

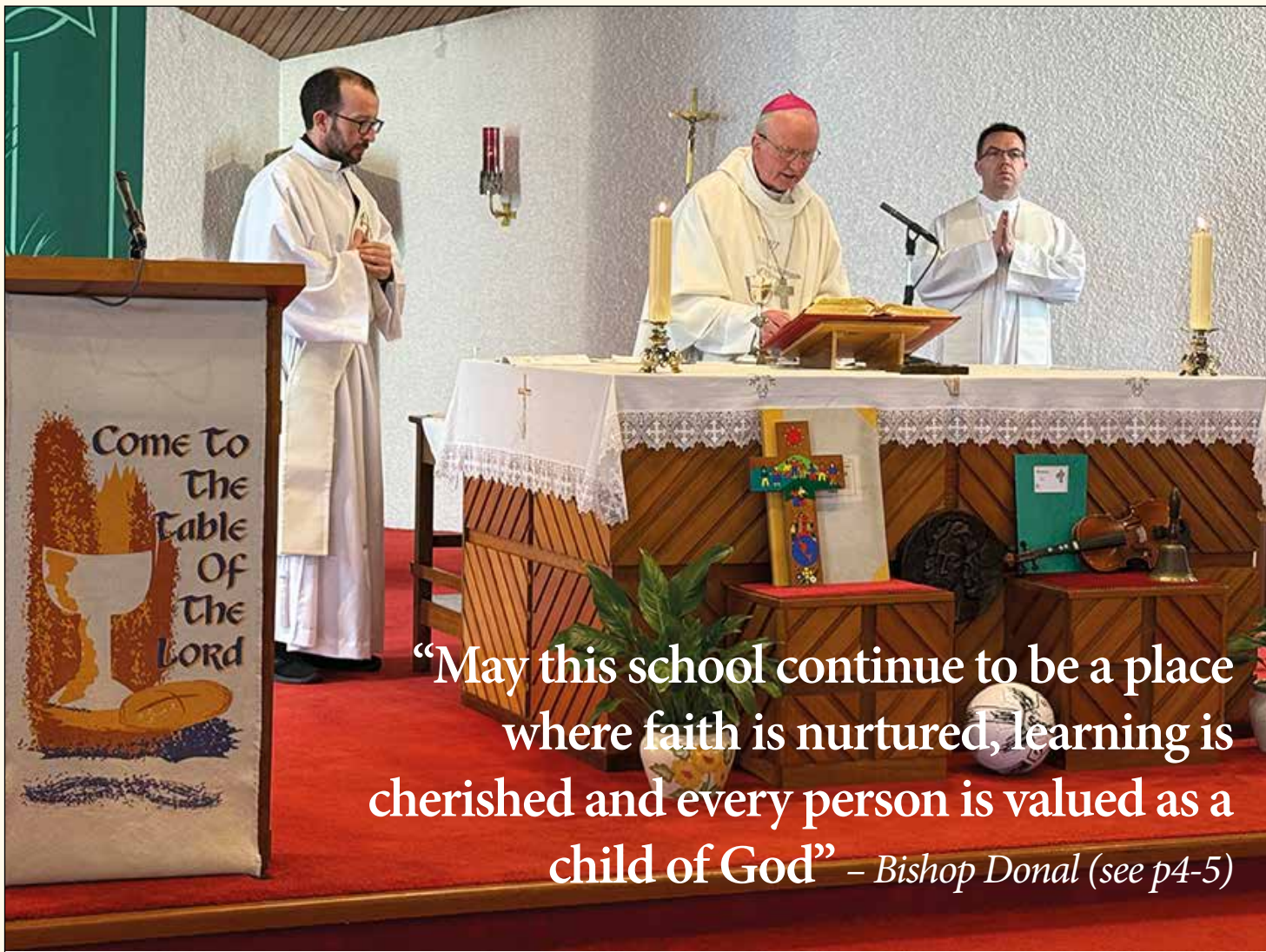


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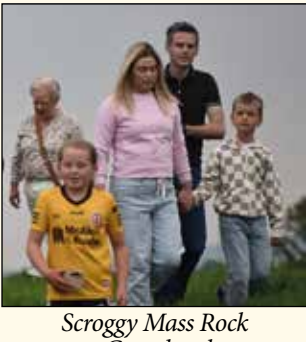
Sharing fruits of faith in Derry Diocese

ISSUE 111. OCTOBER 2025

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Golden Jubilee Mass for St Oliver Plunkett PS, Strathfoyle, in St Oliver Plunkett Church.



People in focus



Fr Declan McGeehan
– Steelstown PP



Fr Michael Keaveny RIP
– Moville



Fr Seamus O'Neill
– Ballinascreen



Fr Sean O'Donnell
– Sion Mills & Melmount PP



Lynn Porter RIP
– Galliagh

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The NET

Sharing the fruits of the faith in the Derry Diocese

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Bishop Donal reflects on the Pope’s October prayer intention for collaboration between different religious traditions:
“Let us pray that believers in different religious traditions might work together to defend and promote peace, justice and human fraternity.”

Mission of Church is to work to bring all things together under Christ (Eph 1:10)

IT is now many years ago when someone, speaking about our own divided little society in Northern Ireland, said that, in the future, the problem for believers would be not so much religious difference as religious indifference.

In the last decades, our own country has changed much, and that saying appears to be increasingly accurate.

No longer are we a society where you have to be classed as either Catholic or Protestant – with space left for a smallish number classified as ‘Other’. People from different Christian traditions, including Syro-Malabar and Orthodox communities, as well as Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims, are now to be found not just in cities but also in smaller towns. We also have many who have no particular religious faith.

Indeed, without so many of these new arrivals, our health services could not function. There is an increasing number of Western countries where there are more deaths each year than births, and where immigration is necessary if the economy is to function.

Pope Leo asks us to pray for a Christian heart in the face of these realities. What might a Christ-like response be?

Firstly, in St John’s Gospel, Jesus prayed for unity among

his followers and He also prayed for those who do not yet belong to His flock (Cf John 10:14-16). That teaching was echoed by the opening paragraph of the Second Vatican Council’s document on the church: “The Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race.” (Lumen Gentium 1)

In Jesus’ name, the mission of the Church is to work to bring all things together under Christ (Ephesians 1:10). For many centuries, the Church on Good Friday prays not only for the baptised but also for




Bishop Donal

famously said “we build bridges, not walls”.

Thus, working with other people of good will to defend and promote peace, justice and human fraternity is a core part of the reconciling ministry of Christ.

Secondly, we all know that we are living in difficult times. As Pope Francis said, we are experiencing a third world war that is being fought in pieces. The world’s major economic, military and political powers are struggling for domination – and these clashes are seen in conflicts in the Middle East, Ukraine and in many other places. Sometimes, it is important not just to ask who

Eucharistic Adoration in the Diocese			
Aghyaran: Thursdays, 10.30am–12 noon. Ardstraw West & Castlederg: Fridays, 10.30am–12 noon, St Patrick’s Church. Badoney Lower: Tuesdays, after 12.30 pm Mass until 5 pm, St Patrick’s Gortin. Badoney Upper: Wednesdays, after 7.30 pm evening Mass until 9 pm, St Patrick’s Cranagh. Ballinascreen: First Mondays, from 12 noon-7.30 pm, in Holy Rosary Church, Draperstown. Banagher: Thursdays, 10.30-11.30 am, St Mary’s Church, Altinure, and Fridays, 10–11am, St Joseph’s Church, Fincairn. Bellaghy: Every Friday, from 10 am until recitation of Rosary at 7.30 pm, in St Mary’s Church. Buncrana: Mondays, Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 6am-10pm, Fridays, 6 am-10 pm and Sundays, 2-10 pm, St Mary’s Oratory.	Cappagh: Wednesdays, 8 -9pm, concluding with Night Prayer, and Sundays, 3.30-6.30 pm, in Christ the King, Strathroy. Claudy: Tuesdays, after 10am Mass until 8 pm, St Patrick’s Church, Claudy, and Wednesdays, after 10 Mass until 8 pm, St Joseph’s Church, Craighbane. Clonmany: Tuesdays, 7.30 -8.30 pm, the Oratory of the Assumption, Ballyliffin; Wednesdays, 3-4 pm, St Columbcille Village, Cleagh; Fridays, 3-6 pm (Rosary at 5.40 pm), St Michael’s Church, Urris. Coleraine: Wednesdays, in St John’s Church, 2-4 pm, with Rosary at 3:45 pm. Creggan: Sundays 1.30 pm-6 pm; Mondays 10.30 am - 7 pm; Tue - Sat 10.30 am - 12 pm, Divine Mercy Chapel. Donagheady: First Fridays after Mass until 12 noon, St Mary’s Church, Aughabrack. Donaghmore: Tuesdays,	10.30 am-7.30 pm, St Mary’s Church, Sessiaghoneill; Thursdays, after 9.15 am Mass, St Patrick’s Church, Crossroads. Drumquin: Wednesdays, 6 pm until Mass at 7.30 pm. Drumragh: Wednesdays, following morning Mass, Sacred Heart Church until 5.30 pm. Dungiven: Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, 9am-6 pm, and Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9 am-8 pm, in Adoration Chapel. Errigal: Mondays, after the 10 am Mass until 2.30 pm, St Mary’s Church, Ballerin. Fahan: Fridays after 10am Mass, St Mura’s Parish Church. Greencastle (Tyrone): Thursdays, 6-10 pm, St Patrick’s Church. Greenlough: Thursdays, 9am–5 pm, St Oliver Plunkett’s Church. Iskaheen: Tuesdays, from after 10 am Mass until 2 pm, St Patrick’s Church. Kilrea: Mondays, 12 noon - 7pm, St Mary’s Drumagarnier.	Concludes with Benediction. Lavey: Fridays, after 9.30 am Mass until 5 pm. Leckpatrick: Wednesdays from 8.15 am–5 pm. Lifford (Murlog): 9.30 am - 12.30 pm Limavady: Sundays from 3-5 pm in Christ the King (with Confessions). Magilligan: Wednesdays, 3-7 pm; First Sundays, 3-6 pm, St Aidan’s Church. Melmount: Mondays, after 10 am Mass until 6 pm. Moville: Mondays, 2-9 pm, and Wednesdays, 6-9 pm, St Pius X Church. Newtownstewart: Thursdays, 6.30-7.30 pm, Oratory of Mary, Mother of God. Sion Mills: Adoration takes place in the side chapel (Oratory) and will be available every day during the Church’s opening hours, moving to the main body of the chapel on Fridays, from 11am-6.50 pm, ending with Benediction before 7 pm Mass. Steelstown: Mondays, from after 10 am Mass until 6.50pm.
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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.

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

'77' helping young people grow in faith and closer to God



Aoife O'Hagan Bisono, 77 Group founder and leader.

YOUNG people are being encouraged to take part in the November Eucharistic Procession in Derry, to celebrate the centenary of the Feast of Christ The King, and amongst those planning to be there are members of the Galliagh-based youth faith group, 77.

Aoife O'Hagan Bisono is one of the group's leaders and its founder, on feeling "called by God to start it up", and she has shared with 'The Net' the story of its origins.

"Initially, a few friends and I had heard about a Youth Alpha course at Magee. There was free pizza so that was an incentive for us to go

along, as we didn't know what Youth Alpha was. We only went a few times because while they spoke about the Lord, we heard no mention of the Eucharist or Confession being the most important part of being a follower of the Lord."

After suggesting that they start their own prayer group, Aoife recalled: "Three or four of us began meeting in a friend's house every Sunday night, and we started to invite others. That was in 2021. We didn't really have a structure, and would sometimes do praise and worship or have periods of prayer reflection."

"The numbers attending started to grow, so we needed a bigger space, and the Franciscan Friars allowed us to use the community centre. Later, Fr Francesco became our shepherd, as we needed to know the truth of our Catholic faith."

"We started to think of a name for the group and wrote down some suggestions for cool names, like 'Truth Youth'. We voted on these and ended up going with Fr Francesco's suggestion of '77', from the Scriptures."

"At this stage," she continued, "the group had become more structured, doing Lectio Divina and also Youth Alpha and Team Alpha for a time, which was funny after us having left the Youth Alpha in Magee to start our own group. Now, we mostly focus on Lectio Divina."

"77 has developed into a little community, like a family, and we go on trips as well. We went to Knock last year and, this year, we climbed Croagh Patrick on St Patrick's Day, and we have also held an All Saints' Party."

"We go along to the friars' monthly healing nights in Galliagh, and are looking forward to taking part in the Eucharistic Procession in Derry in November. The young people are very enthusiastic for the Lord and we normally go to any faith events happening. Some go to Youth 2000 as well."

"We are also involved in the Youth Mass in St Joseph's Church, Galliagh, on Sunday nights at 6.30 pm. The idea for this came to me after attending Camp Veritas. I felt that the Lord wanted more, such as a Mass for young people."

Reflecting on how her own faith has developed through 77, Aoife said: "It allows me time out of the world, where there is so much noise and too many distractions, and to see the joy of the young people."

"Lectio Divina gives an opportunity to be quiet and give time to the Lord. As well as the silence in my heart, this time enables me to be open and accept the Lord's Mercy and Grace, and allow Him to transform and purify me."

"I am also blessed and honoured," she added, "to be able to get to know and understand the young people that the Lord has chosen to come through 77. I pray that they actually feel the love, welcome and acceptance of the Lord coming to them where they are at."

Around 20 young people attend the '77' group, which is open to those of secondary school age up to 35 years. We currently have mostly 14-20-year-olds coming along. We meet now in St Pio House on Thursday nights at 7.30 pm and new members are welcome.



Reflection continued from p2

is fighting and dying, but who is benefiting from the conflicts but not shedding any of their own blood.

We pray that, in a fragmenting world, different religious traditions may not let themselves be used to support self-serving political agendas.

Thirdly, there are people who are genuinely concerned about new arrivals and the effects on immigration on access to services in our local communities. And that has come at the same time as a fragmentation in international bodies.

A growing emphasis on nationalism has seen situations where religion is under pressure to be frightened of the stranger and people who are different. There are those who portray diversity as only a threat. Religious nationalism may have its own roots, but it has little to do with Jesus. Self-protection was never a priority for Jesus. If Catholic means universal,

Catholic nationalism seems a contradiction in terms.

And, we know from history how closeness to political power can have a corrupting influence on the prophetic voice of the Church.

Pope Leo is asking us to pray for the grace to withstand the use of religious identity for political purposes. He is asking us to pray that Christ's mission will not be blunted by those who tell us to fear everyone in other religions. And, in a world where great powers are trampling on human dignity with apparent impunity, he wants us to work with all people of good will to promote peace, justice and human fraternity.

That is one way to counteract those who say that religious belief is a curse on the world. And, help us to be missionaries of hope in this Jubilee Year.

Our problem is not so much religious difference as religious indifference. That is where we have to focus our mission in Jesus' name.

Young people share their thoughts on 77...

"I have been going to 77 every Thursday night since May of this year. I joined it to get closer

to my faith and have a better relationship with God. I keep coming back each week because it is an amazing group of people and the things that we do are incredible. We do Bible Study and socialise with our friends. Through my time at 77, I feel a lot closer to Jesus and have a better understanding of my faith."

- Reuben

"Since coming to the 77 group in June of this year, I love each and every bit of those few hours on a Thursday night. Being in an amazing group, with so many young people who love Jesus, just sets my heart on fire. I joined 77 to find people who share the same beliefs as me, as many of my friends are secular and I knew, at that stage in my life, that I didn't want to lose sight of the Lord. Even though, I have only

been at 77 for a short period, I feel so welcome by everyone and many of them have touched my heart in such special ways. I go to the group as much as I can because I love Jesus, and being in the company of others my age, who love Jesus too, helps me grow more and more in my faith. After just a few months, I have a deeper longing for a stronger relationship with Jesus. I read my Bible a lot more and, due to us doing Lectio Divina, I have learnt how to properly hear the Lord speak to me through His Word. The leaders, the other young people, the talks and everything about 77 centres around Jesus, and I'm so incredibly blessed to be a part of it. 'For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them' (Matt 18:20)."

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- Ava

"I have been in 77 for just over a year-and-a-half. I first joined because I was

with my cousin, who went to it and had persuaded me to go with him. I felt very welcome and a lot of my friends already went, so this made it easier to join. I have met many people who have helped me grow in my faith and understanding of the Catholic Church. We spend time with the

Lord by doing things like Lectio Divina, and the really 'home' and joyful environment helps me in my faith journey."

- Colm

"I have been going to 77 since July 2023, when I was invited by some of my friends. I was quite shy at the start, but kept coming back because of Lectio Divina. It was something that I had never experienced before, even though I had grown up in the faith. I remember being so amazed and excited to go back the following Thursday night. Getting to read the Gospel with other people, learning from their interpretations, is so beautiful. Fellowship is so important in our walk with Christ, so I would really recommend coming along. I have grown so much in my faith and relationship with God because of 77, and the group has always been so welcoming and supportive of any questions that I have had. I love being a member. 77 is my second family...especially my sisters in Christ!"

- Orla

"I have been going to 77 for the past two years. I found out about it through word of mouth, and a few friends and I decided to

go due to encouragement from a youth leader. Personally, 77 has allowed me to grow in faith and also community. At first, I was nervous to go, as I didn't know much of the group, but they quickly made me feel very welcome. 77 creates a sense of fellowship, a welcoming space where a group of like-minded young people, around my own age, can come together. This has helped me to develop close friendships and almost a feeling of another family. Participating in activities like Youth Alpha and Lectio Divina allows us to ask meaningful questions and share our own ideas about the faith, creating a sense of belonging and deepening our own understanding. Having friends to share your faith with, who are your own age, makes it easier to ask

questions and feel comfortable. It has also taught me to pray with the Scriptures, which helps me deepen my relationship with the Lord and enter more into my prayer life. I would recommend 77 to other young people, whether they are deep in their faith or just starting out. It feels like a safe space, where there is no judgement and everyone is there to uplift each other."

- Erin

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- Erin



Orla



Reuben



Ava



Colm



Erin



Nominated for award in recognition of excellent pastoral care...

Strathfoyle school gives thanks for 50 years of learning and faith

THE Golden Jubilee of St Oliver Plunkett PS in Strathfoyle, Derry, was celebrated with a Mass of Thanksgiving on September 18.

Bishop Donal concelebrated the Mass in the neighbouring St Oliver Plunkett Church with curate, Fr Patrick Lagan, assisted by Deacon Stephen Baxter, after receiving memorabilia brought forward to the altar by children representing Years 1-6.

Welcoming the pupils, current and former school staff and family members gathered to give thanks for 50 years of learning and faith, the bishop said: "For a half a century, this school has been a place of learning, growth and faith; a community where pupils have been nurtured in mind, body and spirit. We give thanks to God for the founders, staff, pupils and families, and all who have contributed to this mission."

"As we begin this Eucharistic celebration, let us open our hearts to God's presence and give thanks for the blessings of the past, the grace of the present and the hope of the future."

During the Mass, Bishop Donal prayed that "the seeds planted over these five decades continue to grow in truth, compassion and excellence", asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit for the school to continue "to be a place where faith is nurtured, learning is cherished and every person is valued as a child of God."

He talked to the children about the significance of the school having St Oliver Plunkett as its patron, explaining that it opened in the same year as he was being made a saint in Rome, in 1975.

Instead of preaching a homily, Bishop Donal went amongst the pews to interact with the pupils, noting that the school had been nominated for the National Pastoral School of the Year Award.

"What we are celebrating here today," he said, "is not just a great school, with wonderful teachers and Board of Governors, we are celebrating a school that looks after you."

He added: "Above and beyond the subjects that are taught here, the first message this school

wants you to learn is that you are loved by God. People make mistakes in life, but Jesus says that they can have a fresh start; they are forgiven."

The Mass was greatly enhanced by the music and singing of the well-rehearsed school choir.

The celebrations continued later in the evening in the school, with many taking the opportunity to view photographic displays and reminisce over some light refreshments, including the delicious anniversary cake.



Fr Patrick Lagan with local man, John Doherty, who shared his experience of working in the school for about 16 years as a part-time cleaner. While he has fond memories of his time there, John also recalled the sad death from leukemia of his seven-year-old nephew, Niall Ferguson, in May 2000. "The support we got from the school here was great. They erected a plaque in memory of Niall and raised nearly £3,000 for the Royal Victoria Hospital for Sick Children," said John, who also suffered the loss of both Niall's parents from cancer and the death of his mother.



St Oliver Plunkett principal privileged to lead wonderful nurturing school into next half century

PRINCIPAL of St Oliver Plunkett Primary School since 2018, Mr Eamonn Moore told 'The Net' that he was "truly honoured to lead the whole school community in acknowledging 50 years of this wonderful school nurturing and developing children from the local community and beyond."

"Reaching such a milestone," he said, "provided the perfect opportunity to reflect on who we are, as a school, and what we stand for. As a school, we are very much focused on the needs of the children. We live that out every day."

"We are a school of nurture and, as well as having a dedicated specialist Nurture Unit, every class teacher employs nurturing strategies in their daily practice, and every classroom has dedicated nurture spaces for the children to use. In addition, we employ a dedicated Play Therapist and have a bespoke outdoor sensory room."

He continued: "We ensure the well-being of every child as our first priority. We don't say that we will put children first, we actively put the children first. We don't live by a set of rules that stifle the children's creativity, we live by a set of shared values where every child knows that they matter. We wouldn't dream of putting a child down, we do everything in our power to lift them up."

"We truly believe that every one of our children deserves the very best and, from the moment we walk in the door every morning until the moment we leave, that is what we give them. Every child is welcomed into school every

morning by the Principal or Vice-Principal because we want them to know how happy we are to see them."

In a promise to all new parents, Mr Moore stated: "From the day your child enters St Oliver Plunkett Primary School until the day they leave, your child will not just be educated, they will not just be safe and looked after, they will be loved. That is who we are, and that is what sets us apart."

"When visitors come into the school, they comment on the relationships between the staff, the staff and the children, the welcoming atmosphere and the impeccable behaviour of the children. The children are so well behaved because they know that they are safe, valued and loved."

Honour

He added: "I was so thrilled when we were told that we had reached the final five in the National Pastoral School of the Year Award. As the only primary school in Northern Ireland to make it this far, it is a great honour for us. What makes it even more special is that it was our pupil council that made the decision to put us forward for the Award. It is so gratifying that the children have the confidence to use their voices in such a positive way, because we encourage them every day to express themselves and have the confidence to know how amazing they are."

"The winner will be announced on October 10, at the Awards ceremony in England, and, while we are excited to see if we are successful, we are more thrilled that, by making the application

for the award, it is clear that the children feel the care and respect that we have for them."

"So, after 50 amazing years, I want to thank all of the past members of staff who helped set us on our journey."

I want to thank all of our parents and families who give us the greatest gift imaginable – getting to spend every day with our amazing children.

"Finally, I want to thank all of the amazing staff of St Oliver Plunkett Primary School, who show every child an unlimited amount of compassion, nurture and love every day, not because they have to but because, after 50 years as a school of genuine compassion and love, that is who we are."

Board of Governors Chair, Bobby Whoriskey, shared his experience since joining the Board around 2020, at a time when the school had been through a lot of change.

"After much discussion with all school staff over a period of a few months," he recalled, "we set about organising an employee values workshop. What came out of this was an agreed set of principles that we all signed up to."

He continued: "At the heart of every decision we make as teachers, classroom assistants, governors, or any member of staff, is the child."

Recounting a particular situation, which for him was the most difficult of all the decisions the school community has had to make, Bobby said: "We had a child with additional needs, which we could not supply for the

child. This was not due to lack of willingness of the staff, but a lack of resources. Breaking the news to the parents – a family who were always supportive of the school over its entire 50-year life - that we had to recommend that their child would be better catered for in another school outside the community, was upsetting. I never wanted to be in that position again."

