last Sunday of May.

Parishioners had brought beautiful bouquets of flowers to decorate Our Lady's altar and joined the Sisters in praying the

Rosary before morning Mass in St Patrick's Church, Crossroads, Co Donegal.

At the end of the Mass, the Sisters led a prayer of Consecration to Our Lady, while the parish priest, Fr Patsy Arkinson walked around the chapel blessing the congregation with Holy Water.



May crowning of Our Lady at St Eithne's PS, Derry



Every Friday 3:30-6pm

ALL OR NOTHING Youth Club

FOR GIRLS 11-14 YEARS OLD

ACTIVITIES:

- Guitar classes
- Spanish
- Baking
- Sewing & Crochet
- Games
- Crafts
- Painting & drawing
- Faith Formation

Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother Parochial House Crossroads, Killygordon F95 PH 0X hmactivitiesireland@gmail.com

St Oran's NS Buncrana celebrates 40th anniversary

THE school community of St Oran's NS in Buncrana has been celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Cockhill centre of education.

Masses of Thanksgiving were celebrated during May both in the school and in the nearby St Mary's Church by the parish priest, Fr Francis Bradley.

In his homily, the PP remarked that while the anniversary celebration was an occasion to look back "with nostalgia and some shock at how quickly time goes by," it was also an opportunity to "look forward too, to bigger and even better days ahead."

Remarking that St Oran's is a very welcoming environment of teaching and learning, he added: "That does not happen by accident; it demands time and energy, talent and generosity. But it always has."

"Back in the day, it was Master McNellis, the Principal, who led the pupils and staff from the old school to the new one. The building itself was completed by George Hampson; the field had been sold to the parish by Patrick McKinney; my distinguished predecessor, Dr Hugh McGurk was the Parish Priest; and Bishop Edward Daly performed the cutting of the ribbon and the blessing of the new school.

"But...the building did not stop there. For the living organism which a school must be had to take root and develop in new and unfamiliar surroundings. There

was much more space than in the old school – the play area was larger too – and all in all, the present school, sitting on an excellent site was equipped for so many of the developments which have taken place since in Education.

"And that growth and development must still continue at pace, if our children and young people are going to equip themselves with the skill sets needed as we go into an even more unimaginable future."

He continued: "St Oran's is blest to be a Catholic school, for it is not only where staff and pupils go each day and grow each day – it is a very special place of faith and learning. In other words, it is where they play and, we pray, it is where they learn how to love and how to learn. And the two things are closely connected – for we all know that we learn best where we are loved most.

"These are the very things that we get from our parents, for our parents are our first teachers. Our home is our first school; likewise our national schools (and St Oran's is no exception to this) is where we can all build on the lessons we learn at home."

"At home, we first hear about God and we see His love for us in the way we are tenderly cared for by our parents," said Fr Francis, adding: "In turn then, we learn to care for and respect other people; we learn to love as we have been loved. It is

when we come to the church that we can put all the pieces of the jigsaw together – for in the stories we hear and tell, and in the sacraments we celebrate and receive, it is Christ, our teacher, our friend and our brother who wants to show us His great lesson of love.

"As He did in the Gospel, He still does today – He gathers children around Him and teaches all of us to be as eager to learn as they are.

If we look at how we learn, we'll see how Christ, working in so many people, is the One from whom we can learn best.

"Why do I say that? Because Christ is the one who loves us more than anyone else. He cares for us like a parent, He explains things to us like a teacher, He blesses us like the priest, He helps us like the secretary, He protects us and feeds us like a special needs assistant, and guides us safely here and there like a bus-driver; He cleans up after us like the caretaker and, in school, He laughs with us like our friends in the classroom or playground."

Special

Reflecting on how Jesus does this, Fr Francis referred to the Gospel read that night, saying: "It shows how Christ taught the crowds of people who followed Him, the children who laughed and giggled at His funny stories, the parents who could see in what He was doing and hear in what He was



saying that He was special, He was from God. Eventually they would see that He was God."

He then called on those gathered, in the words of St Paul, to "let the message of Christ in all its richness find a home in you, teach each other in all wisdom and always give thanks for who you are, and the good you can do."

"Take a good look at the beauty of life, the people and the places of faith and learning," he said, adding: "That's the gift of a Catholic school like St Oran's – it is a group of good people, a place of faith and learning where we discover Christ in everything we do.

"Even when the world seems torn apart and confused, that is what St Oran's has been doing for forty years and will continue to do: enabling us to put things together and map a future of joy and hope for one another."

At the end of Mass, Mrs Tara Doherty, who is deputising for the principal, Mrs Rose Mary Lennon,

expressed thanks for the support from the wider community in joining in the celebration of the school's 40th anniversary.

"Since 1984," she noted, "there have been many changes in education – from curriculum changes to advancements in technologies. Teaching and learning may have evolved, but the wonderful thing about school is that so much of it has remained the same.

"The fundamentals are the same. We are teaching the children to: read; write; count; draw; think critically; be creative; build relationships; be resilient; and show kindness."

Mrs Doherty continued: "We love to see children learn and grow, form life-long friendships and change from junior infants, who hold your hand, to young teenagers, who are mature and ready to move on to the next phase of their education.

"As you watch a cohort move up the school and beyond, it really is a

privilege to be part of that journey, to hopefully have influence on those young minds, and prepare them for some of the challenges that lie ahead."

Highlighting that the school motto is 'Kind hands, kind feet, kind words', she pointed out that this "really encompasses the school ethos and culture" that they strive for: "To make St Oran's a happy and welcoming school where pupils feel encouraged and supported."

She concluded: "Praise the youth and they will prosper."

Children from the school formed the choir for the anniversary Mass, singing beautifully throughout and ending with a resounding rendition of 'Sing Hosanna', which surely filled the hearts of all listening with joy at the youthful enthusiasm.

Afterwards, there was a welcome cuppa and delicious home-baking in the school assembly hall, and an opportunity to view displays of old school photographs and the pupils colourful artwork.



Photographs continued from page 8



Sun shines on Coleraine Parish Picnic



THIS month, when many of our young people are studying and sitting examinations, James writes about the life of St Joseph of Cupertino, the Patron Saint of Examinations and Students, while Bronagh shares her own experience of seeking this Saint's intercession regarding examinations, and the great benefits of prayer in helping young people to respond to Pope Francis' call to dream big and aspire to change the world.

Seán reflects on the Holy Father's call for young Catholics to look outwards for real interactions rather than on the screens of their smartphones, etc, sharing his personal experience of the effects of the lockdowns on his interactions on returning to school in person, and Luke writes about the importance of hospitality in Christianity, even in little ways.

Focusing on the power of the Holy Spirit as we celebrate Pentecost, John reflects on the transformation experienced by the disciples and how we are all called to have the courage to let the Holy Spirit work through us in proclaiming the good works of Jesus in our lives.

In awe of the amazing colours in the night sky from the northern lights, Erin writes about the power and beauty of God reflected in Creation, while Evan shares the peace and love he feels in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and his experience of introducing Eucharistic Adoration to his school's oratory.

Delighted to have discovered 'The Chosen', the popular biblical drama based on the life of Jesus, Niamh highly recommends it as a way of connecting with Jesus and His teachings, which has the potential to change lives.

And Cara-leigh writes a joyous account of her wonderful weekend on a 'Surf Sand Son' retreat with Net Ministries in Sligo.

"Be diligent dreamers" - Pope Francis by Bronagh

POPE Francis recently met with representatives from Loyola University in Chicago, and spoke to them about the importance of shaping the future, dreaming big and aspiring to change the world, and how universities and other educational settings have the power to spark this.

The report of this visit is particularly inspirational to all those sitting exams currently, it reminds them they have a purpose in life; a path chosen by God for each person.

"No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him." (Corinthians 2:9)

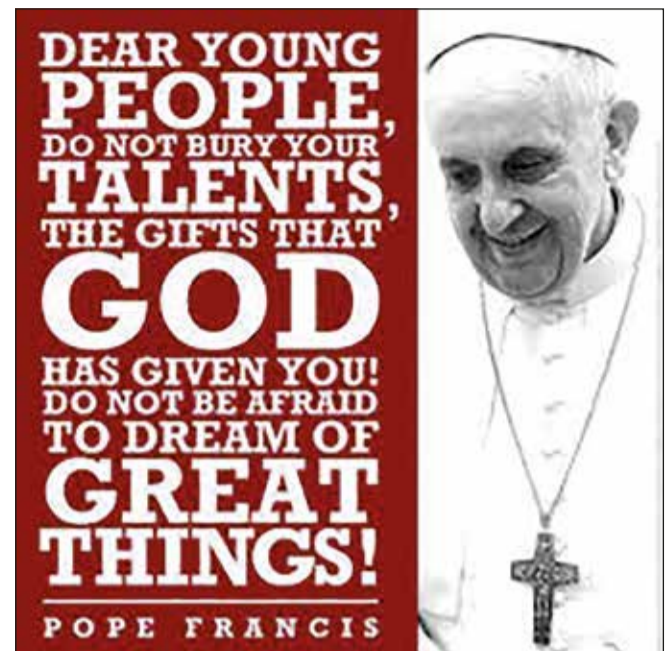
This reminds us all that we can turn to prayer during these times, to pray for success, comfort and contentment.

The most common prayer said during exam times, and I recall from my own exam experiences, is the prayer to St Joseph of Cupertino. St Joseph is the Patron Saint of many things, including aviation and pilots, astronauts, examinations and students.

Pope Francis wrote a message that was sent to leaders of a summit at San Carlo di Milano High School, in Italy, which reminded them that it was "important to have big dreams" because "God has them too!" (Vatican News, 13/10/23)

These dreams can be big, small, futuristic, or in the moment - but they all contribute to the future of our world. We should all share a common dream, as reminded frequently in Mass and other religious events; a dream for the future of our church, a dream that not only sustains, but also grows the church.

The future of the church, the future of the planet, and our individual futures are all matters that we can turn to God to ask for guidance in the decisions we make. There are people doing amazing work in all these causes: introducing youth to the Catholic Church, involving them and helping them see the cause; working hard to reduce global warming to maintain a planet for our grandchildren and



future generations; and teachers, parents, and other school staff inspiring children and young people every day to take the steps to achieve their wildest dreams.

There is fantastic work going on in Derry Diocese with the Youth Ministry, involving young people in all aspects. I have taken part in

several activities and I urge you to do the same. Get involved, be a part of it and tell the story!

Altogether, there is a massive sense of hope, we just have to look for it and allow ourselves to believe in God, trust His plan, and we will see the path He has made for us.

Surf Sand Son retreat connecting young people of faith by Cara-leigh



THIS month, I got the privilege to go on a NET Ministries weekend retreat in Star of the Sea Retreat Centre at Mullaghmore, in Sligo! It was run by their amazing road team; it was one of their 'Surf Sand Son' retreats. A group of 10 of us went from Derry, including Fr Francesco cfr, who was the priest on the retreat! The overall theme of the weekend, which ran from May 10-12, was 'to Jesus through Mary'.

Friday

When we arrived on the Friday, we played 'Pictionary', but instead of your usual things to draw it was Marian titles! This was amazing because it gave us all the opportunity to learn about all the different titles Mary has.

Each of us was assigned to a small group and we met in our groups throughout the weekend. During this time we discussed what we had learned and got to know each other. Before bed, all

the girls/women gathered outside our rooms to have night prayer together. On this night, we were encouraged to pick a Marian title which we could journey with, alongside Our Blessed Mother, over the weekend. We were blessed with the northern lights being visible, so we all ran outside and got photos together.

Saturday

Saturday was a jam-packed day with loads of fun activities! We woke up early and gathered for prayer outside our rooms, had breakfast and then hopped on buses to go surfing. It was a great opportunity for all of us to learn how to surf, and those who didn't want to surf stayed on the beach, played games and had amazing conversations.

We all had lunch together, and then split into men's and women's groups. The girls went down to the beach for our meeting! We came back, celebrated Mass,

listened to talks and testimonies. We then watched a drama, before making our way to Adoration! This was very beautiful, plus peaceful, and during Adoration we got the opportunity to receive prayer from the road team or go to Confession.

After some free time, we met in our small groups to discuss our favourite parts of the day, before heading back up to the rooms to have night prayer and discuss, as a big group, our highlights and lowlights of the day!

Sunday

On our final day of the retreat, we woke up and had Morning Prayer together, followed by a delicious breakfast, and then went on a Rosary walk around the town. We came back and learned about the story of the Catholic soldiers who fought against the Ottoman forces and won, due to the recitation of the Rosary!

We listened to a testimony and

played a really fun game. We then listened to a talk on how, once we leave the retreat, we can implement new habits into our day-to-day lives, for example, saying the Rosary daily! We also watched a drama on this too. We celebrated mass together, and then spilt once again into women's and men's groups. Afterwards, we enjoyed lunch together, which concluded the brilliant retreat.

Overall, this retreat granted us an opportunity to learn the importance of having a relationship with Mary, and how it can lead us closer to Jesus! It helped us all see how Mary always points to Her Son, Jesus, and will always guide us to Him. It also allowed us to connect with other youth who also had faith and to explore that with them.

The NET road team did an amazing job running this retreat and teaching us all about Our Blessed Mother Mary.



God's Creation *by Erin*

DURING the month of May, the northern lights were visible for a period in Derry. I was fascinated to be able to stand in my own garden and watch the wonder of the changing colours lighting up the dark night sky.

Psalm 19 describes it perfectly: "The Heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."

God created this planet to be perfect for life, and we under appreciate just how beautiful the world around us is. We all have busy lives and we tend to spend a lot of our free time glued to screens, forgetting to take in the beauty that surrounds us.

In moments like this, when I see such amazing sights, it makes me wonder how anyone can deny that there's a God? How could this happen by chance?

Only God could create such a stunning display of light and colour. In my opinion, this cannot be some cosmic accident.

Two days later, we had the other end of the spectrum with a roaring thunderstorm. Again, the flashing lights filled the sky. The lightning and grumbling thunder emphasise that God created



everything: beautiful, dangerous, and powerful. He contributes to natural events.

Listening to the heavy rainfall can remind us that we have little control in the face of the power of nature. We cannot control God any more than we can control the power of a storm.

Although some of us Catholics

may fear storms, we can look to Jesus' words before the calming of the storm, when He said: "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" (Matthew 8:26).

With the gift of faith, we can enjoy even the scariest elements of nature, knowing that God is in control and we have nothing to fear.

Pope Francis tells young Catholics to look outwards for real interactions rather than on a screen *by Seán*

JUST under a month ago, my attention was drawn to an address by Pope Francis during his visit to Venice, at the end of April. He outlined very clearly the social issues that young people struggle with today, even though we shouldn't.

The last 20 years has seen the evolution of smartphones and their adoption into every aspect of a human's life. They are very useful – and Pope Francis makes this very clear – but they remove, to some extent, the skills of a human being to associate with others. Speaking to someone in person is drastically different to arguing with someone on the other side of the world in a social media comments section. Pope Francis made it very clear that young Catholics should look outwards for real interactions, rather than ones on a meaningless screen.

Technology is an everyday part of our lives now. It is impossible to fight that growing feature without losing touch with society. That does not make it impossible to limit how much we rely on our devices.

Pope Francis began his address by saying, "You should fearlessly go against the current." In other words, just because it is now the societal norm to rely on your phone or spend hours watching

the TV, it doesn't mean that young people should buy into it. It is unnatural for a human to be confined mentally to a small, complex device. Our bodies and minds are built for the outside world. It is natural to become attached to other people, and how better to do that than by embracing your humanity.

I take lockdown as a great example of how we might live unnaturally. We spent two consecutive years locked away in our homes with only brief gaps, festering on devices that were our only connection to the outside world. This was not natural. During this period, I fell away from the fragile friendships that I had managed to previously form, and upon returning to some form of normality, I realised that in spending two broken school years in my room learning from an iPad, my social skills had suffered terribly.

Pope Francis points out that we should "Turn off the TV and open the Gospel." Jesus Christ was a man who loved interacting with people, and for this reason He gained a loyal group that defended Him until their deaths. The very beginning of the Book of Matthew outlines the need for humans to interact with other humans. When Jesus met the brothers, Simon and Andrew at

the lake at Capernaum where they fished, He said to them, "Come, follow me; and I will make you fish for people."

This crucial interaction in the birth of our religion has two meanings. It is a demonstration of how Jesus did not fear social judgement when gathering His followers, but it also outlines how a phone will not help us 'fish for people'. Our humanity will. Jesus did not need a phone to gather people and preach His word. We, young people, must go out and talk to people ourselves, face-to-face, because there is no better way to get to know someone.

For about two years after lockdown ended, I continued to drift socially, never being able to settle on how to interact with people. When I finally did manage to successfully build up the skill and confidence to show my friendly side, it was not my phone that aided me in building up my friendships. It helps, of course, but it was face-to-face interactions that actually brought me to begin and build up my attachments.

Pope Francis continued to say that we have to "Leave the cell phone and encounter people." From my own personal experience, I couldn't agree more. Pope Francis is correct in saying, "The cell phone is very useful

Eucharistic Adoration in St Joseph's Boys' School *by Evan*



"The Church and the world have great need of Eucharistic Adoration. Jesus waits for us in this sacrament of love." (Pope John Paul II)

RECENTLY at St Joseph's Boys' School, in Derry, I have introduced a holy hour of Eucharistic Adoration. This has been long overdue and, with the grace of God and the support of Fr Shaun Doherty, it has been a success.

I believe that Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is one of the most important aspects of the Catholic Church, as it truly is Our Lord Jesus present in front of us, willing to hear our prayers and sit with us in moments of anxiety and grief.

This is extremely important, especially in the school environment with exam and expectation pressures, to sit peacefully in front of Our Lord exposed in the Monstrance as it

can, and will, bring great comfort and joy knowing that He is always present and that you are never alone. He is there to listen to the things that you wouldn't be comfortable discussing with others. He is there when you are abandoned and feel overwhelmed with the pressures of life in modern society.

I was very worried on the first day that maybe people wouldn't turn up and that I would possibly be left on my own. However, I

was taken aback by the positive response. Many people called in, and the flow of people in and out of the oratory was very beautiful.

In our local churches, I find it difficult to sit and reflect due to constant distraction and brightness, whereas in the small school chapel it is dark and you can just feel the peaceful and loving embrace of Our Lord.

This is a fantastic opportunity for pupils and staff, and please God it will continue to grow.

Christ Speaks

Come to Me. I know your Name.

When you were being formed in the womb of your mother, I was there.

I saw you even before you were born.

I have always loved you.

Come to Me, you who are burdened.

I will refresh you, I will give you rest.

Stay with Me and listen.

This is My house and you are welcome.

I want you so much,

I long that you experience My love.

My love is like a fire consuming all hatred, pride, sin, etc.

I long to fill your life with My Peace and My Joy.

Here am I before you, imprisoned in My own house.

Take Me with you, into your heart.

Take Me into your home, into your school, into your office, into your streets, into your dance hall.

I need your feet, your hands, your voice, your heart to carry My love to a wounded world.

Please take Me in your heart.

(Will you help Me? – Handbook of Devotion to Divine Mercy. Published by Divine Mercy. ISBN-13: 978-1872276151.)



to communicate, but be careful when your smartphone keeps you from meeting other people."

The smartphone is one of the most useful developments of this century – I suppose you could say millennium as well. It provides us with so many resources. You can produce answers within seconds of pulling the device out of your pocket. You can hear the voice and see the face of someone thousands of miles away. It has provided

our species with experiences that no other generations have ever experienced. But how far does this go? That is the critical question. It went from phone calls to hours and hours of short-form content that young people become addicted to. That is not so useful for people. Young people now go for walks while on their phones and do not appreciate their surroundings.

As Pope Francis outlined, we cannot allow smartphones to

lead us away from interacting with other people. Jesus did not carry out His mission on earth by spending hours watching pointless TikTok videos. He did so by interacting with people and seeing the value in dialogue between people. Language is one of our greatest developments. We can say so much to each other with it. A phone cuts that down only to letters, and letters are not as valuable as spoken words.

The life and story of St Joseph of Cupertino *by James*

DURING the months of May and June, students in our Diocese and across the island are undergoing the exam season, and all the joys of it. As someone who is doing exams, I've come across the amazing story of an Italian Saint, St Joseph of Cupertino, whose patronage is of students and exams.

Born in 1603, his father had died before his birth, and as a result of debts that he hadn't paid, the family's home had been seized, meaning that the baby Joseph would have to be born in a stable.

He often had ecstatic visions as a child, which continued throughout his life. Feeling

drawn to religious life, he applied to the Conventual Franciscan Friars, but was rejected due to a lack of education. He then applied to the Capuchin Friars in Martino, near Taranto, by whom he was accepted in 1620 as a lay brother, but he was dismissed as his continued ecstasies made him unfit for the duties required of him.

Unpersuaded by these setbacks, he pleaded with the Conventual Friars near Cupertino to be allowed to serve in their stables, in which he was finally accepted. After several years of dedication and pious living, he was admitted to their Order, and became

destined to join the Priesthood, being ordained in 1628.

It is said that, in addition to having experienced religious ecstasy, he also began to levitate during the celebration of Mass and during the prayers of the Divine Office.

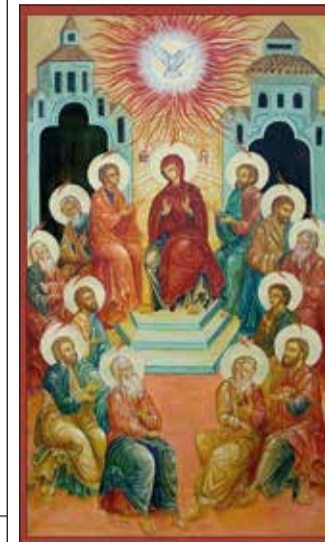
And so, while according to traditional Franciscan accounts, he was 'remarkably unclever', thousands, if not millions of students ask for his intercession during this particularly difficult time of the year.

St Joseph of Cupertino, Pray for us!

St Joseph of Cupertino Exam Prayer

O great St Joseph of Cupertino, who, by your prayers, obtained from God to be asked at your examination only the propositions which you know, pray that I, like you, may succeed in the examination which lies before me. In return, I promise to make your name known and cause you to be loved. Amen.

From fear to witness: The transformative power of Pentecost *by John*



Icon of Pentecost (source: <https://associationofcatholicwomenbloggers.blogspot.com/2014/06/pentecost-icon.html>)

THE Feast of Pentecost is, perhaps, one of the most underrated feasts in the Church calendar, partly because no secular holidays are associated with it and partly because many people don't think that the Feast has much significance to it. However, for those who know some Church history, the Feast of Pentecost marks the day that the Church was officially established.

The word itself comes from the Greek 'Pentēkostē', that is the 'fiftieth', referring to 50 days after the Resurrection. Taking a look at the Acts of Apostles, the disciples were in a room in Jerusalem, with Our Lady and the other followers of Jesus. As per the command of Jesus, they were praying together and waiting for the "gift" promised to them by the Father. It was in this moment of uncertainty that they were baptised by the Holy Spirit and were given the courage to proclaim the Good News.

At that time, many Jews from all across the known world were

gathered in Jerusalem for the Jewish Pentecost called Shavuot, which is celebrated 50 days after Passover. The Feast of Shavuot was originally a thanksgiving Harvest festival, during which many people would bring the first fruits of their summer harvest to the Temple to give thanks to God. It was in this opportune moment that the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles and disciples – "the Lord of the Harvest" (Mt 9:38) had sent His labourers to gather the Harvest.

Despite many thinking that the apostles had become drunk, Peter came to the defence of his brothers and proclaimed boldly in his belief that Jesus was the Messiah, by stating his witness and by referring to the prophecies of Joel and other parts of Scripture. Even though he was weak, even though he had betrayed and forgone Jesus, the Holy Spirit made clear what Jesus saw in Peter. The Holy Spirit did not make Peter into something he was not, rather he was given the courage that he did not have before to witness to what he saw.

Likewise today, we who are baptised and confirmed by the Holy Spirit, absolved of our sins through Confession and sanctified by the Holy Eucharist, are called to proclaim to the ends of the Earth and witness to what Jesus has done for us.

It is a difficult and daunting task and, despite our reception of the sacraments, we may feel that we have little courage – but as Our Lord said many times in scripture, "Do not be afraid."

Trust in Him, pray, fast, do acts of charity and allow the Holy Spirit to make you into "another Christ".

'The Chosen'...a biblical drama that may change your life *by Niamh*

IN today's world, we are constantly influenced by the media, it provides us with facts and ideas that can influence our opinion and outlook on life. There are also programmes and films that can help us grow in faith, and love for God. An example of a programme that has deepened my faith is 'The Chosen', a ground-breaking biblical drama based on the life of Jesus.

Primarily set in Judea and Galilee in the 1st Century, the story is told from the perspective of those who met and followed Jesus. 'The Chosen' Season 1 was released on April 21, 2019, with eight episodes.

Season 1 begins with the statement: "All biblical and historical content and artistic imagination are designed to support the truth and intention of the Scriptures."

While some of the scripture is

dramatised, I believe that it helps as a viewer to connect with Jesus on a different level.

'The Chosen' was created, directed and co-written by filmmaker Dallas Jenkins. It started out as a crowd funded project and has been hailed as the most successful crowd funded TV series of all time.

Dallas has shared how a calling from God, and a feeling of disappointment with the faith-based entertainment that was being produced at that time, inspired him to work on the series. At this time, he had just completed a film in Hollywood that hadn't been successful at the box office.

Dallas says: "I was coming off a huge career failure, the beginning of 2017 was the lowest moment of my life." It was at this point that he had an encounter with God; he felt His presence so strongly that



he was compelled to do what God wanted him to do, and that was to make an historical TV series based on the life of Jesus.

According to a 2022 analysis commissioned by the show's producers, 108 million had seen at least part of the show through the app and streaming platforms.

An iconic scene, from Season 1, shows St Mary Magdalene speaking to Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin who had previously tried to help her.

In the scene, he asks her what has transformed her life, and she replies: "I was one way...and now I'm completely different."

What brought about this change was an encounter with Jesus that changed her life. Watching this series may also change your life. It can be found on Netflix or YouTube for free, and I would encourage anyone reading this article to watch it, if you haven't already.

Hospitality in Christianity *by Luke*

THE word 'hospitality' originally comes from the Latin word 'hospes', which can mean host, guest or stranger. I think it is fascinating how the word hospitality comes from a word that means three different yet connected things. I will refer back to this later.

Hospitality is an important application of our faith. From a Christian perspective, hospitality is more than allowing a neighbour to share a meal with us, though that is a part of hospitality. Hospitality can be wholeheartedly welcoming and helping someone in need, even if they are a complete stranger. This can be a somewhat discomfoting idea in the modern day, when many are hesitant to trust even one they know. This is unfortunate, but the difficulty in following the tenets of our faith is far from a new phenomenon.

One of the reasons hospitality

can seem so daunting is that we often think that welcoming strangers into our home without regard for ourselves is the only form of true hospitality. I would suggest that that is untrue. It is important to understand our individual limits when it comes to hospitality. There is no point in pushing ourselves too far in the pursuit of hospitality, which not only results in harm towards ourselves but also prevents us from extending hospitality to others in the future.

Some of these limits are obvious, such as the fact we can only help a few at any given time, or that we are limited by our financial situation. Others may not be as clear. For example, we need to pay attention to the amount of energy we have to share. While it is not as visible as the amount of food in a house or money in a purse, we have a finite amount of energy too, and expending all of

it on assisting others is doubtless admirable, but for many is not an option. Identifying these limits will allow us to fulfil our true potential for helping others.

I mentioned that the Latin root of hospitality is a word for both the host and the guest. This is because hospitality is not something that can be encompassed by a single person. Hospitality is a relationship between a host (or multiple hosts) and their guests.

The word 'invitation' is used frequently regarding hospitality. This is because no person has the obligation to receive another's hospitality. Just as a host must offer hospitality of their own free will, a stranger must make the deliberate choice to step into the role of a guest. If they do not do that, then it is not hospitality.

As hospitality is a relationship, the host may expect certain things from the guest. While

the host provides hospitality, a guest should be respectful of the boundaries that the host sets. If a guest is welcomed into the host's home, with the instruction to avoid entering a specified room, then the guest should respect that request or leave. Most examples are less clear-cut than that. A guest may not intend to disrespect or violate a boundary, at which point the host may use their own discretion on whether or not to forgive the guest. After all, forgiveness is another core part of our role as Christians.

Hebrews 13:2 states: "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it."

This is clearly a powerful idea, that we may be assisting a saint or even a divine being with our hospitality. However, even though it would be wondrous to extend hospitality to someone



like this, we should not lose focus on the original goal, or lack thereof. Hospitality shouldn't be done with the intent of earning a reward; it should be done because it is the right thing to do.

As I alluded to before, hospitality does not have to be the traditional image of opening our home to others, though it certainly can

be. It also involves little things. It can simply be making another feel welcome, helping someone stuck at the side of the road or innumerable other things. It does not need rigid boundaries on what is and isn't hospitality. Even if the kindness we provide is not hospitality, it is still a kindness and that is enough.

St Columba's PS Draperstown wins award for outstanding Pastoral Care

ST Columba's PS, Draperstown, has been recognised for its 'Outstanding Pastoral Care' with its recent winning of the annual Derrytrasna Award, for the Primary School sector.

The Award was presented to St Columba's, and two other schools, by Education Minister, Paul Givan, and Public Health director, Dr Joanne McClean, towards the end of April, for exceptional pastoral care of pupils and families.

Presenting the Awards at a ceremony hosted by the Department of Education and the Public Health Agency, Minister Givan said: "Children and young

people face many challenges as they grow up. Over the last ten years, the Derrytrasna Awards have recognised the exceptional contribution and support, provided to children and young people by schools, during what can be a difficult time in their lives."

He added: "These award-winning schools have all demonstrated outstanding pastoral care, putting pupils' needs to the forefront of school life. All three schools displayed a commitment and dedication to supporting the individual needs of pupils and their families. I am exceptionally proud of their

efforts, which have made such an incredible difference to the lives of young people."

The Derrytrasna Pastoral Care Award was created by the Department of Education in collaboration with the Public Health Agency in 2014. It seeks to recognise through nominations, those school communities that have demonstrated exceptional pastoral care in supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of pupils and their families.

Delighted at the news, St Columba's principal, Mrs McAlister commented: "We are very excited about receiving this prestigious award, especially

when we found out that our school was selected as a winner out of 500 nominations. We feel very honoured.

"We pride ourselves on the excellent relationships between staff, pupils and parents in our school family. We firmly believe in the importance of a happy child along the journey of education."

Mrs Mc Alister added that she would like to thank all the school team for their outstanding contribution to school life, and that they hoped to organise some fun events in school to celebrate this success.



Education Minister, Paul Givan with pupils from Belfast Boys' Model School, Knockevin Special School, and St Columba's Primary School, Draperstown, at the Derrytrasna Awards at Stormont.



Mary's Way of the Cross with St Brigid's PS Mayogall by Grainne O'Kane

PRIMARY 7 pupils from St Brigid's PS Mayogall, in the Lavey Parish, performed the very moving 'Mary's Way of the Cross' in two local churches during Holy Week.

'Mary's Way of the Cross' tells the story of the Stations of the Cross from Mary's viewpoint - as a mother watching her Son suffer and die.

Simeon told Mary at the beginning of Jesus' life "a sword of sorrow will pierce your heart", and this dramatic story really enables the congregation to think about suffering and loss from a relative's perspective.

On Palm Sunday, their first performance of 'Mary's Way of the Cross' was in St Mary's Church, Craigavole. The children told the Passion story through drama and song with their emotional rendition, including Daniel Boyle as Jesus carrying the cross, whilst wearing a crown of thorns. The role of Mary,

superbly played by Caoimhe Murtagh, had the congregation enthralled.

These young children re-enacted the story showing their considerable talents in music and drama. The school choir added so much to the performance, with a selection of Taizé chants and hymns.

On Spy Wednesday, they performed in their own parish church - Our Lady of Mercy, Lavey. Parish Priest and School Trustee, Fr Eamon Graham commended the children on their telling of the passion and death of Jesus from this moving perspective of Mary.

He added that the pupils had created a very polished and professional performance, which delivered a strong Easter message to all.

Well done to all the boys and girls who gave up their time and talents to this production.



Anam Óg Summer Scheme

FOLLOWING on from the success of last year's Anam Óg summer scheme, it will return once again this year in Termonbacca Derry.

The week is aimed at young people aged 8-14 years old, and will be filled with fun and games. It will also be an opportunity

to grow in understanding of elements of our Catholic faith.

The scheme will run from Monday, July 29 to Friday, August 2, from 12 noon until 4 pm, and will cost £15 per person.

If you have any queries, or for booking, please contact Aoife at termonbaccaderry@gmail.com

Termonbacca Derry Summer Fun

Faith
Prayer

Art & Crafts
HELLO Summer
Games

Friendship

Ages 8-14

Adventures

Monday 29th July - Friday 2nd August 2024

12pm - 4pm

£15

For further info/booking email termonbaccaderry@gmail.com



Three Patrons' parishioners encouraged to reflect, restore and rebuild during Dominican-led Mission

THE Three Patrons' Parish Mission during the fifth week of Easter was an opportunity to build on the joyful celebration of Christ's Resurrection, with parishioners invited to reflect, restore and rebuild in the spirit of their parish patrons, St Patrick (Pennyburn), St Brigid (Carnhill), and St Joseph (Galliagh), and St Catherine of Siena, whose Feast Day was celebrated during the Mission, on April 29.

The Dominican led Mission ran from Saturday, April 27 to Wednesday, May 1, the Feast of St Joseph, The Worker, with great turnouts in each of the churches for the Masses, and times of prayer and talks, celebrated by Fr Damian Polly OP, from Dublin, Prior of the Dominican community in Kilkenny, who also holds the position of Director of Preaching for the Irish Dominican Province, Fr Colm Mannion OP, from Birr, Co Offaly, part of the Dominican community in Newbridge College and promoter of Vocations and the Rosary Apostolate, and Fr Ruaidhri Grieve OP, from

Dungiven, who was ordained last year and currently in ministry in St Catherine's Priory, Newry.

The missionary trio were thankful for the turnout and reverence shown by the parishioners, particularly the pupils from the various schools in the Parish that joined the community for morning Masses.

As well as the celebration of Mass at 7 am and 10 am in all three churches, and the Mission talks on the Sunday, Monday and Tuesday evenings at 7 pm, there were opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Sick, and an All Night Vigil with Eucharistic Adoration.

Each day of the Mission had a different theme, with St Catherine of Siena the focus on Sunday, April 28, when the talk was on 'Proclaim the truth and do not be silent through fear'. St Patrick was the focus on the Monday, with the theme being 'Relighting the fire of our faith in Ireland today'. St Brigid featured in Tuesday's theme, 'Spreading the cloak of Christ's welcome and

care', and St Joseph was the focus on the Wednesday, his Feast Day, when the theme was 'Working to humbly serve the will of God'.

The Mass for the close of the Mission, on the evening of the Feast of St Joseph, was celebrated by Bishop Donal in St Joseph's Church, Galliagh.

Reflecting on the example of St Joseph and the blessing of this time of prayer and reflection in Three Patrons Parish, the Bishop told those gathered: "The mission will have been a missed opportunity if it is not followed up by a shared reflection on how well the parish - to quote Pope Francis - 'is mission'."

"The parish's mission is not over," he said, adding: "It has to continue, ready - like Joseph - to go where the Lord calls and be ready for a bumpy ride.

"Today, St Joseph would tell us to step out in faith; even when we think that evil is winning or that something does not make sense. We can do that because we believe Love is ultimately in charge.

"St Joseph, guardian of Jesus,

pray for us. As we step out on mission into the unknown which God has prepared for us, help us to share your gentle rugged faith."

Thanking the Dominican Fathers and all who contributed to the Mission, and helped in any way in making it such a prayerful experience, Fr Michael McCaughey PP remarked that there had been "a lovely sense of parish from all three areas"

He added that the time of prayer was a fitting lead-up to 90th anniversary of St Patrick's Church, Pennyburn, at the end of May.

After Mass, parishioners were treated to a free ice-cream or hot food, while enjoying the opportunity to chat to each other and Bishop Donal, the priests of the parish, Fr Michael McCaughey and Fr Sean O'Donnell, and the Dominican Fathers, as well as Fr Thomas of the Galliagh-based Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, who was one of the concelebrants at the closing Mass





Barons Court cross community walk raises funds for two Newtownstewart parishes *(Photographs by John Wilson)*

NEW TOWNSTEWART Parish embarked on another fund-raising walk on Sunday, May 12. This time it was a cross community, Two-Parishes Walk, meaning that the Catholic parish and the Church of Ireland parish undertook a joint venture.

Both parishes have St Eugene as their patron, based on the monastery that the Saint founded in the sixth century at Ardstraw, three-and-a-half miles west of modern-day Newtownstewart.

The walk took place in Barons Court Estate, the home of the Duke of Abercorn, who very kindly gave his permission for the parishioners to walk in the picturesque setting and enjoy the trees and paths, lakes and castles.

Particularly interesting was Derrywoon Castle, a ruined Plantation manor of the early 1600s, nestled into the woods. It is

the original dwelling house of the estate, pre-dating the present-day castle.

Derrywoon is an anglicized form of Derrie-owen, or Doire Eoghain, meaning the 'oak-wood of Eugene'. Therefore, the planted estate includes an area named after St Eugene, whose monastery was just over four miles away (550-1609AD). It is fascinating that the place name survived down the centuries, and that Barons Court kept the name alive by placing it on the original castle.

The participating clergy were Fr Roland Colhoun and Rev Ivan Dinsmore. The guide for the walk was Robert Scott, retired land steward of Barons Court, who gave a very informative exposition of the history of the estate.

This was imparted stylishly and humorously over four miles of delightful scenery. Even the



onset of rain and the rumbles of thunder in the final quarter-hour did not dampen the spirits of almost 60 participants.

The regular walks that the Newtownstewart community undertakes are part of its heritage programme. The churches are historic buildings, and the donations of the walkers are a

valuable input to their restoration.

As this walk was a cross-community project, the proceeds were divided equally between the two parishes, St Eugene's Church of Ireland on Main Street and St Eugene's Catholic Church at Glenock. The Two-Parishes Walk raised £1,025!



Fr Roland Colhoun, Robert Scott and Rev Ivan Dinsmore

“We are an Easter People and Alleluia is our song!”

...even in Ordinary Time! by Fr Peter O’Kane



THE words of St Augustine are often given to us as an encouragement – “We are an Easter people and Alleluia is our song!” For those of us who count the days of Easter, we know that they are more than just the Easter Triduum and, indeed, how quickly the 50 days pass us by!

The Easter Season has drawn to a close as we have celebrated the Solemnity of Pentecost, remembering the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostles. The solemn dismissal at the end of the Eucharist on Pentecost Day is the same as that of the Easter Vigil: “Go in peace, Alleluia, Alleluia!” And the congregation responds with: “Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia!”

The hope, in the reality of the experience of those who have gathered, is that our 50 days is not a tired rejoicing, but rather a moment to go home and share the joy of Christ’s Resurrection with others...and a reminder that our

celebration of Easter does not end with Pentecost, but that the Paschal Mystery permeates every part of our Christian living, day in and day out with its “Alleluia”.

And so, every day, whether in the darkness of night or the dawning of the sun or in the dusk of evening, our Easter “Alleluia” is a song for 50 days that celebrates the Passion and Resurrection of Christ and the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the gifts of God the Father.

Paschal Mystery

In the liturgical and catechetical life of the Church, the Paschal Mystery is at the very heart of the believer. I was reminded very profoundly of this when I celebrated the Easter Vigil in St Oliver Plunkett Church, Greenlough. A modern church with a sanctuary arrangement that draws the human eye, whether of pilgrim or tourist, towards its large replica of a penal cross.

A close viewing of the cross shows its engraved image of the crucified Christ with the symbols associated

with His passion and death: the hammer which nailed Him to the cross; the spear that pierced His side; the whips used to scourge His body; and the ladder which bore His body as it was taken down from the tree. Underneath the figure of Christ are the roasting pot and its rooster.

There is an old associated story with the return of Pontius Pilate to his home after the long, horrific day that led to Christ’s death. The legend recounts that Pilate’s wife was in distress and, as she cooked the rooster, she recounted a dream in which she saw “the man who was crucified” rise from the dead. Pilate responded: “There’s as much chance of that rooster rising from the dead as that rooster rising from the pot,” at which the rooster flew up and cried out “Mac na hÓighe slán!” – “the Virgin’s Son is alive!” This legend is a reminder that the rooster’s crow, which once cried a man’s denial leading to death, is the cry that announced God’s truth in new life.

How much deeper then is the mystery presented to us in the truth of God’s Word as we celebrate afresh the story of Easter. Yes, the Scriptures recall that the passion and death of the Lord was a moment of great bitterness and sadness for the first disciples. But that was not the end for them, but rather the Cross became a pathway into sweetness and joy because, by the Lord’s resurrection, faith was restored, hope ignited and love poured out in a new way. The promise of the road has been made real, the stone of the tomb has been rolled back and Christ has risen from the dead, just as He said!

During the weeks of Easter, at the celebration of Mass and in the Liturgy of the Hours, the Scriptures will recall that after His Resurrection, the Lord appeared on numerous occasions as the disciples regrouped and joined together in prayer, conversation and community. Some were gathered in the one place, others were physically separated from their brothers and sisters – and yet united in prayer and fellowship even from

a distance.

In the three year cycle of the Lectionary, the Gospel passages proclaimed in the Easter Octave into the Sundays of the season, share the experiences of the first disciples as they encounter the Risen Lord.

And on that Pentecost Day, the fulfilment of Christ’s promises was manifested as the Holy Spirit came upon them. As the earliest of accounts tells us in the Acts of the Apostles: “They had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from Heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting, and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire, these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.”

This was the gift promised by Jesus during His last discourse as He prepared to make His way to the Cross: “I will send you another Advocate...when the Spirit of Truth comes He will lead you to the complete truth.” And yet, Pentecost marked not only the completion of the promise, but rather the moment of inspired commission to fulfil the command of Christ at the Ascension: “Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

The Word of God is much more than a story, it is the Word which is truly alive because, by taking on the human form and the cross, Christ unveils for us the glory that is to be ours who stay close to Him, follow Him, trust Him and love Him, as He beckons us into new life with Him.