"When Eamonn later informed the Board of Governors that there was an opportunity to set up an autism unit in the school for Key Stage One pupils, as a BOG, we jumped at the opportunity and the entire school staff enthusiastically accepted the challenge. The unit was built and is a great addition to the school."

"We have now secured the funding for a Key Stage Two unit, and construction is well underway. Staff are in place and we look forward to welcoming our first cohort of pupils as soon as possible."

"This is a brilliant success for us as a school," added Bobby, "and goes a long way to allowing us to support more children from our community. It is well established that children with additional needs thrive better in familiar surroundings."

"Having children with additional needs in mainstream schools is also a positive experience for all the children. It allows for a lived experience, where we learn to practice our Catholic ethos of love for self, love for others, and respect for all."



Lourdes pilgrims gathered in St Mary's Desertmartin for Youth Mass of Thanksgiving



ST Mary's Church, Coolcalm, in Desertmartin, was the beautiful setting for a Youth Mass in early September, in thanksgiving for a blessed time in Lourdes during the annual Diocesan pilgrimage to the French Shrine back in July.

The Mass was celebrated by the spiritual director for the Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Committee, Fr Michael McCaul, curate for Desertmartin and Ballinascreen.

Fr Michael expressed sincere



thanks to the young people who took part in the Liturgy, including: Ciara Loughran, of Swatragh, and Gabriella Sargeant, Creggan, Derry, for reading; Aine Devlin, Desertmartin, for her part in the Prayers of the Faithful; and Aoife McNamee and Jamie Trainor, of Draperstown, for their beautiful singing and guitar playing.

Members of the Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Committee also travelled to the South Derry

Church for the Mass, and were involved in the Prayers of the Faithful.

Offering the Mass in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes, Fr Michael encouraged those gathered to reflect on their holiness and whether they were listening to the world or the Word of Jesus Christ, which challenges us.

Noting that the Mother of God's last recorded words in the Gospels were – "Do whatever He tells you" – Fr Michael said: "So, we are to listen and do what Jesus tells us, not the world. It is by doing the will of God that we will have peace in this world."

He added: "Perhaps we are too busy with our phones to notice the signs of our times. The greatest wireless connection is prayer that connects us with God and the people around us and ourselves."

Commenting on Our Lady's role in our lives and in the Church, Fr Michael said: "Our Mother Mary knows what we need and She will

intercede for us. We need to open up our hearts and minds to Jesus and Mary.

"Lourdes will always be a reminder of what Mary said to us – Do whatever He tells you. Our Lady of Lourdes pray for us."

Everyone enjoyed lovely refreshments afterwards in the neighbouring Knocknagin Hall, where Fr Michael thanked all who had helped in any way with the preparation for, and celebration of, the Mass of Thanksgiving, and with the refreshments, and all who attended.

Bringing the evening to a close in praying the 'Hail Mary', Fr Michael left all with the reassuring message: "Jesus will never refuse His Mother anything."

Charlie Glenn, of the Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Committee, expressed thanks for the invitation, saying: "This was a lovely occasion in such a vibrant community as this. There has always been very good support for



Continued from p6

our Lourdes Pilgrimage from this part of the world.”

Desertmartin parishioner, Bernie Devlin's daughter, Aine was one of the young people from the parish who had gone on the Pilgrimage, after some encouragement from Fr Michael. Delighted at this, when Fr Michael afterwards asked Aine about organising a Youth Mass in Thanksgiving, Bernie said that she happily helped her in thanksgiving.

Bernie also remarked on the growing devotion to Mary and St Bernadette in the Parish since Fr Michael's arrival as curate, through his great devotion to Our Lady.

Youth comments

Aine is amongst the young Lourdes pilgrims who have shared their experience with 'The Net', recalling: "When Fr McCaul first asked if I would go to Lourdes with the Derry Diocese Youth Group, I honestly wasn't sure what I was getting myself into. I just said, 'Aye, why not.' I didn't really know what to expect, but from the moment we arrived, I realised it would be something special.

"On the first day, we toured the town and learned about St Bernadette's story, which gave real meaning to the place. Each day brought something new: pushing wheelchairs; meeting pilgrims; and helping people get to the various Masses. The conversations along the way were some of my favourite moments; hearing about people's lives and

their previous trips to Lourdes was both humbling and inspiring.

"I made so many new friends, young and old, and the sense of community was unlike anything I've felt before. Being by the Grotto, surrounded by people from all over the world, filled me with a deep sense of peace and belonging. There's something truly moving about Lourdes; the calm, the kindness, the shared faith. It's an experience that I will always cherish, and one I hope to repeat in 2026."

Jamie Trainor, who offered his guitar-playing skills during the Lourdes pilgrimage too, remarked that his experience there had been "a pivotal moment" in developing his faith.

He added: "The relationships I had with others will be unforgettable, and I cannot imagine my life now without them. I want to especially thank our leader, Fr McCaul for leading us on this special journey. We could not have done this without him and, therefore, I am grateful for him encouraging us, as students, to carry out this adventure."

The pilgrimage was a very memorable experience for Ciara Loughran too, who said: "It showed me how people from all over the world can come together in faith, each with their own individual wishes, prayers and different reasons for coming. Helping the sick and elderly pilgrims filled me with great gratitude and peace, and I learnt how even small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

"Lourdes really opened my

heart and helped me to see how welcoming and faithful a community can be. I am very grateful that I got the opportunity to go to Lourdes as it strengthened my faith and touched my heart in many ways."

Adding her comment, Gabriella Sargeant shared: "The Lourdes pilgrimage opened my eyes to the profound ways in which individuals turn to God during challenging times. I witnessed

first-hand how many people seek not only divine assistance, but also comfort and a sense of security in moments of vulnerability, whether they are grappling with a terminal illness or navigating the depths of grief.

"The sheer strength of the Christian faith was palpable, as pilgrims from around the globe gathered to share in the sacred experiences of Mass and communal prayers of worship."



Gabriella Sargeant (left) and Ciara Loughran (right), and Amy Loughran (front).



Aine Devlin, left.



Jamie Trainor (back, left) with other youth pilgrims at Lourdes.

Rosary is prayer for a renewed Church... we neglect it at our eternal peril – Bishop Donal



POPE Leo has invited Catholics worldwide to dedicate October, known in the Church as the Month of the Rosary, to praying the Rosary daily.

A special Rosary event will be held to mark this in St Peter's Square on October 11, at 6 pm, as part of the ongoing Marian spirituality Jubilee.

The Holy Father has also encouraged Vatican employees to join in daily Rosary prayers at the basilica throughout the month.

Bishop Donal has also been a great encourager for families especially to come together to pray the Rosary.

As the main celebrant and homilist at this year's All Ireland Rosary Rally in Knock, on Saturday, June 7, he spoke about how "we have lost the skill of listening and would rather be talking at others," and proposed the praying of the Rosary "as an antidote".

He suggested that, rooted in the wisdom of the ages, the Rosary "can free us to be, like Mary, open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, able to listen for Emmanuel who is God with us on our journey, and prepare us to be a missionary Church."

"The Rosary is an invitation to contemplate, to meditate on the work of God for our salvation," added Bishop Donal, "Thus, the Rosary is not so much a Marian prayer. Mary was involved in and at so many of the events that we reflect on. But the Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries are all about the work of Jesus."

He went on to say: "The Rosary is a meditation on who Jesus is, revealed in the Gospels and other writings of the early church... The Rosary has always played a

large part in helping us meditate on the story that begins with the Annunciation of Christ's incarnation right through His early years, His public ministry, His suffering and death and the glories of His resurrection and ascension.

"They invite us to be absorbed in the mysterious action of God in Jesus. That work of God can be understood by the heart and not merely by the head. We hand on faith to young people by inviting them to nourish their imagination with knowledge of Jesus. If the Rosary is not a core catechetical tool for a missionary church, then what is it?"

"In the Rosary," noted Bishop Donal, "Mary invites us to look with loving eyes on the mysteries of Christ's life and mission and to be at peace. After all, the Glorious mysteries tell us that, despite the ups and down of the Joyful, Luminous and Sorrowful mysteries, the Risen Christ has been victorious over sin and death."

Referring to the Jubilee of Hope, Bishop Donal said: "We gather today in this place where

Mary, pointing to Jesus as the Lamb of God, came to give people hope in those terrible years of the late 19th century. Today, she still accompanies us as members of the Body of Christ. She invites us in Ireland to again become a contemplative church.

"Discernment of God's way forward will come...in hearts that are steeped in grace. She wants us to become like her, a people pickled in the mysteries of God's work in Christ. She invites us to know the story of our salvation and to be able to give to others the narrative that forms the heart of the Creed that we say at beginning of the Rosary and recite together in the Creed each Sunday.

"And she invites us to walk with her loving heart as we come and follow Christ. As our wise ancestors knew, the Rosary was not a childish prayer for the uneducated, but the fruit of church wisdom. It is a prayer for a missionary church, and it is a prayer to enkindle in our hearts the hope by which we are saved (Rom 8:24). The Rosary is a prayer for a renewed church. We neglect it at our eternal peril."

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Steelstown's 'three Anns' served up sumptuous supper of welcome for new PP

POPULAR Killyclogher curate, Fr Declan McGeehan was installed as parish priest of Steelstown by Bishop Donal on the eve of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 13.

Fr Declan's family and friends were amongst the congregation in Our Lady of Lourdes Church, when the bishop entrusted him with the key, which had been brought forward by sacristan, Noreen Quigley.

Ordained in 2019, the 36-year-old is surely amongst the youngest to be elevated to the role of parish priest.

Fr Declan was ordained a deacon in Rome, in Easter 2018, then appointed to serve as deacon in Killyclogher from September 2018 to his ordination in 2019. He was then appointed as curate for Killyclogher in September of that year, where he served until appointed as parish priest of

Steelstown.

Thanking Bishop Donal for the trust he had placed in him, Fr Declan thanked Fr Peter McLaughlin and Fr Peter O'Kane for their presence as concelebrants.

He went on to share a fond memory of Fr Peter giving him his first Holy Communion, and paid tribute to his many years of service to the priesthood.

Recalling the bishop, during the Rite of Installation, encouraging him "to be kind" to the parishioners, Fr Declan went on to thank them for all the kindness that had been shown to him since arriving in the parish.

He also had a special word of thanks for those who had helped him to prepare for the induction ceremony, and those who had prepared the refreshments for afterwards, especially "the three Anns"!





The three Anns



With help of Our Lady and St Theresa of the Child Jesus...

New Sion Mills & Melmount PP hopes to see 'little and older flowers of faith' blossom

THE Den in Melmount, on the outskirts of Strabane town, was filled with well-wishers on Sunday, September 14, following the induction of Donegal native, Fr Sean O'Donnell as parish priest of both Sion Mills and Melmount.

Bishop Donal had first installed Fr Sean as the new Sion Mills PP at the 9.30 am Mass in St Theresa's Church, and then as the Melmount PP in St Mary's Church during the 11.30 am Mass there.

Parishioners were joined by Fr Sean's family and friends for the joyous occasion, who just three months previously had helped the 52-year-old Muff man celebrate 10 years of priesthood, on June 14.

For the last three years, he was a much-loved curate in Three Patrons Parish before receiving his first appointment as parish priest.

Speaking at the end of the Mass in Sion Mills, Fr Sean thanked Bishop Donal for his faith and trust in him, adding: "I won't say how I looked at him when he said to me, but I thought I would trust his judgment."

He told the congregation: "With your prayers and the prayers of many in parishes that I have been in, and those of my family and friends, I will do my best to live up to the oath that I have taken as your parish priest going forward."

Following a spontaneous applause, Fr Sean went on to say: "This Church is dedicated to St Theresa of the Child Jesus, and it is great to see little and older flowers of faith here, and I look

forward to seeing all blossom."

Deacon Stephen Baxter assisted at the Mass and, thanking him, Bishop Donal expressed the hope that he would receive his first appointment as a priest in a year's time.

Bishop Donal, Fr Sean and Deacon Stephen were joined by Melmount native, Fr Peter O'Kane for the installation ceremony in St Mary's Church, where Denise Flack provided a signing service for the hearing-impaired community.

With it being the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the bishop noted that the neighbouring College came under that banner.

During his homily, Bishop Donal spoke about the Church being at a point of renewal and of the importance of taking up the Cross as disciples of Jesus.

He commented on how "a relative shortage of clergy means that we have to do things differently," before stating: "But the mission remains the same."

"Today's Feast," he added, "tells us that we have to gather in prayer around the cross, celebrate the sacramental memorial of the Cross in Mass and be a visible sign of the merciful love of God for our broken world."

At the end of the ceremony, Fr Sean thanked the parishioners for their warm welcome and Bishop Donal for appointing him as their parish priest, noting that Fr Michael Doherty's long and faithful service there would be a hard act to follow.

Sion Mills



Melmont



Greenlough community commemorate faith and courage of ancestors at Scroggy Mass Rock



GREENLOUGH Parish Administrator, Fr Pat O'Hagan was joined by around 75 people for the first celebration of Mass at Scroggy Mass Rock in a number of years, on Friday, August 22, the Queenship the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The spot is marked with a plaque, which was erected in 2015 to remember the faith of those who had congregated there in difficult and dangerous circumstances many years ago.

And, that was the theme of Fr Pat's homily; the undaunted faith and courage of those believers who came together for the celebration and reception of the Eucharist at a time when the Faith was outlawed, the Mass declared illegal, and priests persecuted and hunted down.

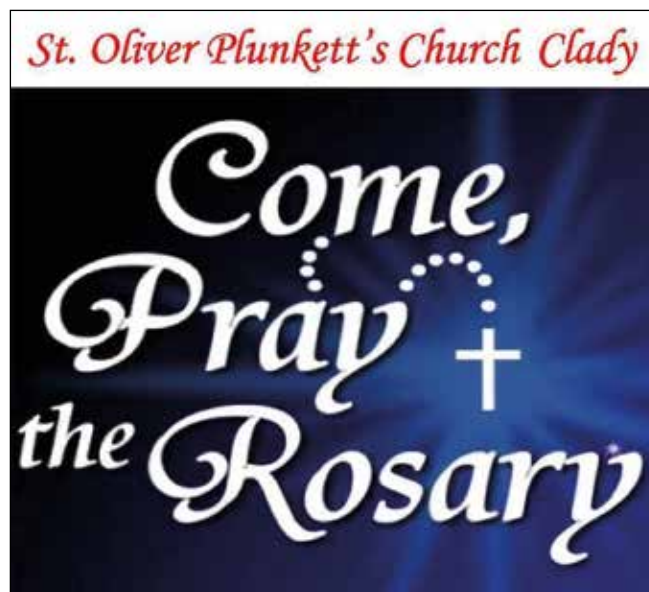
He expressed his joy at the fact that we are free nowadays to attend Mass as and when we wish. However, he noted that, sadly, too

many people choose not to come to Mass, despite the ease with which we can do so, and without the need for lookouts to warn of the menace of approaching Redcoats!

Some parishioners walked to the Mass Rock as their ancestors would have done, and on a path taken by many who paid a weekly visit to the old church at Greenlough when it was still in use, which was up to the early 1980s.

Fr Pat thanked all those who had organised this year's gathering at Scroggy Mass Rock, and all who had helped in any way, providing benches and chairs for the congregation. The impromptu choir was commended for leading the singing, and the Lord was thanked for the very pleasant evening weather.

All being well, this will not be the last Mass on this ancient and hallowed site but, God willing, the first of what will be an annual Parish celebration of our faith in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist; "...the source and summit of our faith" (Second Vatican Council).



Greenlough Rosary Group celebrates first anniversary

THE first anniversary of praying the Rosary every Tuesday night in St Oliver Plunkett's Church, has been celebrated by Greenlough parishioners.

On Tuesday, September 30, after reciting the Rosary prayers, the mixed gathering of children and adults enjoyed some light refreshments to mark their first year of praying Our Lady's Rosary together every week.

Anyone is welcome to come

along to the parish Church at 7.30 pm every Tuesday for this special time of prayer, particularly during October, which the Church dedicates to the Rosary.

Pope Leo has called for the Rosary to be prayed daily during October for peace: "I invite everyone, each day of the month, to pray the Rosary for peace – personally, in the family, and in community."



Great turnout for Lavey Year of Hope Walk to Holy Year Cross

THERE was a great response from the people of Lavey to the Year of Hope Walk on the evening of Sunday, September 7.

From little children in prams to teenagers, families of all ages and more senior parishioners, there was a great representation of the parish community as the pilgrim walk set off from St Mary's Church in celebration of the Jubilee Year of Hope.

They walked to the Holy Year Cross at Hall Lane (Scullion's Hill), in the townland of Mayogall, via the site where the St Patrick Bell was recovered.

The walk concluded with a short prayer service led by Fr Eamon Graham, Lavey PP, which included the re-dedication of the 1950 Holy Year Cross.



Lavey Parish Priest, Fr James McGlynn with parishioners at the dedication of the Holy Year Cross in 1950

Young Writers share thoughts...

THIS month, James shares the amazing experience of his first visit to Rome coinciding with the canonisations of Sts Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati, and the hope it has given him for the future of the Church.

Focusing on how Jesus forgave sinners and guided countless souls during His ministry on Earth, Seán writes about how, as Christians, we have a duty to be merciful and forgiving in the face of sin.

With October known, in the Church, as the Month of the Rosary, Erin writes about this and her love of praying the Rosary with others, while Niamh reflects on the legacy of Mother Teresa and how her messages can be lived out today.

Impacted by the experience of attending the celebration of Latin Mass for the first time, Harry shares what stood out for him, particularly the reverence.



Cara-leigh Doherty - Derry City Deanery
Bronagh Doherty, Co Derry Deanery
Peter Grant, Inishowen Deanery
John Augustine Joseph, Derry City Deanery
James Tourish, Derry City Deanery
Erin Whoriskey, Derry City Deanery



Bláthnaid McMenamin - Co Tyrone Deanery
Carragh O'Donnell, Derry City Deanery
Evan Curran, Derry City Deanery
Seán McLaughlin, Co Tyrone Deanery
Niamh Sharkey, Derry City Deanery
Harry Mason, Derry City Deanery
Luke Doherty, Inishowen Deanery

The Latin Mass by Harry

RECENTLY, I had the privilege of going to the ICKSP (Institute of Christ The King Sovereign Priest), a Catholic Order offering the Latin Mass in Fortwilliam, Belfast, with a good friend of mine, James Tourish. It was a great experience to participate in the Mass of my ancestors, and not only my ancestors but the saints also! I would like to highlight some of the key features which I really liked and why.

Firstly, the Roman chasuble, which has a Cross on the back reminding us of what we are participating in. The very representation of the cross in the sacrifice of the Mass, which we seem to have forgotten, also reminds us too of how much Jesus really loves us! A less important but valid reason as well is that the Roman chasubles tend to be more aesthetically pleasing. We can encounter God through beauty; something which our modern world has lost hold of.

Secondly, in the Latin Mass, the priest faces the East (Ad orientem), which makes us not focus on the priest. As Pope Benedict XVI said: "We don't become a closed in community", but rather we are all focused and turned to God outwardly and inwardly. Genesis 2:8 describes the Garden of Eden being in the East as well, so facing East signifies our yearning to return to paradise.

Another, and final, reason is that the sun rises in the East, which is a symbol for the 'light of Christ', so it symbolises our turning away

from darkness and to the light of The Risen Christ. Furthermore, the Latin Mass has a great deal of silence as the priest prays in a low voice and there are very little responses.

Cardinal Sarah offers us a reason why this is: "Silence is not the absence of noise but the manifestation of the presence of God!" Let us consider also, after a long, noisy day at school and work, that we may rather prefer to go to Mass with silence, to allow us to encounter the divine.

Lastly, the great reverence for the Eucharist in the Latin Mass. There were altar rails, at which everyone knelt. The rail also had cloth over it for reception of the Eucharist, with the altar boys using patens.

Why all this? Well, it is simple. I think it communicates to us that what we are receiving is not just a lovely, round piece of wafer, but really God Himself; the Bread of Angels.

So, does God not deserve our worship and reverence? Yes, it is His very due which we owe Him, as Flannery O'Connor said: "If the Eucharist is just a symbol to hell with it!"



Rome...new Saints...and thoughts of an Irish Pilgrim on the Jubilee by James

FROM my experience anyway, it is no coincidence that Rome rhymes with the word 'home'. It was my first time in the Eternal City in September and, quite simply, it was a whirlwind of a few days that I shall never forget. Arriving on the afternoon of the seventh, travelling with my friend Matthew from university (an ecumenical Anglican by the way!), we just missed the Canonisation Mass for Pier Giorgio Frassati and Carlo Acutis. However, I got to watch the special event on the train into Rome, getting to St Peter's Square at about three o'clock.

With still a vast amount of pilgrims there, and the banners of now St Carlo and St Pier Giorgio on the balconies, there existed an air of enthusiasm - a sense of renewal, even. My red hair and white skin most definitely stood out, as when we attempted to get to St Peter's, we took the wrong route, ending up in a seminary called the Pontifical Urban University, where we were helped by a seminarian, who Matthew kept calling 'Father', to actually get into the Vatican.

We spoke about the new Saints, his time in Rome, and how there was violence back in his home country, with me recounting how we would often pray for South Sudan at our Masses back home. Indeed, once ordained, he told us he would likely be sent back to his home nation, back from the peaceful and angelic environment of Rome. I can only imagine the hardship that that might entail, but I also consider the fortitude of some of the men that God has called to serve His people. We think we can have it tough where we are, but my conversation with him opened my eyes and I haven't stopped pondering on it.

Universality

Arriving to the Piazza di San Pietro, and gazing upon the Basilica, I couldn't have felt more fulfilled. It was a moment that felt unreal. Being there, where so many Popes and millions of Saints had been before, I felt the true universality of the Church; a theme that I shall touch upon throughout this story of pilgrimage. So many people of different nationalities and cultures, yet all here, walking on the same cobbled stones and united by our Catholic faith.

I took in the feeling, sent a few postcards from the Vatican Post Office, and tried to embrace everything that I was seeing. For those who haven't been, I cannot recommend it enough. We would spend the rest of the night, and

perhaps early morning, in an Irish bar with a newly married couple from Letterkenny, and some lovely Americans too. However, no late night would stop us from getting to what we had planned for the next day, a tour of the Scavi crypts underneath St Peter's Basilica; something limited to only a few dozen pilgrims each day, apparently.

Seeing the history of the Church, among other things, was incredible. Tombs and family crypts dating back to the first centuries of the Church, gave me a tangible sense of how old this institution really is. The landmark sight though, of course, was seeing the tomb of St Peter. Indeed, upon seeing this, one can only draw their mind back to scripture, "And I tell you, you are Peter and, on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it". There is no coincidence as to where the central Basilica of Catholicism stands. Indeed, those who know their scripture, know that before being called Peter, the first disciples of them all was called Simon. What does Peter, or 'Petros', mean in Greek? Rock. Before my eyes, I literally was viewing the rock that Christ had spoke about, and the Church that He had founded Himself.

Walking up the steps from the underground of the Vatican, and seeing the inside of St Peter's Basilica for the first time, was special. Firstly, it is far bigger than what it looks like from the outside. Secondly, just the art and the general aesthetics is transcendent, like nothing I had ever seen before. I was lucky enough to get the whole Catholic experience, with Confession and Mass at the altar of the Dove of the Holy Spirit, one of the most famous altars in the Basilica. It was a nice Mass, however on this trip I must confess there are a few things that I came across, which I was rather displeased with.