Light

The Easter story calls us to realize that the night is over and the real light is already shining. We celebrate an invitation to journey from darkness into the light of The Risen Christ, because it is in that light we see Christ and recognise one another as brothers and sisters.

This is what we are called to do as we return to the ‘green’ of Ordinary Time.

Over the coming weeks, two Sundays will keep a certain solemnity; the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity when we reflect on God, who is One and Three, who calls us to celebrate our life in Him, and the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi), when we rejoice in the gift that Christ bestowed to us as a living memorial of Him that nourishes and sustains us.

But then, we also keep low days and ferial days, other feasts and memorials of saints as a reminder that the life of Christ penetrates the lives of all believers who seek humbly to follow Him. All these feasts and seasons, days and nights are oriented towards the fulfilment of all things as we celebrate the Eucharist, as St Thomas Aquinas penned for the Feast of ‘Corpus Christi’: “O Sacred Feast in which Christ is received, the memory of His Passion is renewed, the soul is filled with grace and the promise of future glory is given to us.” And he finishes this prayer with the same word that we ought to witness to in

our lives: “Alleluia!”

Together

How can we live this “Alleluia” each day. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy from the Second Vatican Council, ‘Sacrosanctum Concilium’ §10, reminds us “the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made children of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of His Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord’s supper.”

As we process out of Eastertide into the days of ordinary time, marked by the changing seasons, winds and temperatures, may we be people who sing our “Alleluia” by our prayer together in the Church’s Liturgy, by our participation in the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Confession, by our sharing of life in our homes, places of work and recreation, and by our reaching out to others by the Gospel in our caring and sharing.

In the words often attributed to St Francis of Assisi: “Preach the Gospel always, only if necessary use words.” So, as we live Easter every day, may “Alleluia” be our song.



Bellaghy Confirmation children encouraged to use gifts of Holy Spirit well

THE Sacrament of Confirmation was celebrated by Bishop Dónal in St Mary’s Church, Bellaghy, on Friday, April 26, with the P7 children of New Row St Patrick’s PS, Castledawson, St John Bosco PS, Ballynease, and St Mary’s PS, Bellaghy.

In his homily, the Bishop encouraged the confirmandi to use well the gifts of the Holy Spirit which they were about to receive, so that they could become

the followers of Christ which the Church and the world will need them to be as they grow up.

Bishop Dónal also asked the children’s sponsors and parents to be excellent role models of faith for our younger generations.

After the ceremony, everyone was invited to The Open Door Complex, where the volunteers served tea and refreshments to the adults and provided treat packs for the children.



Bishop Donal with Fr Pat O’Hagan, PP, Bellaghy & Greenlough, Fr Juan Jesus, CC, Magherafelt, and Cathal Donnelly, Parish Acolyte, Bellaghy.

Holy Communion joy in Bellaghy



Neansaí Ní Chearnaigh agus Clodagh Ní hUiginn with Ath. Pat Ó hÁgáin, PP, at St Mary’s Church, Bellaghy, the morning after they had received their First Holy Communion, on the previous day, with their classmates from Gaelscoil an tSeancháí, Magherafelt.

Eangach

Tar chugainn a Naomh-Spioraid
Bheannaithe
Comhairligh sinn in am 's i dtráth;
Treoraigh sinn ar ród na beatha seo
Is stiúraigh sinn go ríocht na ngrást.

Líon ár gcroí le grásta carthain,
A Naomh-Spioraid dhiaga shólásaigh,
Tabhair dúinne foighne, neart is eagna;
Go rabhamar choíche cóir le cách.

Tabhair dúinn tuiscint 's creideamh láidir,
Fios ár ndualgas 's eagla Dé;
Go rabham i gcónaí dlís cráifeach
Is saor ó pheaca i rith ár saoil.

Fan inár bhfochair, a Spioraid na fírinne,
Trí gach buaireamh, olc is baol;
Ar gach contúirt tabhair dúinn dídean,
Go sroicheam cuan i bPárthas Dé.



Léigiún Mhuire – Arm Mhuire

Ag cloí le spiorad na féile, mar fhócas speisialta in eagrán Mhí na Bealtaine – Mí Mhuire – ba mhaith liom aird ar leith a dhíriú ar cheann de na gluaiseachtaí is suimiúla a tháinig chun cinn inár linne san Eaglais. Is in Éirinn a tháinig an ghluaiseacht seo ar an tsaol agus ba Éireannach é a príomhbhunaitheoir, Frank Duff. Fear a bhí ann a raibh fis mhaith, réalaióch aige, agus fáithiúil, thig leat a argóit. Is í an ghluaiseacht seo ná Léigiún Mhuire, gluaiseacht agus aspalacht iontach a thugann isteach an gnáthdhuine, den chuid is mó. Is é is misean don Léigiún ná craobhscaoileadh an tsoiscéil, agus sochar spioradálta gach aon duine agus is iad is éifeachtaí ag cur i bhfeidhm na hoibre seo!

Tosaíonn scéal Frank Duff in 1889, i mBaile Átha Cliath inar fhás sé aníos i dteaghlach measartha saibhir. Chuaigh sé ag obair sa státséirbhís. Chuaigh sé isteach i gCumann N. Uinseann de Pól agus rinne sé obair charthanach ansin. Ba ansin a chonaic sé go pearsanta an bhochtaineacht agus an t-anró gear inar mhair mórán i mBaile

Átha Cliath ag an am. Deirtear go raibh roinnt de na slumaí ba mheasa san Eoraip sa chathair ag an am. In 1921, bhí sé i láthair ag cruinniú mar aon leis an Athair Michael Toher agus cúigear déag bean, a raibh bunú a léigiúin mar thoradh air. Chuaigh siad i mbun a misin le dúthracht. Ba mhian leo cuidiú leo siúd a bhí imeallaithe ón sochaí. Bhí fadhb an striapachais go holc sa chathair ag an am, lárnaithe sa cheantar Monto a raibh droch-chlú air go forleathan. Thosaigh siad ag obair le cuidiú leis na mná a bhí sáinnithe ann. Ní beag an cur in éadan a fuair siad óir ba mhór an náire a chuir an sochaí ar na 'mná tite' .i. mná a raibh clann acu gan a bheith pósta agus a bhí tréigthe ag a muintir dá bharr. Gan rogha ar bith, thit mórán isteach sa tsaol sin agus iad coinnithe ansin go héigeantach. Bhí a fhios ag Duff agus a chomrádaithe go raibh áit de dhíth ar na mná seo le cónaí ann agus chuige sin, bunaíodh brú Sancta Maria. Mar seo, thiocfadh na mná a chónaí ann, sábháilte ó na Kip-keepers a mbíodh cumhacht acu orthu. Ansin, teagascadh

scileanna do na mná le bealach a thabhairt dóibh len iad féin a chothú. Chuir an Léigiún deireadh leis an fhadhb iomlán mar seo agus ba shin deireadh le ceantar na soilse dearg in Monto.

Tá le feiceáil, sa mhéid a thit amach sna blianta luatha fiu, go raibh éifeachtúlacht ag baint le hobair an Léigiúin. Druideadh an kip-house deireanach sa cheantar in 1925. Nach iontach an léiriú é seo ar obair éiseamláireach ag leanúint teagaisc Íosa? Dearbhaíodh an dínit a bhíonn ag gach duine (iadsan atá imeallaithe san áireamh) as siocair gur clann Dé iad. Ní raibh deireadh le hobair cheannródaíoch an Léigiúin, nó leis an dul i bhfeidhm a bhí ag Frank Duff. Leathnaigh an Léigiún amach ní amháin ar fud na hÉireann, ach go hidirnáisiúnta. Ghlac mórán daoine leis go fonnmhar i mórá tíortha agus rinne daoine móra tréaniarrachtaí lena cur chun cinn ina measc, go háirithe Alfie Lambe (a chuaigh go Meiriceá Theas) agus Edel Quinn (a rinne obair mhór sa Afraic). Tá an cás oscailte anois len iad agus le Duff a dhéanamh ina naoimh! Chreid Duff go láidir sna gnáthdaoine a bheith gníomhach i saol an chreidimh agus na hEaglaise, agus chuaigh chun na Róimhe leis sin a chur



Frank Duff

chun cinn ag an Dara Chomhairle Vatacánach. Ó shin, tá ár ról mar ghnáthdhaoine go mór chun tosaigh inár nEaglais.

Tá an Léigiún anois spréite ar fud an domhain agus meastar go bhfuil na milliúin ina mbaill. Tá ath-bhláth ag teacht ar an ghluaiseacht inár dtír féin agus tá seans go bhfuil Praesidium (an cumann áitiúil) le fáil go háitiúil. Bunaithe ar mhúnla an léigiúin a bhí ag na Rómhánaigh, déanann baill iarracht a bheith ina 'saighdiúirí' a dhéanann toil Mhuire le daoine a thabhairt chuici, agus chuig a Mac. Ar labhairt le baill dom, tá scéata cluinste agam féin faoi rudaí iontacha agus galánta a dhéanann Muire i saolta dhaoine a mbíonn siad ag freastal orthu. Má chorraítear thú le tuilleadh a fháil amach, déan cuardach ar: <https://legionofmary.ie> B'fhéidir go bhfuil Praesidium i do cheantar féin?

Comhdháil mór i nDoire

Ar an Satharn 11ú Bealtaine, bhí Halla na Cathrach óstach ar mhórchruinniú de chaitlicigh a tháinig ó áiteanna i ngar is i gcéin a tháinig lena greideamh a athnuachan, le comhspregadh a fháil agus le héisteacht le cainteoirí a bhí le labhairt ar na bealaí a thiocfadh linn maireachtáil mar chaitlicigh sa lá atá inniu ann.

Ba é seo an Comhdháil, eagraithe ag an eagraíocht Human Life International Ireland (HLI). Eagraíocht charthanach bunaithe i gCnoc Mhuire, Co. Mhaigh Eo, tá bearta laochmhara á dhéanamh aici le blianta ar fud na tíre, ag obair chun an bheatha a chosaint agus daoine a thabhairt níos cóngaraí d'Íosa. Ba iontach an radharc é daoine a fheiceáil as gach cearn den tír bailithe isteach sa tsuíomh stairiúil seo le idir óg agus aosta ann. Thosaigh an lá le guí agus rinneadh an tAifreann a cheiliúradh. Ansin, bhí gach duine réidh agus fonnmhar chun éisteacht le clár de chainteoirí iontacha.

Ar dtús, labhair John Pridmore leis an tslua agus thug sé scéal a bheatha.

Iarbhall de dhrong i Londain, roinn sé faoi cad é mar a d'éirigh sé sáinnithe i saol na coireachta agus na hainriachtachta. Nuair a bhí eispéreas iontach de Dhia aige nuair a bhí sé i bpríosún, thiontaigh sé le bheith ina Chríostaí atá – ar lasadh – le grá do Dhia. Anois, tá ministreacht aige ina n-oibríonn sé le daoine atá i bpríosún le cuidiú leo a saol a leasú. Bíonn sé ag taisteal thart le cainteanna a dhéanamh faoin chreideamh. Labhair sé faoin tábhacht a bhaineann le dea-bhéasa a thógáil le bheith réidh le héisteacht leis an Spiorad Naomh agus lena bhfuil Sé ag insint duit.

Labhair stiúrthóir HLI Ireland, Patrick McCrystal, faoina scéal féin, inar a leag sé amach a thuras a thosaigh ar bhealach agus é ag obair mar phoitigéir ach d'éirigh sé as ós rud rud é gur mhóthaigh sé Dia ag insint dó gan leigheas a thabhairt amach a théann in éadan phrionsabail na beatha agus a dhéanann damáiste don bheatha dá bharr sin. Sa deireadh, lean sé Dia agus rinne sé obair mhór ar son na beatha sa tír seo agus níos faide.

Labhair sé go spreagúil faoi theagasc maith agus galánta na hEaglaise faoi chaidrimh agus faoin phósadh.

Thug Dana – a bhí ina hionadaí d'Éirinn sa chomórtas Eurovision – caint spreagúil araigeanta faoi oidhreacht Naomh Pádraig agus, anuas air sin, faoi iomann (amhrán naofa) úr atá cumtha aici atá go speisialta oiriúnach don lá atá inniu ann agus muid ag maireachtáil in Éirinn inniu. Tugann sé chun cuimhne an tine a las Pádraig ar chnoc Shláine, ag iarraidh air an tine a lasadh inár gcroíthe in athuair.

Tchíonn sí go bhfuil lámh Dé, trí Phádraig, ag obair go láidir in Éirinn inniu.

Bhí bainisteoir ar fhoireann peile Dhoire, Mickey Harte, ag labhairt go paiseanta faoi iontach an Aifreann agus faoin tábhacht a bhaineann leis, agus a bhaineann le muide á ghlacadh go dáiríre. Pléadh an dóigh a bhfuil muid le bheith ag iarraidh páirt a ghlacadh in urnaithe go comhfhiosach, agus an meas a chaithfidh a léiriú dár dTiarna agus é i láthair i bhfírinne agus go hiomlán san Eocairist san Aifreann.



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MICKEY HARTE
Manager, Derry GAA

JOHN PRIDMORE
Former East London Gangster

DANA
Former MEP, Eurovision Song Contest Winner

PATRICK MCCRYSTAL
Executive Director HLI Ireland

And Others

Clonleigh Parish marks Diamond & Golden milestones



THE sixth Sunday of Easter was a day of great celebration in the Parish of Clonleigh, Lifford, in Co Donegal, when Bishop Donal joined in marking the 60th anniversary of the opening of St Patrick's Church, Murlog.

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Parish of Clonleigh, which had been known from 1964-74, with Strabane, as the Parish of Camus & Clonleigh.

The Diamond Anniversary Mass on Sunday, May 5, was a joyous occasion, with two choirs leading the singing – a senior choir led by Ursula OFaodhagaim, and a junior one provided by St Patrick's NS, Murlog, led by Geraldine Devine. Pupils from the other parish schools also took part in the liturgy.

Welcoming everyone, and Bishop Donal in particular, to celebrate this milestone in the life of the parish, the parish priest, Fr Colm O'Doherty, said that as well as it being a Mass of thanksgiving, the petitions left at the beautiful May Altar would also be remembered in prayer.

He added: "This is a very special day for you, the parishioners of Clonleigh, a day when you can be proud of being part of the faith

community that has contributed to 60 years of prayer, worship and handing on the faith in St Patrick's Church and in this parish."

In his homily, Bishop Donal remarked: "The Liturgy that has been celebrated on this site for over 260 years, and in this church since 1964, has sought to give glory to God and to help God's holy people learn about what Jesus taught.

"Down through the centuries, the different shape of buildings reflected ways of understanding God and His People – sometimes emphasising the majesty of God, at other times in a simple building, giving us the message that the God of the Cross is in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, sometimes reflecting the idea captured in one of the Irish words for church, the 'teach an phobail, the house of the people."

Referring to the Gospel of the day, the Bishop noted that it "calls us to be a people marked by a love for one another that reflects Christ's love for us". He went on to say: "This parish is not just a supplier of religious services. It is a community where the faithfulness of the shepherd and our shared life in the vine are reflected in how we live together. The Risen Christ calls us to be a community united in Him, not merely individuals who pray and pay."

Highlighting that the whole process of faith "is rooted in coming to know the love of the Father", Bishop Donal noted: "As St John wrote to the early church, we begin, not with our love for God but with God's love for us. Our prayer and weekly Mass are not merely time to hope for gifts from the almighty God. As we see from the opening lines of the Our

Father, all our prayer and worship are focused firstly on giving glory to God for His love revealed in Jesus.

"For the early church, the Resurrection was proof of the victory of God's love over sin and brutality. Jesus told His apostles that it would be by their love for one another that people would know that they were His disciples (Jn 13:35)."

Adding that the love of Jesus points to an understanding of love "that goes beyond just being based on feelings", he said: "Families know that, when the going gets tough, love is very often a decision. Adults and children benefit from knowing that they are loved, even when they mess up. The Christian understanding of marriage is clear that maintaining relationships is difficult – but that faithfulness is possible.

"When young people have little contact with life-long committed relationships, they risk growing up in a world where they expect little from their own future relationships. It is love that makes the world go round – and Jesus wants us to believe that love is not an unrealistic dream but something that can bring out the best in all of us, especially when the going gets tough."

Going on to note that some people "criticise faith in Jesus as a distraction from real life", Bishop Donal commented: "But Jesus does not want to take us away from the difficult realities of life. Because of the Resurrection, He tells us that grace can transform even the apparently most hopeless of situations. Because Jesus has risen from the dead, death and failure do not have the last laugh. Grace is stronger than sin; that conviction

helped people here to build a poor church in the middle of the Penal Laws and then to replace it nearly 70 years later.

"In the 1960s, the parish dared to dream of a magnificent church on this site that would point to the glory of God and give confidence to God's people. You filled this church with rich artwork that would inspire people and point to God. And all of that art is centred on the love of God revealed on the Cross and celebrated around the altar each weekend."

He added: "This is a time when there is much need for renewal in the church. The purpose of renewal is not to make the church strong and make ourselves feel in control. Jesus focussed His mission on bringing the love and mercy of God to those who felt most distant from hope and from grace. What He detested was those who wanted to feel superior to others and who loved to condemn.

"All our synodal conversations are about how we get the message of Jesus to those who most need healing and joy. If God is love, then there is nobody who does not have the right to know of that love."

Living in a culture today that "doubts the possibility of love", Bishop Donal asked: Are we getting ready to proclaim? Are we getting ready to take the infinite love of God seriously and to make it known in our time and place? That is what Jesus calls His friends in every generation to do."

Afterwards, the celebrations continued across the road in Murlog School, with refreshments, music, Irish dancing, and conversation.



A little bit of history...

ST Patrick's Church, Murlog, was consecrated in 1964 by the then Bishop of Derry, Dr Neil Farren. Designed by architect, Liam McCormack, it is one of what is known as the 'Seven Donegal Churches' that he was involved in. The others are Milford (1961), Desertegney (1964), Burt (1967), Creeslough (1971), Glenties (1974) and Donoughmore (1977).

The new church replaced the one that had stood there since 1828, but had been deemed to be too small to accommodate the growing Catholic population of the area. All that remains of it now is the tower, which has become a great feature of the site.

The 1828 building had replaced another church building, the first, which had been built in 1760 on a site donated by the local landlord, The Earl of Erne. Again, the

tower is all that remains of this church building and it was used as part of the 1828 building.

The opening of the 1964 church building marked a severance with the Penal Times and Laws which had dominated Irish Catholic society from 1691 to 1760, laws which had stripped the Catholic Irish of religious freedoms and nearly all their holdings including land.

The parish priest at the time of the opening of the current church building was Fr Anthony McFeely, who later became the Bishop of the Raphoe from 1965 to 1982. He started the project in 1959, and travelled to Europe along with Liam McCormack and another architect, Frank Corr, to visit new churches being built in France, Switzerland and Germany.



Derry pilgrims amongst thousands at Knock with Eucharistic Adoration Apostolate

by Roseann O'Donnell



Parishioners from Claudy and surrounding areas were amongst pilgrims from Derry in Knock for the annual National Apostolate of Eucharistic Adoration.

ON the weekend of April 13-14, pilgrims converged on Our Lady's Shrine, Knock, from all over Ireland, for the annual pilgrimage of the National Apostolate of Eucharistic Adoration. Declared an international Eucharistic Shrine in March 2021, Knock has been the venue for this yearly event since April 2013.

The programme began at 7 pm on the Saturday, with a short welcome address and recitation of the Holy Rosary. This was followed by a talk from Fr Brendan Walsh, SAC, entitled 'The Prodigal Returns: From Priest to Painter'. At 8.30 pm, the Holy Mass was celebrated, followed by Benediction.

On the Sunday, thousands more arrived for the full-day event. After refreshments, served in St John's Rest & Care, the day's programme began at 11 am with Guided Adoration in the Parish Church, whose gable wall was the site of the 1879 apparition. Prayer was led by Fr Patrick Cahill and members of Holy Family Mission.

Behold The Lamb

After lunch, the programme resumed in the Basilica, with the Keynote Address given by Fr Brendan Walsh, a Pallotine Father well-known for his ministry of

healing. Large numbers attended the talk, in which Fr Walsh focused on the power of silence before God.

He asserted that "the world wants to be beheld", and that those who crave notice often make a lot of noise, to attract attention. By contrast, however, "in Adoration", there is more coming at you, than from you to God", and "the language of silence is more powerful than anything...when Jesus was standing before Pilate, He was silent... When I am in silence before the Lamb, I am no longer pulling the strings."

After the keynote address, anointing of the sick was offered in the Basilica, prior to the celebration of Mass at 3 pm. The Most Rev Brendan Kelly, Bishop Emeritus of Galway, was the main celebrant, with priests from all over the country concelebrating. Music was provided by the Meath Diocesan Choir, led by Jim Walsh.

During his homily, Bishop Kelly referred to the previous Sunday's Gospel, which told of the encounter on the Road to Emmaus. The two men who encountered the Risen Jesus, and who recognized Him at the breaking of bread, subsequently turned back to Jerusalem and went to the apostles, who were "locked in a room in terror", to tell them: "He

is alive; He is risen...He is not far away; He is near."

Bishop Kelly explained that, as they were telling of their encounter, "there Jesus was, in spite of the closed door. He stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you'...These four words are the message of the Risen Jesus...this is His prayer for the whole world... He is not in the tomb, but alive... and all tombs [are] opened by His Resurrection."

Bishop Kelly went on to quote St Thoms Aquinas, "the greatest theologian the world has ever known; the greatest lover of the Blessed Sacrament, who wrote, "I come as one sick, to the Physician of Life."

He continued, "We come repentant and confident, full of faith in His mercy...He is our peace. He is alive and with us - our peace individually and as a communion of people."

Bishop Kelly twice more repeated the words of Jesus - "Peace be with you", saying that "we have been given all that is necessary, in the Sacraments, to achieve that peace... so that we would be the hands, the feet, the mind, the heart, the voice of Jesus in our world today. Every one of us, not just the priests and religious.

"Let Him lift up His face upon us and let us sit, stand, kneel before Him, in adoration, in awe and in confidence, in faith above all else - faith, in spite of the doubts that plague us constantly; peace in the midst of a sinful world and a broken world."

He added that, in repentance, "we have been given the courage to come back, not just seven times but seventy-seven times seven."

Bishop Kelly quoted Pope Francis, who said, "Tend the

wounds; be part of a church that is a field hospital, ready to go out and minister", adding that, "Before the Blessed Sacrament and in the Blessed Sacrament, fed by the Bread of Life, you and I can go out, can have the courage to bring the peace wherever we can. We can pray anywhere and carry others to Him; carry the whole world."

Eucharistic Procession

After the final blessing, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed on the altar and the prayers of Benediction prayed. Then the Lord Jesus, exposed in the Monstrance, was carried in procession around the Basilica, weather conditions having made it difficult to process outside. The Sacred Host was accompanied by Knights of the Blessed Sacrament and Knights of St Michael, from Derry Diocese.

In addition to the talks and periods of conducted prayer, Sunday's programme included the opportunity for confession in the Chapel of Reconciliation, from 11 am pm-4.30, and pilgrims were encouraged to visit the Adoration Chapel, where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed during the day.

An important feature of the pilgrimage was the opportunity for children, and the adults who accompanied them, to take part in guided Adoration in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, from 1.45-2.30 pm.

This time of prayer was led by leaders from the Children's Adoration Apostolate, 'Children of the Eucharist', which is a fruit of the 2012 Eucharistic Congress that took place in Dublin. Since 2013, this Apostolate has spread all over Ireland, and to several other countries, with many schools and parishes in the Derry Diocese taking part.

To find out more about the Adoration Apostolate, see the following contact details...

Derry Diocesan Apostolate - email: AdorationDerryDiocese@gmail.com; National Adoration Apostolate - website: www.EucharisticAdoration.ie and email: info@EucharisticAdoration.ie

Children of the Eucharist - website: https://ChildrenOfTheEucharist.ie and email: info@ChildrenOfTheEucharist.ie



Children of the Eucharist in Adoration during the Knock pilgrimage.



First Holy Communion



Some of the P4 Class with Fr Roland Colhoun, having received "Second Holy Communion", the day after First Communion, at St Eugene's Church, Glenock, Newtownstewart

Gortin May Procession



The P7 Class of St Patrick's School, Gortin, Co Tyrone, with Chaplain, Fr Roland Colhoun. All the classes (P1-P7) walked in the May Procession in honour of Our Lady for the second year in a row.



Most Rev Brendan Kelly, Bishop Emeritus of Galway

Memories of Marian Devotion in May *by Dr Seán Beattie*

THE month of May brings many memories to mind. As a secondary teacher for most of my life, it was always a time to go the extra mile before the school examinations. In the church, choirs usually pulled out old music sheets with traditional hymns in honour of Mary, the Mother of God. In classrooms across the country, children in primary schools picked the early summer flowers to create May altars and likewise in many homes. In some towns, there was a tradition of decorating shop windows with statues of the Virgin, garlanded with flowers – a custom that has not disappeared entirely.

May hymns

The month of May was celebrated in its own way in different churches: May retreats; sermons; May altars; processions; and pilgrimages, etc. In relation to hymns, there were many memorable and beautiful versions associated with May. My favourite was Canon Sydney McEwan's version of 'Queen of the May', sung with great emotion, more as a fervent prayer than a devotional hymn:

O Mary, we crown thee with blossoms today

Queen of the Angels and Queen of the May.

McEwan was born in Glasgow in 1908 and he had a great following

among the thousands of Donegal emigrants and hired folk, as they went about their daily chores on the farms and in the factories across Scotland. No doubt, his rich tones brought back happy memories of their childhood.

Many Derry readers will recall the warm renditions of their own songstress, Maureen Hegarty, and her fervent interpretation of 'Queen of the May', sung with solemn and dignified piety. This is now available on YouTube.

I am sure the great Irish tenor, Count John McCormick, has also made a recording of 'Queen of the May', but so far, I have been unable to track one down.

So much for my own personal reflections on the month. How has it happened that May has been associated with Marian devotion and ceremony, as far back as I can recall?

Origins and history

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin in the Month of May can be traced back to the 13th century, when Alfonso X of Castile wrote the poems, the 'Cantigas de Santa Maria', in which he proposed that May should be reserved for special devotion to Mary.

Some of the great spiritual exercises relating to her can be traced to Italy, particularly in the 17th century. Other countries

followed suit, notably France and Belgium. By the 19th century, devotion to Mary in the month of May was widespread across Europe. The Jesuit Order was prominent in the spread of such devotion.

Throughout Europe, the Catholic Church promoted greater participation by its members in response to the Protestant Reformation. The Council of Trent (1545-63) spearheaded renewal among clergy and laity, with greater emphasis on Mass attendance, prayer and the Sacraments.

The subsequent decades were a difficult time in Ireland because of the operation of an anti-Catholic code of legislation known as the Penal Laws. The presence of so many Mass Rocks in the Diocese is a reminder of the challenges faced by regular Catholics. By the early 1800s, the rigours of the Penal Code had eased and throughout the 19th century, there was an upsurge in Catholic worship.

Catholic Emancipation Act 1929

The year 1829 is a landmark in the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act, which opened the doors of Westminster to Catholics. In the following decades, a 'devotional revolution' took place in Ireland. Cardinal Cullen is credited with the resurgence in Catholic worship that was

evident after the bitter years of the Great Famine (1845-48). The Synod of Thurles (1850) was one of the landmarks of Cullen's achievements. Weekly attendance at Mass was encouraged, families were urged to say the Rosary regularly and devotions in honour of the Mother of God were common in most dioceses.

Pope Pius IX and Leo XIII advised bishops to promote public devotions in addition to attendance at Mass. In many parishes, May processions were held on an annual basis. The month of May was also a regular time for parish retreats, a feature of Catholic life that is no longer as popular as in former times.

In the Derry Diocese, particularly in Derry City, processions were discouraged in the 1930s by the authorities on the grounds that they were prone to disorder, although there was little or no evidence of this.

The Roman Missal

In my possession, I have a copy of the Roman Missal printed in 1957. At one time, it was a common sight to see churchgoers carrying a heavy, black-covered Missal to Sunday Mass, but such is no longer the case.

In writing this article, I looked through my copy and found that May 31st is in fact dedicated to the

Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A note from the editor states: "The piety of the faithful has always honoured the Blessed Virgin Mary as Queen. She has been raised by God to a heavenly throne above the choir of angels."

The final line records that the liturgical Feast of the Queenship of Mary was instituted by Pope Pius XI in October 1954. The role of the papacy in the promotion of devotions to the Mother of God during the month of May is not in doubt. At local level, Bishops and priests in different dioceses have succeeded in raising awareness of the importance of Marian devotion. The ordinary churchgoer has responded faithfully in turn.

Protector of the Seas

Coastal communities have for centuries held the Blessed Virgin in a special place. Many commercial harbours in Europe have life-size statues of the Virgin. A typical example can be seen in the thriving harbour at Nice, France, on the coast of the Mediterranean, where the Blessed Virgin stands with outstretched arms as if in blessing of those who ply our seas.

At the other end of the social spectrum, on the remote, uninhabited island of Inishtrahull, six miles north of Malin Head, a four-foot statue of the Virgin was kept in the island school. Today,



Statue of Our Lady at Malin Head

a century later, it has been moved to a small cave on the coastline at Malin Head beside an ancient church ruin.

At a more mundane level, in small rural schools and in large City establishments, children will erect May altars, decorated with the early flowers of the summer, just as their forefathers have done in years gone by.

Malin Well Rosary walk tradition continues

THE traditional Malin Rosary Walk on the first Sunday of May continues to take place, thanks to the support and devotion of parishioners of various ages.

Following the praying of the 3 pm Divine Mercy Chaplet in Star of the Sea Church, Malin Head, on Sunday, May 5, by Fr Charlie Logue CC, those gathered went

on to pray the Rosary as they walked in procession to Malin Well.

The group walked behind a wooden statue of Our Lady, praying in total three Mysteries of the Rosary. The time of prayer came to an end in front of Our Lady's Grotto on the site of the old Malin Head Church.



May Rosaries in honour of Our Lady



Rosary at the Grotto took place each evening during May at St Mary's Church, Limavady. The event offers the Rosary to Our Lady for Her intentions, and the group found it an excellent way of deepening their Catholic faith. Photograph by John Austin.



Pictured above and below: Claudy Grotto Rosary in honour of Our Lady of Fatima



A group of parishioners from St Mary's Church, Dregish, who pray the Rosary every Wednesday in May at Our Lady's Grotto, followed by a Bluebell Walk.



Dungiven Legion of Mary lead the May Rosary on Mondays at 8 pm at Our Lady's Grotto in the grounds of St Patrick's Church.

Greenlough parishioner shares teaching experience that led to re-training as a counsellor and...

Walking Camino to raise vital funds for ALPS

THIS month's Dawn Walk in remembrance of people who have died by suicide, as well as in support of those bereaved by suicide, saw a large turnout. In all, there were 34 Dawn Walks in various parts of Northern Ireland on the morning of May 11, including Greenlough, Lavey, Bellaghy, Desertmartin, Ballinascreen, Swatragh, Kilrea and Dungiven.

Started in Bellaghy in 2020, the now annual Dawn Walks also raise vital funds for counselling services offered by ALPS – All Lives are Precious. Amongst the walkers was Greenlough parishioner, Christina Carey, a semi-retired teacher who retrained and now works as a counsellor with ALPS at its Portglenone base.

Speaking to 'The Net' about the much-in-demand mental health services provided by ALPS, Christina highlighted the importance of the fundraising, expressing appreciation to all those who took part in the 34 Dawn Walks and the 50 different organisations behind them, such as Bann Valley Community Group in association with the Greenlough Camogie and Football Clubs.

Founded in 2014, in Downpatrick, in response to the Connecting for Life Strategy, in the Republic of Ireland, and the Flourish Initiative, in Northern Ireland, ALPS aims to respond to the well-being, awareness raising, training and development, and the therapeutic service provision needs, of individuals, families, schools and communities.

It has engaged with over 100,000 people throughout the country over the past decade, through its prevention and intervention programmes and services for families, children, young people, schools, communities, the clergy and Travelling Community.

Working in partnership with many organisations and individuals, ALPS relies on

donations, with all funds going directly to the services provided regarding suicide prevention and awareness. The counselling is free at the point of contact, though clients are encouraged to donate/fundraise for it.

Finding her work as a counsellor with ALPS a humbling experience, Christina reflected on the path that led to her mid-life career change. Formerly McGlinchey from Rouskey, in the Parish of Gortin (Badoney Lower), the 64-year-old is married to Brendan Carey and very much involved in Greenlough parish life. She is currently chair of the Parish Pastoral Council, which she has been involved in since it was set up by former parish priest, Fr Oliver Crilly, and is also a leader in the Parish GIFT (Growing in Faith Together) programme for young people in early post-primary years.

Recalling growing up in a strong faith-filled home, Christina also highlighted the great contribution of Loreto Grammar School, in Omagh, to the development of her strong faith and for the support she received there as a pupil, especially during the illness of her mother, who later died when Christina was training to be a teacher at St Mary's, Belfast.

Most of her primary school teaching career was spent in the integrated sector within the Down & Connor Diocese, and her experiences over the years led to her leaving full-time teaching in 2019 to train as a counsellor.

She explained: "It was through teaching that I saw the need for counselling. As a teacher, I saw that if parents were struggling then it affected the children. So, I saw the need for counselling to support parents, however, I was not very aware of how to go about it."

Prior to her leaving teaching to train as a counsellor, Christina had been on an awareness trip to Africa in 2007 with Children in Crossfire, through her knowing

Frank Diamond, who worked for the charity and organised the trip to Tanzania.

Commenting on the experience, Christina said: "We raised a lot of money that went towards building a school in Moshi, in Tanzania. It was a very interesting experience. There were so many people everywhere you looked, but they were very joyful and friendly. It was seeing their joy in the midst of poverty that had a profound effect on me. It was also a nice feeling to be doing something independently from being a wife, mother of four and teacher, as I was always in one of these roles."

Still interested in the work of Children in Crossfire, Christina fundraises for it, managing to raise around £700 during one of the lockdowns by walking 100k in February 2021.

Through Frank Diamond, Christina returned to Tanzania in 2019, but this time with ALPS.

"Frank had moved to work with ALPS and asked me if I wanted to go back to Tanzania," she recalled, adding: "I had kept the link with the priests and a few of the teachers that I had met out there the first time, so I was happy to go back in 2019 with ALPS."

The same year, Christina applied to the Northern Regional College, in Ballymena, to do a three-year Foundation Degree in Integrative Counselling through the University of Ulster. As part of this, she had placements with ALPS and a GP surgery.

Humbling

"I qualified a year ago and I have been working with ALPS since," said Christina, adding: "I am involved directly with clients as a counsellor and also continue to sub as a teacher when called upon. I enjoy counselling and find it humbling that people are prepared to trust me with their inner thoughts and feelings."

Through ALPS, Christina had the wonderful opportunity to walk her first Camino last July. An experienced walker through her outings with Sperrin Hill Walkers for the last 18 years, she was up for the challenge when ALPS operations manager, Ronan Gilchrist said to her one day: "You are doing the Camino."

"So, after a bit of training by walking from Holywood to Bangor as a group, 23 of us, aged from 21-72 years of age, headed off to Italy to do the Camino. Some of us were ALPS counsellors, others had been affected by suicide or had an understanding of those with mental health issues, and some wanted that time the Camino offers and felt like fundraising for ALPS," said Christina.

She continued: "Our Camino was the Italian one – the Way of St Francis – and went across the top of Italy, into Tuscany, finishing in Assisi after five days. It was absolutely beautiful. The walk was enjoyable but challenging too, doing 18+ km a day in high temperatures of mid to high 30s. One day we walked about 25 km, which was definitely challenging but doable. We did it largely as a group and we had a guide."

"I was very tired at the end of each day, but there was the adrenalin from having done it and the camaraderie with the group. It was energising spiritually too, as we visited different monasteries and churches en route. For me, there was something about Assisi itself, where we spent a day-and-a-half. I felt that I could stay there, both for the Cathedral Basilica of St Francis, where we spent quite a bit of time, and the whole town of Assisi. There was so much history in it. In the Basilica, there was a real sense of being in a place of great prayer. I felt like it was a place of healing, a place you would like to return to for longer."

While in Assisi they got to spend



Christina and Camino comrades in Assisi with Sr Elaine Bradley, of Maghera

time with Sr Elaine Bradley, a Franciscan nun from Maghera.

"I know her father from the hillwalking group and when he heard that I was going to Assisi, he told me that his daughter was a nun in Assisi. When we arrived there, a couple who had injuries had arrived before us and had met a nun who asked them where they were from. She then told them that there was a nun in their convent from Northern Ireland."

"When I heard this, I thought it might be my fellow hill walker's daughter, so I checked with him and he sent me the address of the convent. We realised that we weren't far from it and so we decided to go and knock on the Convent door. Sr

Elaine was delighted to see us and it was lovely to meet and chat with her. She is full of joy."

Having thoroughly enjoyed her first Camino experience, Christina is returning to Italy with ALPS this summer for another five-day walk, leaving on July 4. This time, the group is flying out to Assisi and walking the Camino to Rome. As well as back training for the walk, Christina is starting her fundraising for ALPS and has set up a JustGiving Crowdfunding Page to help raise £500 - https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/christina-carey-3?utm_term=XPXNVG4Qj

ALPS can be contacted via +44 2844898216; +44 7731928058; or email: info@alpsltd.org

Large turnout for Dawn Walks



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With Cursillo undergoing resurgence in Derry Diocese, long-time Cursillista, Thomas Gallagher reflects on its continued need in society...

Our focus has to be on living out Christian faith in every area of our lives...not just on Sundays



Cursillista, Thomas Gallagher, of the Cathedral Parish in Derry.

ONE of the speakers at the recent Derry Cursillo Renewal Weekend in Termonbacca was former president of the local secretariat and long-time cursillista, Thomas Gallagher, who has done extensive study over the years on the Cursillo method of a balanced life of piety, continued spiritual study and action.

Recognised by the Catholic Church, the Cursillo lay movement originated on the Spanish island of Majorca and arrived in Ireland in the 1960s. The word 'cursillo' is Spanish for short course, and it was set up in the mid-1940s by a group of young men aware of a need to bring people, especially men, back to the Church, and to renew and recharge the faith of those who still attended.

Thomas did his Cursillo weekend 37 years ago, during a boom time for the Movement in Derry. After experiencing a lull period, he sees it now undergoing a resurgence once again, with the young Cursillistas

"on fire" with the desire to grow in their Catholic faith and bring the fruits of their growth into their homes, work places and society, to evangelise others.

Stating that the changes in Derry Cursillo were authentic, he recalled an experience from a recent Cursillo weekend in Belfast, in April: "Belfast wanted to go with a half Derry team, half Belfast team. The outcome was a stark difference for those listening, between the older Belfast Cursillistas talking about the Troubles and the younger Derry Cursillistas talking about the current environment. The younger Cursillistas are seeing Cursillo on fire again. It is the young adult Cursillistas out there in society who will help it to take off again, not the older generation. When you can see a transition like this, it is an indication that the Holy Spirit is at work."

Sharing some of the history of the arrival of Cursillo into the north of Ireland, Thomas said: "An

Irish priest, who did his Cursillo weekend in Chicago in the mid-late 70s, had such an experience that he made the comment at the end of his weekend that this was what was needed in the north of Ireland. This led to a group of American priests, who were a mix of Irish and Italian Americans, coming to Ireland in 1978 to lead a Cursillo weekend in the Servite Monastery in Benburb, Dungannon, Co Tyrone.

"One of the Servites was a Fr John B Duffy, from Belfast, known as the singing priest, who later joined the Armagh Diocese. He led a Servite retreat in Carnhill at the invitation of the parish priest at the time, the late Fr Seamus O'Connell, and people came from all over the city to listen to him.

"Fr Duffy then selected 12 men from Derry to go on retreat in Benburb, along with men from Belfast, and that was the first Cursillo retreat in the North of Ireland. At that point, people didn't know that Cursillo was already in Ireland. It had been in Kilkenny in the mid-60s, when it was brought in by Bishop Peter Birch, Ossory Diocese, and spread to Roscommon, in the Elphin Diocese."

He added: "The Derry men from that first Benburb Cursillo retreat came back and wanted to develop Cursillo in Derry, and decided to hold the weekends in Ards, as it was the only available facility at that time. That was in 1979 and it developed throughout that year, with Billy Doherty the Derry Cursillo president. Amongst those who did the Cursillo weekend was Ted Armstrong, who was headmaster of St Joseph's Boys' School, and Ron Desmond. It was nine years before I got involved.

"The Cursillo charism is for the faraway but, at that time in Derry, it focussed more on those in their faith and it died off in the early 80s because of this," recalled Thomas, adding: "A few of the men, like Billy Doherty, were still in contact with the Chicago Cursillo, who put a team together and came back with

their families for a Cursillo weekend in Termonbacca in 1985, with the Carmelites having arrived there in 1982, and from that it just took off. There was a 'can-do' attitude, with a group of men and women 'on fire', and anything was possible.

"Donegal got involved. Then Derry went back to help Belfast and Armagh in late 1988, where the weekends were held in Dromantine Monastery. Dundalk was big at that time."

"In the mix of people who were doing Cursillo in these areas," noted Thomas, "there was a huge number of Republicans who were being drawn to do Cursillo weekends and were experiencing major conversions.

"Over the years, this led to influence in the direction towards peace - not political peace, but the peace that is only found through Jesus Christ and belief in Him; a personal peace of heart and mind."

Peace

Recalling being asked to talk about the circumstances of peace in Northern Ireland, at a Cursillo conference in Majorca in 2015, Thomas said: "I made the point to those gathered that of all the people who had been praying for peace in the North of Ireland, both from Protestant and Catholic traditions, Cursillo had contributed in a major way towards that peace. As a result of all those prayers, God's Grace came into the West Bank of the Foyle, West Belfast, South Armagh, and Dundalk, leading to a change of hearts and minds.