Reverence

Firstly, there has been somewhat of a commercialisation of the Church, with things appearing to be more 'touristy', than for tourists. With the gift shops selling over-priced rosaries, a lack of reverence in the churches and a lack of modesty too, I wondered that in all of these beautiful and historic churches in Rome, how many of the people were actually praying, and paying any attention to the presence of God. Yes, the art, the architecture and the marble are all fantastic, but the greatest thing in all of these Churches was being



largely ignored, our Lord Jesus Christ in the tabernacle. There was a general lack of reverence, genuflections were few and far between.

It upset me quite a bit that, in the Church of St Ignatius, a Church with a large ceiling fresco and beautiful side altars, there exists a mirror in the middle of the Church, for people to take photos that reflect the image of the beautiful frescos on the ceiling. With a long, long line of people queuing for the mirror, I could only think of how many of these people would be in the queue for Communion the next Sunday, or for Confession any time. I mustered up the courage, after asking God for help to do so, to ask some people if they had any faith and if 'any of this really meant anything to them'. There was a mixed response and most were dismissive, however, I hope that I at least made some people think. I also hope that I was not being too harsh, or judging.

The worst instance of irreverence took place at the Mass in St Peter's, where I saw tourists line up for communion

and, upon it being placed in their hands, they held it up, puzzled as to what to do with it. Sadly, they were instructed to eat it by one of the ushers, despite the obvious fact that they weren't Catholic. With sincerity, seeing sacrilege in St Peter's deeply affected me, and I hope not to cause scandal, but just to convey a feeling that I left Rome with.

There needs to be a greater emphasis in the Church, from both the laity and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, on the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. If only all these tourists in Rome, as well as the nominal Catholics back home, knew that at Mass we truly receive our Lord, His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, then surely every Mass would be packed and the pews would not be empty. A liturgical experience that reflects the sacredness of the Mass, the time where Heaven meets Earth, should be highly desired, not for our own enjoyment or entertainment, but for the humble and solemn worship of our Lord.

Young Writers share thoughts...

Do small things with great love...We can live Mother Teresa's message in our families, parishes and schools today *by Niamh*

WHEN we think of people who changed the world, it is easy to imagine political leaders, celebrities, or inventors. But one of the most inspiring figures of the 20th century was a small woman in a white and blue sari, who dedicated her entire life to serving the poor: Mother Teresa. Even though she never held public office, made blockbuster movies, or invented new technology, her impact is huge. Her life shows us what happens when someone chooses to live out the Gospel in a really radical way.

Mother Teresa was born as Anjezë Gonxhe Bojaxhiu on August 26, 1910, in Skopje. She grew up in a Catholic family and, even as a kid, she was known for being kind and prayerful. When she was 18, she joined the Sisters of Loreto; an order of nuns that sent her to India to teach at a girls' school in Calcutta. Teaching was important to her, but she felt God calling her to something more.

While riding a train in 1946, she had what she described as her "call within a call." She felt Jesus asking her to leave the convent school and go serve the poorest of the poor directly. That moment completely changed her life.

In 1950, she founded the Missionaries of Charity, a religious congregation that would become famous all over the world. Their mission was simple but challenging: to serve "the poorest of the poor." The sisters wore simple white saris, with blue stripes, a symbol of humility and service. Mother Teresa and her sisters opened homes for the dying, orphanages, clinics, and schools. They took in people who had been abandoned, sick, or forgotten by society. For her, every single person mattered, no matter how sick, dirty, or poor they were. She believed she was serving Christ Himself in each person that she helped, often repeating the words of Jesus:

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Her work didn't stay hidden in India for long. People around the world noticed her compassion and courage. In 1979, she received the Nobel Peace Prize. Instead of using the award ceremony to talk about herself, she used it to speak about the dignity of human life and the importance of love. She shocked some people when she spoke against abortion, saying that the greatest destroyer of peace was the killing of unborn children. Whether people agreed with her or not, they couldn't deny that she always stood up for those who had no voice.

Of course, Mother Teresa wasn't without controversy. Some critics argued that her homes didn't provide the best medical care, or that she accepted money from questionable sources. Others didn't like her strong stance on moral issues. But even

with criticism, she remained focused on her mission. Her personal letters, published after her death, revealed that she experienced years of spiritual dryness, times when she didn't feel God's presence. But instead of giving up, she kept serving. That is something that makes her even more relatable: she wasn't perfect or always overflowing with joy, but she kept choosing love anyway.

Mother Teresa died on September 5, 1997, at the age of 87. Millions mourned her passing, and her funeral was attended by world leaders, but also by countless ordinary people whose lives she touched. In 2016, Pope Francis canonized her as Saint Teresa of Calcutta. Today, the Missionaries of Charity continue her work in more than 130 countries. Their presence reminds us that holiness isn't about doing big, flashy things, but about small acts of love done with

great devotion.

For us, as young Catholics, Mother Teresa's story is both inspiring and challenging. It is easy to think that we can't make much of a difference because we are not famous or powerful. But Mother Teresa shows us that real change starts with love, smiling at someone who feels alone, helping a friend in need, or volunteering our time. She once said, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love." That's a message we can definitely live out in our schools, families, and parishes today.

Carrying her message into our own lives doesn't mean moving to India or starting a religious order, it starts small, right where we are. We can look for Christ in the people around us: the classmate who usually sits alone, the family member who is stressed, the stranger we would rather ignore. Choosing to notice them, to show kindness, and to put their



needs before our own is living out Mother Teresa's mission in a real way. If we each take her challenge seriously - To do small things with great love - then our schools, parishes, and communities will slowly but surely be transformed. That is how her legacy continues; not just in history books, but in the way we decide to love today.

As followers of Christ we have duty to be merciful and forgiving in face of sin *by Seán*

OUR faith asks of us many qualities, and I believe one that requires greater attention is the virtue of compassion. We aim to follow in the example of Christ as well as we can, and therefore, compassion and kindness should be lined in every crevice of our daily doings.

There is more to Catholicism than accepting Jesus as the Son of God - that is only one step towards righteousness. It takes more than belief; it requires action and conviction. Someone can accept Christ but not necessarily live up to His example. No-one every truly will, but the attempt to do so in every way that we can is what matters more.

Looking around, it is easy to sight trespasses of morality, but it is our forgiveness of that which outlines our own worth as Christians. In Ephesians 4:32, it is written: "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, as Christ God forgave you."

God came to Earth to live as we do because He had pity and was merciful, seeking to give us the opportunity to find eternal peace and happiness, despite our natural faults. Christ forgave countless sinful people, guided thousands, and His legacy went on to inspire the thinking of

billions. He forgave adulterers, tax collectors, Roman legionaries, the thief on the cross, Mary Magdalene and many others.

The point is - to live like Christ, we cannot be constantly critical of everyone's actions. Guidance is fine, but excessive condemnation seems un-Christian. It is clearly said in Matthew 7:1 - "Do not judge or you too will be judged. For in the same way as you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

While there are limits to tolerance of certain actions or behaviour, the more I observe the people of this Earth, the more reason I find to love them - God's finest creations. I, or anyone else, have no right to point out the faults of another while ignoring my own. In Matthew 7:3, it is

written: "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"

It is not sinful to recognise the wrong in others. Sometimes that wrong needs to be publicized or called out, but as followers of Christ we have a duty to have mercy and forgiveness in the face of sin. Showing compassion and love is always to be at the forefront of our faith.

To conclude, I think it is vital to acknowledge the words in 1 Peter 3:8, which read: "Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing."

**"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, as Christ God forgave you."
(Ephesians 4:32)**

The Month of The Rosary *by Erin*

WITHIN the Catholic Church, each month is traditionally dedicated to a certain devotion. The month of October is devoted to the Holy Rosary. The liturgical Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary is celebrated on October 7, which honours Mary, our Mother, and the protection which She gives us in the Church.

Throughout this month, the faithful are especially encouraged to honour Mary by praying the Rosary. While we are called to make an effort to pray it all year round, this month particularly being dedicated to the Rosary serves as a special reminder to incorporate it in our daily lives.

In early Christian times, beads were used by the Monks to memorise and keep track of prayers, and Catholics developed this tradition. The traditional Rosary was divided into three parts - Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries - each reflecting a different part of Jesus' life. However, in 2002, Pope John Paul II introduced the Luminous Mysteries in his Apostolic letter, 'Rosarium Virginis Mariae,' in order to fill a gap in this story of Jesus' life, focusing on Jesus' public ministry, such as the Wedding at Cana and Baptism in the Jordan.

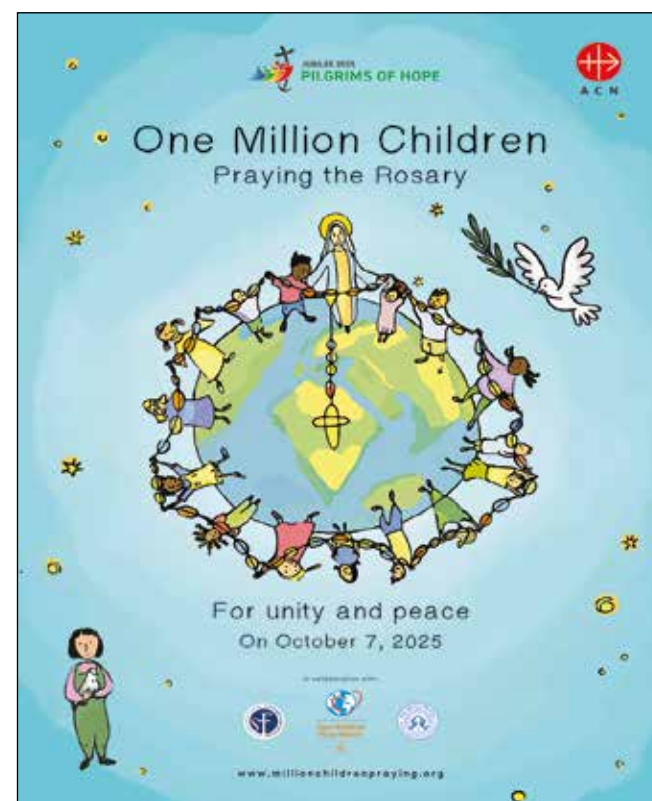
The word 'rosary' comes from the Latin 'rosarium', meaning 'rose garden' or 'crown of roses.' This imagery could symbolise the collection of prayers which create a metaphorical garden on the beads, a spiritual bouquet offered to Mary.

In October, we can celebrate the month of the Rosary by making increased efforts to pray it as much as possible, for example, on a car journey or before we go to sleep at night. Whether individually, with friends or as a family, praying together deepens faith and unity. Personally, I prefer to pray the Rosary with others as it feels like not just a personal devotion, but a shared spiritual step.

The Rosary can sometimes be misunderstood as an optional extra, particularly for those distant from the faith, however, it has the power to transform our

lives and help us to realise just how much we need God's mercy. For me, praying the Rosary helps me feel closer to Our Lady, a way of appreciating her role as our Mother and thanking Her for Her guidance in directing us towards Christ.

Recently, on September 24, Pope Leo ended his general audience by inviting Catholics to pray the Rosary daily in the month of October, particularly for peace in our troubled world. "May you be faithful instruments of reconciliation in your daily lives," he urged.



Eangach

Naomh Carlo Acutis & Naomh Pier Giorgio Frassati



Leis an Tiarna an talamh agus a lánmhaire: an domhan ar fad agus a maireann ann. Is é féin a bhunaigh ar an aigéan é: agus a dhaingnigh ar an bhfarraige íochtair é.

Cé rachaidh suas cnoc an Tiarna: Cé bheidh ina sheasamh ina ionad naofa? An té a bhfuil lámh gan smál agus croí glan aige, an té ar beag air nithe gan tairbhe: agus nach dtugann mionn éithigh dá chomharsa.

Beidh beannacht an Tiarna ar an té sin: agus luach saothair ó Dhia, a shlánaitheoir. A leithéid sin a bhíonn á lorg: a bhíonn ar thóir Dhia Iacób.

Ardaigí bhúr lindéir, a gheataí agus tóghtar na doirse cianaosta: go dtaga Rí na glóire isteach!

Cé hé an Rí seo na glóire? an Tiarna atá láidir tréan: an Tiarna atá tréan sa chomhrac.

Ardaigí bhur lindéir, a gheataí agus tóghtar na doirse cianaosta: go dtaga Rí na glóire isteach.

Cé hé an Rí seo na glóire? Is é an Tiarna é, Dia na Slua: Sin é Rí na glóire.



Lá stairiúil amach is amach a bhí ann ar an Domhnach 7ú Meán Fómhair i stair na hEaglaise nuair a bhí Canónú speisialta ar siúl sa Vatacáin, agus d'ainmnigh an Pápa Leon XIV beirt fhear ógamar Naoimh oifigiúla san Eaglais. Thiocfadh leat a rá go raibh lámh Dé ag obair, b'fhéidir, le go mbeadh an bheirt seo canónaithe ar an lá chéanna. Duine acu, Pier Giorgio Frassati, bhí sé ina éiseamláir iontach mar dhuine óg a bhí ar lasadh ar son Dé agus a thug spreagadh dá chomrádaithe fiú in uaireanta deacra. Tá an duine eile, Carlo Acutis, ar an chéad Naomh mílaoiseach. D'fhás seisear aníos ag am a raibh sé ábalta PlayStation a imirt agus tá a theaghlach go fóill beo. Bhí sé de phribhléid agam féin a bheith i láthair ar an lá le scaifte cairde as Éirinn.

Bíonn sluaite móra ina ghnáthrud sa Vatacáin. Ach é sin ráite, chonaic aon duine a bhí i láthair, nó a d'amharc ar aifreann an Chanónaithe beo ar na meáin, cé chomh mór agus a bhí an imeacht ar leith seo. Bhí muidne mar scaifte inár seasamh ó uaireanta luatha na maidine ar mhaithe lenár n-áit a fháil istigh. Taobh istigh den Chearnóg, b'fhurasta a fheiceáil chomh mór is a bhí an slua a bhí bailithe ann. Is beag spás a bhí againn le seasamh. Bhí atmaisféar ar dóigh ann fosta. Tháinig oilithrigh as achan chearn den domhan, ba chosúil, rud a bhí le feiceáil ó na bratacha a bhí ar taispeáint. Bhí muid timpeallaithe ag na colúin iontach cloiche Chearnóg N. Peadair, bhí altóir mór os ár gcomhar ar an bhealach isteach chuig an Bhaisleac, agus ar taispeáint os a chionn, bhí dhá bhratach móra ar crochadh a léirigh pictiúir Carlo agus Pier Giorgio – grianghraif díobh a tógadh nuair a bhí siad beo.

De réir a chéile, tháinig an Pápa amach le labhairt linn roimh an aifreann. Thosaigh an t-aifreann le mór-onóir agus le mórshearmanas. Tháinig slua mór cairdnéal amach leis an Phápa. Bhí ceol galánta an chóir le cluinstit go hard amhail ceol ainglí, agus chuir sé tuilleadh leis an tsearmanas. Ghlac muid páirt san aifreann ansin. Eispéreas ar leith a bhí ann, ócáid ar leith a cheiliúradh againn, Caitlicigh as achan chúlra agus náisiún in aontacht lena chéile, cóngarach do chroí na hEaglaise, mar aon leis an Phápa ar mhaithe le hÍosa a adhradh san Eocairist.

Ag tús an aifrinn, d'fhógair an Pápa go raibh an bheirt ainmnithe mar Naoimh go sollúnta. Ach cé

hiad na fir óga seo a bhí á ceiliúradh agus a tharraing na mílte a tháinig chun na Róimhe an lá sin?

Rugadh Pier Giorgio Frassati in 1901 in Turin, san Iodáil. Tógadh é i dteaghlach saibhir; bhí a athair ina bainte le cúrsaí polaitiúla agus ba thaidhleoir é, agus ba ealaiontóir í a mháthair. Ina óige, bhí croí mór ag Pier Giorgio do na boicht, agus thug daoine seo fá deara go luath ina shaol, chomh maith leis an ghrá as cuimse a bhí aige d'Íosa. Lean sé mar seo fríd a shaol, agus ba mhinic a thabharfadh sé réada dá chuid féin do dhaoine a bhí ar an ghanncuid. Nuair a d'éirigh sé ina mhac léinn, thug a athair airgead dó ar mhaithe le carr a cheannach – thug Pier Giorgio an t-airgead do dhuine agus níor cheannaigh sé an carr. Bhí seo ina ghnáthrud aige. Chomh maith, bhí sé iontach gníomhach. Ba mhian leis an creideamh a bhí aige a chur i ngníomh i gcónaí. Bhí cúrsaí an cheartais shóisialta iontach tábhachtach dó. Bhí sé ina bhall den Tríú Ord Doiminiceach. Bhí sé in eagraíochtaí caitliceacha fosta, mar shampla *Azione Cattolica* (Gníomhú Caitliceach) a throidéann ar son cearta na ndaoine atá bocht agus faoi chois. Uair amháin, gabhadh é agus é ag agóid mar chuid de Chomhdháil Óige na nOibrithe Caitliceacha sa Róimh. Bhí Pier Giorgio buartha fá smaointeoireacht a bhí ag méadú san Iodáil ag an am – an Faististeachas – agus chuir sé go láidir ina éadan, níor thug sé tacaíocht do rial Benito Mussolini nuair a tháinig sé i réim. Ní raibh sé in amhras fán olcas agus fán leatrom a bheas mar thoradh ar an íde-eolaíocht sin.

Gné amháin a sheasann amach fá Pier Giorgio ná an spreagadh agus inspioráid a thug sé dá chairde. Rinne sé achan rud ab fhéidir leis lena chreideamh a scaipeadh do dhaoine eile. Chruinnigh sé grúpa cairde, agus chuaigh ar thurais dreapadóireachta sna sléibhte. Nuair a bhí siad ann, bhíodh siad ag urnaí agus ag rá an Phaidrín. Labhair sé go hoscaile fá Íosa, fán chreideamh agus fá chúrsaí spioradálta. Bhí sé i gcónaí ag iarraidh eiseamláir mórálta a thabhairt do dhaoine eile.

Nuair nach raibh sé ach 24 bliana d'aois, fuair Pier Giorgio bás de bharr póillió (galar a fuair sé, is dócha, ó na daoine bochta a thabharfadh sé cúram dóibh). Ar lá a thórraimh, bhí iontas ar a thuismitheoirí nuair a chonaic siad na mílte duine a tháinig amach chuig na sráideanna (bhí siad ag súil le baill teaghlaigh agus cairde



continued from page 17

dá chuid) – bhí meas ag an oiread sin daoine air ar chuidigh sé leo i ngan fhios dá thuismitheoirí.

Carlo Acutis anois. Tá rud ar leith speisialta ag baint lena chása, agus is cuimhin liom duine á rá liom: is é Carlo an chéad Naomh canónaithe a bhfeicfeá ag caitheamh bróga reatha! B'fhéidir go shílfeá gur beag an méid sin, ach dá smaoinfeá air, is cruthú é sin ar an dóigh a glaonn Dia daoine in achan ghlúin.

Rugadh Carlo Acutis i Londain in 1991, le tuismitheoirí Iodálacha. Ba pháiste aonair é ag an am. Bhí a theaghlach-san saibhir go leor fosta, amhail Pier Giorgio. Bhog siad ar ais chun na hIodáile agus chuir siad fúthu fá cheantar Milano.

Ag aois óg, bhí Carlo rud beag difriúil óna thuismitheoirí. Ní raibh creideamh láidir acu. Dúirt amháthair nach raibh sí in eaglais ach trí uair ina saol – a baisteadh, an Chéad Chomaoineach s'aici, agus a Pósadh. Ar bhealach neamhghnách, bhí Carlo i gcónaí ag iarraidh dul isteach in eaglais, mar ba mhaith leis cuairt a thabhairt ar Íosa san Eocairist. Rachadh sé chuig Adhradh na Sacraiminte Naofa, chruinneodh sé le daoine leis an Phaidrín a rá, léadh sé Beathaí na Naomh, agus eile.

D'fhostaigh muintir Acutis searbhónta Hiondúch as Oileán Mhuiris – a bhí de chlann sagartach na Hiondúch, Rajesh Mohur. Tabharfadh Rajesh aire do Carlo, thabharfadh sé chun na scoile é agus eile, agus d'éirigh siad mór le chéile. Ba ghnách le Carlo labhairt leis fá Íosa agus fán chreideamh chaitliceach. I ndiaidh tamall, shocraigh Rajesh gur mhaith leis a bheith ina Chaitliceach, agus baisteadh é! Ní amháin sin, ach rinne cara Rajesh – Seven Kistnen – an rud céanna i ndiaidh di bualadh le Carlo, agus tháinig máthair Rajesh ar cuairt, agus i ndiaidh di dul ar aifreann leo, rinne sise an rud céanna! Samhlaigh sin! Cá bhfaighfeá

a leithéid? Triúir duine fásta iompaithe ina gCaitlicigh mar gheall ar eiseamláir ó pháiste. Nach iontach iad na Naomh a thógann Dia in airde in achan aois?

D'fhás Carlo Acutis aníos sa tréimhse chéanna agus a bhí borradh ag teacht ar mhodhanna teicneolaíochta atá againn inniu. Mar a luadh ag tús an ailt, bhí dúil aige sa PlayStation, agus sna cluichí ríomhaire. Shíl Carlo go n-úsáidfadh sé a chuid buanna ríomhaireachta le hÍosa chur i láthair daoine. Rinne sé staidéar go dian ar chúrsaí ríomhaireachta (leabhair ag leibhéal ollscoile) agus chruthaigh sé suíomh idirlín atá go fóill ann, inar chláraigh sé eolas ar mhíorúiltí Eocairisteacha agus míorúiltí Mhuire ar fud na cruinne. Leanadh lena chuid oibre i ndiaidh a bháis, agus tá dúshuim ag daoine sa taispeántas seo a chruthaigh sé. Is léir do níos mó daoine anois, go bhfuil Íosa i láthair – i bhfírinne – san Eocairist.

Thit Carlo tinn de bharr an Leukemia, agus fuair sé bás nuair nach raibh sé ach 15 bliana d'aois. D'ofráil sé a chuid fulaingtí “ar son an Phápa agus na hEaglaise” agus dúirt sé “faighim bás le síocháin mar nár chuir mé bomaite amú le nithe nach dtaitníonn leis an Tiarna”. De bharr a eiseamláire, tháinig a thuismitheoirí ar ais chuig an chreideamh, agus i ndiaidh a bháis, rugadh cúpla dóibh. Rud fíorannamh, bhí a thuismitheoirí, a dheartháir agus a dheirfiúr uilig i láthair ag an Chanónú.

Cad é atá le foghlaim uaidh seo uilig? Cuid mhór is dócha. Tá Dia chomh maith sin dúinn, agus cineálta. Seo glaoch a chuirtear orainn – bímis inár Naomh. Is féidir linn é a dhéanamh. A dhaoine óga, bíodh misneach oraibh agus caithigí bhur saoil ar son Íosa. Anois, tá eiseamláir againn, agus cuideoidh an dá Naomh seo linn ó Neamh.

A Naomh Carlo, agus a Naomh Pier Giorgio – guígí ar ár son!



An Pápa Leon ag ceiliúradh na hEocairiste



Cearnóg Naomh Peadair ar an lá



An Pápa á bhfógairt mar Naomh



Deartháir óg Carlo - Michele - a léigh an chéad léacht



Bellaghy pilgrims honour St Thaddeus with Church Island prayer



ON Sunday, September 7, around 80 people, young and old, braved the torrential rain to make the annual parish pilgrimage to Church Island; a small island off Lough Beg, one-and-a-half miles from Bellaghy.

The ruins of a medieval church survive on the island, the tower and spire of which was built for Bishop Harvey in the late 1700s.