"It was often quoted that a Cursillo meeting in West Belfast resembled an Ard Fheis. This led to serious concern within the Republican Movement, with big numbers of hearts and minds being changed and new directions being sought."

He went on to note: "From 1985-86 onwards, Cursillo exploded, with huge numbers joining. There were 66 candidates and 60 team members on my weekend in Ards, in February 1987. Then we had the

first 'Walk to Knock' in the Marian Year of 1988, and it is still going. Men who were in the conversion process started doing the 'Walk to Knock' for peace in Ireland."

Pointing out that Cursillo is recognised by the Church, Thomas remarked: "It is a specific charism - a gift from Heaven to a person for the church and the world, and that person was Eduardo Bonnin, from the Spanish island of Majorca, in the 30s and 40s. Its first unofficial weekend was in 1944, and the first official one was in 1949, when it was accepted by the local bishop. It was initially seen to be radical there and was also considered radical in Derry in the 1980s.

"The charism of Cursillo is for the faraway - those in the world who do not know, or understand, that God loves them. That charism has been examined for over 50 years by the Church and has been accepted as a Movement of the Church under the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life. It was fully recognised by the Church in 2014. Cursillo is now world-wide, and represented by a worldwide body of leadership known as the World Organisation of the Cursillo Movement (OMCC)."

He added: "Any gift from Heaven can go astray; when individuals take control, often the Holy Spirit steps back from it. And this happened to Cursillo in Ireland, with it falling by the wayside around the island, except in Derry, where 8,000 people have been through the Cursillo programme in the Diocese, and knock-on youth organisations emerged, like Cor and Search, which were set up by Cursillistas.

"People in Ireland are now taking note of what is happening in the Derry Diocese. One of those lights in the Diocese is the Cursillo Movement, which is hugely supported by Bishop Donal, who has been encouraging it since his arrival in the Diocese in 2014."

He went on to highlight that part of the charism of Cursillo is based on the study of the environment in which we live - home, work, society

etc, remarking: "The environment changes with time from generation to generation, but the charism stays the same.

"Currently, Cursillo in Derry is adapting to the environment of the current times. Moving from the time of 'The Troubles', in the 70s, 80s and 90s, into a time of wholesale change in the Church and society - an environment of young people caught up in social media, the drug culture, high suicide rates, and no grounding of faith, with New Age practices very prevalent everywhere and taking on a normality in our society. Look at the graffiti on the walls."

"We have got to get away from Sunday Catholics," urged Thomas, stating: "A Cursillista has to be on duty every moment of the day, looking to draw people back into the faith every day. This is what was discussed on the renewal weekend, when it was said that the only answer to the ills of the world is Jesus Christ. Our focus has to be on living out the Christian faith, trying to implement it in every area of our lives, not just on Sundays. Cursillistas are Catholics bringing their faith into their environments.

"The fruit of the work in Derry is the learning more about self, and spiritual direction is happening with the help of the Church in Derry. People are deepening their faith, leading to an encounter with self and a deeper relationship with Christ."

He concluded by remarking: "I think there is a realisation now that Cursillo does work. The renewal weekend involved sitting down and studying the environment in which we operate in for evangelisation. Where are people crying out for help and for God? It is not only a story of alcoholism but a delivery of drugs at any time of the day in Derry and Northern Ireland. What is going on now has never been seen before. We have mental health issues stemming from today's society. Jesus Christ is the only answer."

Cursillo renewal weekend an encouraging time of community reflection

ON Pentecost weekend, some of the Derry Cursillo community took the opportunity to gather in prayer and reflection together in what is known as a Cursillo de Cursillo weekend. This is an opportunity for the community to pause and look to ensure that they are being true to the original idea of cursillo, and are not falling into deviations from this.

It was a perfect opportunity for everyone gathered to learn more about the experience of living out what is essential in the mentality, essence and purpose of

the movement.

The Cursillo mentality involves actively proclaiming the best news that God, through Christ, loves us. This message of God's love is best communicated by the best means, which is friendship.

Those members of Cursillo who gathered listened to talks on various aspects of Cursillo, and then everyone had the opportunity to gather in small discussion groups to share their own experiences. This was a beautiful opportunity to strengthen and develop

friendships, to share and learn from each other's personal experiences.

Each day, we celebrated the Eucharist together, reminding us all of the central reason why we do what we do. It was a time of personal challenge to us all, reflecting on how well we are living out our mission as Cursillistas. Those who came along responded enthusiastically to the truth and simplicity of Cursillo and, through God's grace, they are inspired to leave here and return to their personal

environments to live, witness, and communicate the Good News that God in Christ loves us.

This weekend together allowed the community to prepare well for the upcoming weekends in June and we all had the important reminder - Christ is still counting on you!

Weekends will take place for ladies on June 20-23, and men on June 27-30, in Termonbacca Carmelite Monastery. If anyone would like information about these weekends, please email cursilloderry1@gmail.com



Cursillo renewal weekend in Termonbacca.

Unexpected encounter highlight of 40th ordination group's visit to Rome

by Fr Pat O'Hagan

THE Maynooth Ordination Class of 1984 has a reunion every year in some part of the country. At last year's reunion in Limavady, we decided to mark our 40th anniversary with a visit to Rome. So, 10 of us, from Derry to Cork, from Louth to Galway, spent a few days together in the Eternal City in April.

We were warmly welcomed to the Irish College, where we celebrated Mass in the College Chapel, led by Mgr Joe McGuinness of the Diocese of Clogher, who is currently Secretary to the Irish Bishops.

The Irish College is no longer a seminary, training men for the priesthood, but now hosts priests who are taking postgraduate courses. Some of the College community joined us for Mass and for a reception afterwards, before we repaired to a restaurant near the Coliseum for our reunion dinner.

The following morning, we started to queue up very early on the Via della Conciliazione for the Papal Audience, which began at 9 am. We were still queuing when we saw Pope Francis making his way to the podium, from which he would give his weekly address. We managed to get through the



The group at the Papal Audience in St Peter's Square, on Wednesday, April 10.

'airport style' security and ward off some queue jumpers, as we made our way to what had been described as "very good seats!"

We didn't realise how good the seats were until the Audience was over. While we were still standing around talking to one another and taking some photographs, a Vatican official dressed in a grey morning suit approached us and asked if we would like a photo. I thought he wanted to take a photo of our group, but then he added, "...with the Holy Father". There was no hesitation in getting to our place in the line. We were placed between a group of Romanian priests and a sizeable number of Pallotines, who were meeting in Rome that week.

Pope Francis has been suffering from mobility issues for some time and is using a wheelchair to move around. As he approached us,

we told him who we were and he told us a story of the Irish and the Italians (his ancestors) arriving in America with, respectively, "... whiskey and the Mafia!"

The Holy Father shook hands with each of us, before posing for a group photo. As he was moving away, he asked us twice, "Pray for me!" We assured him that we would.

The rest of that day, which included a visit to the excavations under the Basilica and the tomb of St Peter, passed in a kind of blur after the highlight of meeting St Peter's successor. We hadn't expected to meet and speak with Pope Francis, so that made all the difference to our reunion.

We met up again the following evening for dinner in another of Rome's many fabulous hostels, before returning home, or continuing our visit in Rome or elsewhere in Italy, glad to have spent so much time together and to have met Pope Francis.



Back (l-r): Frs Hughie Loftus, Tuam; Eoin Whooley, Cork & Ross; Tommy O'Connor, Meath; Michael Woods, Armagh; Peter Rabbitte, Galway; Liam Lawton, Kildare & Leighlin; Pat O'Hagan, Derry. Front (l-r): John Conlon, Meath; Joe McGuinness, Clogher; Bernard Cotter, Cork & Ross.



The Chapel of the Irish College, Rome.

Fruitful time for priests of Diocese at conference reflecting on co-responsibility

by Fr Peter Madden

BISHOP Donal McKeown and the priests of the Diocese of Derry spent three days recently at Dromantine Conference Centre, Newry, Co Down, in a follow up to a similar conference held last October.

Once again, Rev Dr Seamus O'Connell, Professor of Sacred Scripture at St Patrick's College, Maynooth, presented a detailed explanation of several of the parables of Jesus. He was joined by Permanent Deacon Paul Mallon of the Archdiocese of Armagh, and his wife, Dymrna Mallon, at present director of the Margaret Aylward Centre for Faith and Dialogue, who shared some of

their own faith journey.

On the second day, Maire Gormley, Director of Catechesis and Faith Mentor in the Parish of Desertegney and Lower Fahan (Buncrana), gave an overview of her own faith/vocation journey and her present work in Inishowen.

Overseeing the entire three-day conference was Jim Deeds, from Belfast, who has accompanied the priests of the diocese before and works in dioceses all over Ireland. His facilitation was essential to the success of the conference, leading with wisdom and clarity.

On the third day, Jim led the conference in a Conversation in

the Spirit, which mirrored the Synodality approach that Pope Francis is encouraging the whole church (every diocese and parish) to adopt.

To the surprise of most (and is our God not the God of surprises), this exercise was an extremely moving and spiritual experience for all who took part.

The organising committee have undertaken, on behalf of the Council of Priests of the Diocese of Derry, to plan the next conference by seeking feedback from all who attended on how to build on the success of the previous two conferences.

Commenting on the

Diocesan Vocations News

by Fr Pat O'Hagan

THE members of the Diocesan Vocations Team continue to promote prayer for vocations to the priesthood. So far, this year, there have been regular meetings with the group of men who hope to serve the Church as priests of the Diocese of Derry, many of whom took part in a retreat in Drumalis in March.

Between now and the end of the year the following 'events' have been organised:

*On May 26, there will be a gathering in Bellaghy after the 11am Mass, with refreshments in the Open Door Complex followed by lunch and a meeting with Fr Peter O'Kane, who will speak about the Prayer of the Church.

*In June/July, those discerning a vocation to the diocesan priesthood will have an opportunity to meet our seminarians, who will be home for their summer holidays and working on their pastoral placements in a number of parishes around the Diocese.

*On September 8, a Vocations Day is to be held in Buncrana. Mass will be at 12.30 pm in St Mary's Oratory, followed by lunch and a meeting with some priests of the Diocese. There will be a Holy Hour in the Oratory at 6 pm.

*In October, discerners will be invited to take part in a Cursillo retreat weekend in the Carmelite monastery at Termonbacca.

*In November, there will be a 'Come & See' gathering in Maynooth.

*In January, there will be a post-Christmas gathering for discerners and a farewell to those who will, please God, be heading to Salamanca to begin their priestly formation.

There will be more information, including posters, about the Vocations Day on September 8,

Our Lady's Birthday, in future editions of 'The Net', and in parish bulletins, websites, and social media.

Please pray for those discerning their vocation, for our four seminarians, and for the men who have applied to the Diocese this year.

CALLED TO BE A PRIEST?

DERRYVOCATIONS.ORG

If this is of interest to you, please contact the Diocesan Vocations Director, Fr Pat O'Hagan on (+44) 07703444280 or (028) 7938 6452



A tribute to Sr Anna

by Sr Margaret McConalogue RSM



The late Sr Anna Doherty RSM.

Sr Anna Doherty entered eternal life on May 11, 2024, the eve of the Ascension of Our Lord, aged 87 years. May she rest in peace. Her Requiem Mass was celebrated on May 14 in Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Steelstown, followed by burial in Thornhill Cemetery.

A true Derry girl, she attended St Columba's Long Tower Primary School, Mercy Primary School, Pump Street, and then Thornhill College. Having graduated from Thornhill, at age 18, Anna entered the Mercy Sisters, Pump Street, as a postulant, where she further discerned her vocation and embarked on the spiritual formation programme in preparation for First Vows.

As a young Sister, she trained as a primary school teacher and

taught in St Joseph's, Artillery Street (1960-1966), and in St Patrick's, Pennyburn (1966-1972), while living as a member of the Pump Street Mercy community.

While teaching in Pennyburn, Anna also worked two evenings per week in St Joseph's Youth Club, Creggan, where she took groups of young people on summer holidays and weekends away.

After 12 years' teaching experience, she began to discern even greater needs in the wider community. Inspired by Vatican II and the vision of Catherine McAuley, our Foundress, who taught her Sisters that "need is our cloister", Anna decided to take action!

She requested her Superior for permission to retrain in social work and began to discern how best to engage with the wider social issues of the time. Anna completed a course in community development in Leicester and returned to Derry in 1974, full of energy and enthusiasm, and a clear vision about where to begin her new ministry.

New parishes had been created to cater for the increased population in the housing estates, without any of the necessary social supports. Anna immediately formed a team of

workers, paid and volunteers, and together they formed a plan, and so the Carnhill Resource Centre came into being, in an effort to tackle the multiple needs, pastoral and social care, in the wider area.

Challenges like welfare rights, the needs of the vulnerable elderly and of women, were just some of the issues that Anna set out to improve, as well as practical help, like meals on wheels and citizens' advice, were offered.

As Fr Colum Clerkin said in his homily at Anna's Funeral Mass, the Resource Centre was a hub of activity at the centre of the Carnhill Parish community during his time as a curate there. This year sees the 50th anniversary of the Centre's foundation and it is going from strength to strength!

Anna gave 20 years of steadfast commitment to this iconic project in Derry. She was supported financially and in many other ways by the Sisters of Mercy, and received whole-hearted support from the many contacts she had built up over the years in the local community.

As Fr Clerkin said: "She enlisted the help of many, who knew they could trust her instinct and the 'can do/will do' attitude that Anna brought to all that she took on."

Instead of resting on the success of the Resource Centre initiative, Anna took up the Ministry of Prayer-with-others, guidance and counselling. She established the Thornhill Centre, reappropriating the Convent as a different resource, a Centre of Spirituality, one that would nourish people's spiritual life on the pilgrim journey of life.

Anna had been very active in the Charismatic Renewal Movement of the 60s, 70s and 80s. She was also coordinator of a Mercy Associates (men and women wishing to share the Mercy ministry and spirituality) in the Derry area.

When Bishop Edward Daly invited Anna to assist him in his chaplaincy work in Foyle Hospice, she responded in her usual generous way and ministered to patients and their families, of all denominations there, for as long as she was able.

We will miss you, Anna, for your warm presence, your positive and affirmative ways, your lively personality, and the love with which you touched the lives of all you met.

In iothlann De go gcastar sinn! (Until we meet in Heaven).



Sr Anna receiving a cheque in 1983, for the Resource Centre, from the children of Carnhill PS.



Sr Anna and Sr Margaret McConalogue



Sr Anna with Sr Conleth and the late Sr Christopher RIP.

Donaghedy Parish and Aughabrack & District Community Association celebrating volunteers



Pope's monthly intention

The Holy Father has asked for prayer during May for:

The formation of religious and seminarians: Let us pray that men and women religious and

seminarians grow in their own vocational journey through human, pastoral, spiritual and community formation, leading them to be credible witnesses of the Gospel.

Prayer for Priests

Heavenly Father, I ask you to bless our bishops and priests and to confirm them in their vocation of service.

As they stand before us as ministers of Your Sacraments, may they be channels of the love and compassion of the Good Shepherd, who came not to be served but to serve.

Give them the grace they need to respond generously to you, and the courage to proclaim your Word of

justice, love and truth. Bless, in a special way, Your servant Father, Send your Spirit upon him So that he may always walk in the path of faith, hope and love, in the footsteps of Christ, the eternal priest, who offered Himself on the cross for the life of the world. Amen.

Remember in prayer during May:

- All Priests (1st May)
- All Priests (2nd)
- Fr Michael Porter (3rd)
- Fr Roni Zacharias (4th)
- Fr Ignacy Saniuta (5th)
- All Priests (6th)
- Fr Gerard Sweeney (7th)
- Fr Joshy Parokkaran (8th)
- Fr John Walsh (9th)

- Fr Alex Anderson (10th)
- Fr Patrick Arkinson (11th)
- Fr Patrick Baker (12th)
- Fr Declan Boland (13th)
- Fr Eugene Boland (14th)
- Fr Francis Bradley (15th)
- Fr Manus Bradley (16th)
- All Priests (17th)
- Fr Brian Brady (18th)
- All Priests (19th)
- Fr Thomas Canning (20th)
- Fr Michael Canny (21st)
- All Priests (22nd)
- All Priests (23rd)
- All Priests (24th)
- Fr Colum Clerkin (25th)
- Fr Roland Colhoun (26th)
- Fr Michael Collins (27th)
- Fr Oliver Crilly (28th)
- Fr Patrick Crilly (29th)
- Fr Brendan Crowley (30th)
- All Priests (31st)

Mystery ... "Soy Catolico pero no fanatico!" by Fr John McLaughlin ssc

IT was Easter Monday afternoon and I was sitting back and reflecting upon the Mystery of Faith. A lifetime habit, after all the ceremonies and the organisation, liturgy novelties of this year, etc, and then arrived, quite unannounced, my Surprise Easter Visitor (SEV). So the reflection was now being shared and it released speculation, wonder and appreciation.

As my SEV responded from the point of another wondering and searching-soul, faith and life, feeling the doubts and letting the darkness enter as a pre-requisite to faith and light, neither of us was 'preaching', just searching out the Mystery on a personal level.

My SEV moves in different circles and spoke of a gay pastor and his peace, and cited a text or two from a Psalm, with an easiness that is unusual amongst my normal visitors. There was probably an Easter hug and I was left to feel that this was just what I needed for the day; to just look and 'unbind' the Mystery, as I settled down to Evening Prayer.

Mystery surrounds us and constitutes our existence, and it is good to just face into it and often share with others! No Easter Eggs for me this year, but that SEV will more than suffice for the gap, commercial or existential!

Catechism is one thing and the Kerygma or Evangelisation can be other. One of the many privileges of pastoral life for me in those years in Chile was that of promoting the weekend Ignatian Retreats for our parishioners, at parish and deanery levels, in the Jesuit Retreat House, 'Padre Hurtado', called after that recent and worthy saint, Alberto Hurtado.

There was always a well-planned programme of accompaniment, where some of the Sisters and Priests had participated in workshops and were able to lead the process over various levels, so that, with the guidance of priest or sister and later prepared lay people, groups of five or six would share their reflections on the allotted texts under the leadership of the guide, and state how they had accustomed themselves to keeping silent and attaining reflection.

Since the sharing was in common, following the periods of silence the participants inspired one another and moved into retreat mode during that first Saturday morning. More advanced retreatants would share alone with their guide, and the whole group from the parishes in the deanery would later on join in the Eucharist and Night Prayer, before supper in silence and then retiring for the night. For some, it was maybe their first time ever away from their family and so a certain loneliness was to be faced.

We had a good team of Religious from across the deanery, with some being experts in that form of accompaniment, more than

we priests in truth (as fellow Columban, Fr Aidan Larkin used to wryly remark!) Back in our parishes, it was the custom in those years to have a session on one Sunday night in the month, and here the gifts of the Sisters came into play, with a well laid-out leaflet of hymns, drawings and short litanical prayers interspersed in the overriding silence of the moment.

I always regarded these retreats and vigils as a kind of 'payback time' to the catechists and other pastoral leaders in the parish. The depth of their faith and practice showed up on many occasions, and there was a capacity to experiment and initiate further activities that surely came from those reflections, like proposing an afternoon of reflection or maybe of reconciliation in the chapel, capilla or, occasionally, in a local school that offered privacy for the afternoon.

'Conversion' is a much thrown-about word, and often there was more evidence of it in these movements than in their own intense catechetical preparations, for the CFIVE, 'the Family Catechism in the Life of the Eucharist', which replaced the rather static 'First (and maybe the only) Communion' experience, or the Marriage, Confirmation and pre-Baptismal encounters. Bishop Dermot Martin of Dublin often remarked that our people have been 'catechised' more than 'evangelised', and that was my own experience in those Retreat weekends with many their fruits.

One of the Irish authors who was available in Spanish was Jesuit, Fr Michael Paul Gallagher, whose apologetical works translated well, and were available for the searching Catholic adult. As, indeed, they were in Ireland at the time, and some of them fruit of his time lecturing in UCD, where he linked up the works of some of the great writers with the modern day challenges to our Faith (Dive Deeper).

Sense of Wonder

In his biography of Fr Michael Paul, the Jesuit Fr Tom Casey (Wisdom at the Crossroads) tells of some of those moments and debates. The Jesuit movement, as they outline it, from AH>HA>AH HA, for me indicates a person who is willing to move from the dogma or belief, to the analysis, to the 'Eureka moment', as we might visualise in the growing-up in a mature appreciation of the Eucharist and maintaining a Sense of Wonder eg, at the Bread of Life, which moves away beyond routine observance in to joy and privilege and fascination.