The Feast Day of St Thaddeus falls on September 7, and the local annual pilgrimage to the island in honour of the Saint still takes place on the first Sunday in September. So, on Sunday, September 7, this year, a number of people braved the elements and made their way out to the island.

Some walked from the meeting point, while others made their way on a trailer drawn by a tractor, driven by Bernard McKenna. The parish priest, Fr Pat O'Hagan, was taken across the field in a small agricultural vehicle driven by Francis Hughes.


Once there, Fr Pat welcomed everybody and thanked them for turning out in such a big number, despite the rain and the mucky field. He invited them to thank God for blessings already received, including the faith of the monks who established the settlement there, on what was an island in the days before the water levels of Lough Beg were lowered.

He also mentioned the devotion of all those who have handed the faith down the generations, with the challenge that we are now the people who must do the same for present and future generations.

Prayers were offered for the intentions of the families of those present, and for all our parishioners, as well as for all those suffering injustice, oppression, and the deprivation of their human rights. The poor, sick, and needy were remembered, as were the dead.

Fr Pat led a celebration of The Stations of the Cross, followed by a decade of the Rosary for an increase in vocations to the diocesan priesthood.

This year's pilgrimage was enhanced by an Apostolic Blessing received from His Holiness Pope Leo XIV.



His Holiness Pope Leo XIV

sends greetings of good wishes to the

clergy and lay faithful of the

Parish of Bellaghy-Ballyscullion

on the occasion of the Church Island Sunday pilgrimage

and prays that this event of hope be an occasion

for the faithful to open their hearts to spiritual renewal,


grow in zeal for spreading the Gospel and

promote Christian charity among their brothers and sisters.

The Holy Father cordially imparts his Apostolic Blessing

as a pledge of abundant joys and peace

in our Lord Jesus Christ


Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor
Apostolic Nuncio

7 September 2025

Creggan nine-day St Pio Novena a blessed time

THE annual St Pio Novena in St Mary's Parish, Creggan, was yet again a great blessing for the parishioners and all who joined in.

Attendances at the early and mid-morning Masses, and the evening Novena prayers, reflected the continued widespread and deep devotion to St Pio of Pietrelcina, whose Feast Day is September 23.

A blessed image and mitt relic of the Capuchin friar, who was known as a stigmatist and mystic, was on display in the sanctuary, and many queued for a time of private prayer before it.

The nine-day Novena, seeking the intercession of St Pio, was also an encouraging time for the priests of the Parish: Fr Daniel McFaul PP; Fr Ignacy Saniuta CC; and the retired Fr Gerry White, who happily helped to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Celebrating the mid-morning Mass on the closing day of the Novena, Fr Ignacy spoke of how St Pio spent hours every day hearing Confessions, "bringing people back to God's Mercy."

He noted that the Italian friar always "carried a Rosary in his hands" and described it as "a weapon for our times."

"He encouraged people to pray and trust in God," said Fr Ignacy, going on to quote Padre Pio telling people to 'Pray, Hope and Don't Worry'."

After the Mass, some of those attending the Novena shared their thoughts on St Pio with 'The Net'.

Married 56 years, Creggan

couple, Susan and Eugene McDaid spoke of their lifelong devotion to Padre Pio and how he doesn't let them down when they pray for his intercession.

"I prayed to him during a time of sickness and he brought me through it," recalled Eugene.

Charles Tierney, of Creggan, said that he was devoted to Padre Pio for a long time, and carried his prayer card around with him, in his phone.

Creggan lady, Catherine Fisher got to know of St Pio through a friend who was devoted to him: "Her aunt had one of his mitts. I had a lump on my breast a few years ago and I prayed so hard to him, and it ended up that it was nothing, thank God."

I remember my father, who had a great devotion to Padre Pio, asking me for the prayer leaflet that I had with his relic on it, and I totally refused as I couldn't let go of it. Years later, I heard that you should pass on your prayers. I always felt bad about that."

Bob Shepard became a devotee of Padre Pio many years ago, through his late wife, Peggy.

"My journey with Padre Pio has been up and down," said the Derry-adopted American, "Sometimes I get angry with him, but he is always there, and I have had many prayers answered through his intercession."

Blessing

Saying that his mother-in-law, Cissie, had had a great devotion to Padre Pio, Bob recalled this incident: "She worked in the shirt factory and was collecting Rosary

beads to send off to Padre Pio for a blessing. One woman that she asked if she wanted to send her beads, said 'no' as she had no belief in him. So, Cissie sent off a pair of Rosary beads on her behalf anyway, along with the rest, and they were the only pair that did not come back!"

Along with Bob was Creggan parishioner and long-time Padre Pio devotee, Kevin Payne, the husband of Bob's late wife's niece, and he recalled being at St Pio's tomb in San Giovanni, when his body had been exhumed.

"I went out of curiosity with my daughter, Louise, on a pilgrimage led by Sean Mulrine," said Kevin, adding: "I was really impacted by the actual experience of seeing so many people queue up to view his body, and when we went in the hairs on my head stood up. Louise found the smell of roses."

"It was a very emotional experience. There was definitely something special there. The only time I got a feeling like it since was during an audience with Pope Benedict XVI in St Peter's Square."

Bob's daughter, Shelaine was also present and she shared a special encounter with Padre Pio when she was only six years old and, just six weeks before, had been knocked down by a car, along with her eight-year-old sister, Maria.

Recalling the incident, Shelaine said: "Maria was flung up into the air and hit the bonnet, and I went underneath the car. It was six weeks before my cousin, Geraldine and Kevin's wedding

in 1987, at which both of us were to be flower-girls.

"Maria was able to walk up the aisle, but daddy carried me, as I was in plaster to the top of my leg. I was set down in the front seat beside my mother, in Creggan Chapel. It was the old design of the chapel, with the side aisles, and when I looked over to the left side aisle I saw a woman sitting there, with a man in a brown robe beside her, who was looking over at me. I asked mummy who the man was, but she couldn't see him. It was a real man, not ghost-like, and he was there the whole time, sitting beside Betty, who was there because she knew my cousin who was getting married."

"The woman was called Betty Beals and she had one of Padre Pio's mitts. She also had the stigmata on her hands, and I remember mummy saying that people went to her for healing."

Now a St Pio devotee herself, Shelaine went on to recall that a lot of the trauma she had felt following the car accident left her at that time, when she saw the man in brown robes at the family wedding at Creggan Chapel. Her family believe that it was Padre Pio, not only because he was beside devotee, Betty Beals, but also because her mother, Peggy had been praying to the Saint for the six weeks prior to the wedding, that her daughters would have recovered enough to attend. In addition, the bride, Geraldine, now deceased, also had a great devotion to him.



Christ The King centenary celebration

IN February 2025, under the blessings of Archbishop Eamon Martin and Bishop Donal McKeown, and led by Fr Antonio and the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, with support from local clergy, the Benedictines, Carmelites and Servant of God Sr Clare Crockett's Home of the Mother Order, and 5,000 devotees, Derry led the world in the first Worldwide Eucharistic procession.

Over 70 parishes, across six continents, joined in unity, from Medjugorje to Mexico, America to Africa, Singapore to Spain; a spectacle which grabbed the attention of the world's Christian media. On Sunday, November 23, Derry will replicate this phenomenal celebration of the Catholic faith for the 100th anniversary of the Feast of Christ The King.

Already, many parishes across Ireland and further afield are again signing up to join in unity, with either a Eucharistic procession, Adoration or Holy Mass, making

this another worldwide celebration of our Eucharistic Lord.

Once again, we have the support of Bishop Donal, who will lead the Eucharistic Procession. The programme starts with 24-hour Adoration in Termonbacca Carmelite Monastery from 8 am on Saturday, November 22, ending with Holy Mass at 8 am on Sunday, November 23. This will be followed by the celebration of Holy Mass at St Columba's Chapel, Long Tower, at 12 noon, by Fr Gerard Mongan, and then Benediction at 1 pm, with the procession to begin after that.

The procession will go through the centre of Derry City to the Peace Bridge, then onto the Quay, where three boats will carry Bishop Donal and clergy along the Foyle River to the three bridges. This is in commemoration of all those in Ireland who died through suicide, which has sadly touched the hearts of so many across the island and beyond.

Then, the procession will carry on to Ebrington Square, where

Benediction, led by Bishop Donal, will be followed by choir singing, and an afternoon of praise and worship.

The procession is not only in honour of Christ The King, but also a youth celebration. Already the organisers are contacting all the local schools and youth groups to come to join in this day of celebration. We want to give our children something to guide them to God, to give a message of hope in a world that is full of despair and anxiety.

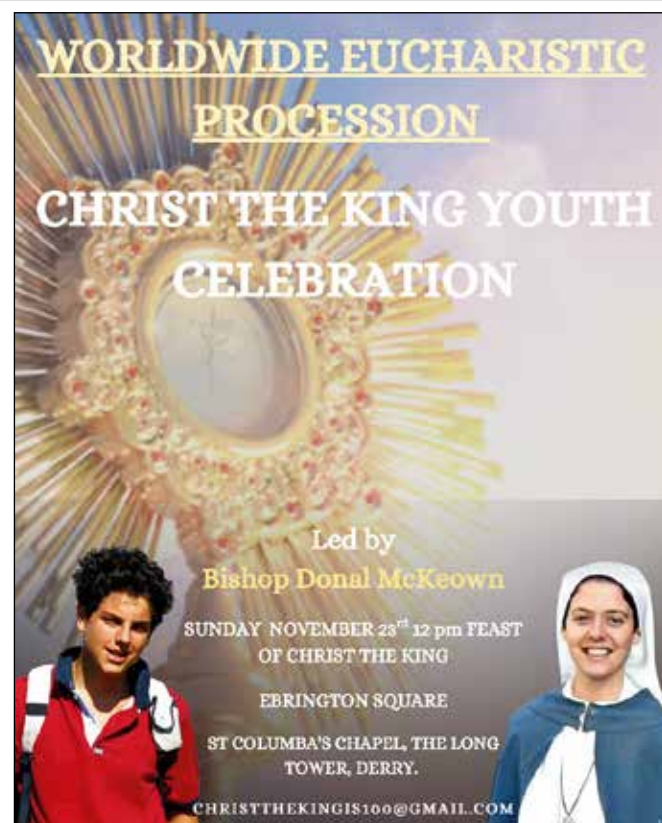
This procession is a message of 'Love'; a spark that will pass the flame of love from heart to heart, to show the youth that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and that light is the light from the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart.

So many local prayer groups, and from all over Ireland, have pledged their commitment to be there, such as St Vincent de Paul, Legion of Mary, HLI Ireland, Precious Life, Cursillo, Search, Spark, Youth 2000, Mary's Meals, the Men's Rosary, Servant of God

Clare Crockett's Prayer Group, the Children's Rosary, Children of the Eucharist, Walk to Knock pilgrims, as well as Holy Face and Holy Souls prayer groups.

Radio Maria, The NET newspaper and many other media outlets will be there to cover the procession. Irish and international YouTube channel hosts are all booked to come to Derry, once again, to give global exposure, as Derry lifts the baton that was passed on to us by previous generations, who chose the crown of martyrdom rather than denounce their faith. This may well be the flame that St Patrick foreseen, that would spark from the North of Ireland and spread throughout the whole land, then onto to all nations.

Please bring all your family, especially the youth, for a day of joy and celebration as we stand together in unity as Christians from all over Ireland to shout out that there is only one King, and that King is Christ the King.



Remembering Galliagh legend Lynn Porter...whose smile brightened as many lives as candles she lit in faith

THE family and friends of the late Lynn Porter, and the Galliagh community in Derry, where she lived, are still missing her beaming smile and lively presence, particularly in and around her beloved St Joseph's Church.

Lynn was only 52 when she passed away peacefully in Altnagelvin Hospital on March 21 this year, following a series of strokes.

Such is the feeling of loss in the community, that many attended and appreciated the erection of a little memorial to Lynn in the grounds of Galliagh chapel, near to St Pio House, where she went often to be amongst her faith friends and her beloved Franciscan Friars of the Renewal.

Her older sister, Bernie Robinson recalled how good the Friars had been to Lynn and how they visited her while she was in hospital, praying for and encouraging her to get well soon, asking her who was going to open the post for them.

"Fr Francesco was her favourite," said Bernie, "and he had visited her on the Friday before she died. She was able to speak to him, but had lost her power of speech before Fr Thomas and the others got over."

"She wasn't able to speak either to her wee friend, Shauna Clifford, who had been delayed in getting to visit her because she uses a wheelchair and had difficulty in getting a lift. But it was as if Lynn was waiting on her to come, because she passed away a few minutes after Shauna made it in."

Fr Sean O'Donnell, who was still ministering at the time in Three Patrons and residing at St Brigid's, in neighbouring Carnhill, was another favourite of Lynn's, and Bernie expressed relief that her sister didn't have to go through the sure heartbreak of saying goodbye to Fr Sean, when he was appointed parish priest of Melmound and Sion Mills, and to the Franciscan Friars, Fr Francesco and Fr Thomas, who were also appointed to ministries further afield - London and Limerick, respectively.

Youngest

Lynn was the youngest of 10 - five girls and five boys. Her father, Andy, died in 2001, aged 75, and her mother, Mary, whom she was very close to, died in November 2023, aged 88. She was also predeceased by two sisters, Maureen and Ann, and her brother, Eddie.

Returning home to Derry from Australia in 2018, with her husband, David, and daughter,

Lauren, Bernie said that they moved in to live with Lynn, to care for her when their mother went into residential care in 2021.

"During those four years, Lynn travelled with us around England, then we did a cruise in Hawaii, before travelling around Australia for a month. She loved going places and flying."

"She loved football, especially Liverpool and Mo Salah, and Derry City FC. Our late brother, Eddie would have taken her to some of the games. She loved life. She loved music and dancing, and would have been the first on the dance floor. For her 50th, we had a big party at the Gransha Club and the Friars came to it."

The affection with which Lynn was held by so many was reflected in the large turnout for her Requiem Mass in St Joseph's, with a number of priests and the Franciscan Friars concelebrating.

Delivering the homily, Fr Sean, noted that Lynn was born on September 9, 1972 and, as "the baby of the house" was "spoiled rotten". She attended Belmont House School and loved it, and then went on to attend Maybrook Adult Training Centre, where she "enjoyed the craic, getting out and meeting new people". She also loved her SpREd group.

Fr Sean went on to recall: "From as far back as 1994 and up until 2008, before I went to seminary, I can remember driving the bus for the SVP Senior Citizens Day Trip organised by Mary McLaughlin, and Lynn with her mother, May, were always both there. We used to call her the youngest OAP on the trip!"

From she was about 16, Lynn had been an assistant at the St Joseph's Playgroup, run by Sr Declan and Vivienne, for over 30 years, and "loved the kids and singing," said Fr Sean, quoting Lynn's favourite saying: "Happy days."

He added: "She worked also in Galliagh Co-op and a few nursing homes. She loved working with old people, and would chat away to them and keep them entertained."

The Chapel

"But, Lynn's big love," he highlighted, "was the chapel. She went with her mum and dad any chance she got, and then she would go over herself, all the time. She loved to do

her Stations of the Cross, and lighting candles for everyone in Galliagh, especially her wee friends, Peggy and Eileen.

"Every priest, from Father Keaveny and Fr Mullan, to Msgr McCanny and Fr Gerard [Mongan], when he was a deacon and then again as a priest, up to us the most recent priests, had Lynn's assistance always on hand, from the days of getting post for them and, most of all, watching 'her chapel'."

"She loved it when the Holy Fathers came for the retreats to Galliagh; they were all so good to her. She loved having the friars here. But her favourite was Father Francesco. Her wee face would just light up when she saw him."



"Everyone who frequented the chapel really took great care of Lynn and had time for a chat with her," added Fr Sean, "She spoke to everyone, and was always smiling. Except when Brendan Kerr was changed from doing the baskets on one side, with Lynn covering the other at the Saturday night Mass, to read on Sunday mornings for a while. When he returned, there was a tug of war between them for the basket, as Lynn had taken over covering the two sides!"

"She would help Emma in the sacristy, and the other sacristans before her, and she loved to sing all the time. In her own key of course! She joined the folk group with George Kerrigan and just loved it. Every time she saw George, she would say, 'When is the folk group getting back together?'"

"You could never pass the chapel and not see Lynn standing there, rain or shine. She had her spot outside, from where she could observe in one swoop: the chapel; the co-op; the nursery; the friary; and the hall. She was better than a PTZ camera. We will have to install one now to carry on Lynn's work!"

SVP Box

Fr Sean went on to recount a memory Mgr McCanny had

shared with him regarding Lynn and an occasion when a lad decided to take one of the old metal SVP boxes after Mass: "Lynn saw him make off with it and, running after him, clung to the box so much that he final dropped her and it, and made off. She proudly came back to the parochial house to tell Fr Bryan how she had saved the box. That's our Lynn! Even on holidays, she had to get into a chapel and light candles and get a few leaflets to add to her mountain of a collection."

Referring to bins as another passion of Lynn's, Fr Sean said: "The neighbours on the street would be informed by Lynn every week which bin it was, and to make sure they brought them back in again. Lynn's bin had to be first, she could make an Olympic sport of it."

At this point, he recalled a story that Vivienne had shared about the bins and Lynn when she was at the Playgroup: "One day there was a bit of rubbish left in the bin after being emptied, and Lynn couldn't have this. Next thing Vivienne knew, Lynn was head first into the bin, and all you saw was her feet sticking out."

He added: "So many of you here today could tell story after story about Lynn. Cherish those now, they are precious memories. The amount of posts on social media really spoke of our wee Lynn, who will always be remembered as that 'wee Galliagh legend'."

Summing up, Fr Sean said: "Our first reading from Proverbs 31 speaks of a woman of strength and dignity, whose hands reach out to the needy, whose heart is full of faith. That was Lynn. She didn't just live her life, she shared it."

"St Paul's words to the Thessalonians remind us that we do not grieve as those without hope. Lynn's faith was her anchor, her chapel her home. She lived for those Stations of the Cross, those moments of prayer, those retreats with the Holy Fathers, the Holy Mass. And now, as Jesus promises in John 14, she can enter that dwelling place prepared for her. 'Do not let your hearts be troubled,' He says. 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.'"

Later on, in July, Fr Sean, along with Fr Gerard Mongan and the Franciscan Friars, led a memorial service for Lynn during the planting of a pink (her favourite colour) Cherry Blossom tree, near to St Pio House, which will bloom around the time of her anniversary.

Lynn is survived by her siblings, Bernie, Barbara, Liam, Seamus, Phil and Pius. May she rest in peace.



Michael O'Neill pays tribute to his late uncle...

Fr Seamus O'Neill – A gentle soul and committed fisherman for Jesus and others

“He was a gentle presence, a fisherman, an amateur pilot, and a quiet industrious missionary.”

THIS brief reflection was the final tribute of Seamus' Columban brothers and was a fitting and appropriate summary of a wonderful priest. In many ways it mirrored his ability to deliver an impactful message in few words, something for which he was renowned.

A native of Ballinascreen, Seamus was born on October 2, 1932, in Dungiven, where his mother taught in Cashel Primary School. He was the first born of five children of Andrew and Mary Brigid. He continued his education in St Columb's College, Derry, before following in the footsteps of fellow parishioner, Fr Michael Kelly (ordained 1935, died 1976), by joining the Missionary Society of St Columban. He entered the Seminary in Dalgan Park, Navan, in September 1950 and was ordained on December 21, 1956, before spending most of his Missionary life in the Philippines and Belize.

He was appointed to graduate studies at St Xavier University, Antigonish, Canada, 1957-1959, and in 1959 to the Philippines, where he would spend most of the following 25 years on the island of Mindanao. After language studies, he worked briefly in Bonifacio, and in Gingoog, 1961-64. After a year in Talisayan, he spent four years in San Pablo. There followed three years in Pagadian and a year in Dimitaling, before spending time in Camiguin. He had a year's renewal studies in Maynooth University, Ireland, before going to the new Columban area in the Diocese of Tandag, Surigao del Sur, Mindanao.

Seamus was a member of the first group to be appointed to a new mission in Belize in 1986; he ministered there for the following 10 years. Formerly known as British Honduras, it only achieved independence in 1981.

The people of Belize are a mixture of Creoles, descendants of slaves and slave-masters, Hispanics and peoples of mixed Caribbean, Indian and African ancestry. There were just eight Belizean diocesan priests to cover a multitude of small communities. A key Columban contribution was to help train local lay leaders to gather the people for prayer, to be a voice for the poor and prepare candidates for the sacraments.

Lack of personnel forced the Columbans to withdraw in 1996.

On his return to Ireland, Seamus worked for five years in Balinaheglis, Co Roscommon, in the Diocese of Elphin, before retiring to his native Ballinascreen, where he helped in the parish.

Seamus enjoyed his retirement in Derry, before entering the Dalgan Nursing Home in December 2021, where he received the highest level of care, love and support. His health deteriorated rapidly over the past year, and he passed away peacefully on August 18, 2025.

His funeral was celebrated in Dalgan Park on Thursday, August 21, when Columban Fr Val Kyne was chief celebrant. A large crowd travelled from Ballinascreen to show their appreciation for Seamus, as well as solidarity with the family and with the Columbans on the passing of a man described as a very dedicated Missionary.

Homily

Delivering the homily, Fr Kyne said: “Seamus was a person who had a deep and genuine faith. His faith motivated him to become a Columban Missionary, and he generously and faithfully shared it with so many people of different cultures.”

With regards to his mission in the Philippines, he said: “Seamus was always willing to take on assignments that were challenging and difficult. He certainly was a willing horse. In the Philippines, he was assigned to parishes that could only be reached by sea. He showed great initiative in getting his own boat built.

“One of his assignments was on Camaguin Island, in Mindanao. In Camaguin at the time, there was also another Columban, Pat Cashman, who had his own boat. On one occasion when they were out fishing and having a good time, the engine on the boat died and they were unable to restart it. The tides and currents were carrying them further out into the South China Sea. As night was falling, Seamus asked Pat Cashman to hear his Confession. According to Seamus, Pat Cashman refused point blank, as he saw this as a sign of giving up and not being rescued.

“As morning broke, they saw a flotilla of pump boats

approaching. Since they failed to return to base the night before, the people realised that they were in trouble. That flotilla of boats must have been an answer to prayer. Seamus became known as a man of the sea.”

Referring to a tense situation in the Diocese of Tandag, Fr Kyne recalled: “In the early 1980s, Seamus and I worked in the Diocese of Tandag. It was a very poor diocese and there was a lot of violence. On one occasion, Seamus's town was surrounded by Rebels. Bullets were flying everywhere. It became obvious that the rebels were interested in the local rural hospital. Seamus put on his white cassock and walked down the main road to the hospital. The rebels wanted to take a doctor and nurse to the mountains, where they had members with gunshot wounds. Seamus was able to negotiate with them not to take the doctor and nurse. The doctor gave them some medicines which would be useful.



“By giving medicines to the rebels, the military felt that Seamus and his group were in cahoots with them. We had to explain that giving out medicines was normal practice for a person from Northern Ireland!”

Describing Fr Seamus as “a man of adventure”, he noted that he had a pilot's licence and a hand gliding kit. He went on to highlight his great virtues as “kindness, gentleness and patience”, saying that Fr Seamus had these gifts in abundance.

Fr Kyne also noted that Fr Seamus had worked as a Missionary in three continents: “Asia in the Philippines; Belize in the Americas; and Ireland. Wherever he ministered, he was highly respected. Seamus was somebody who had his feet firmly on the ground, despite his love for the skies.

“After having spent many years in the Philippines and Belize, he returned to Ireland in his

twilight years. Yet, he remained very active. He ministered in Ballinaheglis, Co Roscommon, where he did some fishing on Lough Corrib and also Lough Mask. I had the honour of doing some fishing with him. He retired to Ballinascreen, Co Derry, a place he loved so well.”

Fr Madden tribute

Ballinascreen parish priest, Fr Peter Madden also made a heartfelt tribute to Fr Seamus, saying: “It was with the deepest sorrow that we learned that our great friend and parishioner, Fr Seamus O'Neill passed away at the age of 92. We have been blessed over all these years that he maintained his close connection with the parish of Ballinascreen. Fr Seamus was generous with his time. All of us, priests and people could turn to him and take him into our confidence.

“At daily Mass, and especially at the weekend Sunday Masses, he broke the Word of God for us, and we would leave Mass having been nourished and fed with God's Word and the Eucharist.”

He added: “Fearless in his love for the poor and the marginalised, Fr Seamus was a committed follower of Jesus, a true fisherman indeed like the first disciples, and spent his life bringing the compassionate face of his Saviour to everyone he met.”

Fr Seamus was a man of many interests. A promising Gaelic football career was sacrificed when he joined the Columbans, but he retained a life-long interest in the GAA and, indeed, up until the end, enquired regularly about the fortunes of St Colm's Ballinascreen and Derry.

Having obtained his private pilot license in the Philippines, Seamus was able to continue this interest back home in Ballinascreen by flying planes belonging to locals, Maurice Taylor, and his great friend, Paddy Heron. Thanks to Seamus, many locals got a unique view of the beautiful Ballinascreen Parish during a flight in Paddy's two-seater Cub airplane. Some people were even brave enough to go up a second time!

As mentioned by Fr Kyne, his love of being air-bound also led to him learning to hang glide. There were less takers for joining him for this but, nonetheless, he had many thrilling adventures around the hills of Dungiven and Limavady with John McGuigan, among others.

Not only did Seamus follow Jesus' command to be a fisher of men, but he also followed in the

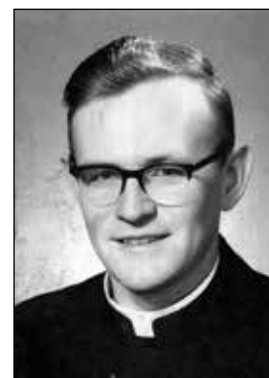
footsteps of many of the Apostles and spent many hours on the lakes, the seas and in the rivers of Derry and Tyrone, fishing to put food on people's tables. An expert fly-fisher, he regularly treated family and friends to the finest wild salmon, sea trout and the fruits of the local Moyola River. He was equally keen to pass on his lifetime of knowledge, and many aspiring beginners were taught to cast on dry land, on his lawn and in the field behind his house.

As described by his Columban brothers, Seamus was a kind and gentle soul. He was a model of

humility and loved by all who met and dealt with him. He seemed to have time for everyone and judged no one - but never shied away from preaching that we would all face the ultimate judgement.

He was pre-deceased by his parents, his brother Sean (and his wife, Alice Jo) and brother-in-law Dan Gormely, and is survived by his brother Colm, sister-in-law Rosemary, sisters Maire Gormley and Gemma Heron, and brother-in-law Brian. He was laid to rest in the Cemetery in Dalgan Park, Navan.

May he rest in peace.



Fr Seamus following ordination.



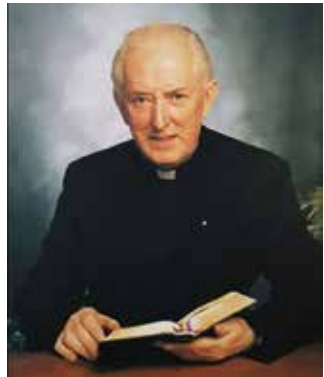
With his family at the 60th anniversary celebration - Sean, Gemma, Seamus, Maire, Colm



At his 60th anniversary Mass with Fr Peter Madden PP Ballinascreen and the late Fr John Downey.

“In his life as a priest, you could find him anywhere, from the bottom of the sea to the top of a spire”

Celebrating the late Fr Michael Keaveny...fondly remembered for his kindness and care as teacher and priest



IT was a beautiful, sunny, autumn morning when the family, neighbours and friends of the late Fr Michael Keaveny walked the short distance with his coffin, from the Moville home of his niece and passed his family home of Loreto, to St Pius X Church for the Requiem Mass on Monday, September 22.

With scenic Lough Foyle in the background, near to where Fr Michael and fellow divers discovered the wreck of La Trinidad Valencera, the third largest vessel of the Spanish Amada, off Kinnegoe Bay in 1971, the funeral cortege was met on the steps of the Church by a guard of honour.

Standing in tribute were pupils and staff from St Columb's College, where he had formerly taught, and from primary schools in the Parish of Faughanvale, where he had served as curate and continued to reside in during his retirement years.

Bishop Donal received the 98-year-old's remains as his coffin entered the Church, where the ceremony began with Mid-Day Prayer of the Church, the Office for the Dead. Assisted by Moville PP, Fr Colm O'Doherty and Deacon Stephen Baxter, the bishop was joined by 26 priests in celebrating the funeral Mass for the Diocese's longest ordained priest. He was joined on the altar by Fr Colum Clerkin, Fr Eamon Graham, Fr John Farren and Mgr Andy Dolan.

Born on January 29, 1927, the Moville native was ordained 74 years ago on March 10, 1951. Following 25 years as a teacher of Maths and Religion in St Columb's College, Derry, Fr Michael was appointed as Administrator of St Joseph's Galliagh, 1976-1985, in the midst of The Troubles, when bombs were exploding and shots were fired regularly. He then received his first parish priest appointment in 1985, when he was assigned to Donaghmore. In 1992, Fr Michael became parish priest of Drumragh, where he served until 2002, when he retired as parish priest to become curate in Faughanvale. Some six years later, he retired from that role but continued to reside in the parish

until 2025.

Michael Joseph was the third eldest of 12 children born to Bridget and James Keaveney, and he was one of three siblings who spelt their surname 'Keaveny', as the third 'e' had been left out on their birth certificates. His mother, Bridget Shanley, was a Leitrim lady who took up the position of post mistress in Moville in the early 1920s. Spotting a job advertisement for manager of a Co-op, she got her fiancé, James Keaveney from Galway, to apply. He got the position and they went on to get married.

The first four in the family were born above the Moville Co-op, which is now an SVP shop, on the Main Street. They then moved to Loreto house, near St Pius X Church. Michael attended local national school, boarded in St Columb's College, and went to Maynooth to train as a priest and Maths teacher. During his seminary time, he spent three years in the Irish College, in Rome, from 1948-1951, when it re-opened after the second World War, and was ordained in Rome.

His first appointment was to the teaching staff at St Columb's, and while there he got the opportunity to provide holiday cover during the summer months in a parish near Cape Canaveral, where a number of parishioners worked in NASA. Invited along for one of the rocket launches, he found himself about 200 yards from the rocket as it took off.

St Columb's

The homily for the Requiem Mass was delivered by Mgr Andy Dolan, who was a pupil in St Columb's while Fr Michael was a teacher there, and was a neighbour of his when he retired from Bellaghy Parish to reside in Faughanvale.

He opened with a reference to the Vatican II decree, *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (Life and ministry of Priests), which states that priests should serve the Christian community by proclaiming the Gospel, celebrating the sacraments (especially the Eucharist), and building up the Church through pastoral care and spiritual leadership.

Noting that this document "shifts focus from an institutional view of priesthood to one centred on the priest's role within the community, fostering fraternity with fellow priests, providing guidance to bishops, and promoting the dignity and involvement of the laity", Mgr Andy remarked: "Fr Michael Keaveny's life and ministry fulfilled that duty of pastoral care and leadership; not shying away

from his role in Community, very much into fraternity with fellow priests, and promoting the role of the laity.

"His priestly life grew from a strong foundation in a home of faith where Christian values were upheld, a home blessed with family prayer, where there was encouragement and support. His family made a big contribution to the life of the diocese; himself and his older brother, Laurence good and faithful servants. Other family members made a big contribution at parish and within diocesan groups, as well as in civic life."

"Michael Keaveny," he added, "was a bright and intelligent man, who would have succeeded in any path of life he chose. He answered the call to priesthood, and there was encouragement for that in the parish of Moville, where there had been a strong tradition of vocation to priesthood and religious life."

"His years in seminary took him to Maynooth and Rome. Certainly, the Roman influence kept emerging over the years. It fostered culture in him and an appreciation of the finer things of life."

Recalling first knowing Fr Michael in the College in 1959, when he was a pupil, though he didn't have him as a teacher, Mgr Andy said: "Fr Keaveny was always seen as fair and could maintain good discipline without resorting to too much corporal punishment. I don't think Seamus Heaney had him in mind when he wrote 'Ministry of Fear'."

"He was seen as someone who encouraged people to be their best self, fulfilling their potential. Something his nieces and nephews acknowledged about him. He was always very supportive to them, encouraging and challenging. They missed his presence among them, especially the White family with the recent deaths of their siblings, Patricia and John."

He continued: "Beyond the classroom, he had input into boys' lives too. A man well-noted for his love of swimming and other water activities, he gave his Wednesday afternoons to teach swimming in William St Baths. His interest in football, and sports in general, was obvious too. And, once a fortnight, he showed a film on a Wednesday evening to the boarders. Sixpence, the price (two and half pence in today's money). The hand went over the projector accidentally on purpose, if a certain type of scene was coming up."

Parish Ministry

Referring to Fr Michael's parish ministry in Galliagh, Killygordon

and Omagh, and retirement as curate to Faughanvale in 2002, where he "was active until he became fairly incapacitated with spinal stroke in 2009", Mgr Andy said: "His aim in his ministry was to leave a place and its people in a better place than he found it."

"Given his years at the chalk face, it was natural that provision for educational facilities to be the best was on his to-do list, and he served for a number of years on the Western Education & Library Board on behalf of maintained schools."

He went on to highlight how ecumenism was a hallmark in Fr Michael's ministry, "even when community tensions could be high", as well as "instructing his people in the faith as a conscientious preacher", and "taking care of parish churches, ensuring they were in good condition, future proofing them and bringing them up to be in keeping with modern day liturgical requirements."

He also pointed out how his association with the Derry Sub Aqua Club and the discovery of the guns on La Trinidad Valencera, in 1971, led to the line, that "in his life as a priest you could find him anywhere, from the bottom of the sea to the top of a spire."

Highlighting his determination in all his pursuits, Mgr Andy remarked: "Once he set his mind to some project or idea, that was it. He could be best described as a man in whom there was no reverse gear."

He continued: "More importantly, he was a man who dedicated his life to the service of his Lord and Master, always striving to get to know Him better and draw ever closer to Him. That was so evident in his love of the scriptures and his prayer life; he was ever faithful to his breviary. Priests, and bishops too, will remember him opening us up to some understanding of the Psalms, with his presentation at the beginning of our Priests' Conferences."

Privileged to have been able to join Fr Michael and his long-time housekeeper, the late Nancy McCallion, for the celebration of Mass when he settled in Faughanvale on retirement, Mgr Andy remarked: "Nancy was his housekeeper and soul mate since 1978; maybe his 'minder' would be an appropriate title as well. A good and faithful servant. Even in saying Mass, if he went off-line, he was put back on track. She stood by him. Indeed, mention of Nancy leaves us amazed that they should die within two weeks of each other. The Lord might have been told that it was time to call



Fr Michael with his mother and father, Brigid and James Keaveny, at his ordination in Rome, in 1951.



Fr Michael (middle) while studying in Rome, in 1948.



Meeting Pope Francis in Rome on September 21, 2022.

continued from page 22

him in.”

Mgr Andy went on to pay tribute to the support and care Fr Michael had received from the people of Faughanvale, especially in his later years, saying: “There was always somebody to call on, particularly Brian McCloskey, the sacristan, and also the care he received in Longfield nursing home.”

Major events

Mgr Andy ended with a few major events in Fr Michael’s life, other than the Armada find and rocket launch at NASA, such as accompanying his past pupil, the late Liam Ball to the 1968 Olympics in Mexico, where he was representing Ireland in swimming. He also recalled the August 15 Omagh tragedy in 1998, when Fr Michael had heard the bombs in his own house: “This was an event that made demands on so many, including Fr Michael and some of our brother priests, who ministered to the wounded and dying in such awful circumstances.”

And he concluded with Fr Michael’s dream trip by private jet to Rome three years ago, arranged by his nephew, Neil, to meet Pope Francis, saying: “No Covid, nor his physical limitations, were going to get in the way.” Referring to the “iconic photograph” of the meeting, he remarked: “It’s like a foretaste of the joy of coming face-to-face with his good Lord.”

In his tribute to Fr Michael at the end of Mass, Bishop Donal finished by saying: “He knew that recent decades were difficult for all involved in the Irish Church. But, as we hand him back to God, I am seeing signs of a new generation of young people who, like Michael in 1947, are discovering food with which to nourish their generous hearts in the wealth of beauty and religious learning of earlier generations.

“A wise and faithful servant can take out of the storeroom things both old and new. I pray for a new wave of young people who, despite the ravages of war

and poverty, will be enraptured by the beauty of truth itself. We still need adventurers for Christ, who will go to the sunrise and to the sea’s furthest ends, and bring God’s healing grace to the depths of human hearts.”

Family tributes

Fr Michael’s niece, Dr Lucy White paid tribute to him as being “one of the happiest and contented people” she had ever known, adding: “He had such an interest in people, always wanting to know what you were doing, how life was going. I could talk to him about anything. At his wake, so many people commented on his lovely smile when he met them, and his genuine interest about how they were.”

She continued: “Fr Michael loved being in the middle of all family occasions, particularly parties, ever ready with a speech. If it was a birthday party, he would end it singing ‘Happy Birthday’ in Italian, which, as children, made us laugh.

“He supported us through sad times too, particularly when our parents and siblings died; he was amazing. And, for months afterwards, you got the regular phone calls checking to see how you were doing. When in hospital, Fr Michael would be one of the first to visit, offering prayers and support.

“He followed the lives and careers of his 31 nieces and nephews, plus many grand-nephews and nieces, with such interest. In return, so many of us kept in regular contact with him, with those living abroad visiting him when at home.”

Recalling being with him when he met Pope Francis in 2022, Lucy said: “He was just so happy to meet the Pope and also to be in his beloved Rome. Everywhere Fr Michael went in Rome, he gathered a crowd, telling them that he was ordained there in 1951 and about his life...all in Italian. And, when leaving them, he would give a big smile and thumbs up.

“Fr Michael was a constant for us all our lives. He will be greatly

missed, but his legacy lives on in all of us.”

Another niece, Cecilia Keaveney fondly remembered Fr Michael for his interest in everything they were doing: “He never stopped being interested, whether he was familiar with the theme presented or not.” And she recalled his sheer enjoyment of music: “He was always more than happy to lead a sing-song, even in Italian, and play the violin.”

Reflecting on the many comments she had heard from people during Fr Michael’s wake, one that Cecilia particularly identified with was how he had helped others by being intuitive to their needs.

Amongst the many letters of sympathy to family members, one from a former College boy and Omagh parishioner was felt to sum Fr Michael up. He noted: “As a teacher, he exhibited kindness and care...and as parish priest here the same qualities were always to the fore. I smile each time I recall his frequent efforts

to turn his parishioners into a congregation of singers! He has left us all with great memories. May he rest in peace in the light of Christ.”

Seagulls salute

As Fr Michael’s coffin was carried in to the cemetery at St Mary’s Church, Ballybrack, large seagulls flew overhead and perched on the church roof, taking off again later, as if in tribute, to circle in the air above his grave as his fellow priests sang the ‘Salve Regina’, before returning to perch on the roof ridge.

Buried in the same plot as his brother, Fr Laurence, Fr Michael is survived by his siblings, Vincent (Dublin) and Eileen (Farrelly - Letterkenny). Other siblings were Paddy, JJ (James Jude), Peter, Brendan, Anna, Chris, Mary, and Bernie.

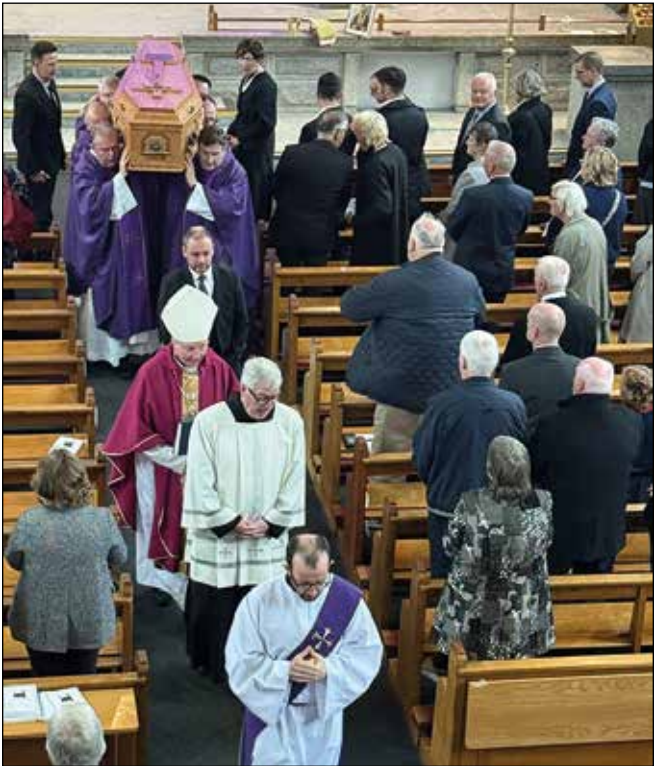
Fr Michael’s Month Mind Mass will be celebrated in Star of the Sea Church, Faughanvale, on October 18, at 5 pm.



Fr Michael at his 90th birthday celebrations on January 29, 2017, with his grand-nephews, Finn (left) and Lochlainn (on right).



Grand-nephews, (left) Lochlainn and Liam, and nephew, Michael White (on right), with Fr Michael at the Trinidad Valencera Exhibition in the Greencastle Maritime Museum, in June 2022.



Community Service FOR ALL

Every Tuesday From 4pm - 6pm

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There is no cost to the service. Our partners supply a warm meal and a friendly space for anyone in need. Different menu every week!

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Daniel O'Connell... 'Monster Meeting' in Derry Diocese *by Dr Seán Beattie*



Daniel O'Connell was born in Kerry in 1775 and died in Italy in 1847, during the Great Famine.

DANIEL O'Connell was born in Co Kerry in 1775. This year marks the 250th anniversary of his birth, which is being commemorated throughout the country, but especially in his native place, Derrynane.

The son of a substantial Catholic landowner, the family had sufficient wealth to send him to a college in

Douai, in France. He left the city when the French Revolution broke out. For a brief period, he studied law in London. As a young man, he was aware of the 1798 Rebellion in Ireland. His experience of civil unrest and violence in both countries had a major influence on him and he remained a staunch pacifist for the rest of his life.

Thus, violence was never seen as a solution in his political career.

Emancipation

O'Connell is remembered today mainly for Catholic Emancipation and his efforts to secure Repeal of the Union. In 1829, an Act of Parliament gave Catholics the right to sit in Westminster and to hold senior positions in the government. He also carried out a country-wide campaign to have the Act of Union (1800), which abolished the Irish Parliament, repealed. He was successful in the case of Emancipation, but failed to achieve his dream to have the Act of Union abolished.

The Parliament in Westminster passed an Act which granted Catholic Emancipation, as it did not threaten the Union. In the case of Repeal, it was a different matter, and the government was prepared to use force to defeat O'Connell, if necessary.

O'Connell did not believe in the use of force to achieve his political objectives. Instead, he engaged the weapon of civic protest to great effect. He travelled across the country and addressed huge assemblies, which became known as "monster meetings".

Belfast – a mixed reception

In Ulster, he had a mixed reception. Pro-Union lobbyists heckled him on the streets on a visit to Belfast in January 1841. On the other hand, he attended a formal dinner organized in his honour and was given a very warm reception by 800 delegates. In his after-dinner speech, his response was: "I hail the amalgamation of Protestant, Catholic and Presbyterian".

Speakers acknowledged

O'Connell's "defense of the Catholic church" and the mood was upbeat. A fearless defender of O'Connell, the 'Derry Journal' carried a glowing report on the evening. To formally close the proceedings, attended by prominent citizens, it was traditional to propose a toast to Her Majesty Queen Victoria. Guests duly obliged and raised their glasses to Her Majesty's health. Because of the mixed reception he had received in Belfast, O'Connell concentrated on towns outside Ulster thereafter, as he travelled across Ireland promoting the cause of Repeal.

Repeal Movement in Derry Diocese

The repeal movement had massive support in the Diocese of Derry. Fr Maginn, later Bishop of Derry, was one of O'Connell's leading supporters. Maginn was one of the chief organisers of a great meeting at Green Hills, overlooking Trabreaga Bay, between Carndonagh and Malin, in August 1843, which was attended by thousands.

It was held there because the landlord, George Young, of Culdaff, was sympathetic to the Repeal movement, and following an intervention by Maginn. At this stage, the meeting was legal but there were fears that the government was about to clamp down on such events.

1843 'Monster Meeting' in Derry Diocese

The regional RIC depot was in Carndonagh, and the Head Constable decided to place the army and coastguards on standby as rioting was expected, if attempts were made to disband

the crowd. Soldiers were based in the Inishowen Union Workhouse at Carndonagh, then under construction and not officially opened.

Led by pipe bands and priests of the Diocese, including O'Connell's most passionate supporter among the clergy, Fr Maginn, a huge procession set out from the Diamond in the town.

Speakers used the hill at Trabreaga Bridge as a platform. Rumours spread through the town that Daniel O'Connell would attend, but he failed to show up. The Inishowen site was chosen as the safest place in the Diocese of Derry to host such a gathering. It could not have been held there without the expressed approval of the local landlord, George Young. The meeting ended peacefully, but alarm bells were ringing in the corridors of power in Dublin Castle.

Clontarf 'Monster Meeting' abandoned

Initially, in the early 1840s, Dublin Castle, the seat of government, did not feel threatened and there were no serious disturbances. As the Repeal movement grew in strength, however, Dublin Castle became uneasy and it was believed that, sooner or later, the situation would get out of control. A monster meeting at Tara drew almost a million people.

Year of Repeal 1843

O'Connell declared 1843 as the 'Year of Repeal'. Plans were in place to hold a monster meeting at Clontarf on October 8, 1843. The Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, decided to repress the meeting. It was proclaimed as an illegal assembly. Anyone attending was

liable to imprisonment.

It was a case of sheer brinkmanship, but O'Connell decided to back down and called the meeting off in order to prevent bloodshed. Months later, he was arrested and spent time in Richmond Jail until he was released in 1844. He made sincere efforts to gain the support of Protestants for repeal, and he formed a close alliance with the Catholic clergy.

Death in Genoa

He died in Genoa on his way to Rome in 1847, at the height of the Great Famine and after a spell of ill-health, at a time when the country needed him most. His last words were: "My body to Ireland; my heart to Rome and my soul to Heaven".

He is buried in Glasnevin Cemetery in Dublin, in an ornate crypt. O'Connell was partly responsible for the establishment of Glasnevin as a burial ground for Dubliners of all faiths. A tower rising over the crypt, to 180 ft, is one of the great landmarks in north Dublin, and is known as O'Connell Tower. His statue stands at the foot of the main thoroughfare, O'Connell St, also named after him, together with the bridge nearby, thus ensuring that his heroic brand of patriotism will never be forgotten.

Commemoration in Kerry in 2025

O'Connell's birth was commemorated this year in Co Kerry. The Taoiseach, Micheál Martin described him as "the greatest Irishman who ever lived". His descendants were also present. His great-great-granddaughter, Emily Lenehan, praised him as "a great public figure".