'Help my Unbelief' and 'Dive Deeper' were two of his titles that I can recall as stirring my own faith. One of his biographers wrote: "In 1972, Gallagher commenced full-time lecturing at UCD. There



The Desert (Atacama) - a biblical place of encounter

he observed growing student disillusionment with what many saw as the remote and authoritarian nature of Irish Catholicism. In an influential article published in 'The Furrow' in 1974, Gallagher posited the 'possible slow death of Irish Catholicism' ('Atheism Irish style', 184) and observed the weakening foundations of the Irish Church. He suggested widespread weekly Mass attendance obscured the underlying impoverishment of personal belief. To combat weak and tenuous observance by many practising Catholics, and the growing disengagement of younger people, Gallagher urged the Church to deploy pastoral creativity to enthuse the laity and engender new forms of faith. Interviewed in 1991, Gallagher asserted, "I expected a more drastic collapse. Yet, a more sinister collapse actually happened" ("The culture of atheism", 312). What would he say of today and the 'post-secular culture', I wonder?

For those of us involved in the Charismatic renewal in those days, the Assembly in Ballsbridge in 1979 is surely anchored in our 'faith archives' and convictions. Cardinal Suenens of Belgium was the leading Papal delegate. In one moment, he quoted St John of the Cross, "If you seek love, put love and you will find love"...surely a challenge for me and many others to carry away from that great occasion.

On a rather different vein were the commentaries of Fr Tom Hamill, from the Mount Oliver Institute, when he chose to challenge the rather superficial forms of belief of some of his listeners. Some of those commentaries were offered in private circulation on the Sunday Gospels coming through his native Armagh Diocese. Hardly the material for a normal Sunday sermon, they certainly served to 'stir things up' a bit.

I remember from the 'Faith and Mission' workshop in Dalgan, when he treated us to some of those speculations, like the on-going influence to this day of the Roman gods, like Eros, Mars, Epicurus, and found it hard to just argue away the profundity of his thesis. "You will make us lose our Faith, Father", some would say

during some of those sessions. To which he would reply: "It mustn't be much of a faith if I can shake in fifteen minutes what you have for those hundreds of years!"

In my own case, there is a sort of kaleidoscope of sentiments, impressions, shared-moments, which come together at this 'autumn of my life' and demand a re-appraisal. 'Sophie's Choice' was a wonderful way of visiting some of the works of the great thinkers of the centuries. It brought me round to recalling a lecture in UCD from the Existentialist, and Christian, Gabriel Marcel, and the contrast with Sartre, who is still a quoted figure. The lecturer of our time as Philosophy students for the priesthood gave us little encouragement to enter into that level of thinking!

My interest was palpable some years ago when I discovered in the bundle of Kike, a youth and student in Valparaiso, 'The dialogue of Pope Paul VI' with Jean Guittou, the French Philosopher who was an observer at the Second Vatican Council. Papal journeys were a novelty in those times and his visits to Manila and to the UNO were memorable, and were a subject of discussion between the two men there in the rooms of the Vatican at the time. The Great Vision of Isaiah Chapter 2, on the 'swords in to ploughshares' and a 'renewed peace', being the centre of his address to the UN Assembly (1965) took on a new meaning for me after reading those conversations.

Charity

One of the much more modern gems that I often refer to is on YouTube, that of the Sermon/

Homily of Archbishop Michael Curry on the occasion of the marriage of Prince Harry and Megan in Edinburgh in 2017. The whole doctrine of Charity as he outlined it, in such an animated and compelling manner, left his rather sedate audience spellbound, uncomfortable, shaken and self-conscious, as seen through the footage. His constant reference to Fr Teilhard de Chardin, left Catholics more than satisfied with the substance of his impressive and animated homily. Look it up on YouTube, and do yourself a great favour!

As the well-known Chilean sentence (above) "Yo soy catolico pero no fanatico!" says...we can choose to live a low-level 'survival-form' of Catholicism or try to fly just a bit higher. We can play the Ostrich (head in the ground!) and just soldier on with survival rations, hoping that will carry us through.

Spending a weekend in Milltown Park for a Tony de Mello experience, being a follower of his, brought me into strange company; Catholics who were seeking and yet not your normal Sunday Mass-goers. It was interesting on that Sunday morning to sit amongst the small groups and pick up on the search that seemed to mark their lives. Led by an American Jesuit, Fr Dolan, we visited again some of the narratives of De Mello, which I had often used in workshops, catechist meetings etc, and some appeared to find there a satisfaction that the normal Catholic narrative of the time did not offer those Dublin and Wicklow people of differing ages.

Dr Sheila Cassidy, known for her report ('The Courage to Believe'

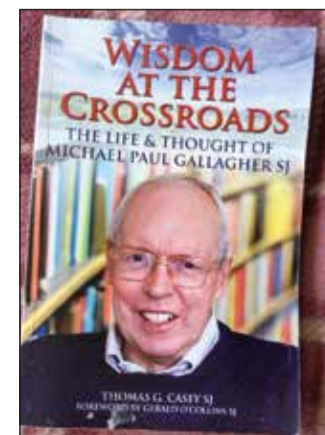
was, I think, the title of her early book then) on her experiences in the Chile of Pinochet, a victim of torture in the women's prison, 'Villa Grimaldi', wrote in later life a book called 'Good Friday People', largely based on her experiences in Hospice work. She quotes the singer/song writer, Sidney Carter: "There will be no Revolution in the life of those humble folk, only the Revelation of being loved by God" - a rough translation, I admit, but it certainly rang loudly and often in my pastoral life!

We are shaped by such moments, many, even most of the 'searching Christians' of our day, and it would be a pastoral concern for today, to find ways to bring together such seekers and enrich their often solitary existences.

A few years ago, the well-known writer in the Tablet, Fr Daniel O Leary, wrote his final articles and book, 'A Dance with Death', journaling his last days while fighting with cancer. I shared some of the passages with Fr Paddy McGoldrick, who had purchased and read the book, which I found hard to face. However, of his second-last book I was more than euphoric, 'The Astonishing Secret', so much so that I went to Veritas, packaged two copies and sent them off to two Columban Colleagues...and nada! Neither could share my enthusiasm, and I realised that I had picked the wrong persons, who had other and more immediate visions of the Universe and the Cosmos. The work is filled with quotations and reflections from people like Pope Francis ('Laudato Si'), De Chardin, C S Lewis, Ilya Delio, John O Donoghue, etc, and seems to me to offer an exciting new way to re-tell the stories of Creation, Redemption, Resurrection with a deep connection to all created reality. Some of the readers may be prompted by this to dip into it with their little toes!

Finally, from my own early 'Kaleidoscope' as it were, I recall that during a prolonged period as a teenager in the Mater Hospital in Dublin with a stubborn virus pneumonia, someone brought us out to the Dominican College, in nearby Eccles Street, to attend a college presentation of 'The Dream of Gerontius'. At 14 years of age, it hardly came across to me in all its depth. Yet, it opened up a window into Cardinal Newman, whose Institute and mission I was to know and learn about in early seminary life and UCD classes. Recently, during the visit of Pope Benedict to England for the Beatification of John Henry Newman, I was motivated to get into it all once more and to visit what may be a preview of my own move into eternity, as seen and sung in that work of Elgar and Newman.

Mystery does not 'evade us' and we can only open ourselves to our own personal 'Kaleidoscope'!



Eternal Echoes... Timeless Truth for today's hearts by Regina Deighan

The Four Marks of the Church: A Series

SOMETIMES repetition, or even complacency, causes us to miss important aspects of our faith. When responding at Mass, we can become so used to rattling off the appropriate responses that we can become desensitized to what we are actually saying and its underlying meaning.

Every Sunday, following the homily, we recite the Nicene Creed - a statement of belief developed by the Early Church Fathers (early bishops) during the ecumenical councils of Nicaea (325 AD) and Constantinople (381 AD) to combat heresy. The text of this prayer includes the words "I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church." While perhaps a small statement, it is key to salvation because this is the means which Christ provided us to enter Heaven - through His Church.

We know that Christ is God, who founded His Church and promised it would endure until the end of time. He gave specific qualities to this Church so it could be easily identified, namely those we list in the Creed: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Of all the Churches that exist, the Catholic Church is the only one that possesses all these qualities. Thus, we are faced with a serious moral choice: we must enter this Church through baptism and live according to its teachings because this is the instrument through which Christ provides His grace for us to be saved.

In this month's article, we continue to summarize each of these marks to better understand the words we are reciting, and to recognize that the precious faith

we have been given is the one that will guide us on the most direct path to Heaven.

The Church is Holy

At the end of the 'Bread of Life' discourse recorded in John 6, Jesus is faced with the reality that many of His disciples are not pleased with His teaching about the necessity to consume His Body and Blood, and they leave Him. He speaks about how He will give Himself as food and drink for our souls, and that the only way to be nourished on our way to Eternal Life is through His Body and Blood, what we call the 'Eucharist'.

After many disciples leave, He turns to His chosen Twelve and asks if they will leave Him too. Peter responds with, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." (Jn 6:68-69)

I have turned to Peter's response many times in my life when Church politics, despairing ecclesial situations, and untrustworthy Church leaders seem to plague every secular and Catholic news source. I remember even posting these words on my social media account in September of 2018, when the then-Cardinal McCarrick scandal broke and the subsequent Pennsylvania Report was released regarding clerical sexual abuse of minors in the dioceses of Pennsylvania.

I posted this quote from our first pope because, despite what appears to be turmoil in the Church, we find ourselves wrapped in the arms of a loving,

reliable, and, dare I say, holy Mother, the Church herself, who cares for our souls. How is this possible, though? How can the Church appear so broken and sinful and be called 'holy'? The answer is reassuring: constituted by Christ as His very own Mystical Body, she doesn't derive her holiness from the holiness of her members, nor is her holiness diminished by the sinfulness of her members. Thank God for that!

To call something 'holy' means it is constituted as sacred and set apart for sacred purposes by God, or by the mediation of His Church's apostolic ministers. Things that are holy should be treated differently. They are not part of normal, secular life, that which is holy should be recognizable in the way such things are revered.

The Church derives her holiness from her origin and founder, Jesus Christ. Everything remains rooted in Him. Jesus tells us in Matthew 16 that He is establishing a Church, so we know that the Church is constitutive of His mission. To trace the holiness of the Church, we can look at the life of her founder. While Jesus' holiness is not often a subject of debate, we can still establish a few examples. Christ's holiness is evident in His ability to perform miracles. We know from Old Testament examples that only those intimately connected to God are able to perform miracles. He also provides sound moral teaching, showing us a holy way to live. Further, Jesus demonstrates a consistent prayer life, rooted in

private prayer, teaching others to pray, and traditional Temple worship.

Through these examples and myriad more, it is undeniable that Jesus is a holy man, intimately connected to His Heavenly Father; in fact, we know that He is God-in-the-flesh, as we celebrate at the Annunciation and Christmas. Thus, we can look to Him as a model of holiness, but He is also the source of holiness; and we can trust that what He has established as His Mystical Body is also holy, even if individual members of that Body turn away from holiness through sin or reprehensible and repugnant behavior.

Instrument of Salvation

The Church herself maintains this holiness by being intimately connected to Christ through the life that He breathes into her, especially through the sacraments, divine worship, and the magisterium. Jesus left the sacraments and His teachings to His successors, entrusting them to His Church so that she could be His instrument of salvation on earth. The Church's purpose is to usher souls to Heaven, and she is able to do this through the sacraments and handing on (Lt. tradere; traditio: En. "Tradition") the teachings of Christ, which are, in and of themselves, the path to holiness.

While we might see corruption in Church leadership at times, Jesus does not promise us that everyone will be perfect (e.g. Judas was one of His Twelve); rather, He promises that the Church will never be overcome by the powers of Hell nor be



entirely thwarted by the sins of her members. Armed with virtuous practices and a desire for Heaven, the pilgrim ship of the Church carries souls to their final destination through the Sacraments, by passing on Christ's teachings of holiness, and by aiding her members in achieving this holiness through their devotion to Christ and the building up of the virtues, both natural and theological.

While the Church doesn't derive her holiness from human beings, we can see down through the ages countless examples of 'lived holiness' in men and women, canonized saints and ordinary folks alike, who attained holiness through worthy and efficacious reception of the sacraments and forming their lives and actions according to the teachings that Christ entrusted to His Church. We can look at the example of the saints - from Old Testament heroes to our more recent martyrs; there are a multitude of witnesses to the goal and achievement of a life lived in the arms of Holy Mother Church. We can look to these role models as examples of perseverance in difficult moments when we are up against the forces of evil and sin in our lives.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud

of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us..." (Heb 12:1). This cloud of witnesses stands as myriad examples to us of what it means to live through the grace and teaching of the Church, so as to win the race and receive the reward of Heaven, which is awaiting us. Even so, I want to reiterate that the Church does not gain her holiness from the saints; rather, they reflect her holiness, and thereby Christ the Head's holiness, by living according to her teachings.

It is a comforting fact to consider that this inalienable and intrinsic mark of the Church relies completely on Christ and not on our own strength or merits. We are all sinful, including those who lead our Church. It is important that we pray for each other, and especially our Church leaders who are called to an exceptional role in guiding others on the path to Heaven. In difficult moments of human frailty, let us find hope in Christ and in the embrace of a loving Mother, Holy Church, whom He founded, of whom He is the Head, and to whom He entrusted each of us on our journey toward personal holiness and to Heaven.

Schedule of Prayer in St. Eugene's Cathedral Ordinary Time

Monday to Friday 8.00am - Morning Mass 10.00am - Morning Mass 12.00noon - Angelus & Rosary 3.00pm - Divine Mercy Chaplet 7.00pm - 7.20pm - Confessions 7.30pm - Evening Mass followed by Rosary & Night Prayer	Tuesday after 10.00am Mass until 7.30pm Mass
Saturday 10.00am - Morning Mass (11.30 am - 1.00 pm) (5.30 pm - 6.00 pm) (7.00 pm - 7.20 pm) - Confessions 6.15pm - Vigil Mass 7.30pm - Vigil Mass	CONFESSIONS Saturday (11.30 am - 1.00 pm) (5.30 pm - 6.00 pm) (7.00 pm - 7.20 pm) Eves of Holy Days (5.30pm - 6.00pm) (7.00pm - 7.20pm) Monday - Friday 7.00pm - 7.20pm
Sunday 7.00am - Sunday Mass 9.30am - Sunday Mass 11.00am - Sunday Mass 12.30pm - Sunday Mass 7.00pm - Sunday Mass	DEVOTIONS Sunday 6.00pm



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION
Sunday 3.00pm - 6.00pm

I REJOICED WHEN I HEARD THEM SAY
LET US GO TO GOD'S HOUSE. PS 121

Catechism-YouCat June pilgrimage to Knock Shrine

DO you want to learn more about your Catholic faith? Do you want to know and share the Catechism of the Catholic Church with your children?

In parish faith communities throughout the country, religious education, catechism, prayer study, and adult faith formation have been named as essential for nurturing individuals' spiritual lives and fostering a deeper relationship with God.

There have been calls for formation and training programmes to encompass a deep understanding of the Gospel message, the Church's mission in the world and Catholic Social Teaching.*

YouCat (Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church) is a faith training programme of the Christian faith for anyone who wants to learn more about what Catholics believe. YouCat is not just for young people but for anyone who wants to explore the Christian faith.

To help you learn more about YouCat and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, you are invited to

the Catechism/YouCat Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine on Saturday, June 15.

This pilgrimage is an opportunity for anyone who wants to understand their faith more deeply in a practical way, and to get to know the faith treasure of the Catholic Church.

The day at Knock Shrine will include workshops and testimonies from many who lead YouCat and the Catechism programmes with individuals, groups and families in parishes across the country.

The pilgrimage Mass will be celebrated by the Papal Nuncio to Ireland, Most Rev Luis Mariano Montemayor, with homilist, Bishop of Ossory, Niall Coll. Choir music will be by the Mullingar Cathedral Choristers.

For further information contact Máirín Ní Shúilleabháin, National Co-Ordinator for Adult Catechism Studies in Ireland, on 00353 (0)87 795 0325.

(*Source: Towards October 2024 - Summary of Contributions from Dioceses and Groups of the Catholic Church in Ireland)

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
FAITH FORMATION FOR FAMILIES AND PARISHES

PILGRIMAGE TO THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF KNOCK
International Eucharistic and Marian Shrine
SATURDAY 15TH JUNE 2024

Celebrant of Holy Mass:
HIS EXCELLENCY MOST REV. LUIS MARIANO MONTEMAYOR
Papal Nuncio to Ireland

Homilist:
MOST REV. NIALL COLL
Bishop of Ossory

Choir/Music:
MULLINGAR CATHEDRAL CHORISTERS
Directed by: Dervilla Conlon

WORKSHOP - Spiritual Director, Facilitator and Students share the joy of exploring the Catechism/YouCat together
TIME 11.30 am - 12.45 pm
VENUE St. John's Rest and Care Centre

SCHEDULE OF CEREMONIES
2.00pm Outdoor Stations of the Cross and Rosary Procession
3.00pm Holy Mass in the Basilica with Anointing of the Sick
Eucharistic Adoration and Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the day

HELP KEEP THE FLAME OF FAITH ALIVE!
FAMILY - PARISH - WORKPLACE

- Organise a bus to help build community
- Plan a family picnic
- Spread the word in your home, parish or workplace

See www.catechism.ie for local contacts.
FURTHER DETAILS: Kate - catechismstudies.ie@gmail.com and Máirín 087 795 0325
EVENT ORGANISED BY: Catechism of the Catholic Church - Adult Studies, Steering Committee

Parish Post-its

Aghyaran

Blessing of Graves: The blessing of the graves will take place on Saturday, June 15, at 6 pm, with Mass followed by the blessing. (Note: There will be no 7.30 pm Mass on that evening).

Adoration: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Thursdays after 10 am Mass, and finishes at 12 noon.

Ardstraw East

(Newtownstewart)

YOUCAT Study: A one-hour interactive YOUCAT programme, for those aged 16+ years, takes place on Tuesdays in the Oratory, at 7 Main Street, Newtownstewart, starting at 6.30-7.30 pm. For further information contact 028 81661445 or email ardstraweast@derrydiocese.org. This may be of particular interest to those undertaking the Pope John Paul II Award.

Badoney Lower

(Gortin-Rouskey)

Adoration: Adoration takes place in St Patrick's Gortin, after the 12.30 pm Mass until 5 pm on Tuesdays, and in St Mary's Rouskey after 7.30 pm Mass on Wednesdays, when there will also be Confessions.

Badoney Upper

(Plumbridge-Cranagh)

Evening Prayer: Evening Prayer of the Liturgy of Hours (Vespers) takes place on Sundays at 7 pm in Sacred Heart Church, Plumbridge.

Ballinascreen

Blessing of Graves: The Blessing of the Graves in the parishes of Ballinascreen and Desertmartin will take place on the following dates: Saturday June 8, 6.30 pm, Mass in St Patrick's Keenaught followed by blessing of graves...Note earlier Mass time; Sunday June 9, 11 am - Mass in St Patrick's Church, Sixtowns followed by blessing of graves, 12 noon, Mass in St Eugene's Church, Moneyneena, followed by blessing of graves, 2 pm blessing of graves at St Columba's Straw, 3 pm blessing of graves at St Mary's, Coolcalm, and 4.30 pm - blessing of graves at Old Keenaught Church.

St Pio Mass: Mass in honour of St Pio of Pietrelcina is celebrated on the first Monday of each month at 7.30 pm, in Holy Rosary Church. The Novena prayers and Rosary are recited at 7.10 pm.

Ballymagroarty

Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in Holy Family Church, Ballymagroarty, every Sunday, from 1.30 - 6 pm.

Padre Pio Prayer: The Holy Family Padre Pio Prayer Group meets on the first Tuesday each month at Holy Family Chapel, Ballymagroarty, Derry. It starts with the Rosary at 6.45 pm, followed by Mass at 7.15pm, and Novena to St Pio directly afterwards. There will be a first class relic available for veneration.

Banagher

Adoration & Chaplet:

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Divine Mercy Chaplet take place in St Joseph's Church, Fincairn, on Fridays, 10-11 am.

Bellaghy

Cemetery Sunday: Graves in Bellaghy & Ballyscullion will be blessed on Sunday, July 7.

Community Café: The Open Door Community Café is open on the last Sunday of each month, from 11.30 am until 1 pm.

Buncrana

Adoration: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament now takes place in St Mary's Oratory every Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, beginning at 6 am and closing at 10 pm, and on Sundays 2-10 pm.

Rosary: The Rosary is prayed each weekday at 9.30 am in St Mary's Oratory, prior to 10 am Mass.

Guided Holy Hour: A Guided Holy Hour of Adoration in Honour of the Holy Face of Jesus takes place on Sundays, 6-7 pm in St Mary's Oratory. All welcome.

Rosary for Priests: Three Rosaries are prayed each Tuesday, between 1-2 pm, in the Oratory for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

AA: Alcoholics Anonymous Amazing Grace Group, Buncrana, has five meetings per week: Sundays - 8 pm, Tuesdays - 8.30 pm, Thursdays - 11.30 am, Fridays 8.30 pm, and Saturdays at 11.30 am. If you think you may have a problem with alcohol, please come along. Venue for all meetings is St Teresa's Room.

Al-Anon: The Al-Anon Group, for anyone whose life is or has been affected by someone else's drinking, meets in St Teresa's Room on Thursdays at 6.45 pm.

Burt, Inch & Fahan

Grave Blessings: The annual blessing of the graves will take place in St Mura's Parish Church on Sunday, June 9, at 11.30 am, in St Aengus' Church, Burt, on Sunday, June 16, at 3 pm, and in Our Lady of Lourdes, Inch, on Sunday, June 16, at 6 pm.