Prayer in my pocket...heart *by Kieron Kehoe*

THIS month, I travelled to meet Patricia in Limavady Parish. I first met Patricia in October 2023 after booking a place on a pilgrimage to Fatima. She was the organiser of the pilgrimage and, having such a great week with family members, we booked again for June 2024 and then June 2025.

It was June 2025 when I told her about the 'Prayer in my Pocket / Heart', and she said that her prayer had brought her to Fatima for 25 years as pilgrimage leader.

In April 1996, Patricia had back surgery. She had two broken vertebrae and was in Musgrave Hospital. Fr Declan Boland came to visit, as he was in the Monday Prayer Group with Patricia.

He said to her: "As soon as you are well again, we will go on a pilgrimage, but not to Medjugorje." Patricia told him that she was

reading a book that a friend had given her, called 'Jacinta the Flower of Fatima', and Fr Declan said: "We'll go there, it's the altar of the world." That is what Saint Pope John Paul II had called it.

Patricia spent the next six months in a cast. It was Fr Declan's silver anniversary two years later, in 1998, and that is when he asked Patricia to organise a pilgrimage to Fatima.

That year, 58 pilgrims travelled with Patricia to Fatima on pilgrimage. From this, she learnt that the message Our Lady had asked of us was to pray the Rosary.

Pope John Paul II came to Fatima in 2000 and all our group were there. We have been every year since except during the Covid Pandemic.

In 1985, Patricia's son Willard was born and, at the age of six

months, they discovered that he had a heart murmur and, at eight years old, was given a balloon procedure. Patricia believes that Our Lady was preparing her for 2004, when Willard went for heart surgery, because he needed a mechanical valve and an ascending aorta. After the operation, he took an infection called endocarditis and the medical staff didn't think that he would live. They put him on antibiotics for six weeks.

During this time, Patricia visited Clonard Monastery and prayed in front of the Blessed Sacrament. She was then told that the only thing they could do was to repeat the operation. Patricia was very worried and scared that Willard would die before he got another surgery. Then, one day, as she came out of the Monastery to answer a phone call, she noticed a red brick

wall and when she looked up, she saw a mosaic of our Lady of Fatima with the three children. At that moment, she felt that Our Lady would look after her son.

She answered the phone and her prayers were answered. The surgeon had rung and notified Patricia that the surgery would take place in a couple of days. Everything went well and, although he has had another surgery since in 2014, he is doing great.

In addition, Patricia's husband spent so much time praying the Rosary that he converted to the Catholic faith.

Patricia believes that the calling of Our Lady of Fatima is for families to pray the Rosary. Our Lady of Fatima Pray for us. Saints Francesco and Jacinta pray for us. Venerable Sr Lucia pray for us.



Patricia, on right

Ruach...Breath of the Spirit

The most important things in life cannot be bought by Fr Eamonn Kelly

ONE of my childhood memories turned into a great lesson of life, a lesson that taught me to cherish every moment.

Near our home, there is a good fishing river. One of my brothers and I have always shared a love of fishing. Honestly and by far, he is the better fisherman. If I were to catch two fish, he would be sure to come home with five or six. He is more skilful, especially when he has hooked a fish, and is gentle in the way that he can take to land the fish.

Anyway, one Saturday, when I was 13 and he, the big brother, was working in our bar, I decided to go fishing. That decision would turn out to make a great day's fishing and a shifting of my own belief in my fishing ability. I had a fantastic time at the river, which was alive with sea trout and salmon making their way from the bay to the spawning ground up beneath the Blue Stack Mountains. I caught four lovely sea trout, each weighing between a half pound and a pound. They would make a lovely meal for the family, and I was proud as punch as I walked the couple of miles home.

The first job I did was to put the four fish on a nice, big plate, so that I could take them into the bar to show them to my big brother. The

real reason, of course, was to show off and to prove to my big brother that I was a good fisherman! I wanted to provoke him into a fit of jealousy. I desired to see him mad with rage; rage that he had to work and I got to fish; rage that the wee brother might becoming a real rival in our unspoken of competition for best fisherman ever.

I was in for a bit of disappointment for the brother reacted in a very positive way. He congratulated me, saying several times, "Well done," "That is fantastic," "Good on you," and other very sincere remarks. Even though my pride was elated, there was something of a disappointment within to his very complimentary attitude. It was then that things took an unexpected turn. Wee John, a very regular customer, asked me, "Would you sell me one of the fish?". Now the 13-year-old, who was now a successful fisherman, was becoming an entrepreneur and could see the dosh beginning to roll in. So, I got a plastic bag and wrapped the fish in it.

Delighted and annoyed

As Wee John and I exchanged fish and money, Paddy Mulhern asked if I would sell him two fish. Paddy

was a lifelong customer who was always in good mood, despite his many health issues and problems. Paddy was very deaf, and it was very hard to communicate with him, but I nodded and quickly got another bag. Now I would have the money for the three fish sold and the fourth one for a lovely evening meal for myself. As I placed the second fish into the bag, Paddy said, "You know what, I'll take the third one of your hands, and my sister and brother and I will have a grand meal tonight." I was delighted and annoyed at the same time. The money was rolling in, but I had honestly looked forward to a meal with my fish. But how do you argue with a man who can't hear you, and so the emerging business tycoon took the cash and handed over the fish. My older brother nodded at me and said, "Well done", and I left the bar with the empty plate and a pocketful of money.

The next day, I was on early, 'unofficial' bar duty. Between the 9 am Mass and the 11am Mass, some customers would come by the back door for a wee quick one, or maybe two. So, I went out the back to see if there were any potential customers. And there was Richard Mulhern, Paddy's brother. Automatically I

said, "I will get the keys," but he replied, "No. It is your father that I am looking for". I told him that I would get him and, when I came back to Richard to say that my father was on his way, Richard said, "Your good friend, Paddy died last night." I was shocked but managed to say, "That is wild news. I am so sorry. He was one of the best." "Aye," Richard said, "he died in his sleep," and then he added with a soothing smile, "and it was not the fish that he took!" With that, my father arrived, and I left the two men to make funeral arrangements for Paddy, RIP.

Stunned

I was stunned. Paddy was so alive, with it and happy only a few hours earlier. He had gone home so content with himself, having purchased a 'grand meal' for his people. Even though Paddy was a fair age, his passing shook many people as he had been in such good form.

As I have grown older, I cannot count the number of times that I have meditated on this experience. Jesus tells us clearly that we will not know the day or the hour when death will come. Jesus tells us to live every moment in the power



of God's Holy Spirit. More than once, Jesus tells us to be prepared to go home to our Maker and God. Never once have I had any fear over this incident. I hold that fact to be the working of the Holy Spirit in my soul. The selling of the fish was the innocence of a child. God used this moment to teach me that the most important things in life cannot be bought. Often when I hear the term, 'the Last Supper,' I will recall three fish that were bought unknowingly for a last supper.

God speaks to us almost every day, telling us about His unconditional love for us, about the beauty of proper relationships, about how precious every moment is. God reveals to us more of His ways and He invites us to be attuned to the movement of the Spirit. God had no interest in the desire for jealousy by a child on his brother, but had given the child the lasting memory that he was good to an old man; that he said 'yes' even when he wished to say 'no'; that good actions overcame bad intentions.

In short, God tells the child in this story that the child is good and called to do good and to union with the eternal.

Vocations News

Power of prayer continues to move hearts to consider priesthood

by Fr Pat O'Hagan

THE Diocese of Derry is delighted to announce that Gary Duddy and Gerry Friel, who completed their propaedeutic course in Salamanca in June of this year, have recently moved to Maynooth and Rome, respectively, to continue their formation towards becoming priests of the diocese.

Gary is from Strathfoyle, in the

Parish of Glendermott, and Gerry is from St Mary's, Creggan.

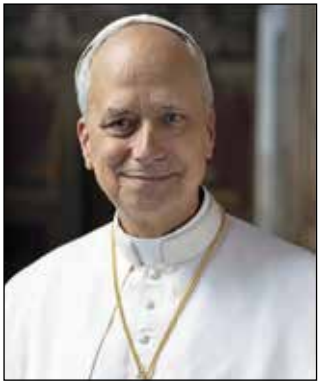
They join the ranks of Deacon Stephen Baxter and David Stott, who have been studying at the Beda College in Rome for the last few years.

Towards the end of September, Bishop McKeown and a panel of lay people interviewed four candidates,

all of whom have been selected to begin their propaedeutic studies in Spain this coming January.

Let us all keep of these men in our prayers as we continue to pray for an increase in vocations to the diocesan priesthood.

St John Vianney, Patron of Priests, pray for us.



Pope's monthly intention

The Holy Father has asked for prayer during October for:

For collaboration between different religious traditions: Let us pray that believers in different religious traditions might work together to defend and promote peace, justice and human fraternity.

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 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:

Fr Colum Clerkin (Oct 1st)
Fr Roland Colhoun (2nd)
Fr Michael Collins (3rd)
All Priests (4th)
Fr Patrick Crilly (5th)
Fr Brendan Crowley (6th)
All priests (7th)
All priests (8th)
All priests (9th)

All priests (10th)
Fr James Devine (11th)
Fr Peter Devlin (12th)
Fr Fintan Diggin (13th)
Fr Brendan Doherty (14th)
All priests (15th)
Fr Shaun Doherty (16th)
All priests (17th)
All priests (18th)
Fr Michael Doherty (19th)
Fr Patrick Doherty (20th)
Mgr Andrew Dolan (21st)
Fr Brian Donnelly (22nd)
Mgr Joseph Donnelly (23rd)
All priests (24th)
All priests (25th)
All priests (26th)
All priests (27th)
All priests (28th)
Fr Jack Farrell (29th)
All priests (30th)
Fr John Farren (31st)

Prayer Evenings for Vocations

EVENINGS of Prayer for an increase in Vocations to Priesthood, in the Diocese of Derry, will take place each month in St Columb's Church, Chapel Road, Waterside.

The evenings will begin with Mass at 7.30 pm, followed by a Holy Hour from 8-9 pm.

The dates are: Tuesday, October 28; Tuesday, November 25; and Tuesday, December 2.

IS GOD CALLING YOU?

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

Parish Post-its

Aghyaran

Weekend Mass Times: 7.30 pm Vigil, and 11 am.

Ardstraw East (Newtownstewart)

Zoom Catechism: All are welcome to join Catechism by Zoom on Mondays, from 7.30-8.15 pm. Email: ardstraweast@derrydiocese.org to get the link. Learn how to answer hard questions.

Pope John Paul II Award – Sessions for Pope John Paul II Award participants take place on Thursdays at 6.30 pm, in the Oratory of Mary, Mother of God.

Holy Hour: 6.30 pm, Thursdays, Oratory of Mary, Mother of God.

Weekend Mass Times: 11:30 am, St Eugene's Glenock.

Badoney Lower (Gortin-Rouskey)

Adoration: Adoration takes places 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.

Weekend Mass Times: 7.30 pm Vigil, St Patrick's, Gortin; 10 am, St Mary's, Rouskey.

Badoney Upper (Plumbridge-Cranagh)

Adoration & Confession: Adoration and Confessions take place in St Patrick's Cranagh after the 7.30 pm Wednesday evening Mass, until 9 pm, and after the 12 noon Mass on Saturdays in Plumbridge.

Weekend Mass Times: 7.30 pm Vigil, St Patrick's Cranagh; 10 am, Sacred Heart Plumbridge.

Ballinascreen

Hope Novena: To celebrate the Holy Year, which has Hope as its theme, a Novena of Hope will take place each Sunday at 6 pm, alternating

between Holy Rosary Church and St Patrick's Church Keenaught - except for November 2. Guest speakers, have been invited to talk about their faith and life in the church: October 19, Holy Rosary Church - Marguerite Hamilton, Director Columba House Community; October 26, St Patrick's Keenaught - Brenda Bannon, Former head of RE Loreto College Omagh; November 2, All Souls' Day Service - 3 pm, St Patrick's Keenaught, 6 pm, Holy Rosary Church; November 9, Holy Rosary Church, Bishop Donal McKeown; November 16, St Patrick's Keenaught, Fr Hugh Lagan SMA; November 23, Holy Rosary Church, Sr Perpetua McNulty, Sisters of Mercy and Thornhill Ministries; November 30, St Patrick's Keenaught, Michael Murphy, Matt Talbot's life and example; December 7, Holy Rosary Church - annual Carol Service incorporating the Novena prayers; December 14, St Patrick's Keenaught, Fr Paul Farren, Adm St Eugene's Derry.

School Masses: St Mary's Primary School Draperstown, Opening of School Year Mass, on Wednesday, October 15, at 10 am in Holy Rosary Church; St Colm's High School Harvest Mass on Thursday, October 9, at 2 pm in Holy Rosary Church; and St Colm's High School Year 8 New Beginnings Mass on Thursday, October 23, at 7 pm in St Colm's High School. 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.

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place in Holy Rosary Church on the First Mondays from 12 noon until

7.30 pm.

Confessions: Holy Rosary Church every Saturday at 5.30 pm, before the Vigil Mass.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, Holy Rosary; 9 am in St Columba's Straw; 11 am in St Patrick's, Sixtowns; 12 noon in St Eugene's, Moneyneena.

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.

Confessions: Saturdays from 10.30-11.30 am & 5.15-5.50 pm; Tues & Thurs 6.45-7.10 pm.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil; and 9.30 am, 11 am, and 12.30 pm on Sunday.

Banagher

Adoration & Chaplet: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Divine Mercy Chaplet take place in St Mary's Church, Altinure, Thursdays, 10.30-11.30 am; St Joseph's Church, Fincairn, on Fridays, 10-11 am.

Confessions: St Mary's Church, Altinure, Thursday 10.30 am; St Joseph's Church, Fincairn, Friday 10 am & Saturday 6.30 pm.

Weekend Mass Times: 7 pm Vigil in St Joseph's Church, Fincairn, 10.30 am in St Mary's Church, Altinure, and 12 noon in St Peter's & St Paul's Church, Foreglen.

Bellaghy

Adoration: Fridays from 10 am-8 pm (Rosary at 7.30 pm). **Weekend Mass Times:** 7 pm Vigil in Bellaghy, 9.45 am in Ballyscullion, and 11 am in Bellaghy (alternates with 11 am Sunday Mass in St Oliver Plunkett's, Clady).

Buncrana

October Rosary: The Rosary will be prayed each evening at 8 pm at the Grotto in Cockhill and the Oratory Grotto from October 1-31.

Coffee Morning: The Parents' Committee for Scoil Naomh Padraig, Drumfries, are holding a Coffee Morning to raise money for school funds on Saturday, October 25, from 11 am to 1 pm, in Sliabh Sneacht Centre. Sandwiches and home-bakes will be served, with gluten-

free options.

Holy Year of Hope events: At parish level, the Holy Year of Hope will be marked with times of prayer, participation and pilgrimage. The first of these initiatives is entitled 'Come away from your nets for a moment', and involves gathering special interest groups of people from the parish for a special Mass and ceremony of blessing, each third Wednesday of the month.

Adoration: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament now takes place in St Mary's Oratory every Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, 6 am-10 pm, Fridays, 6am-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.

Weekend Mass Times: St Mary's Oratory - Vigil 4.30 pm, 8.30 am and 12.30 pm; St Mary's Cockhill - 11am; Star of the Sea, Desertegney - 9.45 am.

Burt, Inch & Fahan

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

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil, 10.15 am, St Aengus' Burt; 9 am, Our Lady of Lourdes, Inch; 11.30 am, St Mura's, Fahan.

Cappagh (Killyclogher)

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 6-7 pm, in Christ the

King, with Devotions and Benediction.

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.

Legion of Mary: Legion of Mary meets every Monday after 10 am Mass in St Mary's Church, Killyclogher. New members always welcome. Anyone wishing to welcome the Pilgrim Statute of Our Lady into your home and pray the Rosary is asked to contact Rosaleen on 07917421119 to make arrangements with the Legion of Mary, Cappagh Group.

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 as 7.30 pm. Veneration and blessing with relic will be available after Mass.

Stations of the Cross: The Stations are prayed on Fridays at 3 pm in St Mary's Killyclogher.

Confessions: Confessions are heard on Saturdays after 10 am Mass in St Mary's Killyclogher, and from 5.45-6.25 pm in Christ The King, Strathroy.

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

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil, 12 noon, Christ The King, Strathroy; 9 & 11 am, St Mary's, Killyclogher.

Carndonagh

Weekend Mass Times: Vigil 7 pm; Sunday 9 am & 11 am.

Castlederg & Ardstraw West

Adoration: Adoration takes place following 10 am Mass in St Patrick's Church on Fridays, until 12 noon. **Weekend Mass Times:** 6 pm Vigil and 11 am, Castlederg; 9.30 am Dregish; and 12.30 pm Drumnabey.

Claudy

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.

Rosary: The Rosary is prayed on the Parish webcam from St Patrick's Church, Monday-Thursdays, at 6 pm.

Divine Office & Chaplet:

The Divine Office (Mid-day Prayer of the Church) and the Divine Mercy Chaplet are prayed on the Parish webcam, from St Patrick's Church, Monday-Friday, at 3 pm.

Holy Face Devotions: Holy Face Devotions will be prayed on the Parish webcam in St Patrick's Church, Claudy, every Friday, beginning with Divine Office (Evening Prayer) at 6 pm. All welcome to join.

Society of St Joseph: The Vocation Society of St Joseph prayer meeting, in support of religious vocations, takes place on the first Thursday of each month, at 6.30 pm, in the Upper Room, St Patrick's Church.

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.

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil, St Patrick's; 10 am, St Joseph's; 11.30 am St Patrick's.

Clonleigh (Lifford)

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil, 11 am.

Clonmany

Exposition: Exposition of The Blessed Sacrament in St Michael's Church, Urris, on Fridays, 3-6 pm (Rosary at 5.40 pm); in the Oratory of the Assumption, Ballyliffin, on Tuesdays, 7.30-8.30 pm; and in St Columbcille Village, Cleagh, on Wednesdays, 3-4 pm.

Confessions: Confession is available from 6 pm on Saturdays, in lead up to 6.30 pm Vigil Mass.

Weekend Mass Times: St Mary's Church, Clonmany, Vigil 6.30 pm (Rosary at 6.10 pm); Sunday 11:30 am; St Michael's Church, Urris, Sunday, 10 am.

Coleraine

Society of St Joseph: The Society of St Joseph for the support of religious vocations 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.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, 11 am, St John's; 7.30

pm Vigil, St Mary's Dunboe; 9.45 am, Our Lady of the Assumption, Aghadowey.

Creggan

YOUCAT: The YOUCAT Programme is underway in the Parochial House Conference Room on Wednesdays at 7 pm. All welcome.

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.

Polish Mass: Mass for the Polish community will be celebrated at 4 pm every second and fourth Sunday of the month in the Divine Mercy Chapel, at St Mary's Church.

Confession: Monday - Friday 5-5.30 pm, Saturday 10.30 am & 5.30-6.20 pm.

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil; 10.30 am; 12.15 pm.

Culdaff

Good as New Shop: St Mary's Church Bocan Re-decorating Committee has the 'Good as New Shop' now open in Carndonagh. All proceeds are for the Re-decorating Fund.

Weekend Mass Times: 8 pm Vigil; 10 am Sunday.

Desertmartin

Hope Novena: To celebrate the Holy Year, which has Hope as its theme, a Novena of Hope will take place each Sunday at 6 pm, alternating between Holy Rosary Church and St Patrick's Church Keenaught - except for November 2. Guest speakers, have been invited to talk about their faith and life in the church: October 19, Holy Rosary Church - Marguerite Hamilton, Director Columba House Community; October 26, St Patrick's Keenaught - Brenda Bannon, Former head

Long Tower

From St Columba to Sr Clare

An Evening of Prayer

Every 1st Thursday

7pm: Confessions & Rosary

7.30pm: Mass

Thursdays 2nd October

with mini-Vigil of Adoration to Midnight

Parish *Post-its*

of RE Loreto College Omagh; November 2, All Souls' Day Service – 3 pm, St Patrick's Keenaught, 6 pm, Holy Rosary Church; November 9, Holy Rosary Church, Bishop Donal McKeown; November 16, St Patrick's Keenaught, Fr Hugh Lagan SMA; November 23, Holy Rosary Church, Sr Perpetua McNulty, Sisters of Mercy and Thornhill Ministries; November 30, St Patrick's Keenaught, Michael Murphy, Matt Talbot's life and example; December 7, Holy Rosary Church - annual Carol Service incorporating the Novena prayers; December 14, St Patrick's Keenaught, Fr Paul Farren, Adm St Eugene's Derry.

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.

Weekend Mass Times: 7.30 pm Vigil in St Patrick's, Keenaught; and 10 am in St Mary's, Coolcalm.

Confessions: Saturday evenings in St Patrick's, Keenaught, from 6.30–7.10 pm.

Donagheady (Aughabrack & Dunamanagh)

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place in St Mary's, Aughabrack, on First Fridays, after 10 am Mass until 12 noon.

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil, St Patrick's, and 10.30 am, St Mary's.

Donaghmore (Killygordon)

Gospel Concert: The Patrick Feeney Gospel Concert in St Patrick's Church, Crossroads, will take place on Sunday, November 2 at 5 pm. Tickets cost 25 Euros and can be purchased in Bradley's Shop, McCreary's Topline, All Things Nice Antique Shop – Stranorlar, and Stockhouse Interiors Drumrooske, Donegal Town. All proceeds will go towards the Church Restoration Fund.

Holy Hour: Prayerful reading of the Scriptures & Rosary with the Home of the Mother, Servant Sisters every Tuesday from 6.30-7.30 pm at St Mary's Church, Sessiaghoneill, Ballybofey, and every Thursday from 7-8 pm at St. Patrick's.

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Tuesdays, 10.30 am-7.30 pm, St Mary's Church, Sessiaghoneill; Thursdays, after 9.15 am Mass, St Patrick's Church, Crossroads. Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm

Vigil, 10 am, St Patrick's; 8 pm Vigil, 9 am & 11 am, St Mary's Sessiaghoneill.

Drumquin

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.

Weekend Mass Times: Vigil 6.30 pm, and 11 am.

Drumragh (Omagh)

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 10 am 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.

Stations of Cross: The Stations are prayed after 10 am Mass in Sacred Heart Church.

Confessions: Confession take place on Saturdays after 10 am Mass and after 6 pm Mass in Sacred Heart Church.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, 9 am and 12 noon, Sacred Heart Church; 10.30 am, St Mary's Drumragh.

Dungiven

Concert: Dungiven Community Choir Concert will take place in Dungiven Parish Conference Room on Sunday, November 30, at 3 pm. (doors open at 2.30 pm.). A second concert will take place at 7 pm. (doors open at 6.30 pm.). Ticket only event. Tickets £15, available by contacting Tel: 077 1432 9319.

Legion of Mary: Dungiven Legion of Mary meets every Tuesday at 6 pm in the Parish Committee Room. New members welcome. If anyone would like to have the Legion of Mary Statue, (Our Lady of Peace), please telephone 078 9552 9563. Many blessings have been bestowed upon those who have taken the statue to their home for a

week.

Prayer Group: The St Canice's Charismatic Prayer Group meets each Thursday at 7 pm, in the Conference 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.

Society of St Joseph: The Society of St Joseph's for the support of religious vocations meets on the second Tuesdays of the month in the Committee Room, after 10 am Mass in St Patrick's Church.

Children's Liturgy: Children's liturgy recommences on Sunday, October 20 and will continue every third Sunday of the month at 11.30 am Mass. Children from P2-P4 are invited to participate.