Adoration: Adoration in St

Mura's Parish Church, Fahan, takes place each Friday after 10 am Mass.

Cappagh

Tircur PS Closure Mass: Bishop Donal will be celebrating Mass in St Mary's, Knockmoyle, at 10 am on Sunday, June 16, to mark the closure of Tircur PS.

Eucharistic Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Wednesday from 8-9 pm in Christ the King, Strathroy, concluding with Night Prayer, and on Sunday from 3.30-6.30 pm, in Christ the King.

Rosary: The Rosary is prayed in St Mary's Church, Killyclogher, Monday-Saturday at 9.15 am, and in Corpus Christi, Mountfield every Thursday evening at 8 pm.

St Pio Novena Devotions: Novena devotions through the intercession of St Padre Pio take place on the first Wednesday of the month in Christ the King Church, Strathroy. Rosary at 7 pm, followed by Mass at 7.30 pm. Veneration and blessing with relic will be available after Mass.

Polish Mass: Mass is celebrated in Polish in the Church of Christ The King, Strathroy, Omagh, on the first and third Sunday's of each month at 10 am.

Carndonagh

Graves' Blessing: Cemetery Sunday will take place on Sunday, July 7.

Castleberg & Ardstraw West

Blessing of Graves: The Blessing of the Graves will take place in Castleberg on Saturday, June 22, at 6 pm, with Mass followed by the blessing; in Drumnabney on Sunday, June 23, at 12.30 pm, with Mass followed by the blessing; in Carncorn on Sunday, June 23, at 3 pm; and in Dregish on Sunday, June 23, at 5 pm, with Mass followed by the blessing (Note change in Mass time; there will be no 9.30 am Mass that morning).

Church Spire Fundraiser: An Ardstraw West & Castleberg Golf Classic will take place on Friday, June 28, at Newtownstewart Golf Club as a fundraiser for the Church Spire project in Castleberg. With over £3,000 in prizes, the fee is £160 per 4-person Team, any combination. Meal included. Timesheet Bookings can be made via the Golf Shop, tel 028 816 61466.

Adoration: Adoration takes place following 10 am Mass in St Patrick's Church on Fridays, until 12 noon.

Adoration: Adoration takes place following 10 am Mass in St Patrick's Church on Fridays, until 12 noon.

Claudy

Cemetery Blessing: The Blessing of the Graves takes

place after 11 am Mass in St Patrick's Church, Claudy, and at 3 pm at St Joseph's cemetery, Craighbane, on Sunday, June 30.

Adoration: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place from after the 10 am Mass until 8 pm on Tuesdays in St Patrick's Church, Claudy, and on Wednesdays in St Joseph's Church, Craighbane.

Living Word: There is a 'Living Word' gathering in the Upper Room in St Patrick's Church on Thursdays, 7-8.30 pm, for a time of reading and reflection on the Mass readings for the following Sunday. All welcome.

Children's Rosary: Children's Rosary continues in St Patrick's Church, Claudy on the first Saturday of each month, at 2 pm. All are welcome.

Clonleigh (Lifford)

Blessing of Graves: The annual Blessing of the Graves will take place on Monday, June 3, at 7 pm.

Coleraine

Rosary: Gathering for an understanding of the biblical origins and history of the Rosary prayers takes place on Wednesdays at 7.30 pm in the Parochial House, Chapelfield. Lough Derg: A Parish Pilgrimage to Lough Derg will take place on Saturday, September 7.

SJYP Meet: St Joseph's Young Priests' Society meets on the last Monday of each month at St John's Church Sacristy, after the 10 am morning Mass, and is open to everyone. New members are welcome at any of the meetings, which support praying for and assisting to support the vocation to priesthood and the religious life.

Exposition: St John's Church Monday Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Wednesdays in St John's Church, from 2-4 pm, with Rosary at 3:45 pm.

Creggan

Adoration: Exposition of Blessed Sacrament takes place in the Divine Mercy Chapel on Sundays from 1.30 pm - 6 pm, Mondays from 10.30 am - 7 pm, and Tuesday - Saturday from 10.30 am - 12 pm.

Bereavement Support: Parish Pastoral Bereavement Support. The Parish Pastoral Bereavement Support Group meets on the second Sunday of each month at 3 pm in the Parochial House community room. All are welcome to share a cup of tea, have a chat, remember and talk about their loved one and find support with others experiencing similar feelings. In addition to the group, there is an ongoing opportunity to speak on a one-to-one basis with an experienced grief counsellor. The contact number for more

information on the group or to arrange one to one support is 07907085178.

Vocations Prayer: There will be Vocations Holy Hour in St Mary's Church, Creggan, on the second Friday of each month, running from 8-9 pm. Polish Mass: Mass for the Polish community will be celebrated at 9.30 am every second and fourth Sunday of the month in the Divine Mercy Chapel, at St Mary's Church.

Culdaff

Ecumenical Songs of Praise: A night of Ecumenical Songs of Praise will take place in Bocan Church, Culdaff, on Sunday, June 30, at 6 pm. Music and songs will be performed by St Marys Church Choir, Bocan, Patsy Cavanagh, Musical Memories Choir, St Columba's Choir, Ballinacree, Joanne & Finbar, Inishowen Methodist Choir, Danny McCarron, Student Choir, Moville Community College, Michael Cavanagh, Hillhead, Moville Presbyterian Church Choir, Moville Upper & Lower, Donagh, Cloncha and Culdaff.

Graves' Blessing: Blessing of Graves will take place on July 7, at 6 pm, and Mass for the Dead of the Parish will take place on November 24.

Desertmartin

Silver Jubilee: Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Donal in St Patrick's Church, Keenaught, on Saturday, July 6, at 7 pm, to mark Fr Dermot McGirr's Silver Jubilee of ordination.

Knit & Natter: Knit & Natter classes take place in Knocknagin Hall on Tuesdays at 7.30 pm. Bring your own project or you can help with knitting for local charities.

Donagheady

(Aughabrack & Dunamanagh)

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place in St Patrick's Church after 10 am Mass on Saturdays, until 12 noon, and on Mondays from 7-8 pm.

Drumquin

Blessing of Graves: The Blessing of the Graves will take place on Saturday, June 29, at 6 pm, with Mass followed by the blessing.

Rosary: The Rosary is prayed each Tuesday morning at 10 am in St Patrick's Church, Drumquin.

Eucharistic Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Wednesdays from 6 pm - Mass at 7.30 pm.

Drumragh (Omagh)

125 Years Celebration: Following the celebration of Masses by Bishop Donal and Archbishop Eamon Martin to



mark the 125th anniversary of Sacred Heart Church, and a Triduum of Prayer on June 4, 5 and 6, on the lead up to the Feast of the Sacred Heart, the Bishop of Dublin will be celebrating Mass in Sacred Heart Church on June 7 Feast, to mark the 125th anniversary of the opening of the building.

Prayer Group: The Charismatic Prayer Group meetings take place in The Pastoral Centre on Thursday evenings, with Rosary at 7.30 pm and prayer meeting at 8 pm. All welcome to come and pray.

Legion of Mary: The Legion of Mary Men's meetings take place on the first, second and last Monday, and third Tuesday of each month at 7.30 pm, in St Vincent's Hall (beneath Sacred Heart Church Sacristy). Contact: Sean on 07730671370.

Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in Sacred Heart Church on Wednesdays following morning Mass until 5.30 pm.

Rosary of Reparation: On the first Saturday of each month, a Rosary of Reparation will be prayed at 1pm on Main Street, Omagh. All welcome to join.

Dungiven

HOPE Summer Camp: The Dungiven HOPE Summer Camp will run from Monday, July 29 to Friday, August 2. Cost £10 per attendee Camp registration will open online Wednesday, June 5 at 6 pm. See HOPE Dungiven Parish Summer Camp Facebook page for more details or contact a committee member.

Prayer Group: The St Canice's Charismatic Prayer Group meets each Thursday at 7 pm, in the Parish Committee Room, and invites anyone who wishes to deepen their faith through shared Scripture, Prayer and Praise.

St Pio Healing Mass: A St Pio Healing Mass is celebrated monthly, on the first Tuesday, in St Patrick's Church at 7 pm.

Errigal

First Saturdays: The Five First Saturdays devotion asked for at Fatima by Our Lady is underway in the parish, is underway, continuing on June 1 in Glenullin, July 6 in Ballerin, and August 3 in Glenullin. There will be a period of Adoration from 5-5.40 pm and during this time Confessions will be

available. During Adoration, we will keep Our Lady company for 15 minutes while meditating on the mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Rosary will begin at 5.40 pm and the Vigil Mass will follow at 6 pm, finishing with the Fatima Prayers.

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Mondays after the morning Mass in St Mary's Church, Ballerin, until 2.30 pm.

Rosary & Chaplet: The Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet are prayed in St Joseph's Church, Glenullin, every Wednesday evening at 6.30 pm.

Graves Blessing: The Blessing of the Graves will take place at St Mary's Church, Ballerin, on Sunday, June 2, at 2 pm, and at St Joseph's Church, Glenullin, on Sunday, June 9, at 12.30 pm.

Fahan

Graves' Blessing: The annual blessing of the graves will take place at St Mura's Parish Church on Sunday, June 9, at 11.30 am, St Aengus' Church, Burt, on Sunday, June 16, at 3 pm, and Our Lady of Lourdes, Inch, on Sunday, June 16, at 6 pm.

Adoration: Adoration takes place in St Mura's Parish Church each Friday after the 10 am Mass.

Faughanvale

Alpha Course: The three local churches - St Canice's, Star of the Sea and Faughanvale Presbyterian - are running an Alpha Course at the Faughanvale Community Project, beside the Vale Centre, Greysteel, on Wednesdays at 7.30 pm. Alpha is a series of group conversations that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith in an open, friendly environment. What is faith really all about? etc. All welcome.

Rosary: The Rosary is prayed every Friday at 7 pm in Star of the Sea Church.

Greencastle

Sacred Heart: Bishop Donal will be celebrating Mass at 7.30 pm to mark the 350th anniversary of revelations regarding the Sacred Heart.

Continued on p29

Divine Mercy: The Divine Mercy Chaplet is prayed on the First Tuesday of every month at 12.15 pm before Mass in St Patrick's Church, Greencastle.

Adoration: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in St Patrick's Church after 7.30 pm Mass on Mondays, with Confessions.

Stations of the Cross: The Stations of the Cross are prayed after 7.30 pm Mass on Fridays in St Patrick's, Greencastle.

Greenlough

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place in St Oliver Plunkett's Church from 9 am-5 pm on Thursdays.

Cemetery Sunday: Cemetery Sunday will take place on July 14.

Iskaheen, Drung & Muff

Blessing of Graves: The Blessing of the Graves will take place in Drung on Sunday, July 28, at 3 pm, in Muff on Sunday, August 11, at 3 pm, and in Iskaheen on Sunday, August 11, at 5 pm.

Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Tuesdays after 10 am Mass until 2 pm in St Patrick's Church, Iskaheen.

Divine Mercy: Divine Mercy Devotions take place on Wednesdays after 10 am Mass in Sacred Heart Church, Muff. St Peregrine: The St Peregrine Novena Prayer and veneration of relic takes place on the first Friday of each month, alternating between the three churches.

Kilrea

Stations of the Cross: The Stations of the Cross are prayed on Sundays in St Anne's Oratory at 7 pm, with Confessions beforehand from 6.30-6.50 pm.

SVP: The St Vincent de Paul Thrift Shop is open on Saturdays from 10 am -1pm.

Cemetery Sunday: The Blessing of Graves will take place at St Mary's Church, Craigavole, on Sunday, June

23, at 1pm, and at St Mary's Church, Drumagarnier, on Sunday, June 23, at 2.30 pm.

Killygordon

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place in St Patrick's Church, Crossroads, every Thursday after 9.15 am Mass.

Lavey

Cemetery Sunday: The annual Cemetery Sunday Mass will take place on June 30 at 11 o'clock.

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Fridays after 9.15 am Mass Adoration until 5 pm.

Leckpatrick

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Wednesdays after 10 am Mass until 5.30 pm.

Limavady

Grave Blessing: The Blessing of Graves will take place at: Roemill at 6 pm on Sunday, June 2; Christ the King at 6 pm on Sunday, June 9; St Mary's at 6 pm on Sunday, June 23; and St Finlough's at 3 pm Sunday, June 30.

Children's Prayer: A Children's Prayer Group is held in the Drummond Hotel, Ballykelly, on the First Saturday of every month, from 2.30-3.30 pm. All welcome. Contact: Kathy on 07538749627.

Maghera

Pray & Play: The Maghera Parish Pray and Play for Parents, Grandparents & Tots (three years old and younger) meets every Friday, in the Fairhill Youth Centre, after the 10 am Mass. It runs from 10.30 am until 12 noon.

Melmount

Exposition: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in the church on Mondays after 10 am Mass until 6 pm. During May, Exposition will be dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary for World Peace. The Rosary will be recited prior to closure of Adoration

at approximately 5.40 pm. Everyone is welcome.

Moville

Stations of the Cross: The Stations of the Cross are prayed after 10 am Mass on Fridays.

Prayer: The Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet will be recited in St Pius X Church, Moville, at 7.30 pm every day, from Sunday - Friday.

Adoration: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Mondays, from 2-9 pm, and Wednesdays, 6-9 pm, in St Pius X Church.

Graveyard Sunday: The Blessing of the Graves will take place in Ballybrack on Sunday, July 7, and in Ballinacrae on Sunday, July 14.

Sion Mills

Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Fridays, from 10 am until Mass at 11 am, and continues after Mass until 7 pm.

Legion of Mary: The Legion of Mary meets in the Green Room, behind the church, each Monday evening at 7.30 pm. This is open not only to members of the Legion but to anyone interested in joining. Anyone can come along to the start of the meeting for the Rosary.

Steelstown & Culmore

Lectio Divina: Lectio Divina is a way of praying the Scriptures together and takes place every Wednesday after 10 am Mass, in the Parish Conference Room. All welcome.

Adoration: Spend some quiet time before the Lord Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament each Sunday, from 6-7 pm. Adoration also continues each Friday after 10 am Mass until 6.50 pm.

Stations of the Cross: Come along to reflect on the Way of the Cross on Fridays at 7.30 pm.

Strabane (Camus)

Photographic Competition: Church of the Immaculate Conception, Strabane is

running a photographic competition for all amateur photographers. Original photographs can be of any aspect of the Church, inside or outside, and emailed to churchphotos@camusheritage.com. Prize winners will be announced on Friday, June 7. For more information see the Church of the Immaculate Conception Facebook page.

Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place all day in the Adoration Chapel (Oasis of Peace), which is situated at the back of the Church.

Prayer Group: The Contemplative Prayer Group meets on Mondays at 8 pm in the Prayer Room in the Parochial House. All welcome. Entry by Parish Priest's front door.

SJYP Society: The St John Vianney branch of the St Joseph's Young Priests' Society (the three combined Strabane parishes) meets on the first Tuesday of the month, excluding January, July and August, with Rosary in the church after 10 am Mass and continues in St Patrick's Hall. More people are encouraged to join in this prayer for new students to join the priesthood. The Society assists Irish and overseas student. Please contact Margaret Harte on 028 71 883159.

Padre Pio Mass: The Padre Pio Mass takes place in the Church on the first Wednesday of the month at 7 pm, with Rosary beforehand at 6.40 pm.

Grotto Rosary: The Rosary is recited at the Grotto on the last Sunday of each month. Everyone welcome.

Templemore - St Eugene's

Eucharistic Adoration: Every Sunday, there is Eucharistic Adoration from 3-6 pm and every Tuesday from 10.30 am until 7.20 pm.

Matt Talbott Mass: The Matt Talbot, Freedom from addiction Mass takes place on the first Monday of each month at 7.30 pm in St

Eugene's Cathedral.

Cathedral Club: The Cathedral Club meets after the 10 am Mass each Thursday in the Cathedral Hall. Everyone is welcome to this parish social group. Refreshments will be served.

Knock Pilgrimage: St Eugene's Cathedral Parish Pilgrimage to Knock takes place on Thursday, June 13. Price is £45, which includes transport and meals. As pre booking is required, please contact Anne Marie Hickey on amhickey@derrydiocese.org or phone the Parish Office on 028 71262894 for a Booking Form.

Fatima Pilgrimage: St Eugene's Cathedral Pilgrimage to Fatima will take place from October 19-24. The cost is £770 per person sharing, with a single room supplement of £150 (subject to availability). For more information contact Anne Marie Hickey on amhickey@derrydiocese.org or 'phone the Parish Office on 048 71262894.

Templemore - Long Tower

St Columba Feast: Bishop Donal will celebrate the annual St Columba Mass at 12 noon on Sunday, June 9, followed by the procession to the well.

Three Patrons

St Brigid's PS 50th: Mass to mark the 50th anniversary of St Brigid's PS, Carnhill, will be celebrated by Bishop Donal at 2 pm on Wednesday, June 19, in St Brigid's Church.

Men's Bible Study: Men's Bible Study takes place in the Upper Room in St Brigid's Chapel, Carnhill, on Tuesdays at 7.30 pm.

God Club: God Club is an opportunity for 16-30 year olds to learn together about their faith. It takes place in St Pio House, in the grounds of St Joseph's Church, Galliagh, on Sundays from 7.30-9 pm on Sundays.

Family/Youth Mass: A Family/Youth Mass is celebrated every Sunday

at 6.30 pm in St Joseph's Church, Galliagh. Everyone is welcome.

Be Still: Be Still is a Men's Prayer and Friendship Group that meets every Thursday night from 8-9.15 pm in Our Lady's Chapel, within St Joseph's Church building, Galliagh. Its mission as a group is to provide a safe place where men can pray and share in a confidential and supportive setting. All men are welcome.

Holy Hour: A Holy Hour for the Unborn & Expectant Mothers takes place on Thursdays at 7 pm in Our Lady's Chapel, St Joseph's Church, Galliagh. All welcome.

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place in Our Lady's Chapel, St Joseph's Church, Galliagh, on Mondays after 11 am Mass, concluding with a Youth 2000 Holy Hour from 7-8 pm. It also takes place seven days a week in the Adoration Room in St Brigid's Church, Carnhill, from 8 am until 6 pm, and in St Patrick's Church, Pennyburn, on Wednesdays from 10.45 am - 6.45 pm.

First Saturday: On the First Saturday of each month, after 11 am Mass in St Brigid's Church, Carnhill, there is Adoration and Rosary, ending with Divine Mercy and Benediction at 3 pm.

Living Disciples: Living Disciples meet on Tuesdays at 7.30 pm in St Pio House, St Joseph's Church grounds, for Praise & Worship, friendship and a cup of tea. All welcome.

Holy Face Devotions: Devotions to the Holy Face of Jesus takes place every Tuesday after 11 am Mass in Our Lady's Chapel, St Joseph's Church, Galliagh. All welcome

St Pio Mass: A monthly Mass in honour of St Pio takes place on the first Monday at 7 pm in St Patrick's Church, Pennyburn.

Healing Night: A Healing Night with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal takes place monthly on the first Friday, from 7-10 pm, in St Joseph's Church, Galliagh.

Everyone welcome.

Holy Souls Prayer: Praying for the Holy Souls, Our Lady of Montligeon Prayer Group meets on Wednesdays after 9.15 am Mass in the room adjacent to St Brigid's Parochial House, Carnhill, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

Vocations Society: The Vocations Society of St Joseph hold monthly meetings on First Fridays after 10 am Mass, in the Emmaus Room, Pennyburn. New members welcome.

Women's Laugh & Craft: The Women's Laugh & Craft Group meets every Monday from 7.30 -9 pm in the Kildare Room, St Brigid's, Carnhill. £3 per class. Spaces limited.

Urney & Castlefinn

Blessing of Graves: Blessing of Graves will take place at Castlefinn on Tuesday, June 11 after 7 pm Mass in St Mary's Church, and at Doneyloop on Thursday, June 13, after 7 pm Mass in St Columba's Church.

First Saturdays: The First Saturday Devotion and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will take place in St Columba's Church, Doneyloop, from 12 noon until 1 pm on the First Saturday of each month.

Adoration: Weekly Eucharistic Adoration takes place in St Anthony's Chapel every Tuesday, from 12 noon until 8 pm.

Cenacle: The Cenacle for Priests takes place every Tuesday in St Anthony's Chapel immediately after the 7 pm Mass.

Waterside & Strathfoyle

Eucharistic Adoration: There is Eucharistic Adoration in St Oliver Plunkett Church, Strathfoyle, on Monday mornings, and on Wednesday evenings from 7-9 pm. All welcome.

Lectio Divina: Reflect on the Scriptures with Lectio Divina in the side chapel in St Columba's Church, Chapel Road, on Thursday nights, starting at 8 pm.

...other Diary Dates

Silent Retreat: There will be a Silent Retreat, with the theme 'If you but knew the gift of God', preached by Fr Kilian Byrne, Foyer of Charity, in Carmelite Retreat Centre, Termonbacca, Derry from June 3-9. The cost is £350 full board. To book contact: Helen 028 86 1678027 or email hellywilliams@gmail.com. See website: www.foyer-ofcharity.ie.