Stations of the Cross: The Stations of the Cross will be prayed after the 10 am Mass on Fridays, in St Patrick's Church.

Rosary: The Rosary is prayed on Mondays, Tuesday, Wednesdays and Fridays, at 9.35 am, in St Patrick's Church.

Adoration: Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, 9 am-6 pm, and Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9 am-8 pm, in Adoration Chapel.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, 9 am and 11.30 am, St Patrick's; 10.15 am, St Matthew's; and 4.30 pm, Immaculate Conception.

Confession: Confession is available in St Patrick's Church at 11 am on Saturdays.

Errigal

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Mondays after 10 am 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.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, St Joseph's Church, Glenullin, and St Mary's Church, 10 am, St Mary's, Ballerin, and 11.30 am in St Joseph's, Glenullin.

Faughanvale

Rosary: The Rosary is prayed every Friday at 7 pm in Star of the Sea Church.

Vocations Society of St Joseph: The Faughanvale Branch meets in St Mary's Church on the second Monday of the month (not Jan July, August) following morning Mass. They pray for

and sponsor vocations to the priesthood. New members are needed. The meeting only takes less than an hour.

Rosary for Priests and for Vocations: A Rosary for priests and vocations is recited each Monday before morning Mass.

Weekend Mass Times: 5 pm Vigil, 12 noon, Star of the Sea; 6.30 pm Vigil, 10 am, St Mary's.

Granaghan (Swatragh)

Weekend Mass Times: 12 noon & 7 pm Vigils; 10.30 am.

Greencastle

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 on Thursdays, 6-10 pm.

Stations of the Cross: The Stations of the Cross are prayed after 7.30 pm Mass on Fridays in St Patrick's, Greencastle.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, St Patrick's, and 11.30 am, Our Lady of Wayside, Broughderg.

Greenlough

Rosary: Tuesday Night Rosary is prayed at 7.30 pm in the Church.

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place in St Oliver Plunkett's Church from 9 am-5 pm on Thursdays.

Weekend Mass Times: 5.30 pm Vigil, and 11 am (alternates with 11 am Sunday Mass in St Mary's Bellaghy).

Iskaheen, Drung & Muff

Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Tuesdays after 10 am Eucharistic Service, until 2 pm, in St Patrick's Church, Iskaheen.

Divine Mercy: Divine Mercy Devotions take place on Thursdays after 10 am Mass in Sacred Heart Church, Muff.

Rosary: The Rosary is prayed before all weekday Masses.

Confessions: Confessions are available in Iskaheen on Saturdays, 9.45-10 am, and in Muff on Saturdays, 6 pm, and after 6.30 pm Vigil Mass

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil, 11.30 am, Sacred Heart Church, Muff; 8 pm Vigil, 10.15 am, St Columba's, Drung; 9 am, St Patrick's, Iskaheen.

Kilrea

Eucharistic Adoration:

Mondays, from 12 noon - 7pm, at St Mary's Drumagarner. Concludes with Public Prayers.

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.

Confession: Confession is available immediately after the 7 pm Vigil Mass in St Anne's Oratory each Saturday. Alternatively, feel free to request the sacrament before or after any weekday Mass.

Weekend Mass Times: 7 pm, Vigil, St Anne's Oratory; 10am St Mary's, Drumagarner; 12 noon, St Mary's, Craigavole.

Lavey

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Fridays from 9.30 am until 5 pm.

Confession: Confessions are heard from 5.15–5.45 pm on Saturdays.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, 9 am and 11 am.

Leckpatrick

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Wednesdays from 8.30 am Mass until 5.30 pm.

Weekend Mass Times: 5 pm Vigil, St Mary's Church, Cloughcor; 9.45 am St Joseph's Church, Glenmornan; 11.15 am, Sacred Heart Church, Derry Road.

Lifford (Murlog)

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Wednesdays from 8.30 am Mass until 5.30 pm.

Stations of the Cross: The Stations of the Cross are recited publicly each Friday after 9.30 am Mass in St Patrick's Church, Murlog.

Adoration: 9.30 am-12.30 pm.

Confessions: Saturday, 6-6.15 pm

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil; 11 am.

Limavady

Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Sundays in Christ the King (with Confessions) from 3-5 pm.

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.

Weekend Mass Times: 4.30 pm Vigil, 9 am, 12 noon, Christ the King Church; 6 pm

Vigil, St Finlough's Church; 10.30 am, St Mary's Church.

Maghera

Holy Face of Jesus: The Holy Face of Jesus prayers take place every Tuesday after the 9.30 am Mass and Divine Mercy.

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.

Confession: Daily after morning Mass (except Sunday and Holydays), and St Mary's at 7 pm on Wednesdays (before evening Mass) and Saturdays at 11am/12noon and 5.30pm/6.15pm

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil and 11.30 am, St Mary's; 9.30 am, St Patrick's.

Magilligan

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place in St Aidan's Church on Wednesdays, from 3-7 pm, and on the First Sundays from 3-6 pm.

Malin

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, and 10.30 am, St Patrick's Church; Vigil 8 pm, Star of the Sea Church; 9 am, St. Mary's Church.

Melmount

Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in the church on Mondays after 10.30 am – 6.30 pm (Benediction at 6.30 pm if priest available).

Confessions: Second and fourth Saturdays at 11.30 am in St Mary's; for First Fridays – after Mass Thursday & Friday mornings (if no funeral) and after First Friday evening Mass.

Weekend Mass Times: 7 pm Vigil, 11.30 am.

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.

Confessions: Confessions will be heard in St Pius X Church on Saturdays from 5.45-6.15 pm.

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil, 10 am, St Pius X Church. 11.30 am on alternate Sundays in St Mary's

Ballybrack, and St Columba's Ballinacrae.

Sion Mills

Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Fridays, from 10.30 am – 6.30 pm (ending with Benediction if priest available). The Blessed Sacrament can also be adored in the Adoration Room in St Theresa's anytime while the Church is open.

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.

Confessions: First, third and fifth Saturdays at 10.30 am in St Theresa's.

Weekend Mass Times: 5.30 pm Vigil; 9.30 am.

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: Mondays 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.

Weekend Mass Times: 6.30 pm Vigil; 9 am, 11 am, and 12:15 pm.

Strabane (Camus)

Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Wednesdays from 8.30 am Mass until 5.30 pm.

Stations of Cross: Stations of the Cross are recited publicly each Friday after 10 am Mass in Immaculate Conception Church.

Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place every day, from 10.30 am-1 pm, 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.

Society of St Joseph: The St John Vianney branch of the Society of St Joseph (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

Parish Post-its

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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 is welcome.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, 9.45 am & 12.15 pm.

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.

St Dymphna Mass: The St Dymphna Mass with Anointing of the Sick takes place on the third Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm.

This Mass is to give thanks to God for positive mental health and to pray for those who are struggling with mental health issues and those who care for them.

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.

Weekend Mass Times: 6.15 pm & 7.30 pm Vigils; 9.30 am, 11 am, 12.30 pm & 7 pm.

Templemore – Long Tower Novena: The annual Solemn Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, on the nine Sundays before Christmas, begins on Sunday, October 26, at 6 pm. This year's theme is 'Finding Hope and Healing in this Hurting World', to mark the close of the Jubilee Year of Hope.

Mental Health Mass: A monthly Mass for Mental Health, and a mini-Vigil to midnight, takes place on the first Thursdays at 7.30 pm. This Mass is to give thanks to God for positive mental health, and to pray for those struggling with mental health issues and those who care for them. After Mass, Adoration will follow until midnight.

Purple Hearts: The Purple Hearts group gathers every Tuesday in Aras Cholmcille after 10 am Mass in Long Tower, for a cuppa, conversation, and some activities such as dancing, knitting, bingo and organising day trips. All welcome.

Long Tower & Brandywell Memories: A collection of old cine film transferred to DVD, taken from 1950's onward. The pack contains a double DVD with many clips of Derry in the 50s up

to 80s. Much of the footage was filmed in the Brandywell area and the Long Tower School. Cost £10, available from Parish Office and Aras Cholmcille.

Children's Rosary: Children's Rosary takes place in the Long Tower on the First Friday of every month, at 3.30 pm.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, 10 am & 12 noon.

Siopa Cholmcille: St Columba's Gift Shop in Aras Cholmcille has a variety of Confirmation/First Holy Communion gifts & cards, candles, Rosary beads, books, occasion cards and other gifts & mementos available. The shop is open after 10am morning Mass during the week. For enquiries, please contact Sheila Doyle/Jim Doherty via (parish office 028-7126230 or Sacristy 028-71261946) who will be happy to help.

Cloisters Café: Cloisters Café in Aras Cholmcille (Wee Nuns building), in the grounds of Long Tower Church, is a cosy place to relax and have a bite to eat or a cuppa and a cake! The café is open Tuesday – Saturday, from 10 am to 3 pm.

Three Patrons

St Carlo Adoration Chapel: A special Service of Dedication will take place after the 12.30 pm Mass on Sunday, October 12, in St Brigid's Church, Carnhill, for the dedication of the Adoration Chapel to St Carlo Acutis. Come and join us as we give thanks for the gift of Carlo's example and ask his intercession for our young people, families, and all who seek to grow closer to Christ through Adoration.

New Course: The Parish is running a course entitled, "Genesis (1-11) and Church Teaching" on Thursdays in the Kildare Room, St Brigid's, Carnhill, from 7-8 pm. All are welcome; bring along a Bible and come discover how these ancient stories speak powerfully to our faith today.

Children's Rosary: Children's Rosary takes place in St Brigid's Church, Carnhill, on the second Saturday of the month, at 2 pm.

Legion of Mary: The Legion of Mary meets on Mondays, from 1-3 pm in the Meeting Room at St Joseph's Church, Galliagh.

Folk Group: The Carnhill Folk Group meets on Mondays from 7-8.30 pm in St Brigid's Church.

St Brigid's Choir: The 10.30 am St Brigid's Choir meets on Thursdays from 5-5.30 pm in St Brigid's Church.

Bible Study: Bible Study takes place on Tuesdays after 11 am Mass in the Meeting Room, St Joseph's Church, Galliagh.

Men's Bible Study: Men's Bible Study takes place in the Upper Room in St Brigid's Chapel, Carnhill, on Tuesdays from 7.30-8.30 pm.

Women's Bible Study: Women's Bible Study takes place on Wednesdays from 7-8 pm, in the

Upper Room, St Brigid's Church, Carnhill.

God Club: God Club is an opportunity for teenagers to learn together about their faith. It takes place in the Kildare Room, Carnhill, on Saturdays from 11.30 am until 12.30 pm.

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 8.15-10 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 Tuesdays from 11 am until 7 pm. It also takes place seven days a week in the Adoration Room in St Brigid's Church, Carnhill, from 8 am until 8 pm, and in St Patrick's Church, Pennyburn, on Wednesdays from 10.30 am – 7 pm.

Youth Prayer Group: A Youth Prayer Group takes place on Thursdays, from 7.30-8.30 pm, in St Pio Centre, Galliagh.

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 7.30-8.30 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: Under The Gaze of Our Lady of Montligeon, the Holy Souls of Purgatory Prayer Meeting takes place on Mondays after 11 am Mass in Our Lady's Chapel, within St Joseph's Church, Galliagh, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. The Group also meet in Termonbacca on the last Wednesday of every month, from 12.30-1.30 pm.

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 7-9 pm in the Kildare Room, St Brigid's, Carnhill. £3 per class. Spaces limited.

St Pio Café: St Pio's Café, in the St Pio Centre, Galliagh, is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 11.30 am-2.30 pm.

Confessions: Confessions takes place in St Joseph's Church, Galliagh, on Tuesdays from 6.15-6.45 pm and Sundays from 5.30-6 pm; in St Patrick's Church, Pennyburn, on Wednesdays from 6.15-6.45 pm, and Saturdays from 5.15-5.45 pm; and in St Brigid's Church, Carnhill, on Thursdays from 6.15-6.45 pm, and Saturdays after 11 am Mass and from 4-4.30 pm.

Weekend Mass Times: 6.15 pm Vigil & 9.45 am, St Patrick's, Pennyburn; 5 pm Vigil, 10.30 am & 12.30 pm St Brigid's, Carnhill; 11 am, 12.30 pm (An tAifreann Naofa), and 6.30 pm Youth Mass, St Joseph's Galliagh.

Urney & Castlefinn

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.

Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, St Columba's, Doneyloop; 10.30 am, St Mary's Castlefinn.

Waterside & Strathfoyle

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 8.15 pm – after evening Mass.

Eucharistic Adoration: There is Eucharistic Adoration in St Oliver Plunkett Church, Strathfoyle, on Mondays, 11.30 am-12.30 pm; in Immaculate Conception Church on Thursdays, 1-6 pm; and in St Columba's Church on Fridays, 1-6 pm.

Confessions: St Columba's – Saturday after 10 am Mass, Monday-Friday at 7 pm, before evening Mass; Immaculate Conception, after 11 am Mass every Saturday and at 5.30 pm before evening Mass on a Saturday; St Oliver Plunkett, Every Saturday 5.30 pm, before the Vigil Mass.

Weekend Mass Times: 7 pm Vigil, St Columba's; 6 pm Vigil, 10.15 am & 12.15 pm, Immaculate Conception; 11.15 am, St Oliver Plunkett.

SAINT COLUMBA'S LONG TOWER
NOVENA
TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Sunday 26th October - Sunday 21st December 2025

Annual Solemn Novena in honour of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Nine Sundays before Christmas in Long Tower Church at 6.00pm. Each night will comprise of the Rosary, Novena prayer and petitions, talk given by various guest speakers and Eucharistic Healing Ceremony with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

THEME: JUBILEE 2025 - PILGRIMS OF HOPE - FINDING HOPE AND HEALING IN A HURTING WORLD

Dedication of St. Brigid's Adoration Chapel to
ST. CARLO ACUTIS

SUNDAY 12TH OCTOBER
AFTER 12.30PM MASS
ST. BRIGID'S CHURCH,
CARNHILL

"The Eucharist is my highway to Heaven."
- ST. CARLO ACUTIS

Diocesan Diary

Youth Ministry Training: The Derry Diocesan Youth Team is running training for young adults in Youth Ministry, beginning on Tuesday, October 14 and running for four consecutive weeks on the dates, October 21 and 28, and November 4. This programme is for anyone 18-30 years old. It will be delivered online and in-person, with a hybrid approach. It will run from 6.30-7.45 pm each week in the Upper Sacristy in St Eugene's Cathedral and on Zoom. The purpose of the programme is to train young adults in youth ministry to help within parishes and the wider community. To express an interest in joining the sessions email – lizzie.rea@derrydiocese.org or phone 04871264087.

ACCORD Derry: Accord Derry Marriage Preparation Workshops take place on October 17 & 18, and November 7 & 8, in the Everglades Hotel, Prehen Rd, Derry, BT47 2NH. Please visit www.accord.com

ACCORD Inishowen: Online Marriage Preparation Programmes will be hosted on October 17&18, 24&25, November 7&8, 21&22 (Fridays 7-10 pm and Saturdays 10 am – 4 pm), or Mondays, December 1, 8, 15, at 6.30 pm. All materials posted to address on booking form. Book online at accord.ie or for further details contact 0749374103/ inishowen@accord.ie

...other Diary Dates

Sr Clare Prayer: ‘From St Columba to Sister Clare’- Evening of Prayer in St Columba’s Church, Long Tower on the first Thursday of each month, at 7 pm for Rosary (Confessions available), then 7.30pm Mass, followed by mini vigil to midnight for healing and intercession. At this Mass, we will pray for the cause of Sr Clare in the Monastic site where St Columba knelt and prayed. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Day of Prayer & Healing: Omagh Charismatic Prayer Group is holding its annual Day of Prayer, Praise & Healing on Sunday, October 19, in the Mellon Country Hotel, Omagh. The theme will be ‘Apart from me you can do nothing’ (Jn 15:5) and the guest speaker will be Fr John Keane. All are welcome. Registration is from 9.30 am and Mass will be celebrated in the afternoon. The £30 cost includes morning coffee and lunch. Booking by Sunday, October 5, is essential for catering purposes. Indicate any dietary requirements. The contact numbers are 07876411435 or

07596609041.

Walk in the Light 2025: As Derry City gears up for Halloween 2025, St Columba Heritage Centre is part of a small but growing community honouring the Christian origins of Allhallowtide, or the eve of All Hallows, all that is holy. These three days mark a special time of remembrance across the globe. We are asking you to re-member - literally re-join with us in a spirit of togetherness and in the fervent hope for peace, whatever your denomination, religious or cultural viewpoint, by attending our annual inter-denominational ‘Walk in the Light’ event on Saturday, November 1, at 7 pm.

This year, for the first time, St Columb’s Cathedral, London Street, and The Salvation Army Church, on Carlisle Road, are included in our twilight pilgrim walk. This is a great way of seeing inside four special sanctuaries, beacons of worship and welcome - think of it as a free faith tour in good company! This event is funded by Derry City and Strabane District Council, and is

received with thanks on behalf of inner-city church grouping - Carlisle Road Methodist Church, St Augustine’s on the Walls, First Derry Presbyterian and St Columba’s Church, Long Tower.

Walkers are to gather at 7 pm at the Salvation Army Church before proceeding, via Ferryquay Gate, to St Columb’s Cathedral, then crossing through the Diamond to First Derry Presbyterian Church on Magazine Street. The hour-long walk ends at St Columba’s Church, Long Tower, where there will be refreshments in Long Tower PS.

Derry Search Youth Group: The monthly Search prayer meeting takes place on the first Sunday of each month, at 7 pm Everyone is welcome whether you have been before or not. It will start with a cup of tea, then open the prayer meeting with a theme to reflect on. The meeting is in the Search centre at Iona Business Park, Southway.

Anam Óg: This faith-based youth group, for those aged 8-14 years, meets on Sundays in Termonbacca, Derry, to explore the faith through fun and friendship, from 6-7.15 pm. We are always open to new members or anyone who wants

to give it a try. If anyone wishes to sign their child up, you can do so at this link: <https://forms.gle/RFFF9kffzE5yBtq8A>

St Therese Prayer Hour: This year, it is 100 years since St Therese of Lisieux was declared a Saint. In order to mark this wonderful occasion, the Carmelites at Termonbacca Retreat Centre, in Derry, have built a new chapel which holds a first-class relic of St Therese. From Monday, September 1, they will also hold a weekly prayer hour in the new chapel, praying for the intercession of St Therese, particularly praying for world peace. The prayer will be from 7.30-8.30 pm and everyone is welcome to come along and join in.

Anam Cara: Anam Cara is holding a bereavement support evening for bereaved parents on Tuesday, September 9, at 7 pm, in the Inishowen Gateway Hotel, Buncrana. It is open to all bereaved parents regardless of the age you child died, the circumstances of their death, and whether this happened recently or not.


Termonbacca News...

Silent Retreat

Knowing Christ in silence and contemplation

5th-7th December 2025

Termonbacca Carmelite Retreat Centre



For queries and booking email termonbaccaderry@gmail.com or call 02871262512

DDS Daily Masses 2024-2025

St Eugene's 17 Jan, 9 Mar, 29 Apr, 19 Jun, 9 Aug, 29 Sep, 19 Nov	10 Dec 2024, 30 Jan, 22 Mar, 12 May, 2 Jul, 22 Aug, 12 Oct
St Columba's 18 Jan, 10 Mar, 30 Apr , 20 Jun, 10 Aug, 30 Sep, 20 Nov	Mourne 11 Dec 2024, 31 Jan, 23 Mar, 13 May, 3 Jul, 23 Aug, 13 Oct
The Three Patrons 19 Jan, 11 Mar, 1 May, 21 Jun, 11 Aug, 1 Oct, 21 Nov	Donaghmore 12 Dec 2024, 1 Feb, 24 Mar, 14 May,4 Jul, 24 Aug, 14 Oct
St Mary's, Creggan 20 Jan, 12 Mar, 2 May, 22 Jun, 12 Aug, 2 Oct, 22 Nov	Termonamongan 13 Dec 2024, 2 Feb, 25 Mar, 15 May, 5 Jul, 25 Aug, 15 Oct,
Our Lady of Lourdes 1 Dec 2024, 21 Jan, 13 Mar, 3 May, 23 Jun, 13 Aug, 3 Oct, 23 Nov	Langfield 14 Dec 2024, 3 Feb, 26 Mar, 16 May, 6 Jul, 26 Aug, 16 Oct,
Holy Family 2 Dec, 2024, 22 Jan, 14 Mar, 4 May, 24 Jun, 14 Aug, 4 Oct, 24 Nov	Sion Mills 15 Dec 2024, 4 Feb, 27 Mar, 17 May, 7 Jul, 27 Aug, 17 Oct,
Culmore 3 Dec 2024, 23 Jan, 15 Mar, 5 May, 25 Jun, 15 Aug, 5 Oct, 25 Nov	Ardstraw East 16 Dec 2024, 5 Feb, 28 Mar, 18 May, 8 Jul, 28 Aug, 18 Oct,
Glendermott 4 Dec 2024, 24 Jan, 16 Mar, 6 May, 26 Jun, 16 Aug, 6 Oct, 26 Nov	Ardstraw W & C'derg 17 Dec 2024, 6 Feb, 29 Mar, 19 May,9 Jul, 29 Aug, 19 Oct
Donagheady 5 Dec 2024, 25 Jan, 17 Mar, 7 May, 27 Jun, 17 Aug, 7 Oct, 27 Nov	Clonleigh 18 Dec 2024, 7 Feb, 30 Mar, 20 May, 10 Jul, 30 Aug, 20 Oct
Leckpatrick 6 Dec 2024, 26 Jan, 18 Mar, 8 May, 28 Jun, 18 Aug, 8 Oct, 28 Nov	Drumragh 19 Dec 2024, 8 Feb, 31 Mar, 21 May, 11 Jul, 31 Aug, 21 Oct
Ardmore 7 Dec 2024, 27 Jan, 19 Mar, 9 May, 29 Jun, 19 Aug, 9 Oct, 29 Nov	Cappagh 20 Dec 2024, 9 Feb, 1 Apr, 22 May, 12 Jul, 1 Sep, 22 Oct
Strathfoyle 8 Dec 2024, 28 Jan, 20 Mar, 10 May, 30 Jun, 20 Aug, 10 Oct	Greencastle 21 Dec 2024, 10 Feb, 2 Apr, 23 May, 13 Jul, 2 Sep, 23 Oct
Camus 9 Dec 2024, 29 Jan, 21 Mar, 11 May, 1 Jul, 21 Aug, 11 Oct	Badoney Lower 22 Dec 2024, 11 Feb, 3 Apr, 24 May, 14 Jul, 3 Sep, 24 Oct
Urney & Castlefin	Badoney Upper 23 Dec 2024, 12 Feb, 4 Apr, 25 May, 15 Jul, 4 Sep, 25 Oct
	Maghera 24 Dec 2024, 13 Feb, 5 Apr, 26 May, 16 Jul, 5 Sep, 26 Oct
	Desertmartin 25 Dec 2024, 14 Feb, 6 Apr,

27 May, 17 Jul ,6 Sep, 27 Oct	Faughanvale 26 Dec 2024, 15 Feb, 7 Apr, 28 May, 18 Jul, 7 Sep, 28 Oct
	Claudy 27 Dec 2024, 16 Feb, 8 Apr, 29 May19 Jul, 8 Sep, 29 Oct
	Banagher 28 Dec 2024, 17 Feb, 9 Apr, 30 May 20 Jul, 9 Sep, 30 Oct
	Ballinascreen 29 Dec 2024, 18 Feb 10 Apr, 31 May 21 Jul, 10 Sep, 31 Oct
	Dungiven 30 Dec 2024, 19 Feb, 11 Apr, 1 Jun, 22 Jul, 11 Sep, 1 Nov
	Limavady 31 Dec 2024, 20 Feb, 12 Apr, 2 Jun, 23 Jul, 12 Sep, 2 Nov
	Magilligan 1 Jan, 21 Feb, 13 Apr, 3 Jun, 24 Jul, 13 Sep, 3 Nov
	Coleraine 2 Jan, 22 Feb, 14 Apr, 4 Jun, 25 Jul, 14 Sep, 4 Nov
	Garvagh 3 Jan, 23 Feb, 15 Apr, 5 Jun, 26 Jul, 15 Sep, 5 Nov
	Kilrea 4 Jan, 24 Feb, 16 Apr, 6 Jun, 27 Jul, 16 Sep, 6 Nov
	Greenlough 5 Jan, 25 Feb, 7 Jun, 28 Jul, 17 Sep, 7 Nov
	Bellaghy 6 Jan, 26 Feb, 8 Jun, 29 Jul, 18 Sep, 8 Nov
	Lavey 7 Jan, 27 Feb, 9 Jun, 30 Jul, 19 Sep, 9 Nov
	Moville 8 Jan, 28 Feb, 20 Apr, 10 Jun, 31 Jul, 20 Sep, 10 Nov
	Granaghan 9 Jan, 1 Mar, 21 Apr, 11 Jun, 1 Aug, 21 Sep, 11 Nov
	Buncrana 10 Jan, 2 Mar, 22 Apr, 12 Jun,

2 Aug, 22 Sep, 12 Nov	Fahan 11 Jan, 3 Mar, 23 Apr, 13 Jun, 3 Aug, 23 Sep, 13 Nov
	Clonmany 12 Jan, 4 Mar, 24 Apr, 14 Jun, 4 Aug, 24 Sep, 14 Nov
	Carndonagh 13 Jan, 5 Mar, 25 Apr, 15 Jun, 5 Aug, 25 Sep, 15 Nov
	Malin 14 Jan, 6 Mar, 26 Apr, 16 Jun, 6 Aug, 26 Sep, 16 Nov
	Iskaheen 15 Jan, 7 Mar, 27 Apr, 17 Jun, 7 Aug, 27 Sep, 17 Nov
	Culdaff 16 Jan, 8 Mar, 28 Apr 18 Jun, 8 Aug, 28 Sep, 18 Nov

1ST FRIDAY MASS FOR LIVING MEMBERS 2024 / 2025
Ballinascreen 06/12/2024
Banagher 03/01/2025
Bellaghy 07/02/2025
Coleraine 07/03/2025
Desertmartin 04/04/2025
Dungiven 02/05/2025
Errigal 06/06/2025
Greenlough 04/07/2025
Kilrea 01/08/2025
Lavey 05/09/2025
Limavady 03/10/2025
Maghera 07/11/2025

Advent encounter with the Lord in contemplative prayer by Aoife O'Neill

WHAT keeps us from getting to know God better? What gets in the way of us basking in the reality of God's love for us? This Advent, why not take some time out of the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations to prepare spiritually?