City Cemetery Service: The annual Service of Intercession for the Dead will take place in the City Cemetery on Sunday, 30 June, at 3 pm.

LIFE Camp 2024 - Registration is open for LIFE Camp 2024. The Camp takes place in St Mary's College, Northland Road, Derry City, and is for all pupils currently in P3-7. Week 1 runs from July 1-5 and Week 2 from July 8-12. The cost for each week is £40. To register visit <http://www.klubfunder.com/Clubs/Life%20Summer%20Camp>

St Anthony Day Retreat: On the Feast of St Anthony, June 13, there will be a day of prayer and reflection in Termonbacca from 10 am- 4 pm. For further information or booking call

028 71262512. £20 cost includes light lunch.

Ladies' Bible Study: Ladies interested in coming to a deeper understanding of scripture are welcome to come along to the Ladies' Bible Study in Termonbacca, Derry, every Tuesday evening from 8:30-9:30 pm. It is led by Fr Stephen Quinn ocd, who is currently working through the Gospel of Mark, which is the Gospel for Mass for this year. This Bible Study is open to all women who are interested in coming along. There is no need to book, you can simply show up. For further information contact Termonbacca on 028

71 262512.

Faith Talks: The monthly talks by Fr Cajetak Apeh ocd on different elements of the Catholic faith will continue in the Carmelite Retreat Centre, Termonbacca, with the next on Thursday, June 13, from 7.30-8.30 pm. The talks are aimed at leading the participants towards personal development through meditative prayer and convivial discussions of the Church doctrines.

The remaining themes for 2024 are: June 13 - The role of Authority in the Church; July 18 - The Role of the Lay Faithful in the Church.

These nights are open to

everyone aged 18 and above who has an interest in growing more in their personal faith development. Anyone who wishes to know more can speak to Fr Cajetan by calling 028 71 262512 or 07933123633.

Servant Sisters: The Sisters of the Home of the Mother are hosting weekly formation meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 pm, in the Parochial House at Cross, Killygordon, (F93PN0X), and the weekly Holy Hours on Thursdays at 7 pm.

Holy Souls Prayer: Under The Gaze of Our Lady of Montligeon, the Holy Souls of Purgatory Prayer Meeting

takes place on Wednesdays after 9.15 am Mass in the room adjacent to St Brigid's Parochial House, Carnhill, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. It also takes place on the third Monday of each month in Termonbacca, with prayers especially for deceased priests and religious. All welcome.

Polish Mass: Mass for the Polish community is celebrated in the Church of Christ The King, Strathroy, Omagh, on the first and third Sunday's of each month at 10 am, and at 9.30 am every second and fourth Sunday in the Divine Mercy Chapel, at St Mary's Church, Creggan, in Derry

City.

Stations of Cross: On the First Friday of each month, after 10 am Mass in St Eugene's, there is a silent procession from the Cathedral to St Columba's Church, Long Tower, meditating on the Stations of the Cross.

Coastal Rosary: Rosary on the Coast for world peace and the protection of unborn babies takes place at Lisfannon Beach, Buncrana, on the first Sunday of every month at 3 pm, and at Benone Strand on the third Sunday of every month, at 3 pm.

Love is a decision *Fr Johnny Doherty CSsR*



Fr Johnny Doherty CSsR

FOR most of my life as a priest, I have worked very closely with married couples. This began for me in the 1970s, when I was involved with Marriage Encounter. I was in St Clement's Retreat House, in Belfast, at the time and we were looking for some way of helping couples to prepare for Marriage, and also to build up their marriages afterwards. Marriage Encounter provided all that we were looking for – and much more.

Being close to married couples on their journey towards one another in love has given me a wonderful experience of the Church alive in the Sacrament of Marriage.

Love is a decision

One of the key concepts of Marriage Encounter is that statement: Love is a decision. That is one of those ideas that turns everything upside down. It helps us to see things very differently and with much more hope.

It is generally thought that love is a feeling. And, of course, there are many feelings involved in it. There

is attraction, desire, affection, joy, expectation, and so on. If those were not there married love would never get started.

However, feelings change and they change often for all kinds of reasons. In every relationship, there will be times of disillusionment, of loneliness, of anger, of dislike even. If love is to be guided only by feelings it would not last very long. That is what happens in short-term relationships.

But, in a married relationship, there is more involved – there is a commitment to one another 'all the days of my life'. Only the decision to love can bring a couple, and at times a family and even a community, through the difficult times and restore the joy of love.

What does this mean?

'Love is a decision' does not mean that a person just grits their teeth and puts up with things as they are, especially if they are going wrong. No! If something is wrong in a relationship like marriage, it is vital that the couple sorts it out as quickly as possible. They can do this by talking to each other about the situation and looking for a way of making things better. Sometimes, this will mean getting the assistance of a third party, like a counsellor. But the couple can often do it themselves.

The decision to love is about always looking at what is best for the other person and for the couple's life together, and deciding for that even when it goes against how one feels. It means making decisions, not only when there is a problem; but it is about building the quality of life together so that problems, if and when, they come, can be sorted immediately.

Decide to make time for one another:

The decision to love means

making good, regular, creative time for one another, so that love can be strengthened, or renewed, or celebrated. It means deciding to be affectionate in words and in actions every day, even though the couple may have gotten into a rut in their lives when this is not their practice.

Decide to be grateful and affirming:

It means thanking each other regularly for their life together, rather than taking so much for granted. It means going out of their way to acknowledge, to praise, to affirm the other person's goodness, instead of criticism and putting each other down, which can be a big part in a couple's relationship.

Decide to forgive:

The decision to love means readily forgiving one another when there is an argument or dispute. The Scripture tells us: 'Never let the sun go down on your anger'. It does not say you should never be angry. That would be impossible. But it does say that you need to get over the anger and back into the freedom of love very quickly. In a love relationship like marriage and family, we have no right to get up today with yesterday's anger. Unfortunately, people can let things fester for days or weeks, or months – and even for years sometimes. The result is misery for everyone, especially for the person who harbours the anger.

Decide to pray together:

Consider the following statistics as quoted in 'For Better & For Ever' (p.130), by Fr Robert A Ruhnke, CSsR...

- The current divorce rate in the US is about 50%
- Of those couples who worship together each Sunday, the divorce rate is 3.3%
- Of those couples who also pray

regularly together in their home, the divorce rate is 0.3%

This is well worth thinking about! If these statistics point to a truth about marriage then it would seem not only sensible, but essential for couples to decide for it as important for their love relationship.

Not only about marriage

I have spent a lot of time in this article talking about marriage, and how to build marriage up into a powerful way of life that will bring great benefits to couples and families. But this is not only about marriage. The principles here are valid for everything that is important in human life and growth.

Family life:

Most of what is said here about marriage is also valid first of all for family life. All the same decisions that are made for marriage have to be made for the success of family life, and the development of the various relationships there.

If children are to grow up to be rounded persons, they need to experience the affection of their parents, the affirmation of their parents, the forgiveness of their parents. And, because in our Catholic tradition we honour the family as the Domestic Church, they need to experience the prayer of their parents with them and for them.

All of this can only happen if parents are willing to give good, regular, creative time to their children, both individually and as a family. All of that involves a whole series of decisions to love, otherwise it will never happen. Or if it does, it will be in a very haphazard way.

Of course, parents also need the support of other families and of the community of the parish as they give themselves to rearing

their children in life and in faith.

Pro-choice/Pro-life:

For many years now there has been the dispute about being pro-choice or pro-life. And this is most often in relation to the issue of abortion.

The reality is that, as human beings, we are constantly having to face choices. Within all of these choices, we have to constantly make decisions that favour one choice over another, or sometimes several others. The big question is always: What is the motivation for our decisions about particular issues?

For us, as Christians, it is very clear that the motivation of all our decisions has to be that of love. When Jesus was asked about the first commandment, He, without hesitation, named it as love of God with our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole mind, our whole strength. And then, He added: The second is like it: You must love your neighbour as yourself.

In a real way, that is the main thing that we bring to the world in which we live. Love is the only way that can bring success to human living. Love has to be the motivation for all our decisions, at every level. And love is the power that must drive our decision-making.

Abortion; Assisted suicide; war etc:

These very serious social issues all have one thing in common – violence. I find it very distressing when I hear people so easily discussing abortion today, as if the unborn are only, as many of them say, a lump of tissues.

I can understand the difficulty that people have when faced with an unwanted pregnancy. I have met many women like this and accompanied them in their anxiety and fear. But, I cannot

understand a society that refuses to support these women and parents, so that they can bring up their children safely. Instead, there is more and more a pressure to get rid of the problem by getting rid of the baby.

Elderly:

Much the same can be said of the care of the elderly. Instead of society being willing to care for the elderly properly, they are now seeing assisted suicide/euthanasia as the way of solving the problem. Of course, it is being dressed in clothes of compassion and extreme examples are used to justify it. But already, in some countries, this is being proposed for the homeless, for the poor, for emigrants, etc.

War:

Most, if not all, of us are horrified at the daily pictures of Gaza, Ukraine, and other countries of the world that are being ravaged by war. Particularly heartbreaking is the number of children that are being killed. Yet, there is no chance of a breakthrough in any of these places until we can clear from our hearts the awful instinct to get rid of the people and we get rid of the problem. This can never work, as all that is happening in Gaza or in Ukraine is another generation is being formed to continue the conflicts.

Conclusion

During this month of May, we, as Catholics, honour Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother of Perpetual Help. We need to pray as we place all babies in the womb, all married couples, all families, all parish communities and other faith communities, all of our elderly, all countries suffering from war and violence, under her mantle, so that she may help us to bring peace and joy and love to our world through the decisions we make to love one another.

Legion of Mary promoting Rosary in the home

THE Legion of Mary has started a campaign to promote the praying of the Rosary in people's homes, in response to finding that more people are seeing the benefits of praying the Rosary either on their own, as a family or part of a prayer group.

"This prayer has sustained us in the most difficult of times," remarked Waterside Legionary, Tom McDermott, "When we were prevented from any kind of Catholic worship in the past, the Rosary was the prayer of the Faithful."

He added: "We are hoping to help specific groups of people, including those recently bereaved, the unemployed, mothers-to-be, those struggling with depression or of any kind of illness, the lonely, or just people who need a

little help with their faith.

"Anyone who would like help to start saying the Rosary, or know someone that the Legion of Mary could help, please let us know. We will come to your home at a time that suits you and help get you started. We will bring all you need and explain the Rosary.

"When asked who she was, Our Lady said at Fatima: 'I am the Lady of the Rosary'. Mary promises great things for those who say her Rosary," remarked Tom, "it would be our privilege to help you get started on your Rosary journey."

If you would like help to get started on your own, with your family, or with a prayer group, you can contact 07521500665 and a Legion member will get back to you.

Carmelite Book Club

ON Thursday, June 13, at 7.30 pm the Carmelite Book Club will meet again in Termonbacca Retreat Centre.

The purpose of the Book Club is to explore learning friendship with Christ through the example of the Carmelite Saints. The Carmelite vocation is committed to a life of 'allegiance to Jesus Christ', as a Friend and Companion along the way.

Through the reading and

discussion of various books about, or by, the Carmelite Saints, we hope to get encouragement and growth in our own spiritual journey today.

The current book is 'The Life of Teresa of Avila'.

Everyone is welcome to come along and join us. For further information contact Aoife on 028 71262512, or email: termonbaccaderry@gmail.com

Termonbacca Derry

Reading with the Carmelite Saints

Join us as we explore learning friendship with Christ through the example of the Carmelite Saints on Thursday 13th June 2024 at 7:30pm Termonbacca Carmelite Retreat Centre, Derry

Ladies' Bible Study

ON Tuesday, June 11, Fr Stephen Quinn ocd will resume the Ladies' Bible study course.

The group meets every Tuesday from 8.30-9.30 pm and will look at St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians.

This group is open to all women

who wish to come along and learn more about the scriptures. There is no need to book, you can simply show up.

For further information can contact Termonbacca on 028 71262512.

Ladies Bible Study

Led by Fr Stephen Quinn o.c.d.

Termonbacca Carmelite Retreat Centre, Derry

Tuesdays 8:30-9:30pm

Children's Catechism Club - C3

by Veronica Harley

HELLO children. Welcome to the month of May. This month is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. We offer up special prayers and devotion to Our Lady, who always leads us to Jesus. Some traditional customs show our love for Mary, like the making of a May Altar. A statue of Mary is placed on a table and surrounded by fresh flowers. Sometimes, there is a little ceremony to crown the statue with flowers to honour Her as the Queen of Heaven.



We also honour Mary on two beautiful feast days during May. On May 13, we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima. In 1917, the Blessed Virgin appeared to three young children in Fatima and called for prayer and conversion in the world. The Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is on May 31. On this day, we remember how Mary, while carrying her Son Jesus within her, went to visit her cousin Elizabeth to offer her charitable assistance and to tell of God's great mercy.

We continue to celebrate the Easter season and, with Spring upon us blossoming new life, we wait eagerly for the marvellous Feast of Pentecost, the Descent of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Church. During this month, we will also celebrate the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven and Trinity Sunday. The month of May is bursting with Christian joy.

The Ascension of Jesus (CCC 659)

"Then He took them out as far as the outskirts of Bethany, and raising His hands He blessed them. Now as He blessed them, He withdrew from them and was carried up to Heaven" (Luke 29:50).

The Ascension of Jesus is a mystery



of faith. It always falls 40 days after Easter, which is a Thursday, but since 1997, the Irish Church celebrates the Feast on the following Sunday. The word 'Ascension' means to go up and, on this day, we remember how the earthly body of Jesus was taken up into Heaven. Jesus was with His disciples on the Mount of Olives outside Jerusalem. He told them that soon they would receive the power of the Holy Spirit and to go to preach the Good News of His Resurrection to the whole world. After Jesus ascended, two angels appeared and promised that one day Jesus would return (Acts 1:11).

Saints of the Month

St James and St Philip, Apostles - May 3

St Matthias - May 14

St Philip Neri - May 26

St Augustine of Canterbury - May 27



Pentecost

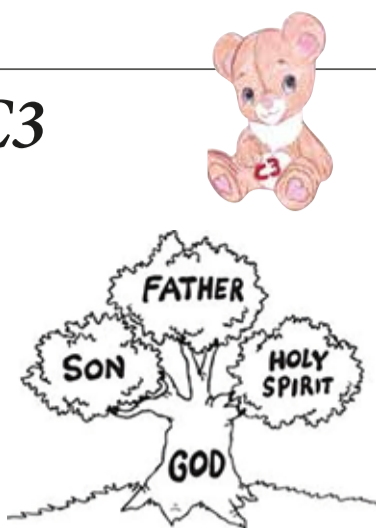
Pentecost is celebrated 50 days, or the seventh Sunday, after the Resurrection of Jesus. It concludes the Easter season. The word 'Pentecost' means 50 and marks the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles. For this reason, it is often called 'the birthday of the Church' (CCC 1076).

On Pentecost Day, Mary and the disciples were in the upper room in a house in Jerusalem. While they prayed together, a strong wind came up with a loud noise and flames of fire came to rest above the heads of the apostles. Immediately they were inspired, and filled with courage and strength to go and spread the Word of God. On that first Pentecost Sunday, over 3,000 people were converted and baptised.

Trinity Sunday

Trinity Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday after Pentecost and lasts only one day, which is symbolic of the unity of the Trinity.

On this day, we remember the truth that God is made up of the Father, the Son (Jesus) and the Holy



Spirit. It is a central mystery of our faith (CCC 234), and a little difficult to understand that there can be one God yet three persons to God.

The Bible reveals that there is only one God but that this God is made up of three parts, The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The word that we use to describe this 'three-in-one' God is 'Trinity'. This word is made up of the word 'Tri', which means three, and the word 'unity', which means one, or being unified together.



Our Lady of Fatima

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, appeared six times to three shepherd children - Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta. Between May 13 and October 13, 1917, She came to the little village of Fatima in Portugal. Our Lady brought a special message from God for everyone to hear. She promised that the world would be at peace and many souls would go to Heaven, if people listened to Her



requests and obeyed them. Her three requests were penance, prayer and devotion to Her Immaculate Heart.

Our Lady told the three children that a great sign from Heaven would happen, so that everyone would believe. This miracle took place in Fatima on October 13, 1917, and was witnessed by 70,000 people.

It is called the Miracle of the sun. Everyone could stare perfectly at the sun without blinking or hurting their eyes. The sun rotated in the sky,

became large and small, drew close to the people and then far away from them. Everyone who saw this said that the sun was dancing. It was an extraordinary event that even made unbelievers fall to their knees and beg God for forgiveness.

The message Our Lady brought to Fatima still applies today. She asked that everyone should pray the Rosary every day to overcome evil in the world. Centuries earlier, Our Blessed Mother Mary had given us the Rosary, a very powerful weapon, to keep us safe from harm in this world. The Rosary is like the sling-shot of King David that killed the mighty enemy because the power of God was behind it. When we pray the Rosary, we have the power of God in our hands, which protects and guards us, and leads us to God.

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.

(Our Lady at Fatima, 13th July 1917)

Unscramble the words to find out about the Holy Trinity

1. The *thFaer* is God and the first Person of the Blessed Trinity.
2. The Son is God and the *osendc* Person of the Blessed Trinity.
3. The Holy Spirit is God and the third *onserP* of the Blessed Trinity.
4. There is only *noe* God
5. In God there are three *viDnei* persons
6. Trinity Sunday is the first Sunday after *tsocePetn*
7. In *odG* there are three divine Persons--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Answers: 1. Father, 2. second, 3. Person, 4. One, 5. Divine, 6. Pentecost 7. God

Quiz Time with Lawrence

1. Which UK singer/actor had a 1991 hit with the song 'The one and only'?
2. What is the best-selling car of all time, with reportedly around 50 million of them made since 1966?
3. What number was the first 'Apollo' to land on the moon?
4. Who is the current Prime Minister of India.
5. From what club did Alex Ferguson sign Eric Cantona for Manchester United?
6. Dominga, Red Globe and Black Manukka are all types of what?
7. What Richard Adams novel from 1972 was released in 1978 as an animated movie starring John Hurt and Richard Briers?
8. Under the 'Michelin Guide', what is the highest number of 'stars' that can be awarded to any restaurant?
9. Former 'Eastenders' actor Ross Kemp currently hosts what BBC daytime quiz show?
10. In football, what competition is abbreviated to 'ACON'?
11. Of which US state is Salt Lake City the capital?
12. Which is the largest and numerically busiest of London's eleven underground stations?
13. How many bones are there in a human ear?
14. Benedict Cumberbatch and Robert Downey Junior have both played the role of what iconic film character?
15. Harold Wilson had two separate spells as British Prime Minister, but who held the role in the four years in between?
16. What body of water separates Africa from the Middle East?
17. Name the Scottish weather presenter on BBC Breakfast TV?
18. Which former Premier League goalkeeper plays ice hockey for the Belfast Giants?
19. With what popular 1980s band did Nick Rhodes play keyboard?
20. Which US comedy actor tellingly titled his autobiography 'When the laughter stops'?
21. In which Irish county would you find the Blarney Stone?
22. How many Oscars did the film 'Oppenheimer' win at this year's Academy Awards?
23. The word 'Dublin' literally translates from Irish to what UK city?
24. From what song does the lyrics- '...son I've made a life out of reading people's faces...' come?
25. In what fictional TV competition was Penelope Pitstop a competitor?

Quiz Answers: 1, Chesney Hawkes; 2, Toyota Corolla; 3, Apollo 11; 4, Narendra Modi; 5, Leeds United; 6, Grapes; 7, Watership Down; 8, Three; 9, Bridge of Lies; 10, African Cup of Nations; 11, Utah; 12, Waterloo; 13, Three; 14, Sherlock Holmes; 15, Ted Heath; 16, The Red Sea; 17, Carol Kirkwood; 18, Petr Cech; 19, Duran Duran; 20, Robin Williams; 21, Cork; 22, Seven; 23, Blackpool; 24, The Gambler (Kenny Rogers); 25, Wacky Races.

Aghyaran, Ardmore, Ardstraw West & Castlederg, Ballinascreen, Ballymagroarty, Banagher, Bellaghy, Bunrana, Carndonagh, Claudy,

Let Your Light Shine!



**"Have I been
with you all this
time..."**

**and still you
do not
know Me?"**
(John 14:9)

This quote from John's Gospel was read at Mass on the Feast of Sts Philip and James, the Apostles, on Friday, May 3, which is also the birthday of Blessed Carlo Acutis, the Italian teenager who greatly loved and promoted Jesus in the Eucharist, and is now on the way to be declared a saint.

Greenlough, Iskaheen, Killyclogher, Killygordon, Kilrea, Lavey, Leckpatrick, Lifford, Limavady, Maghera, Magilligan, Malin, Melmount,

Moville, Newtownstewart, Omagh, Plumbridge, Sion Mills, Steelestown, Strabane, Swatragh, Templemore - Long Tower and St Eugene's, Three Patrons, Waterside

Clonmany, Coleraine, Creggan, Culladuff, Culmore, Desertmartin, Donnyloop, Drumquin, Duramannagh, Dungiven, Fahan, Faughanvale, Garvagh, Gortin, Greencastle,