Termonbacca Carmelite Retreat Centre, Derry, invites you to join us for a weekend free of the distraction of daily life by way of the Silent Directed Retreat from December 5-7, directed by Fr Stephen Quinn OCD.

During this time, retreatants will be introduced to, and led through,

teaching on methods of prayer, particularly meditation and contemplation.

If you would like to spend some time away from the distraction of everyday life, in beautiful scenic surroundings, and learn more about growing in your spiritual life through silence, then this retreat is for you.

The weekend is residential, and is open to men and women. The cost of £90 includes all meals.

For further information/booking contact Aoife on 028 71262512 or termonbaccaderry@ocd.ie

Forty Hours - 2025

Sun 5 Oct	St John's	Coleraine
Sun 5 Oct	Holy Rosary	Ballinascreen
Sun 5 Oct	St Eugene's, Glenock	Newtownstewart
Sun 12 Oct	St Columba's, Long Tower	Templemore, Derry
Sun 12 Oct	St Mary's, Dregish	Ardstraw West & Castlederg
Sun 12 Oct	St Mary's	Maghera
Sun 19 Oct	St Mary's	Limavady
Sun 19 Oct	St Brigid's, Carnhill	Three Patrons, Derry
Sun 19 Oct	Christ the King, Strathroy	Cappagh
Sun 26 Oct	St Mary's, Melmount	Mourne
Sun 26 Oct	Our Lady of Lourdes	Steelstown
Sun 9 Nov	Sacred Heart Church	Omagh
Sun 9 Nov	St Patrick's, Castlederg	Ardstraw West & Castlederg
Sun 16 Nov	Holy Family Church	Ballymagroarty
Sun 23 Nov	St Mary's, Sessiaghoneill	Donaghmore

There was a rich man *Fr Johnny Doherty CSsR*



Fr. Johnny Doherty CSsR

'THERE was a rich man'. That was the opening phrase of a story that Jesus told us at Mass on Sunday, September 28, the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time. As such, it is a very good introduction to the month of October for us as Catholics.

We are all familiar with the story! There was a rich man who had everything. He dressed magnificently, he ate sumptuously, he had friends in high places. There was a poor man named Lazarus. He had nothing. He had no friends except for the dogs, that sometimes brought him comfort by licking his sores. His only food was sharing the scraps that were thrown to the dogs.

Roles reversed

They both died, Lazarus first and then the rich man. Now, however, the roles have been reversed. In the afterlife, Lazarus is the one with friends, especially under the care of his father, Abraham. The rich man, who, by the way, right through the story has no name, is in torment with no one to help him with his intense suffering.

For the very first time the rich man notices Lazarus. He asks that he would be sent to him to dip the tip of his finger in water to cool the rich man's tongue. Abraham tells him that this is not possible because a gulf has been fixed to

prevent anyone, if they wanted to, crossing over from one side to the other.

Barriers

To us, this can seem heartless. But the point of the story is that it was the rich man who created the barriers. Because of his wealth and, as a result, because of his lifestyle, the only things that mattered to him were his pleasure and his dignity. The only people that mattered to him were those who were like him and who came to feast with him and honour him. Lazarus was a nobody. His place, if indeed he deserved any place, was at the gate with the dogs.

The story of our world

This story is being played out every day in our society. Our world is being overcome by violence of all kinds; daily slaughter in Gaza, Ukraine, and other countries, and no one seems able to say stop. Daily starvation of children and adults because of climate change, and no one is able to turn it around. Daily killings because of being Christian in Nigeria and many other countries, and no one is even noticing it. The poor are still at the gate. The dogs are still licking their wounds.

Immigrants

All of this gives rise to the amazing phenomenon of worldwide immigration. For so many of our countries in the Western world, immigration is the single most urgent issue. Governments are elected on this issue and they also fall on it. For many places, the most talked about issue is about how to stop the flow of people on the move and how to get people sent back to their own countries, or anywhere else far away from us.

There is no sympathy left for those countless people who are on the move precisely because of war or famine or persecution. Whatever hope they have is to be

found in getting away from their homelands. And yet, everything is being done to make sure that they have no hope of a future in our countries. They are certainly the people today who are 'at the gate' dying from starvation and from lack of care and compassion.

Too big for us

These issues that are destroying our world and our societies are often too much for us. We can feel helpless in the face of them. And yet, we cannot get away from them. They can be too big for us. And we easily despair of the future. But despair is never an option for us as followers of Christ. We need to call on all the power of Christ's salvation for turning around the awful state of things at present.

Prayer

Prayer is one of the greatest powers we have as Christians, because we know that we do not pray simply on our own behalf, but on behalf of Christ. Prayer can easily be thought about as some pious idea that hands over responsibility for everything to God, and we can then go on our merry way.

Christian prayer is just the opposite to that. It is about enabling us to take on board our responsibility to make a difference in our world, but knowing that we have the power of God's Holy Spirit leading us and inspiring us. When we pray for peace, we first become people of peace. When we pray for justice, we become people of justice. When we pray for forgiveness, we have to become people who forgive and who reconcile with one another.

The Word of God

The narrative of the world around us today is one that does not inspire much hope or gladness. Even though we know that there are many positive things to be said about the world, still it is going to be a gloomy tale.

However, the narrative that we read in the Scriptures, especially the story of the creation of the world in the Book of Genesis, is one that can bring peace and confidence to us. There is a wonderful sense of adventure and of awe in each step of this story, as we are constantly told: "God saw that it was good."

Not just from the past

This story, like all of the Scriptures, is not just something from the past. This is the story of what God is doing among us right now. It is a narrative that has to be put side-by-side with the common narrative of danger and destruction. It is in this story of creation that we see faith and science coming together to empower us to care for creation in every way that is needed today.

Our common home

As Christians, we need to take inspiration from the Word of God in order to become true carers of our common home. This is, first of all, in relation to the environment and what is referred to as Climate Change. For years now, scientists have been warning us that our world is in serious danger of being destroyed through damage done to the environment by fossil fuels and other elements. In spite of so much evidence that is provided by them for these warnings, leaders continue to play with fire and risk destruction.

Fairly recently, one of the most powerful people in the world declared his policy as 'drill, baby, drill', in defiance of all the evidence of serious danger to our planet. It was very obvious that money was the main reason for this foolhardy statement, as indeed money is the main barrier to a serious change of mentality and behaviour generally.

Humanity, the high point of creation

In the story of Creation, in the Book of Genesis, the creation of man and woman is seen as the

highlight of God's imaginative love. "God saw that it was very good." God created humanity in God's own image, male and female God created them. This is the ultimate in dignity and respect.

Our faith teaches us that every person is sacred from the moment of conception until the moment of natural death. We need to commit ourselves to this truth in a world that, in so many ways, denies it. As long as we tolerate the widespread acceptance of abortion, we can never hope to be able to do anything about the awful violence against one another that is rife in our society: the carnage of wars; the scandal of famine; the violence of racism; the breakup of marriage and family relationships; and so on.

Back to starting point

In the Book of Genesis story, the starting point of growth is clearly indicated in the love of man and woman in marriage: "This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife and they become one body." It is no accident that in this day when the world is in such turmoil, that marriage is also under serious attack and in grave danger of disappearing.

One of the most difficult things to talk about today is precisely marriage of man and woman. In a way, this is understandable because we are more aware than ever of the reality of same sex orientation and the implications of this. But once we lose the focus of man/woman love as our core, then

all relationships will suffer and become less important and more fragile.

Conclusion: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again

One of the most revolutionary truths that we profess, as Christians, is that Christ has been raised from the dead and now lives in us and in every community of the Church throughout the world. He is the living Word of God proclaiming God's love and the salvation of the world through us.

For us, as Catholics, one of the most striking truths that we proclaim is that the marriage of a woman and man is one of our Sacraments, one of the major sources of God's love and salvation for the world. We also name the family as the Domestic Church, one of the principal places of Christ's presence in the Church.

In spite of this, we continue to live as if these bold acts of faith are not really meant. We continue to put most of our energy and resources into the Church of the parish, which, of course, is a very important place. And we continue to bemoan the growing lack of vocations to the priesthood, which, of course, is a great loss.

Going back to the basics is not about going back to the past. It is about remembering where our riches are and bringing them out for the world of today, so that the world may believe in Jesus Christ and the wonderful richness of His death and resurrection.



In the world...not of it *by Sinéad Strong*

AS a Catholic mother, raising children in a world that often feels at odds with my faith, I frequently encounter a tension that seems almost impossible to resolve. I want to protect my family's hearts and minds, to shield them from influences that contradict our beliefs and values. Yet, I am also deeply aware of Christ's call for us to be in the world, not of it - a directive that does not permit us to simply build walls and retreat into holy huddles, thinking we can remain pure by isolation. Instead, we are called to go out, to see the world with discerning eyes, but not suspicious or fearful ones.

Too often, I see a tendency among fellow believers, and yes, I have felt it myself, to view anything outside our Catholic circles with a wary suspicion, as if the devil lurks

in every shadow. A pop song on the radio, a fantasy novel on my child's nightstand, a television show that isn't explicitly Christian, are these all gateways to evil, or are they simply part of the tapestry of human culture? The world is messy, yes, but it is also a place where God's fingerprints abound, often in surprising places.

As Catholics, we have a rich tradition of engaging with culture, of finding the seeds of the Gospel scattered among the world's stories, music, and art. Our saints, think of St Francis of Assisi or St Thomas Aquinas, walked into marketplaces and universities, not away from them. They did not hide; they entered into the world's messiness with courage, grace, and a discerning spirit. They did not see the devil behind every

difference or disagreement.

We cannot, nor should we, isolate ourselves and our children from everything that is "not on the same page as us." In fact, to do so would be to ignore Christ's incarnation itself. Jesus did not hover above the world, untouched by its suffering, confusion, or joy. He ate with sinners, spoke with Samaritans, healed on the Sabbath, and called tax collectors to follow Him. He did not fear contagion from the world's imperfection; He brought light into the darkness, trusting that the light is not overcome.

As a mother, I try to remember this when I am tempted to simply say "No" to every invitation, every book, every new friendship that doesn't come with a Catholic label. I want my children to know how to recognize good and evil, to discern

and make wise choices, not out of fear but from love and confidence. I want them to believe, truly, that "God so loved the world" (John 3:16), not just the church, not just the saints, but the world itself, in all its chaos and beauty.

Of course, discernment is important. There are things that I will not allow in my home; ideas and images that are contrary to the dignity and destiny of the human person as we understand it. But discernment is not the same as suspicion. It is not a posture of fear, but of wisdom, one that can see both danger and possibility, both the devil's temptations and God's invitations.

We are called to be the salt of the earth, not to stay in the shaker. Salt only transforms when it is mixed in, when it touches what is

bland or even spoiled. If we want to live the Gospel, to raise children who can witness to Christ in the real world, then we must step out of our comfort zones. We must have friendships with those who disagree with us, read stories that challenge us, and listen to music that might not be on the 'approved' list. We must trust that Christ is with us, and that the Holy Spirit is active, not just within the walls of the Church but throughout creation.

Our faith does not call us to see the devil in everything. It calls us to see Christ, sometimes hidden, sometimes waiting, sometimes calling us to love more deeply than is comfortable. As a Catholic mother, this is the path I choose: not one of isolation and fear, but of courageous presence. We are



in the world, not of it, but always, always for it.

Lord, grant us wisdom and courage to engage the world with loving discernment, seeing your presence in every corner and trusting in your light to guide our families.

(If you are interested in finding out more about Catholic Mothers Ireland, please visit www.catholicmothers.ie).

Children's Catechism Club - C3

by Veronica Harley

Hello children. Welcome to the month of October. This month is dedicated to the Our Lady of the Rosary. October 7 is the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. The Rosary is a beautiful prayer which tells us the story of Jesus' life in four parts: The Joyful Mysteries; The Sorrowful Mysteries; The Glorious Mysteries; and The Luminous Mysteries. Every time we pray the Rosary, we should focus on Jesus' life and remember a special intention that we want to pray for.



Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary

October 7 is the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. This Feast was introduced by Pope St Pius V (1504-1572), in 1571, to honour Mary for the Christian victory over the Turks at Lepanto on October 7, 1571. During the 16th Century, Pope St Pius V was having trouble with the Ottoman Turks, who were a danger to Christianity. He, and all Christians, had prayed the Rosary for the victory of the Christians in battle.

Saints of the Month

- October 1: St Thérèse of the Child Jesus (the Little Flower)
- October 4: St Francis of Assisi
- October 15: St Teresa of Avila
- October 18: St Luke

Guardian Angel

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of My Father in Heaven" (Matthew 10:18).

"Angels are servants and messengers of God" (CCC 329). Angels are signs of God's care and love, and they remind us of how God



knows each one of us. God loves us so much that He gave each one of us our own Guardian angel as "a protector and shepherd" (CCC 336) to watch over us. We celebrate the Feast of the Guardian Angels on October 2. We honour our Guardian Angels on this day.



Saint Theres of the Child Jesus

We celebrate the Feast Day of St Therese on October 1. Therese Martin was born in 1873, in the small French town of Alencon. She was the youngest of five children. Her mother died when she was only four years old, so her father had to sell his business and move the family to Lisieux, where their aunt could help to raise them.

Therese had an ordinary and joyful childhood. She always showed a great love for Jesus, and her Little Way approach to God has become a great help to others in their daily lives. The Little Way which Therese spoke of meant that we should come to God as a little child goes to their father, always trusting in their love and care. Therese fully surrendered herself to God's unconditional love and mercy.



During this year of hope, we also celebrate the centenary, 100 years, of St Therese's canonization. The Little Way of St Therese encourages us to always have hope, a childlike trust in God's love, especially during difficult times. She urges us to walk the 'Little Way', and to know that when we hope in God, we are never disappointed, but filled with confidence that leads us to love.

St Therese Pray for us.

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.

On September 13, 1917, Our Lady appeared for the fifth time to the children and, on this occasion, she promised that when she came in October a miracle would happen so that all would believe.

Tens of thousands of people gathered on October 13, 1917, to await the miracle which the children of Fatima had foretold through



messages they had received from Our Lady. It had been raining heavily the night before, so the ground was soaking wet, but thousands of pilgrims still journeyed toward the Cova, where Our Lady had appeared. The three faithful children made their way to the Cova through many people who did not believe what they had spoken of, even from the first apparition on May 13.

Our Lady appeared to the children as she had promised. She told them that she was the Lady of the Rosary and asked that everyone would continue to say the Rosary every day. She implored people to change their lives and stop offending God, and she asked that a chapel be built there in her honour. By now, the rain had stopped but the sky, still dark and grey, covered the sun. Our Lady turned the palms of Her hands toward the dark sky and the sun burst through the clouds. Everyone present turned their eyes to the sun in the sky to witness what has become known as the Miracle of the Sun.

The people gathered there were able to gaze at the sun without it damaging their eyes. The sun whirled and danced in the sky, turning everything that it touched a different colour. It spun wildly like a burning wheel, and seemed to detach itself from the sky and fall towards the earth. The gathered people were terrified at the sight of the sun falling to the earth, that they fell on their knees and cried out to God asking to be pardoned for their sins. When the miracle ceased, with the sun returning to its place, the people realising that the danger had passed, erupted with great shouts of joy, giving praise and thanksgiving to Our Lady.

October 31 – All Hallows' Eve

October 31 is always a day that children and big people look forward to. They love to dress up and enjoy the fun of Halloween. So, what is

Halloween?

'All Hallows Eve' is where the word Halloween comes from. Hallowed means 'holy'. For example, we say 'Hallowed be thy name' at the start of the 'Our Father'. A hallowed person is a saint. October 31 is called All Hallow's Eve because it is the eve of All Saints' Day (November 1). The night before November 1 became known as 'All Hallowe'en' which was short for "evening before All Hallows Day". It was then shortened to what we know as 'Halloween'. The Mass which is celebrated by the Church on November 1 was called 'All Hallow Mass'. This meant the Mass of all hallowed, saintly people. November 1 was called 'All Hallows Day' or 'All Saints' Day'.

Halloween traditions of dressing up with costumes and masks, and carving faces into turnips to make lanterns, are rooted in Celtic customs. The ancient Celts divided the year into two parts – summer and winter. It was believed that October 31 was the last day of summer, 'Samhain', and, on this night when the seasons changed, that the curtain which separated the living and dead was very thin. Therefore, spirits could rise up and roam the earth on that night. The Celts thought that if they dressed like the spirits and carried eerie lanterns, they would fool the wandering spirits into thinking that they were spirits too, so they would come to no harm.

In celebrating Halloween this year, let us remind ourselves of its true good meaning, and we pray that someday we, also, will be saints in Heaven.



Quiz Time with Lawrence

1. The name of which popular puzzle translates into English as 'Single number'?
2. Of what country is Doha the capital city?
3. What much-loved TV game show from the 1980s was revived by ITV for a Christmas 2024 charity special, presented by Andrew 'Freddie' Flintoff?
4. How many English Premier League clubs has David Moyes managed?
5. Which is the smallest planet in our solar system?
6. In which Irish county would you find the town of Mullingar?
7. What fictional TV family lived in Nelson Mandela House?
8. Name the 2014 movie, starring Seth Rogen, that led to the North Korean government demanding an apology from the USA?
9. Which British comedian uses the alter-ego of Alan Partridge?
10. What are the Christian names of the Spinks brothers,

who both held World Heavyweight boxing titles?

11. What body of water is known in France as La Manche?
12. With what discovery is physician Alexander Fleming credited?
13. Which US sports star's actual Christian name is Eldrick?
14. In what year did Barack Obama become President of the USA?
15. Who played 'baby' in the movie 'Dirty Dancing'?
16. What does the 'A' stand for in DNA?
17. What was the name of David Jason's character in the original 'Open All Hours' series?
18. Who were the last football team to win the old English Football Division 1, before it became the Premier League?
19. Which is the last US state alphabetically?
20. Who wrote 'The Great Gatsby'?
21. Which is the largest of the world's oceans?
22. Who presents the BBC quiz show 'Pointless'?
23. In what country was Elon Musk born?
24. How many red balls are there in a game of snooker?
25. What is the chemical symbol for silver?

Quiz Answers: 1, Sudoku; 2, Qatar; 3, Bullseye; 4, Four - Everton, Man Utd, Sunderland and West Ham; 5, Mercury; 6, Westmeath; 7, The Trotters; 8, The Interview; 9, Steve Coogan; 10, Michael and Leon; 11, The English Channel; 12, Penicillin; 13, Tiger Woods; 14, 2009; 15, Jennifer Grey; 16, Acid; 17, Granville; 18, Leeds United; 19, Wyoming; 20, Scott Fitzgerald; 21, The Pacific; 22, Alexander Armstrong; 23, South Africa; 24, Fifteen; 25, Ag.

Aghyaran, Ardmore, Ardstraw West & Castlederg, Ballinascreen, Ballymagroarty, Banagher, Bellaghy, Buncrana, Carndonagh, Claudy,

Let Your Light Shine!

Young Adults YOUTH MINISTRY TRAINING

@derryyouth

**Volunteer with your Parish
and wider Community**

*If interested please
contact the number
or email below.*

- ✓ Delivered online and
in person
- ✓ Tuesday the
14th, 21st, 28th Oct & 4th
Nov 6:30pm-7:45pm
- ✓ Saint Eugene's
Cathedral upper
Sacristy & on Zoom



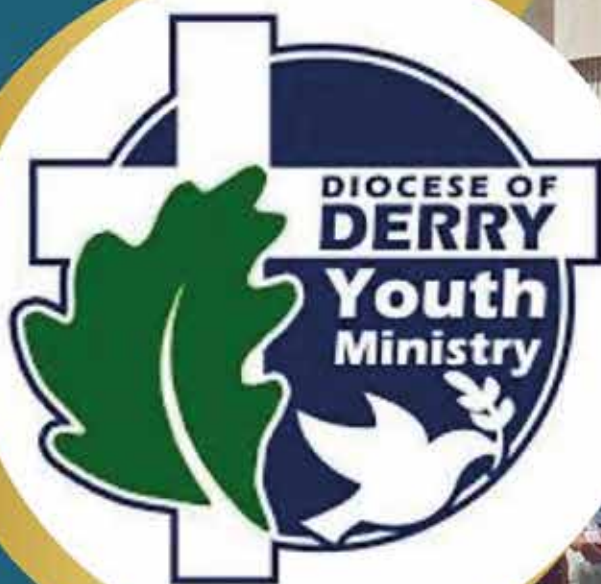
Contact Us

02871264087



Email

[lizzie.rea@derrydio
cese.org](mailto:lizzie.rea@derrydio
cese.org)



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, Donnylough, Drumquin, Dunamnanagh, Dungiven, Fahan, Faughanvale, Garvagh, Gortin, Greencastle,